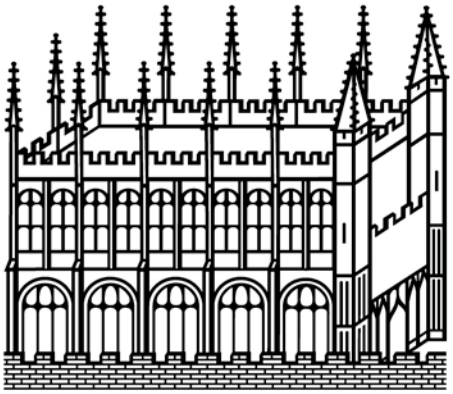

TRAVELLING SKETCHES

IN THE NORTH OF ITALY, THE TYROL,

AND ON THE RHINE.

WITH TWENTY-SIX BEAUTIFULLY FINISHED ENGRAVINGS,

FROM DRAWINGS

BY CLARKSON STANFIELD, Esq.

BY

LEITCH RITCHIE, Esq.

AUTHOR OF THE "ROMANCE OF FRENCH HISTORY," &c.

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A WORD PREFATORY.

Most people understand that the word "sketch," in painting, means a hasty and imperfect drawing, containing merely a sort of outline of the artist's ideas. The present *literary* sketches, however, must be looked upon as subordinate, only with reference to the more finished works of other writers; for in reality they have been executed to the best of the author's ability. They are SKETCHES, however, whatever be their merit or demerit, because they are necessarily brief; and because, for evident reasons, they want the continuity and gravity of interest which might have entitled the book to the distinction of a TOUR.

In an age like this, when a taste for travel and a taste for the fine arts seem to grow together, it is not wonderful that to ransack the portfolio of an artist of genius, on his return from abroad, should be deemed a very fascinating employment. And perhaps, after all, when the drawings come to be

published, the most *useful* literary accompaniment would be a common guide-book. Such works, however, already exist in sufficient abundance; and, instead of having recourse to the common expedient — of reproducing, in a new form, the experience of former travellers, the author conceived the idea of presenting to the reader a set of *bona fide* sketches of his own, the result of impressions made upon his mind on the spot. The appearance in the midst of these, of relations which the profane will term *romances,* must be accounted for by the necessities of the ANNUAL—a plant, which, having been reared in an atmosphere of poetry and fiction, would, perhaps, run some risk of drooping if suddenly transplanted.

The present volume comprehends a Journey through the North of Italy, the Tyrol, and along the banks of the Rhine as far as Strasbourg. Next year, the route will be continued down the Rhine to the sea, and through the most interesting portions of Holland and the Netherlands.

London, October, 1831.

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TRAVELLING SKETCHES,

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CHAP. I.

PREPARATION.

It is nothing at all to write the account of a tour that has been made without reference to authorship. You may imagine that you are merely gratifying the curiosity of your friends; or, what is still better, that you are performing a public duty in disseminating a knowledge of certain memorabilia met with in your journey. You are like a man telling a story, either in answer to the questions of the company, or simply because he believes it to be worth telling. But to travel for the express purpose of writing your travels—to look about you, as it were, of malice prepense—and feel, every step you move, as if you had an ink-bottle dangling at your button, and a pen stuck behind your ear, is surely the most awkward thing in the world! One sits as stiffly in the coach as if he had been petrified into an attitude by the eye of a portrait-painter. A travelling

author may be recognised among a thousand tourists. There is an air of sheepish importance in his manner —a restlessness in the eye, and a twitching in the muscles, that proclaim an unquiet spirit. If he ever sleeps he is filled with remorse when he awakes. He is the curse of postillions, and the terror of travellers.

With a due sense of the absurdity of our position, we set out from London in the ominous month of April, and moreover on a Friday, to proceed to Geneva by the way of Paris—predetermining that till within sight of Lake Leman, where our task was to commence, we should neither hear nor see any thing but what we chose. This, however, is as laborious a way of travelling as the other. It does not do away with either the idea or reality of constraint, but only changes its direction. The best of it is that it cannot last very long. The very jolting of a journey opens the imagination, and sets the moral faculties craving as well as those of the body. We observe as voraciously as we eat and drink; and it must be an unhealthy mind which does not wax plumper and stronger for the meal.

If, however, it were not a folly and a falsehood to say that there is any part of this goodly earth barren of the things which enter, like wholesome food, into the soul of the wayfarer, Calais and Paris might surely be named as the Dan and Beersheba. The former has been called a great inn, where travellers merely stop for a moment for refreshment; and in some sense it is so. It is the inn, however,

be it remembered, from which the vehicles start, and to which they return. On one hand all is confusion, and anxiety, and selfish hurry, and suspicion; and, on the other, weariness, repentance, and disgust. The host and waiters, knowing that they will not have time to get sufficiently well acquainted with their guests to feel ashamed of cheating, cheat without remorse; the shopkeepers and townsmen are in like manner eager to have a pluck at the passing pigeon; and thus the communication between the strangers and natives is full of strife and wrangling, or silent bitterness. The traveller should by all means avoid what are called the cheap *English* inns at Calais, and go direct to one of the dear ones. The expense of both will be pretty nearly alike; but at the former he will be ill lodged and ill fed, and have the additional mortification of being fleeced by the understrappers instead of the principals. Before going any where, however, let him personally, or by his own servants, take measures for the prosecution of his journey as early as circumstances will allow.

From Calais to Paris, with the exception of the approach to the royal fortress of Montreuil, and one or two other places, the road is as dreary and uninteresting as can well be imagined. This is particularly the case in early spring—a season in which Englishmen, if they have any love for the beautiful in inanimate nature, should stay at home. In a flat country, like the one over which we are now rumbling in the diligence, the vast tracks of ploughed ground,

unbroken to the eye by the garden-like fences of England, look like a desert. Even the vineyards, so dear to a northern imagination, and which present themselves as you get nearer Paris, are a deformity rather than an embellishment. They offer nothing more interesting to the eye than a multitude of dirty sticks, five or six feet long, stuck at regular distances in the earth, between which rise the black and naked trunks of the vines. A French vineyard, indeed, is not at any time so beautiful an object as a pea-field, and it bears no comparison at all to a hop-plantation. But wait till we get into Italy!

The dulness of the road, however, is of little consequence; for we have carried along with us abundant materials for amusement. We are not, we thank heaven and a reasonably clear conscience, of that hermit class which, in traversing the common earth, shuts itself up in prison-boxes. We hate solitary confinement; we love to look upon the faces of our species, and to feel that we are not alone in the world. There is a round score of us in this waggon-coach—grey hairs and auburn locks, manly beards and sweet blue eyes—and there is not one in the company who does not feel better and happier for the contact. Not, however, that we would claim for ourselves and our fellow-travellers a greater degree of virtue than commonly falls to the lot of humanity. On the contrary, we acknowledge that our good fellowship is owing to nothing more than the external circumstances of our situation, and in particular to the social necessities of eating

and drinking. We well remember the feelings with which we took our places: the selfish anxiety lest another should get hold of the seat we had bargained for—the sly adjustment of the knees to the utmost possible convenience of the individual party —the haughty stare at finding oneself in a public vehicle, surrounded by brothers and sisters of God's giving—the unfeeling scrutiny of gowns and bonnets —the thousand Machiavelian speculations which take hold of the spirit of man, when he sees around him those whom the education of society has taught him to look upon as his tools, his enemies, or his victims. All this gave way gradually under the influence of mere contact and association. The edges of our unamiability were rubbed off by collision; our reserve was jolted into pieces; we grew hungry together, and felt that we were indeed near relations of humanity. Then we eat and drank together, and grew kind and cordial; we told our pursuits, and sometimes our histories, and were interested in those of our neighbours; by degrees we sat down to table without getting our dusty coats brushed by the waiter; the ladies did not care a pin about their head-gear, and in descending the steps they leaned like sisters upon the first shoulder that offered. In the morning we laughed at one another's haggard looks, and our lassitude was dispersed by the healthy conviction that we had utterly ceased to be the *things* of artificial society, and were indeed men and women. Then came the arrival; and then the parting. The page was turned over,

and glued down for ever. A "good bye," a "God bless you," and here and there a whispered, perhaps a tremulous, "farewell," were uttered; some went east, some west, some north, and some south; "they passed on their way, and we saw them no more."

In Paris one has no time to be melancholy. This is not the case in London, where a man may be as solitary as a hermit in the midst of the crowd. The French are a more social people than the English; they have an acquaintance-claiming look which sets a stranger at his ease; the very *idols* in the cafés, as they were translated in the days of Addison, seem to be offended if you do not speak to them, by at least a bow, before you leave the room. It would scarcely be fair, however, to take those ladies as average samples of Frenchwomen. They are flowers transplanted from their natural soil into hot-houses, where they grow into extravagance. With all sorts, however, the admiration of men is like the breath of their natural life. They dress, they walk, they sit, they stand, they run, they dance, they sing, they laugh, they cry, they eat, they drink, nay, we verily believe they sleep, with reference to effect. The appearance and gait of a Parisian, even of the lowest class, gives you the idea that she is prepared to dance, and that she can dance well. The colour and texture of her clothing are a matter of indifference; they belong to circumstances which coquetry cannot control, but to which it is superior. A Frenchwoman, however, is not vain, as we understand the word in

England. She does not go a-begging for our approbation, and take so much pains to fix our gaze that we pity while we admire. There is a decision in her step, her look, her air—a pride of sex—which admits of no dispute in another, simply because it has no doubt in itself. It may be that, to our colder imaginations, this will seem to smack a little of what is coarsely termed impudence, or a want of feminine shame; and the context which may be read in the manners of the metropolis offers some authority for the suspicion. The exposure of the female form in the print-shops is universal and unlimited; and the books lying open on the stalls would strike an English libertine with surprise approaching to terror. The male stranger, too, is publicly beset by other panders of the imagination peculiar to Paris, or at least unknown in London; and he waits with curiosity and alarm for the closing in of night to remove the last wavering restraint of human shame. The night comes; the Palais Royal is lighted up; the promenade begins; the ceaseless crowd sweeps with slow and orderly magnificence through its arcades; the shops, glittering with the productions of idle industry, are filled with purchasers; the cafés overflow, and, with

Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,

the idols greet their worshippers; knots of eager politicians cluster about the lamps to devour the journals; the theatres resound with acclamations,

and the streets ring with music: and so passes on the night, with scarcely a solitary exhibition of indecency, or even disorder. What a contrast does the aspect of London present to that of Paris! In the day-time, compared to the French, we seem a nation of prudes, and at night of libertines and bacchanals. The very virtue of one part of the English community adds indecency to the profligacy of the other. It makes no allowance, and will admit of no compromise. It will not accept of the homage of hypocrisy. The erring are driven forth to haunt with the depraved, and can only revenge themselves by flinging back injury for injury. In France the government steps in between the apathy of virtue and the encroachments of vice; in England the affair is left to our own antipathies. If we take our wife or sister to the theatre, the hollow eye of prostitution glares at us side by side in the boxes, and the wild laugh of woman's despair wrings our heart more than the tragedy. The consequence is that the French seem better and the English worse than they are. Judging of the latter, indeed, by the aspect of London at night, they look like a race of ignorant and licentious barbarians, whom the more civilized nations of the continent should conspire to tame or exterminate.

From Paris we took the road to Geneva by Dijon rather than Lyons, in order to save time, and in compliance with our resolution to hear and see nothing worth telling before the commencement of the business of our journey. The scenery is much

more agreeable than on the other side of Paris, although still not very striking. The road, lined with rows of trees, and perfectly straight, looks like the avenue to an old-fashioned house. The effect at first is somewhat pretty, but, as the novelty wears off, it becomes sadly tiresome. This continues without many considerable spaces of intermission as far as Sens. From Sens to Joigny, a picturesque and pleasant town, the fine undulations of the country are covered with vines, which stretch down to the very brink of the placid Yonne. Approaching the Cote d'Or, the undulations assume the character of hills, and these gradually swell into mountains. We had here an opportunity of performing a feat of pedestrianism which would be difficult in England —that is, outstripping the speed of the coach by some miles. The peasant-girls in their straw hats, with the great brims hanging over their faces and shoulders, looked interesting at a little distance; but females who are exposed habitually to the drudgery of the fields should not be seen too near. They, however, as well as the rest of the population, had all the appearance of health, which is better— if any thing can be better—than beauty; and the few beggars we saw had reached an extreme old age. Having breakfasted at a cottage auberge, on black bread and cream, we were at length overtaken by the diligence, and pursued our way through a mountainous and sterile region to Dijon.

When sitting down to dinner we were recreated with the spectacle of some officers of the National

Guard getting up fully as tipsy as English officers could be, in such circumstances, for their lives. It was, indeed, gratifying to our national feelings to observe the similarity. The gentlemen alluded to were extravagantly brave, and loyal almost to weeping; they were, moreover, very justly offended that diligence passengers should be introduced into the very apartment in which they themselves had dined. It may seem an odd remark, but we have met with more drunken men in France since the late revolution than we did before. At all events, the people are certainly braver. At Abbeville there was a National Guardsman who excited the admiration of the company at the café by the fearless manner in which he declared that if *he* had been a Pole he would have slaughtered the Russians. Being afflicted, as we sometimes are, with an ignorance of foreign tongues, we conceived that the hero might have alluded to certain defunct geese that were lying upon the table; but our observation thereupon seemed to give great offence.

From Dijon, which is a clean and rather handsome town, to Auxonne, the road runs through a plain, extending as far as the eye can reach. The soil appears to be damp, and the district, as we should guess, unwholesome: the vapour rolling along the vast surface gave it the appearance of a sea. Past Auxonne the whole country seemed a single garden. Descending the hills above Dole a very magnificent picture bursts upon the view. The ancient city stands in a plain so extensive that the

Jura mountains, which are its barrier, look like inconsiderable hills, and the summit of Mont Blanc, which is faintly sketched in the distance, may be mistaken for a thin cloud resting on the horizon. Dole is a dull, uninteresting town, and its ancient cathedral resembles a village church. The inhabitants have a sleepy, inane look; and the idea occurred to us that they were fatigued with the prospect of the almost boundless level before them. There is a pretty promenade, notwithstanding, at the end of the town, although frequented only by nursemaids and their charges.

The Jura mountains are like the advanced guard of the Alps, and prepare the traveller for the spectacle that is to follow. When fairly entered into the gorge of the pass, the view behind of the fair and fertile plain unites ideas of admiration and regret; and we turn an eye of distrust upon the vast cliffs around us, that look like an ocean which had been suddenly petrified in the midst of a storm. Here and there a scanty patch of ground is protected, by human industry, from the curse of barrenness; but in general we traverse a dreary and dreadful domain of naked rock:

> A region of emptiness, howling and drear,
> Which man hath abandoned from famine and fear;
> Which the snake and the lizard inhabit alone,
> With the twilight bat from the old hollow stone;
> Where grass, nor herb, nor shrub takes root,
> Save poisonous thorns that pierce the foot:
> A region of drought, where no river glides,
> Nor rippling brook with osier'd sides;
> Where reedy pool, nor mossy fountain,

Nor shady tree, ———
Is found to refresh the aching eye:
But the barren earth, and the burning sky,
And the blank horizon round and round,
Without a living sight or sound,
Tell to the heart, in its pensive mood,
That this is Nature's solitude.*

In a scene like this, the little oratories at the road-side would have been looked upon with complacency by Calvin himself. Through the grating with which the niche is covered, you see the gentle virgin holding her baby in her arms; while small jars of flowers surrounding the images attest the devotion of their worshippers. Some peasants pass quickly by, for it is already evening, and deep shadows seem to be rising up from the recesses of the valley, and stealing around us like a tide. The men, notwithstanding, wait to pull off their hats as they pass the mountain fane, and make the sign of the cross upon their brow and bosom; while the women, always more picturesque in their devotion, turn aside from the path, and sink upon their knees, and clasp their hands. By and by the figures of these wanderers of the evening are lost in the deepening shades; the night-wind begins to moan among the cliffs; and a feeling of loneliness and desolation oppresses the traveller's heart.

We are now on the ridge of the Jura pass. The

* Thomas Pringle. From a little, unpretending volume, called "Ephimerides," which, in "many days" or few, will assuredly yet be found by the world, if the love of genuine poetry has not for ever departed from it.

night-wind pipes loud and clear; the moon has risen over the mountains; and the shadows of the dusk, like guilty spirits, have fled howling to their caves. Our heretofore associations of moonlight are utterly destroyed, and not Shakspeare's self could build them up again. By *this* moonlight the angles of the crags are not softened, but sharpened; the bald tops of the mountains are steeped in the paleness of death; there is a ghastly bareness in every feature of the picture, which puts one in mind of a skeleton. Here and there a thick belt of stunted trees and shrubs contrasts finely with the naked rock. We pass occasionally a village, where the very dogs are silent. The houses are low and wide, as if catching by the ground lest they should be blown down.

"We have mountains like these in Savoy!" said a voice beside us, in a tone of exultation, but tremulous with some softer feeling. The speaker was a little, oldish, meanly-dressed man, whose remarks had begun to be somewhat annoying, from their frequency, and want of connexion with the train of our ideas. He was a Savoyard returning from Paris (where his trade, as he told, had been ruined by the new revolution,) to carry into the valley he had left when a boy the savings of half a lifetime, wrapped up in a pocket-handkerchief. We thought we had never seen so uninteresting a being. He was ignorant to a surprising degree for a man who had spent so many years in Paris. He understood that Russia lay somewhere between France and

England, and believed that Scotland had had the honour of giving birth to Napoleon. No sooner, however, did we enter into the shadow of the mountains, than a singular change took place in this unleavened lump of humanity. The soul that lay asleep within him, pent up and encrusted with the vulgarities of society, began to stir and heave. Old thoughts and feelings were revived—not old in use, but rather in disuse; and they came forth in the heretofore simplicity of their infancy, unmindful of the *dignity* (alas! alas!) of middle life. Every shrub growing by the road-side put him in mind of home; and resemblances of leaves and stones were detected with astonishment, and descanted upon with enthusiasm. The children whom we passed more especially excited his interest. Poor fellow! he had left Savoy when a child himself! Once, when we were pursued by two or three little mountain-beggars, after a struggle between his inclination and his poverty, he at last threw them a sol. They did not see the gift, but continued to run on. He rose up in anxiety and anger to describe the place where the coin had fallen, to explain that it was intended to be equally divided between the claimants, and to urge them, in tones of expostulation, entreaty, or command, to turn back and look for it. In vain! Swifter rolled the wheels of the diligence, and shriller, yet more faintly, came the now despairing "Charité!—charité!" of the beggar-children. They were already left far behind, when the better feelings of the Savoyard overcame the

resolution which we could see he had taken. He again started suddenly up, and, with a shout that alarmed his fellow-travellers, called the attention of our weary and baffled pursuers. The workings of his face were magnificent during the chace which recommenced; but at last, after a thousand anxieties, the little wretches were seen near enough to warrant the risk, and a second sol—guided through the air by the Angels of Mercy themselves—descended in the midst. The Savoyard sat down, thanking God, we have no doubt, while he wiped his brow, that he had not relented too late.

Champagnol is worth a remark, containing, as it does, the worst and dearest inn in France. The traveller is recommended to venture into one of the cafés rather than risk the overturn of his good humour. On passing this town the road winds irregularly, frequently up the very ridge of the mountains, sometimes through a bare and sterile track, and sometimes plunging into pine-forests, in the midst of which is perceived gleaming many an ample reserve of snow. Torrents are seen tumbling here and there down the cliffs, till at length, as if they had concentrated their forces, a considerable body of water rushes between two inaccessible mountains, that look as if they had been split asunder in some Titanic convulsion of nature, and were waiting to fall back into their original union. The outline of the near horizon presents a very singular appearance. The pine-forests that extend to the top, when seen against the sky, resemble an army of

men guarding the heights. With our mind full of the warlike show we had been prepared to expect beyond the Alps, our first idea was that the Austrians had already climbed into Switzerland, and that we ourselves were just on the eve of an adventure worth relating. In this wild scene, and hanging upon the brink of the torrent, stands Morez, the last French town.

On beginning to descend the Jura, our first sensation, as Lake Leman burst upon the view, was that of disappointment. So far is this from being an affectation of singularity, that we feel convinced that the same impression is and must be made upon every traveller, in spite of the cuckoo-song which it is the fashion to repeat. The immense expanse of the Pays de Vaud at our feet, although in reality diversified by swelling hills, looks as level as the distant sea when only the white specks on its bosom tell of waves and storms. At the extremity of this seeming plain lies the plain of waters; only different from the former in colour, the indentations of its margin lost in the distance, and the whole presenting an appearance of tameness and uniformity which contrasts disagreeably with the ideal picture we carry within us. Even the mountains of Savoy on the opposite shore seem to have been exaggerated by our imagination; and, with a vain attempt to work ourselves up to the conventional point of admiration, we descend Mount Jura.

And yet, as we descend, a kind of wonder, more absorbing than any feeling which attends the

gratification of mere taste, begins to rise in our minds. The mountain-ocean which lies before us, to the extent of twenty-six square leagues of surface, we know is between eleven and twelve hundred feet above the level of the sea. In relation to the mountains which surround it, nevertheless, and of which the Jura whereon we now stand forms a part, it seems like a drop of water in the palm of the hand. The soul expands in the endeavour to grasp so magnificent a whole; and, instead of the ideas of romantic beauty which were associated in our fancies with the name of Lake Leman, we receive only impressions of the vast and sublime.

While we are yet in our first reverie, the surface of the water steals away from our eyes, and a sea of white vapour rolls in its place. The play of the sunlight on this unsubstantial mass is magical; and, in watching the prettiness of the effect, we recover from the feelings of awe which had begun to creep over us. Here and there a blue spot appears in the mist which eddies around it; now a flash of sunshine, and now a gleam of water; and by and by the whole lake is seen, in its vast expanse, as blue as heaven itself. Notwithstanding the song of the morning breeze, and the towns, seats, and farm-houses in the distance, the heart cannot get rid of ideas of loneliness and silence: we are yet in the domain of nature; and the things that belong to human society, with its noise and business, are too far off to trouble the atmosphere of our thoughts.

As we descend lower towards the base of the

Jura, the mountains on the opposite side look more magnificent, and we wonder how our disappointment could have arisen. Mont Blanc is rarely discernible from the clouds which surround it; but when our perplexity as to which is earth and which air is suddenly removed by some atmospheric change, we start in joy and astonishment. The indentations of the margin grow bolder; the cliffs rise huge and definite on the Savoy side, capped with woods of pines, beech, and oak; the lake is broken into fragments, and comes in detail before us; and, without thinking at the moment that the different aspect in which objects appear is caused by the difference in our situation, and the imperfection of the human faculties—or shaming ourselves by analogies connected with the moral perceptions—we acknowledge remorsefully that we had done Lake Leman injustice.

At the inferior extremity of the lake stands the town of Geneva. The canton, of which it is the capital, interposes between the territories of France and Savoy, where the Jura chain meets the first line of the Alps. Jura looks down upon it from the north-west, Salève and Voiron from the south and east, and Sion and Vouache from the west. The valley, guarded by these giants, is almost triangular, till it merges in the vast plains of the Pays de Vaud. Towards the east, a break in the chain of mountains affords a view of the Alps of Faucigny, which appear to carry Mont Blanc upon their shoulders; and beside these the Aiguille Verte and the Buet,

the Reposoir, and the pyramidal Mole. On the south-west a narrower gorge, called the Pas de l' Ecluse, which opens between the mountains of Vouache and the western extremity of the Jura, permits the egress of the Rhone from the "happy valley." The mountains we have named, however, are all at some distance; they form the outer frame of the precious picture; while another girdle of hills, more beautiful if less sublime, clasps, but not too tightly, the town itself.

The town is divided by the Rhone, as it escapes from the lake, into two unequal parts—or rather into three, as an island in the middle of the river forms a third and intermediate quarter. The whole describes an oval figure, elongated from north-west to south-east. The origin of this place has never been ascertained; but Cæsar speaks of it as a walled town (oppidum) of the Allobroges, a Gaulic nation under the dominion of the Romans. It was destroyed by fire in the third century of the Christian era, and rebuilt by the Emperor Aurelian, whose name it bore for some time. Again, however, it was destroyed in the wars of the Franks and Burgundians in the time of Clovis, and almost every vestige obliterated of Roman industry or arms. About the year 426, Geneva was incorporated in the first kingdom of Burgundy; in a century after, it was torn away by the Ostragoths; in about another century, we find it passing into the hands of the Franks; in 879, it becomes a part of the kingdom of Arles; in nine years after, it enters into the second

kingdom of Burgundy; in 1032, it becomes the property of the Emperor Conrad; in 1162, its bishop is declared sovereign of the town by Frederic Barbarossa; in 1287, it is taken by Amédéus V. of Savoy; in 1481, it is the property of the Counts of Savoy; in 1475, it provokes chastisement, and begs forbearance, from the Swiss; in 1535, it delivers itself from its bishop; in 1754, its independence is recognized by its old master of Savoy, the King of Sardinia; from 1776 to 1814, it performs a series of revolutions, all more or less bloody, too tedious to mention; and, in 1815, it is admitted into the Swiss confederation. If to this trifling list of adventures you add the reformation, and a pestilence or two, you will probably form an idea that the abiding-place of the Genevese has not always been the paradise for which nature seems to have intended it.

The maximum of its population has been 25,000 —the largest number, perhaps, that can be contained within the walls. These were commenced in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and finished in a style of solidity which perhaps shuts in for ever the town in its present limits. At the beginning of the sixth century the walls built by Gondibald, King of Burgundy, comprehended a space which at present is appropriated to no more than 6000 inhabitants; and, towards the end of the fourteenth, the more extended inclosures of Guillaume de Marcossay and his successors, Bishops of Geneva, surrounded only that portion of the town which is

situated on the left bank of the Rhone. In the arcade of the Bourg du Four, and at the upper part of the passage of the Barrières, there are still some vestiges of Gondibald's gates; and several pieces of architecture still standing—for instance, the Tour Maitresse—are identified with the later works of Marcossay.

The principle of increase, however,—for cities wax, in certain circumstances, as naturally as trees—was not destroyed even by so firm a ligature as the present walls; and Geneva, since it could not extend itself laterally, grew *upwards*. The mode of packing a population, one layer on the top of another, was doubtless introduced by the necessities of war. The smaller the circumference, the more easy the defence; and kings, when building ramparts, never dream of the laws of population. It is curious to notice the *unteachability* of legislators. In London itself, which the English say is the very emporium of intelligence, it would be hard to discover whether they are at this moment busier pulling down streets that have been found to be too narrow, or erecting others of precisely the same width.

The Genevese have never had time to study architecture. Involved from the earliest ages in a series of wars and revolutions, they were well satisfied to be able to huddle together in any way for protection, and to draw their walls around them like a wet cloak. To-day they expend their mental activity in clock-making and similar arts, and in buying and selling by retail. The watches of Geneva

are much prized in the east of Europe; and we believe a considerable number of those that find their way to England, under the name of French watches, are of Geneva manufacture, slightly altered at Paris.

The only building in the whole town which has any claim upon the traveller's attention is the Temple, par excellence, formerly the cathedral church of St. Peter. This edifice is said to have been begun, towards the close of the tenth century, by Conrad the Pacific, and finished in 1024 by the Emperor Conrad, successor of the house of Burgundy. It stands in the place of an ancient cathedral of the sixth century; itself rising from the ruins of a primitive church destroyed in the second conflagration: these ruins occupied the site of a Roman temple of the sun; and antiquarian ken reaches no farther. The form is that of a Latin cross, elongated from east to west, the two arms surmounted by square towers or belfries, and a third tower, covered with tin, rising between, of the same height as the others. The north tower, apparently the most ancient of the three, contains the great bell, called Clemence, which is twenty feet in circumference round the base. A single blow struck on this bell announces daily the precise instant of noon, determined by a sun-dial placed on the western front of the temple. The façade is modern, and is a very handsome portico of six Corinthian columns of grey marble. The interior is in the heavy Gothic style of the iron ages, before the admixture of the

Arabesque, and is as bare of ornament as Protestant piety could desire, Calvin having carried off and melted the very barrels of the organ.

If there is not much to interest within the town, beyond the walls of Geneva all is enchantment. To the south-west is the confluence of the Rhone and the Arve, where the traveller watches curiously the meeting of two streams of different colour and character, which are seen to run together, yet scarcely jostling on the way. The one is still the blue Rhone, and the other the yellow Arve, at the distance of a league from their first union; but time, habit, and the accidents of travelling, conquer any antipathies, and at length, melting insensibly in the arms of her lover, the coy Arve yields up her identity. And indeed her reluctance does not seem to have been unnatural; for, like the goddess in mythological story, she appears to have been caught up from the flowery plains for the purpose of being hurried into hell itself. The Perte du Rhone, where the river plunges into an abyss and disappears, is about eleven leagues from Geneva, and forms one of the most remarkable spectacles to be seen even in this region of natural wonders.

From the heights of St. Jean, in the immediate vicinity of the town, a very fine view is obtained of the course of the Rhone, and that of the Arve, and of Geneva itself, with the country to the south. Opposite St. Jean, on the left bank of the river, is La Batie, a hill which also affords some beautiful prospects. Its woods, however, were cut down by

the Austrian sappers in 1814; and their melancholy remains, together with the ruins of an old castle, give an air of desolation to the scene. Mount Salève is only a league and a half from the town, and the Voirons only two leagues. On the latter, under its most elevated point, called Mount Calvary, are seen the ruins of the convent of Notre Dame des Voirons, in a situation where one thinks of turning hermit out of pure sadness. If Mount Jura is taken into the account—from the loftier peaks of which is seen the chain of the Jura and that of the Alps as clearly as the imperfection of the human vision allows —together with the walks on the banks of the lake, and a sail on its bosom, it may be concluded truly that Geneva is a perfect paradise of poets and painters.

Being ourselves neither the one nor the other, we left Geneva without much regret, except at parting with our Savoyard. We saw him nod familiarly and joyfully to several acquaintances in the streets. They were *little boys*—the same that he had played with forty years ago! We would have cheerfully sacrificed all the fame we mean to make by writing these travels, to have been able to follow him into his village.

CHAPTER II.

THE VALLEY OF THE RHONE.

THE traveller who sets out from Geneva, to cross the Alps by the great pass of the Simplon, may choose between two routes as far as St. Maurice, on the frontiers of the Valais. One of these follows, on the Savoy side of the lake, the old road through Thonon and Evian, constructed by Charles Emanuel III. in the hope of renewing the commerce of the country, which had been ruined in the wars of the sixteenth century. At the Tour Ronde, this road dwindled into a little path, pressed together by the terrific cliffs which plunge almost vertically into the lake. Here began the more important labours of the French engineers; and the scenery described so graphically by Rousseau, in the Nouvelle Héloïse, has been survived by the description.

In the sides of these cliffs, called the Rocks of Meilleraie, a highway has been carried, twenty-five feet broad. Seen from the lake, which is said to be

about 1000 feet deep* at this place, the works are astonishing. At St. Gingulph the road enters the Valais, and, skirting round the marshes, where the Rhone plunges its travel-stained waters into the lake, arrives at St. Maurice.

The other road, which is four leagues longer, passes through the fine plains of the Pays de Vaud, by Copet, Nion, Bolle, Lausanne, Vivay, and Bex. It was this way we chose; and the spectacle of a storm on the lake, which we had the good fortune to witness, and which would have lost great part of its effect on the other side, amply indemnified us for any thing else we might have missed. For some days past the rain had come down in torrents; and the citizens of Geneva at last would readily have bargained for a good blast of their favourite *bise*, or north-west wind, in exchange. By the time we had performed more than half the journey to Lausanne, the atmosphere at length appeared to undergo a change. The dull and dirty sky, resembling in colour a Swiss dome covered with time-tarnished tin, began suddenly to clear. The hazy uniform hue separated, as if by some chemical process, into its component parts, from the deepest black to the most dazzling white; and then, congregating above the Savoy mountains, towards the central part of the lake, left the rest of the circumference of heaven

Mr. Cadell says that the greatest depth is 393 English feet. —"Journey in Carniola," &c. Mr. Conder's surprise seems very natural, that travellers should differ so strangely in matters of fact. The truth is, few men travel with rules and plummets

clear and cloudless. In the west, all in the meantime was calm and bright; and Geneva, with its diadem of hills, lay steeped in sunlight.

When every thing was ready, some flashes, that seemed more like sunbeams than lightning, appeared playing in the shadows of the clouds, and darting down upon the waters; and, in a few moments more, a deep, muttering voice came from the mountains. Then suddenly a mighty wind smote the lake, that lay slumbrous rather than asleep, from shore to shore. The waters grew black, and swelled with pride. Another, and another blast, with flashes and mutterings between—and the roused waves arched their glossy necks, and foamed, and fretted. Then the trees shook, and the woods lifted up their voices; and blacker and blacker grew the clouds, and thicker fell the silvery arrows, and deeper roared the mountains, and fiercer answered the lake. All this while Geneva, seen in the distance, was like a temple of the sun; and the comparatively narrow neck of water leading to it, which is called the Little Lake, although not separate from the larger, glittered in the sacred light. When the din had

in their pocket, and they are therefore obliged to be satisfied with such information as they can procure on the spot. Ask almost any one of the men who have lived all their lives in St. Paul's Churchyard, and who would on that account be deemed competent authority by foreigners, what is the height of the cathedral! Mr. Conder's book ("Italy") will of itself go a great way in correcting mistakes, and setting travellers on the *qui vive*. It is the most useful and pleasant book of its class we ever saw.

continued at its height about a quarter of an hour, it subsided almost as quickly as it had arisen. The waters smoothed themselves; the clouds, having discharged their spleen, only retained enough of colour to prevent them from being confounded with the blue sky, or the white peaks they surmounted; the sunshine, bursting from the Little Lake, as if from the flood-gates of a reservoir, overflowed the whole expanse; and, in a space of time strangely short, the vast valley comprehended within the embrace of the Alps and the Jura seemed a perfect paradise of beauty and content.

The situation of Lausanne is surely the finest in the world!—and the appearance of the town itself, when viewed from a little distance, harmonizes better than one would expect. We hardly think that London, if set down at this end of the lake, would destroy the idea of *solitude*. At Geneva the view of the water is confined to what is called the Little Lake; and this is by no means an advantage to a place that has all the appearance of a busy and somewhat vulgar sea-port town. But at Lausanne, where there is the same confinement in the prospect, it looks like a positive merit. The quiet loveliness of the scene would be annoyed and interrupted, as it were, by an extensive view. In the direction of Villeneuve, looking towards the Valais, the termination of the lake puts one in mind of a gigantic grotto; and, more especially on the opposite side of the water, the shadow of the mountains falls so black and stern upon its surface that our imagination is

ready to accept, with implicit faith, of any depth that could be mentioned. It was there that Rousseau dreamed. The colouring of this part of the picture is indescribable either by the pen or the pencil. Stanfield himself would be obliged to have recourse to some of those theatrical stratagems which at once embellish the picture and detract from the merit of the painter. The *reflection* of the mountains, seen through their *shadow*, is "beyond the reach of art." The intense and vivid white seems to be produced (if the absurdity can be pardoned) from *excess of black;* and puts us in mind of the thought of the poet—

"——————— the light
Of a dark eye in woman."

The streets of Lausanne appear as if rising above one another on successive terraces. Several of the older ones are highly picturesque; and the effect is enhanced by some antique roofs, steep and sharp, and a few small spires. From the cathedral, which surmounts the town, and to which access is gained by flights of wooden stairs, covered with an uncouth roof of the same material, the view is magnificent. The lake opens, but without the effect we have noticed before being injured; for the distance is proportioned to the height from which it is seen. The roofs of the town are at our feet, sloping down precipitously almost to the water's edge. They are covered, as at Geneva, with small plates of wood, of a reddish colour, which look like tiles.

Lausanne is exclusively a place of pleasure, as Geneva is of business. At the former we were in danger of wanting money, with English gold in our pocket, because no one knew the value of the sovereign. At the post-office, which is also the messagerie, they absolutely refused to receive, on any terms, the dangerous coin. The same republican feeling prevailed at a banker's where we applied; but at length we had the good fortune to obtain our desire at the trifling cost of six or seven per cent. The best money to travel with is Messrs. Herries' circular notes; but at all events English gold should be exchanged for Napoleons at Paris. A Napoleon is worth twenty francs every where; and a sovereign worth twenty-five at Paris, and any thing it will fetch elsewhere. A traveller should not have more silver in his pocket than necessary, for the moment he passes the frontier he will be sure to lose by it. Francs, it is true, are a sort of universal coin; but the stranger, who has not time to calculate at every step, or who persuades himself that it is not worth his while, is apt to confound them with the denominations of the country through which he passes. In Lombardy, for instance, few of the shopkeepers will hesitate to accept of a franc, which is worth about tenpence, instead of an Austrian lira, which is worth about eightpence-halfpenny. The best way is to devote a few minutes, on entering each country, to the task of making oneself acquainted with the common currency. To get rid of this subject, we would advise the traveller, in paying

for trifling services, to give without asking about as much as they would cost in England. If he demands what is to pay, he will either be grossly overcharged, or, what is still worse, the matter will be left insidiously to Monsieur's generosity. We remember, on our first visit to the continent, witnessing the following scene in a barber's shop in the ancient city of Caen :—

English stranger (entering abruptly). I say, what do you charge for shaving ?

Barber (bowing profoundly, and laying his hand upon his heart). I have the honour of assuring you, sir, that I will not cut your throat.*

(Stranger sits down suspiciously and sulkily, and the operation is performed.)

Stranger. Now, I say, what is to pay ?

Barber (with respectful confidence). I will not presume, sir, to make any charge for so unimportant a service. I leave the matter entirely to your generosity ; and, judging by your appearance, I *feel* that I shall not have reason to regret doing so.

Stranger (reddening and looking foolish alternately, while he strives all he can to be angry). Pshaw ! *(Gives about half-a-crown.)*

Barber. I return you, sir, my most grateful acknowledgments. I have the honour of wishing you a very good morning. Pray, sir, *(as stranger is going out)* allow me to ask—but I beg that you will remember I make no charge—anything for the boy ?

* A figure of speech among the vulgar, which means simply "I will not overcharge you."

Stranger (in a shout of thunder). No! G— d— you! *(Exit in a rage.)*

When consulted by a friend on the subject of the studies which might be necessary by way of preparation for travelling on the continent—"Are both French and Italian indispensable?—Would some knowledge of the civil law be useful?" &c. &c.—we answered, "'all's one for that:' *learn to keep your temper.*" The only way to do this is to make up your mind, before leaving England, to be cheated to a certain extent. Our own first journey, we well remember, was performed in a perfect fever of indignation—and all for what? We are ashamed to think of the pitiful sum with which we bought so much misery.

Hazlitt says he was struck with the fine forms of many of the women at Geneva. So were we; and with those of the women of Lausanne also, and of the two cantons generally, of which these towns are the capitals. The faces are not strikingly beautiful; but there is a prettiness of expression, and indeed of feature also, which sets off wonderfully well a bust that is almost perfect. On the French side of the Jura, women require all the aid that the dress-maker can give; and, after all, the admiration of which they are so covetous falls in great part to the share of the *artiste.* Here the idea occurs to one —we hope it is not profane—that the perfection of art would consist in showing rather than in concealing the gifts of nature. A fellow-traveller remarked that these Swiss-women were too *fat.*

This was nothing more than a national prejudice, for the man was a Frenchman. For our part, we saw no *super*-abundance, although, like Anastasius, we "looked very hard." As beauty does not usually

> "Lead her graces to the grave,
> And leave the world no copy,"

it is not so wonderful as it appears at first sight that some districts should possess a greater share of it than others of precisely the same natural advantages. Who does not remember certain "high places," sacred to memory, that seemed in days of yore to have an exclusive patent for producing violets and primroses? If the accident could be traced which first planted this sweet colony, all would seem very simple; and we should not think of having recourse to such theories as *we* drowned ourselves in on the banks of Lake Leman. How could Gibbon pass his evenings in playing whist at Lausanne!

The road through the Canton de Vaud, to the entrance of the Valley of the Rhone, does not answer either in beauty or grandeur to its associations. Vivay was a bad locality for the new Heloise. Bex would have been better, if the lake could have been dispensed with. However, this part of our journey was performed at night; and it was as yet only the grey dawn of the morning when we arrived within sight of the Bridge of St. Maurice, which, spanning the Valley of the Rhone almost in its whole breadth, shuts in the territory of

the Valais. Hazlitt himself, who appears to have been too much jaded with travel to enjoy the route of the Simplon, roused himself here. "The landscape painter," says he, "has only to go there and make a picture of it. It is already framed by nature to his hand! I mention this the more, because that kind of *grouping* of objects which is essential to the picturesque is not always to be found in the most sublime or even beautiful scenes. Nature (so to speak) uses a larger canvas than man; and, where she is greatest and most prodigal of her wealth, often neglects that principle of concentration and contrast which is an indispensable preliminary before she can be translated with effect into the circumscribed language of art."*

The immense gorge of the Alps, called the Valley of the Rhone, is supposed to be the deepest in the world; the mountains on either side rising from ten thousand to fourteen thousand feet above the river. It is not indeed a valley, according to the common meaning attached to the word, running between two elevated lines, but a frightful abyss, a hundred miles

* The man who could observe so well, and who had the art of turning his sentences, when he chose, like so many epigrams, died the other day in London, in poverty and almost in solitude. Like many of the outrageously liberal, he was the slave of prejudice; but if his prejudices had lain on *the other side*, his bread might have been steeped in honey instead of bitterness. He was born too soon for himself; but he has played his part, and is at rest. If he does not always teach to think correctly, he must yet be allowed the merit of teaching to think; and that comes to the same thing in the end.

in length, which seems in many places to have been cloven through the very body of the mountains. Numerous lateral valleys open into this abyss, which serve as drains to convey the waters of the glaciers into the Rhone, itself glacier-born.* The territory of the Valais contains nearly two hundred square leagues of surface; but of these only about a fifth part is under the stewardship of man, the rest consisting of glaciers, rocks, and torrents. The population of this wild country amounted, in 1811, to 63,533; but in 1816 it had diminished to 62,909. The Valais was formerly divided into *Haut* and *Bas*, the latter extending upwards to Sion, its capital; but this district was conquered by the higher. In the Haut Valais the climate is fine, and the soil dry; whereas, in the Bas, there is nothing but a swamp under foot, from which the sun, in endeavouring to drain it, only brings out the malaria. The consequence of this truly medical process is mosquito, fever, and cretinism; and, when two such countries are pitted against one another, it is easy to conjecture the result.

A more formidable enemy than either, however,

* On the south are the Valleys of Illiers, Ferret, Entremont (leading to the St. Bernard), Bagnes (where the great inundations took place in 1818), Heres, Anniviers, Tourtemagne, Viège, Saas, St. Nicholas (leading to Mont Cervin, or Matterhorn), and Saltine, at the foot of the Simplon. On the north are the Valleys of Louache, closed by the rocks of the Gemmi, and Lœsch, leading into the Valley of Frutigen. Beyond the Simplon, on the east, is the Valley of the Krumbach, and to the east of the Upper Valley of the Rhone that of Binnen.

attacked the united Valaisians. Napoleon, having formed the project of making a highway into Italy, which should traverse their country from end to end, was naturally desirous of obtaining the consent of the inhabitants. Diplomacy, however, was vain; the people were too simple to understand the logic of the cabinet, and their deputies too sturdy to bend before any thing less than conviction.* It was arranged, therefore, by a decree of the 12th of November, 1810, that the Valais should cease to be the Valais, and become a portion of France, under the name of the Department of the Simplon; and this decree was carried into effect at the point of the sword.

It appears to have been about the year 1797 that the idea of the gigantic project of the Simplon road entered into a mind of corresponding calibre; for on the 25th Floréal (14th May) of that year, Buonaparte, general-in-chief, wrote thus to the Directory from head-quarters at Milan:—

"I have ordered Comeyrat to proceed to Sion to endeavour to open a negociation with the Valais, for the purpose of bringing into effect a treaty, in the names of France and the Cisalpine Republic, by which we are allowed to open a route from the Lake of Geneva to the Lago Maggiore, by the way of the Valley of the Rhone. I have sent an excellent engineer to ascertain what the undertaking will cost. The road will go from Versoix to Bouveret,

* Stokalper and Derivas—names which we are proud to record. Pray heaven they are properly spelt!

by the lake, fifteen leagues; from Bouveret to Sion, ten leagues; from Sion to Brieg, eight leagues; from Brieg to D'Ossola, eight leagues; from D'Ossola to the Lago Maggiore, eight leagues; from the Lago Maggiore, twelve leagues." * * * * "I have charged the same engineer to proceed to the bridge of ———, and ascertain what it would take to remove the rock by which the Rhone is choked, and thus place the forests of the Valais and Savoy at our command—immense forests, which of themselves are sufficient to restore our marine."

The result of these inquiries, or the effect which the communication (the coolness and simplicity of which are really sublime,) had on the government at home, is not known; but neither, we are led to believe, was highly favourable to the project.* Some time afterwards, notwithstanding, General Lery, of the engineers of the army of the Grisons, was ordered to draw up a plan for the defence of the Valley of the Rhone, taking as its basis the establishment of a direct communication between France and Lombardy by the Simplon; and this was followed by a practical step on the part of Napoleon. His famous expedition into Italy was laid out with reference to the actual existence of such a communication; and in May, 1800, General Bethencourt

* Disjonval's report, which will be presently mentioned in the text, combats the idea that the Simplon is impassable for horses and artillery, and asserts that those who had hitherto been charged with the task of investigation had been deceived by a "prestige."

set out, at the head of fourteen hundred men and eight pieces of cannon, to seek a new route over the Alps. The adventures of this forlorn hope of the Simplon are detailed by Disjonval, second in command of the expedition, in a dispatch to Berthier; and never was a story more French, or more interesting. At one place, in the midst of the mountains, they found that the rude bridge over which they expected to pass had been swept away by an avalanche. The chasm was sixty feet broad, with perpendicular sides, and a torrent roaring at the bottom; but General Bethencourt only remarked to the men that they were *ordered* to cross, and that cross they must. A volunteer speedily presented himself, who, clambering to the bottom of the precipice, eyed deliberately the gloomy gulf before him. In vain

"The angry spirit of the waters shrieked;"

for the veteran—a mountaineer perhaps himself—saw that the foundations of the bridge—which were nothing more than holes in the bed of the torrent to receive the extremities of the poles, which had supported a transverse pole above—were still left, and not *many feet* under the surface. He called to his companions to fasten the end of a cord to the precipice above, and fling down the rest of the coil to him. With this burthen on his shoulders, he then stepped boldly, but cautiously, into the water, fixing his legs in the foundation-holes of the bridge.

As he sunk deeper and deeper in his progress

through the roaring stream, bending up against the current, and seeming to grapple with it as with a human enemy, it may be imagined that the spectacle was viewed with intense interest by his comrades above. Sometimes the holes were far apart, and, in striding from one to the other, it seemed a miracle that he was not swept away; sometimes they were too shallow to afford sufficient purchase; and, as he stood swaying and tottering for a moment, a smothered cry burst from the hearts of the spectators — converted into a shout of triumph and applause as he suddenly sprung forward another step, plunged his leg into a deeper crevice, and remained steady. Sometimes the holes were *too* deep—a still more imminent danger; and once or twice there was nothing visible of the adventurer above the surface but his arms and head, his wild eyes glaring like those of a water-demon amidst the spray, and his teeth seen fiercely clenched through the dripping and disordered mustachio. The wind, in the meantime, increased every moment; and, as it swept moaning through the chasm, whenever it struck the river, the black waters rose with a burst and a shriek.

The spirit of human daring at last conquered, and the soldier stood panting on the opposite precipice. What was gained by the exploit? The rope, stretched across the chasm, and fastened firmly at either side, was as good as Waterloo Bridge to the gallant Frenchmen! General Bethencourt himself was the first to follow the

volunteer; and after him a thousand men—knapsacked, armed, and accoutred—swung themselves, one by one, across the abyss, a slender cord their only support, and an Alpine torrent their only footing.

The dogs of the division, amounting to five, with a heroism less fortunate, but not less admirable, next tried the passage. They had waited till the last man had crossed—for a soldier's dog belongs to the regiment—and then, with a quick, moaning cry, sprung simultaneously into the gulf. Two only reached the opposite cliffs—the other three were swept away by the torrent. These gallant beasts were seen for several minutes, struggling among the surge; they receded imperceptibly; and then sunk at once in an eddy, that whirled them out of sight. Two died in silence; but a wild and stifled yell told the despair of the third. The adventurers—at the foot of an almost perpendicular mountain, which it was necessary to cross before nightfall—had little time to grieve for their faithful friends. With the assistance of their bayonets, which they inserted, while climbing, in the interstices of the rock to serve as a support, they recommenced their perilous ascent; but even after a considerable time had elapsed, they often turned their heads, as some sound from the dark river below reached them, and looked down with a vague hope into the gulf.

The terror of the Austrian posts may be conceived, when they saw a thousand men rushing down upon them from the Alps, by passes which

Nature herself had fortified with seemingly inaccessible ramparts! The expedition was completely successful, both as regarded its immediate and ulterior purpose; and indeed, with all the disadvantages attending the opening of a new and hazardous route, the column reached the point of rendezvous several days before that of General Moncey, which had debouched by the pass of St. Bernard.* The famous battle of Marengo took place immediately after; and the construction of the military road of the Simplon was decreed.

* It was eventually found that the route of the Simplon shortened the distance from Paris to Milan by nearly fifty leagues.

CHAPTER III.

THE ASCENT OF THE SIMPLON.

THE Bridge of St. Maurice does not entirely span the valley, as travellers assert. A hill on the east has been mistaken for the base of one of the mountains, the Dent de Midi, and the Dent de Morcles, which guard on either side the defile; but, between this hill and the stupendous wall of the valley, there are vineyards and corn-fields. The bridge is a very remarkable object, consisting of a single stone arch thrown over the Rhone. We have seen no pictorial representation which gives the slightest idea of it. This must be owing to some defect in the management of the perspective, for the drawings of the objects themselves are correct. The construction of the bridge is usually, but perhaps erroneously, attributed to the Romans. At all events it was rebuilt in 1482 by the bishop Jodocus Sillenus, who also rebuilt the castles of St. Maurice and Martigny; and the

Roman bridge can have no existence but in tradition. At present it bears no token even of its real antiquity, and is only remarkable for the amazing boldness of the arch and its picturesque situation. The town itself consists of a double row of mean houses, running along the base of the precipices.

The straw hat (a very capital imitation, by the bye, of Leghorn) which was the dress of the peasant-women, all the way from the other side of the Jura, is now shorn of its *brims*. It is moulded into the form of a soup-plate, a little elongated, and stuck lightly upon the head. The trimmings, however, have been allowed to remain, and sometimes entirely cover the straw. The dress hat is trimmed with a ribbon three or four inches broad, edged with gold lace. It is altogether an impolitic invention for such plain faces as we see here; but the people appear to be well enough satisfied with the modicum of charms which heaven has bestowed. They are apparently a contented, but not too intellectual, race. The men, as we pass, pull off their cocked hats, and resume their labour, without having received a new idea from the appearance of a stranger: the women salute us with a gentle, submissive bend of the head.

As the road ascends the valley, the dreary uniformity of the scene oppresses the heart. There is, indeed, a fine waterfall by the way-side, with an absurd and nasty name which we do not care to repeat; but in general there is

little more variety in the scenery than you see in a stormy sky, where the masses of cloud are for ever changing, yet for ever the same. At Martigny there is a steep rock surmounted by the ruins of a *Roman* castle, built in the fifteenth century.* This is the nearest point on the Simplon route to the Great St. Bernard, the Valley of Chamounix, and Mont Blanc; and the roads which here diverge to those Meccas and Medinas of the worshippers of nature give the town an importance which otherwise it would not seem to deserve.

Sion, the capital of the Bas Valais, has a very striking and imposing appearance at a little distance. The Valley is here of a considerable width, and the walls of the town seem to run completely across. Two huge rocks in the midst of the picture, surmounted by castles, rising far above the other towers, add still more to the appearance of warlike strength; and the traveller involuntarily begins to rummage for his passport, as he approaches what seems to him to be a fortress, guarding the Valais. This, however, turns out to be all illusion. The walls might be scaled without the aid of ladders, or a breach

* There is a great charm for travellers in the idea of antiquity. If a Roman castle has once stood on any given spot, the ruins of all succeeding buildings are Roman ruins. When the Church of St. Peter, at Geneva, meets the fate of all sublunar churches, its scattered stones will be called the remains of a Temple of the Sun.

effected without the waste of gunpowder, and the town taken by an assault of school-boys. Sion, however, is the Sedunum of the ancients; and some shapeless remains of Roman architecture, as well as several ruined castles, attest its former importance.

When we entered the town, a scene of greater business and bustle presented itself than we had lately fallen in with. It was market-day; and the country people, from a hundred Alpine valleys, were squeezed into an almost impenetrable mass in the dirty and narrow streets. The cries of the "chapman billies," inviting criticism on their wares, the remonstrances of refractory pigs, the salutations of country neighbours meeting in "the town," and many other incongruous noises, discoursed most eloquent music to the ears that of late had listened only to the wind moaning along the steep, and the monotonous rushing of the carriage-wheels. At the table d' hôte, in the inn, were assembled a company very different in appearance from the market-customers of a country town in England. The air of the gentlemen was half agricultural and half warlike, but their dress wholly civilian, and of the newest Parisian fashion; while the ladies looked more like wandering damsels of romance than farmers' wives and daughters. Their bonnet was the common soup-plate hat of the country, and made of the same coarse kind of straw; but its trimmings were of magnificent gold lace, several inches broad. One was a lady

apparently about five-and-twenty; and a lovelier countenance, and more queenly grace, never led captive our eyes and heart. In the midst of the dinner a horse was suddenly checked in a gallop at the door, and a young man, booted and spurred, rushed, rather than walked, into the room. He had cleared half its length before remembering the restraints of society; and then suddenly stopped in confusion, and coloured deeply. Our heroine rose, and made him a courtesy—half of pride, half of benevolence; he advanced more slowly; their hands met, in the freemasonry of love; and with his bearded lips, that seemed to blush at their own daring, he imprinted, in the French fashion, three kisses upon her tingling cheeks. Oh, that we had time for a romance! These were Haut Valaisians, as we conjectured from their language, which was German—French only being spoke in the Bas Valais; and a finer race of people we never saw.

At Visp, or Viège, Monte Rosa is seen conspicuously among the line of glaciers which separates Italy and the Valais. This magnificent mountain is scarcely inferior to Mont Blanc in height, and is much finer in picturesque effect. We arrived at Brieg—a small town opposite the base of the Simplon, where travellers usually pass the night preparatory to crossing the mountain—at so late an hour that little was visible except the outline of the glaciers. Near Brieg, the Valley enlarges till it forms a circle of a league in diameter, about

the middle of which is situated the town. On the north are the glaciers of Aletsch, descending from the Jungfrau, and the Finsterarhorn, the loftiest peak in the northern chain of the Valais; while, on the other side, the Simplon, with its dark forests of firs and larches, bounds the horizon. The Valley of the Saltine, through which rush the glacier-waters of the mountain, looks like a deep gash at the base; and the traveller is somewhat startled to learn that in that black and mystic abyss he is to find the road which will lead him over the Alps.

At Gliss the mountain-road commences; as Brieg, although the station for travellers, was found to lie too low, and to be too much exposed to the torrent of the Saltine, to afford a favourable starting-post. Near this town there is a bridge over the torrent, thrown in a single lofty arch from rock to rock. Beyond, the route opens on two gently swelling hills, till it passes a finely situated hamlet; and then, coasting along Mount Calvary and the Brindewald, reaches in a single tack, to use a nautical phrase, the point where it suddenly turns into the Valley of Ganther.

There can be no finer combinations of the wild and the beautiful, in natural scenery, than those that have developed themselves at every step since we commenced the ascent of the mountain. It is yet early morning, however, and it occurs to us as being just possible that the dreamy hues of the dawn may have added an extrinsic charm to

the picture. Daylight seems to have broken itself on the points of the Alps, whence it showers down the sides, half hazy vapour, half glittering spray. The passage by which we have emerged from the Valley of the Rhone—and of which we sometimes catch a glimpse through the trees—is already indistinct; but the chain of glaciers which surmount it, extending from the Finsterarhorn to the Gemmi, is clearly visible, as they range their battlemented tops along the horizon of Switzerland. The canopy under which we journey—for we are now in the midst of a forest of larches—is touched here and there by the light; a broader and a broader flash falls upon the topmost branches, and, by and by, illumines the grove to its centre. The woods are awake; the voice of the morning is up; the trees shake their dewy tresses; the birds break into their morning hymn; and all nature leaps up into a new consciousness of life. Call it cant—call it common-place—call it what you will—what care we?—there *is* gratitude in the voice of the trees! there *is* praise in the early song of the birds! there *is* adoration in the music of morning!

At the bottom of the wild ravine, called the Valley of Ganther, there is a bridge thrown over the torrent, raised upon immense blocks of cut stone, and eighty feet in elevation from the surface. Although apparently set there as a mark for the avalanche, the flood, and the Alpine storm, this structure is enabled, by its height and solidity, to defy the accidents of nature. Near the bridge,

on the side of the Valais, the first gallery was excavated; but the frequent accidents that occurred, from the schistous composition of the mountain, rendered its abandonment necessary. Ascending by three *tacks* to the third Refuge, the road skirts round the mountain, and again overhangs the gloomy gorge of the Saltine. On the opposite side are seen some huts and cultivated fields; below there is a gulf, so deep and terrible that the traveller looks up for relief to the pinnacles of ice that seem to pierce into the sky.

Fortified by a breakfast, at the Refuge, of excellent *café au lait*, with bread and frozen butter, we had left our fellow-travellers waiting for the conducteur (whom we had passed on his knees before an oratory by the road-side), and set out alone, with the ambitious design of crossing the summit of the mountain on foot. It is good for man to be alone sometimes in such a place. It is good to see the hoary heads of the mountains rising up around you in a thousand strange combinations; and to hear the voice of the storm crying in the wilderness. These summits of eternal ice form a "handwriting" on the sky, which the soul knows how to interpret. The message of the winds has an awful and yet consolatory meaning to the heart.

We love not man the less, but nature more,

for such communings; for no one can love nature who loves not the human kind. He who descends

from the Alps, to look with hate or scorn upon his species, must, indeed, be dull of eye and dead of heart!

We are not surprised that the sight of a hut, in so wild and dreadful a situation, should have affected a traveller of our acquaintance even to tears. They could not be tears of pity, however, but of that human kindness and love which is commonly termed sympathy. The history of one of these isolated families, or villages, would be highly interesting, were it possible to trace the original cause of its retirement from the rest of the world; but as for its continuance, from generation to generation, on the spot where it once took root and grew, that is no more surprising than the adherence of the lichen to its native rock. In the Valleys of Loesch and Louache (Leuk), on the other side of the Valley of the Rhone, there are villages which are buried in inaccessible solitude for seven months in the year; and others which cannot, at any time, be approached, except by ladders hung from steep to steep.* Is it not possible that these mountaineers, when the wintry storm begins to howl, and the avalanche to fall, may look with *pity* upon the world below?—just as our beloved Jack Tar (whom everybody seems to have forgotten since the peace), when overtaken by a tempest at sea, pulls up his nether garments with a half-selfish jerk,

* For instance, the village of Albinnen.

and wonders what the poor devils on land will do!

The road soon entered into a forest of firs, and the view was partially obscured. This interruption, however, is the last of the kind; for we have risen, almost imperceptibly, to an elevation at which vegetable life receives a sensible check. The pine gradually dwindles in height and luxuriance till it altogether disappears; the larch, more hardy, contends a little longer against the unseen spirit of the clime, and then droops, shrinks, and dies. By and by, man himself feels the approach of an influence, which the unaccustomed traveller hails, half with fear, half with strange delight. He sees (if he hath a poet's eye) a shape dancing down upon him from the glaciers:

> *Her* lips are red, *her* looks are free,
> Her locks are as yellow as gold,
> Her skin is as white as leprosy;
> The night-mare LIFE-IN-DEATH is she,
> Who thicks man's blood with cold!

But all considerations of temperature are forgotten, as the road is seen suddenly to close—stopped by a fragment of the mountain round which we are coasting.

It is only closed in imagination. Steadily, gently, evenly—aye, as evenly as a garden avenue, it approaches the mighty obstacle, and plunges into the midst of the solid granite. For a hundred feet—multiplied to a thousand by our surprise—we

wander on through the subterranean Gallery of Schalbet, half in darkness, and (speaking of ourselves) somewhat in confusion of mind. On issuing again from the cavern, our eye follows the route, distinctly traced to the summit of the Simplon. The glacier of Rosboden looks us right in the face, and an abyss yawns at our feet, through which the newly-born torrents of the Tavernette and Saltine, yelling as they meet, rush with fury. Following the course of this headlong stream, the view extends, through a thousand pictures of mingled beauty and sublimity, till it reaches the Valley of the Rhone, which we have left, closed in on the farther side by the Bernese Alps.

At a short distance from the Gallery of Schalbet, the road makes a semicircular sweep to the left, coasting round the abyss which has just been mentioned. On the opposite side—for the eye (more particularly of a nervous invalid, as we were at that time,) does not like to dwell upon the interval—a second cavern is dimly seen, which is recognized, from description, as being the Gallery of the Glaciers; and the traveller remembers that the intervening space is said to be the most dangerous on the route. The road winds along the edge of the abyss, seeming to cling, as if for support, to the mountain. The support, however, is more terrific still. Above, at a vast height, are the glittering heads of the glaciers of Schönhorn, piled upon confused masses of snow which seem to threaten the lower world with destruction. The

dead whiteness is here and there interrupted—not relieved—by a torrent rushing down from the region of ice. These are the sources of the Saltine; and, as they approach the brink, they are suddenly sucked into artificial aqueducts, and fall headlong into the appointed gulf without touching the road. Along this path—with his foot upon the necks of torrents, avalanches tottering over his head, and gulfs of darkness yawning at his side—the wizard man pursues his journey in glory and in pride.

It was only at intervals, however, that we could obtain a view of the glacier-scenery. There was evidently something brewing in the air; and, if it was not the intermingling of the elements of a storm that we witnessed, we know not what it could be. All was quiet hitherto in our immediate neighbourhood; but, in the region of the Schönhorn, the rushing and tumbling of the clouds were tremendous. The mountain-peaks were at last wholly obscured, and the shadowy war descended even to the road. The clouds seemed to break in surges upon the works of man, and, sometimes falling over, were seen far down in the abyss which these surmounted. Presently, a strong and sudden gust of wind induced us to creep nearer to the side of the mountain; and, as we pursued our journey, with the intention of gaining the Glacier Gallery without delay, a rumbling and groaning sound above our heads added that tinge of indefinite fear to our sensations.

which is indispensable in the composition of the sublime.

We could not refrain, however, from pausing in the midst of the pass, to look down into the gulf of the Tavernette. From the spot where we stood, eight persons were swept away by an avalanche, in the month of May, 1811. The terrors of imagination must have added greatly to the real pains of such a death. The Gallery of the Glaciers, constructed at the base of the Schönhorn, is an excavation of 140 feet in length, with which are connected other covered ways to serve as a further protection against the avalanches. During a great part of the year it requires incessant labour to prevent the accumulation of the snow, which otherwise would stop up the route. The nature of the rock, too, into which the cavern is cut, renders the passage both unpleasant and dangerous; as, owing to its numerous fissures, the water either descends in a perpetual drizzle, or hangs down in spikes of ice from the arch. To avoid the inconveniences of this passage, it would have been necessary, it is said, to lead the road to the very bottom of the abyss, and then make it reascend to the plateau, by an inclination too steep for the purposes of ordinary travelling.

On emerging from the Gallery of the Glaciers, we saw two men at a little distance before us on the road. When we came nearer, we found that their faces were covered with black crape: they stood, erect and grim, one at either side of the

path, looking towards us. The reader hopes that these men were robbers: but he is deceived. They were workmen employed to clear away the snow, an avalanche having fallen the day before, and the crape we presume was meant to protect their eyes from the glare. Nevertheless, we ourselves opine that they would as readily have put their hand to a robbery as to any thing else; and, at all events, there was a stern significance in their salutation that caused us to slacken our pace and swagger past them, with the valorous air which fear commonly assumes. We learned afterwards that an English traveller had actually paid toll for his pedestrianism a few days before, at the same place; and we have no doubt on our mind that these very men were the gatekeepers. We at first attributed the safety of our own treasury to the look of valiance already boasted of; but, on casting round our eyes, we saw the diligence heaving in sight at the opposite point of the semi-circle.

From our present position, we see the Valley of the Rhone for the last time, at a distance of five leagues. The terrific gorge of the Saltine intervenes; and these, framed in as it were by the peaks of the Breitshorn, the Jungfrau, and the Monch, form, as Mr. Brockedon truly says, one of the finest pictures in this range of the Alps. Another Refuge now presented itself, and, having turned the base of the Schönhorn, we found ourselves on the *col* of the passage, or highest part

of the Pass of the Simplon, 6562 feet above the level of the sea. Here we waited for the diligence, for the road was impassable on foot with any degree of comfort. There was, indeed, nothing more to be seen, save a wall of snow, rising on either side far above our head; the track had narrowed, till it seemed scarcely capable of admitting a carriage; the rising wind began to mingle fierceness with its voice of wailing; the battling clouds fell swifter and swifter around; and darkness rushed down upon us like an armed man.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AVALANCHE.

From the *banquette* of the diligence, where we had perched ourselves, we could occasionally catch a glimpse of the form of the plateau. The summit of the Simplon is a plain, almost circular, covered at this season with snow, and surrounded by glaciers. On one side, Rosboden raises its spectral head, helmetted with ice—like the white face of a corpse protruding from a winding-sheet; on the east is the Materhorn; and towards the south the Fletschorn, in like manner glittering with ice, one of the most magnificent mountains in the western chain of the Alps. On the north the visible horizon is still formed by the glaciers of Aletsch and Lœschthal, and the sister giantesses of the Gemmi.

The storm, which had been so long in preparation, was now fairly launched; but this is so common a casualty, on the ridges of the Alps,

that it excited little attention on the part of the conducteur. The passengers, however, viewed with some complacency, through the driving clouds, the form of an hospice, projected by Napoleon, and, although incomplete, yet still capable of affording shelter to the traveller in cases of imminent necessity. But even this view was speedily shut in, by the snow rising, on either side, far above the diligence; and the road between became so narrow that it was with great difficulty we made our way at all. On the summit of the Alps, enclosed by walls of snow, and a roof of tumbling clouds, our sensations were such as we shall not readily forget. These are moments that are worth a lifetime of ordinary existence: they are epochs of thought, from which the mind dates unconsciously in its reflective mood.

We have examined all our stores of analogy and comparison to find something which might give the reader an idea of the sound of the wind. We have heard the wind at sea when it literally smoothed and quelled by its violence the waves which a lesser degree of violence had raised; we have heard its voice in the forest, when the strong oak was torn from its bed of a hundred years, and thrown shuddering upon the earth; we have heard the mingled shout of many thousand men, when fury and revenge were in their heart and on their tongue: but to none of these can we liken the sound of the wind as it rushed over the upper snows of the Alps. The words "terrible

—awful—dreadful" we would reject in favour of "shocking," in its popular sense. The sound seemed to be *unnatural.* The imagination, startled from its propriety, lost itself in night-mare recollections.

Among our fellow-travellers were an Italian gentleman and his newly-married French wife, whom the former was carrying home in triumph over the Alps. The lady was of mature age, and apparently not a novice in matrimony; her frame was bulky, and her nerves good. We had fancied, to say the truth, that if she had been a little more feminine we should have liked her better. At this moment, however, nature asserted her power of sex, and she sat listening to the wind in genuine womanly fright. Her lips were bloodless; her eyes wild and staring; she breathed convulsively; had she been less afraid she would have screamed.

"Suppose we were to be met here by a carriage coming from Italy?" said I to the conducteur.

"God forbid!" replied he.

"But suppose the thing were to happen?"

"*Soyez tranquille,*" said he, "we shall soon be at the end of the plateau, and then the road will widen by degrees." The words were scarcely out of his mouth when a waggon, which had been unperceived in the mist, halted suddenly at our horses' heads. The first broadside of oaths had hardly been exchanged, when another waggon made its appearance at its back—then another —and another, as far as the eye could pierce through the gloom; and we found that we were

thus confronted by a caravan of German peasants, consisting of at least twenty carriages. It is impossible to describe the fracas which ensued, because it is impossible to convey any adequate idea of the localities. Were we writing a melo-drama the stage directions would run thus:

SCENE—*the summit of one of the mountains of the Alps, enveloped in clouds sometimes riven by the tempest. Snow and Glaciers. Darkness visible. Meeting of the diligence, and a train of waggons, in a part of the road where it is impossible for them to pass each other. On the right an abyss leading downward to the depths of the Saltine; on the left the ice-pinnacles of Rosboden.*

The interlocutions of the *dramatis personæ* were well adapted to the wildness of the scene. They were carried on in a rude patois of German, and suited to action that seemed preliminary to a fight. These men were component parts of the sublime of the picture, simply because they had no impressions of the sublime themselves. They were angry with us because we were thrown in their teeth against our will. They were enraged at the storm for drowning their voices; and tried hard to outhowl it. After much time and many words had been expended in this way, it was necessary to do something; for the snow was drifting fast, and the day passing by. It was manifest that one of the two rencountering parties should be obliged to back out of the other's way; and, as such retrograde motion appeared to be more

practicable on the part of the diligence, it was at length determined that men and horses, French and Germans, should amicably unite to effect it.

The operation was exceedingly tedious; and as we, being "only a passenger," had of course nothing to do with it, we crept quietly into the inside of the vehicle. Our fellow-travellers had had time to recover from their fright; and the lady—which is always a good sign—had began to speak, and was maintaining, against one of the male wayfarers, that we were actually in the jaws of an avalanche. Being fortunately acquainted with the circumstances of our situation, we had the happiness to be able to convince her, that although, if the wind increased, we might possibly be smothered in the snow, yet there was little chance of the phenomenon of an avalanche, seeing that we were on the summit of the mountain.

"At all events, madame," said we, "if we *are* blown over the precipice, it will be we ourselves that will form the avalanche—and let the Saltine look to it!"

"Ah, how fortunate!" replied the lady; "you can have no idea how much I dread an avalanche. The description which a dear friend gave me of one which occurred last year—I should have said on this very spot, but, since your description must needs be correct, a little nearer the Glacier Gallery—shall never cease to haunt my imagination."

"You mean the lady who eloped—" said the husband

"Yes, the same;—poor, dear, sensitive darling!"

"I can find nothing like sensibility in her conduct, but something quite the reverse."

"No sensibility! Oh, mon Dieu, what an idea!"

"The reverse, I say," rejoined the husband sulkily.

"The reverse!—what nonsense! Go—go!—I am ashamed of you!"

"Nay, since you come to that, it is I who ought to be——"

"If madame and monsieur," interrupted we, "would have the condescension to submit the dispute to the company by relating the adventure of the Lady of the Avalanche——"

"With pleasure! { There were two ladies—" / "There were two gentlemen—"

"Order—order!" cried we, feeling for our note-book; "one at a time, for the love of heaven! Madame, you have the pas."

"Oh, monsieur!"

LOVE IN AN AVALANCHE.

"It must satisfy you to know," began the lady, "that my friend's name is Victorine. She was addressed by a lover, whom, after his profession, I shall call the capitaine; and, when matters had been carried on in the usual way——"

"What is the usual way?" interrupted we.

"You shall hear," said the lady patiently. "The capitaine, being arrived at years of discretion, looked

round, agreeably to the advice of his friends, for a wife. He met Mademoiselle Victorine in the street, and, seeing that she was charming, fell in love with her. Mademoiselle, however, was his equal in rank and fortune, and it was therefore possible that the capitaine might be refused; so, to save himself from the dishonour of a disappointment, he engaged a friend to sound on the subject a lady who was publicly known to hold the office of confidant to Mademoiselle Victorine. The two go-betweens, accordingly, met one day; and, circumstances being found to be mutually suitable, the lover received permission to present himself at his mistress's house.

"Here he had an interview with my charming friend, and no human being present but her mother! They talked in the most candid manner of the opera and Madame Pasta; and in short the capitaine was fully as much delighted with the beauties of her mind as he had been with those of her person. The next day the sweet intoxication of love, rising in rebellion against the dictates of a severe respect, emboldened him to ask permission of her mother to salute his mistress. The kind old lady at once gave her consent, with no other precaution than that of advancing a few paces nearer the lovers; and mademoiselle, rising in graceful confusion, presented her cheek to his impassioned lips. The ice being thus favourably broken, the proposal was made in due form on the following day by the gentleman's relations; and it was arranged that

our capitaine should be permitted to escort his mistress and her mother into Italy, whither they were called by pressing business, and that the marriage should be solemnized at Milan.

"When the travellers were about to enter Brieg, they found the road blocked up by a carriage which had just been overturned. Near it stood a lady, who fainted, screamed, and wrung her hands alternately; while a gentleman, who supported her, bewailed his fate and *sacréd* the postillions in the same breath. Astonished at the spectacle of so much emotion—for in reality no one had been hurt—the capitaine dismounted to enquire into the cause.

"'I am ruined!' cried the stranger lady.

"'We are both ruined!' cried the gentleman.

"'You are dreaming!' said the capitaine. 'This damage will be repaired in a couple of hours, and you would have found it necessary to remain at Brieg for the night at any rate, as it is now late in the day.'

"'I will *not* remain at Brieg!' cried the lady.

"'We will neither of us remain at Brieg!' cried the gentleman.

"'I will rather proceed on foot,' sobbed the lady, 'and crawl on hands and knees over these frightful Alps.'

"'We will both proceed on foot,' said the gentleman. 'You shall lean on my arm, my ever-adored Ernestine; I will carry your reticule and parasol; and your smile will soften the glaciers as we climb, and melt the avalanche to pity!'

" ' Dear chevalier!' sighed Ernestine—' but a carriage would be more comfortable.' She pondered for an instant, and then suddenly threw herself on her knees before Victorine. ' Oh, mademoiselle!' she exclaimed, ' the beautiful are always compassionate, and I know you will take pity on me! Alas! how different are our fates! You, blessed with the protection of an indulgent mother (or rather elder sister), are flying on the wings of a sanctioned love (for I feel that this gentleman, with the sweet epaulettes and orders, is the affianced of your heart); whilst the chevalier and I, the victims of an honourable but secret attachment, are pursued at once by destiny and my father. Save us —for it is in your power! Admit us into your carriage; rest not at Brieg, but order your postillions to gallop as if their steeds were the doves of Venus; and at Milan the chevalier and I will pray for your happiness at the same altar which sanctifies our own!'

" The appeal was successful. Victorine embraced the fair suppliant, and assured her of her eternal friendship; the mother, seeing that the fugitives were genteel, and that the chevalier wore several decorations, allowed her scruples to be overcome; and the capitaine, knowing that the addition to the party would compel him to ride outside, where he might indulge himself with a cigar, was perfectly well satisfied. The innkeepers at Brieg in vain endeavoured, by evil prognostications touching the weather, to detain the travellers. Ernestine,

hurried on by passion, gave reason to the wind; and Victorine, no less carried away by the enthusiasm of benevolence, would listen only to its dictates: both knew, besides, that innkeepers are always foreseeing storms when company wish to go who travel in their own carriages.

"The prognostications, notwithstanding, were correct. The heavens grew blacker and blacker as they ascended the mountain; the storm began to howl even in the depths of the Saltine; and, when they had cleared the Gallery of Schalbet, that voice of terror which shrieks upon the summit of the Alps fell wildly on their ear. The narrow and dreadful pass which leads to the Gallery of the Glaciers was traversed in breathless silence—for it was early in the year, earlier even than now, and the snow hung above them on the side of the mountain like vast waves, already broken at the ridges as they tottered to their fall. The gallery, notwithstanding, was gained in safety.

"'Thank God,' cried the ladies, 'we are safe! Oh, let us stay even in this dismal vault till the sky clears!' The spikes of ice grated on the roof of the carriage as they spoke, and fell in fragments around it; the rock groaned; and the wind swept shrieking through the dark passage. 'Oh, no!' cried they anew, 'let us proceed—let us trust ourselves to the mercy of God rather than the workmanship of man;—surely the vault of heaven, dark and storm-rent as it is, is better than this!'

"When they emerged from the cavern, the

wilderness of snow and ice that was before them appalled their hearts. In vain they looked down into the gorge of the Saltine, to seek for comfort in the waving trees and green earth: its depths were flooded with darkness, over which swung floating the dark grey clouds. Above, the hanging masses of snow, gleaming portentously through the gloom, seemed ready to break in thunder upon their heads.

"'Mere de Dieu!' shouted the postillions at this instant, 'Sacré nom de diable!' The carriage stopped; the travellers threw themselves for protection into one anothers arms: there was a sound above their heads as of a torrent that had burst its banks. The sound swept past them, and died moaningly away in the abysses of the Saltine. A pause of comparative silence ensued.

"When they looked up again, there was no trace visible of the road either before or behind. Masses of snow, piled one upon another, obliterated every object by which the locality could have been recognized — overhanging the precipice till the valley seemed to have removed from its place, and swallowing up the gallery itself at one vast mouthful. Notwithstanding this, the snow on the steeps of the mountain above their heads seemed undiminished in bulk; only its outlines were more broken—its contortions more grotesque and exaggerated.

"'Sauve qui peut!' cried the postillions. 'Ladies and gentlemen, we can do no more for you!—we

must leave even our horses in the hands of heaven! We counsel you to make use of your legs, and follow us, all who can, to the next Refuge. We have as yet had but a taste of the avalanche: in another minute there will be the whole dish—smoking. Au plaisir!' and, plunging into the snow, they speedily disappeared; but whether downwards or onwards the travellers could not tell.

"In critical moments, the rules of ceremony and decorum are suspended; and the good mother, setting the example to the younger ladies, divested herself in a trice of the petticoat, and took to the snow in her drawers. But, alas! she had not calculated either on the depth or cohesiveness of the unaccustomed substance. The first step was easy; she plunged up to the corsage; but no effort could enable her to extricate her legs, and there she stood, a monument and a warning!

"'Fly, gentlemen!' cried the younger ladies, with the spirit of Frenchwomen: 'you see that for us escape is impossible;—away, and leave us to our fate: the life of a man belongs to his country!'

"'It is true, mademoiselle,' said the capitaine; 'a soldier has no right to die but in the ranks; and yet, could my remaining be of the slightest service to you, I should remain with pleasure. To do so, however, in the present circumstances, would only be to sacrifice two lives instead of one. Adieu, beautiful Victorine! the hope of meeting you in heaven, if not in Milan, will cheer my solitary

flight.' And so saying the capitaine darted away, and was soon lost in the gloom.

"'It is well reasoned,' said Ernestine with a sigh. 'Go, also, mon chevalier—may you be happy!'

"'Never, mademoiselle!' cried the chevalier. 'It is true that my remaining can be of no service to you; but, without you, life is of no value to me. If we cannot live together, we can at least die together!' and so saying he clasped her in his arms. Victorine threw herself back sobbing in the coach; and the good mother wrung her hands as she stood up to the middle in the snow."

A loud huzza from the German peasants, answered by the conducteur and postillions of the diligence, interrupted the fair story-teller; and we found that we had at last been drawn far enough back to admit of the waggons passing us. Some minutes were spent in congratulations on this circumstance, and we perceived that the sufferings of her friends, and the terrors of the avalanche, had completely passed from the lady's mind.

"Madame," said we, "you forget that you have left the company in the deepest anxiety regarding the fate of your benevolent friend Victorine, and that of the adoring and adored Ernestine. We are also desirous of knowing whether the philosophic capitaine effected his escape, and whether the devotion of the chevalier met with the reward it so well deserved; and, also, what became of the old lady, whose bust we think we see at this moment planted upon the snow."

"I beg you to excuse me," said the lady, "but I was so near the end of my story, that I imagined I had altogether finished it. The capitaine, you must know, reached Milan in safety, and the avalanche did not fall. The postillions made as much haste as possible to dig a way for their horses, and thus the whole party were saved."

"And the denouement? Come to the marriages! They of course took place as was proposed?"

"Not exactly. Ernestine, from the first moment that she had noticed with admiration the epaulettes and decorations of the capitaine, had become absent and pensive; and the capitaine, on his part, was as much struck with the energy of her character, and the heroism of her love for the chevalier. But why endeavour to account for phenomena which must be for ever hidden among the mysteries of human nature? Early in the morning of the day appointed for the double marriage, the sensitive and enterprising Ernestine stole down the stairs of the hotel, and jumped into the arms of the capitaine, who was seated in a post-chaise. They set out at full gallop for Verona. As soon as the day had sufficiently dawned, they descried another carriage at full gallop in their rear. They were pursued! It was the carriage of Victorine!

"'Oh, my poor chevalier!' sobbed Ernestine, 'I knew he would not give me up without a struggle:—he is so tender, so devoted! Spare his life, my dearest capitaine, if you fight. Wound him tenderly, if you love me. This, at least, the fidelity of his passion deserves!'

" ' Poor Victorine!' sighed the capitaine, on his part, 'I did not think that she had loved me so well, or that she had so much energy:—I almost begin to re——'

" They were overtaken at the next post-house.

" ' Forgive me, Victorine!' cried the capitaine, throwing himself upon his knees before her. Victorine screamed and fainted.

" ' Forgive me, Ernestine!' cried the chevalier, kneeling also.

" ' Forgive *you*? What? It is I who ought to beg forgiveness. I was just going to be married to the capitaine.'

" ' Good God, how fortunate! Victorine and I were married this morning!' The two gentlemen embraced with ardour.

" ' My children,' said the good mother, 'all has happened for the best. I will not now reproach the capitaine with leaving me in the snow, since I, on my part, have endeavoured to leave him in the lurch. In the meantime, let us go in to breakfast.'

" ' Agreed, agreed!' The good mother was handed in by the two gentlemen, one on each side; and the young ladies followed, with their arms round one anothers necks."

CHAPTER V.

THE DESCENT INTO ITALY.

We entreat the generous reader to believe that the foregoing story is no invention of ours, but a genuine report. It contains a gross libel, in our judgment, on the beautiful sex: let the other plead how they will. At all events, by the time it was finished, we were once more fairly off, and progressing towards Italy.

On the western, or right hand side, at no great distance from the road, stands a narrow but rather lofty building, which strikes the traveller with surprise from its odd situation and desolate appearance. Here some benevolent brothers of the Great St. Bernard have their abode. This is charity with a vengeance! By and by we feel that we are at the end of the plateau, for the road begins sensibly to descend. The waters of the Krumbach, speedily to be augmented by those of the Sengbach, roll through the valley to the right; and we pass

close by the mighty parents of these torrents, the glaciers of the Schönhorn and Rosboden. The route continues to narrow for a league and a half, and, towards the bottom of the gorge, is shut in by masses of barren rock. In this place, the rays of the faint sun are intercepted, for many months of the year, by the mountains, and the neighbouring glaciers breathe like death upon the spot: yet here stands a society of human dwellings, called the village of Simplon. The inhabitants tend their flocks in summer, and clear the roads in winter, and wait upon travellers when heaven sends them. They bring their provisions from Italy or the Valais; for even the hardy potato is but little successful in its struggles with this dreary climate. The only wonder is, that, with fair and fertile Italy on one side, and the wild but beautiful Valley of the Rhone on the other, the villagers consent to remain upon their perch at all.

Simplon may be considered the point at which the last of the three orders of scenery which distinguish the mountain has its commencement. The vast panorama presents, indeed, a specimen, here and there, of every possible variety and combination of natural objects; but in the ascent, on the summit, and in the descent into Italy, we find general features, which impress a distinct and peculiar character upon each of the pictures.

On entering the narrow Valley of the Krumbach (or Kronbach), a scene of desolation presents itself, which corresponds with that of a city ruined by

war and time. The steeps of the mountain, bare and horrid, exhibit the appearance of breaches and rents; and the ravine below is choked up with the mighty fragments. Nature herself has fallen into decay. Her palaces are shattered, her battlements riven, and her high places laid waste. Blocks of gneiss and granite, hurled down from the cliffs by the victorious torrents, encumber the ground. The vegetation of the lower world triumphs over their fall; and the weeds and flowers of the valley coronet, as if in mockery, their brow.

At the abrupt corner by which we turned into this ravine, it was at one time intended to have constructed a fort, for the purpose of defending the pass. Indeed, it is not the least remarkable thing about the route, that it should be wholly unprovided with military works. By some strange fatality, however, the great magician himself never saw the wonders which his art called into being: although it can hardly be imagined that Napoleon intended his road only for the convenience of some dreaming wanderer like ourselves, smit with the love of travel, and ambitious of gossiping about

> "——the Alps, the Appenines,
> The Pyrennean, and the river Po."

To these "base uses," however, it has come at last.

In the midst of the ruins we have described, the confluence of the torrents of the Krumbach and Quirna takes place, and the united stream receives the name of Doveria, or Dovedro. The

Doveria conducts us at length to the Gallery of Algaby, through defiles where the road itself is the only evidence of the visits of man.

The view (looking backward) from this gallery, which is excavated through an immense mass of solid granite, is singularly fine. Trees and cottages, with the road winding among them, enliven the scene, which is shut in, in the distance, by the glaciers of Laqui. The traveller can scarcely believe that he sees the same route which in passing he found so dismal.

We now plunge at once into the wild and terrible Valley of Gondo. It looks—to compare great things with small—like a crack or cleft in the ground produced by the shrinking of the soil in sultry weather. The walls of this cleft are from one to two thousand feet high; sometimes sheer down, as if cut to the line of the plummet —sometimes staggering over the abyss—sometimes indented with deep and ghastly gashes—sometimes bare, grim, and threatening—and sometimes, though more rarely, hung with a tapestry of dark green shrubs. At the bottom foams the torrent of the Doveria; and beside it winds—as smooth as a garden avenue, as quiet, and trim, and *pretty*, as if its course was through the garden of Eden itself—the pertinacious road. Here it is carried like a scaffolding along the sheer side of the cliff, and looks down smiling at the torrent it overhangs; there it is scooped into the granite mountain; now it just suffers its foot to be kissed

by the spray, which is sent up for the purpose like an ambassador; and, again, it raises its head majestically to a distance, where the roar of the subject-waters comes faint and shadowy upon the ear. On the dizzy height where we now stand, however—for there *is* a limit to the power of man—it can neither go up, nor down, nor straight on, gallery or no gallery. It therefore leaps across. As the carriage totters over the Ponte Alto, the traveller experiences a feeling of mingled wonder and terror—a kind of moral vertigo. Such is the fury of the torrent below that the foam rises over his head in light grey vapour; the edges of which, gilded as they now are by the sun, give it the appearance of a volume of fire issuing from the abyss.

Change of sides has no effect in smoothing the difficulties of the way: on the contrary, the wild and stern grandeur of the scenery increases at every step. The road strikes us (without blundering intentionally) as being *unnatural;* for it seems apparent that nothing of the kind could have been anticipated, or allowed for, by the genii of the mountains. Some vast masses of perpendicular rock shut in the view entirely. On one side are the steeps of the mountain; on the other, a deep chasm, in which the Doveria dashes its frantic waters upon the blocks of granite. Nothing is seen but the shattered firs above, which form the visible horizon; and, but for a dark, suspicious-looking spot at the base of the perpendicular rocks,

we should say that nothing less than the "Open sesame!" of magic could carry us farther.

This, however, is the entrance of the Gallery of Gondo, otherwise called the Great Gallery. The roar of the Doveria echoes through the cavern; and the strangeness of the sound is increased by the sinuosity of the passage, so constructed, we believe, for the purposes of military defence. We wandered through it for a distance of about *six hundred feet;* but not wholly in darkness, for two openings have been constructed to admit the light. At the end, the torrent of the Frassinone leaps across the path, to plunge into the Doveria, a hundred feet below. This, however, is only a trifling obstacle. A bridge of a single arch spans the torrent like a rainbow.

As soon as we reach *terra firma* we look back involuntarily. Stanfield, the reader will perceive, has done the same. His pencil moved unconsciously. He knew that the view had already been taken again and again; but he took it yet again for all that, simply because he could not help it. On the right is the waterfall of the Frassinone, spanned by the bridge, and in front the opening of the gallery. On the left a peep is given of a cataract, formed by the Doveria, which, at the bottom of the abyss, receives the Frassinone with shrieks of welcome; and, in the distance, the view is closed by mountains and glaciers.

The road begins to descend rapidly, and the defile to widen. The character of the mountains,

however, remains the same; and the greater width, by giving to the eye the more distant details, only adds to the sublimity of the scene. Mr. Brockeden, and several other travellers, have noticed the appearance, presented here by the cliffs, of enormous towers. We would add that the ranks of firs, on their distant summits, relieved against the sky, in the manner we have described when in the midst of the Jura, strengthen, in a remarkable degree, the impression. In a very elegant work by Mr. Schoberl (Picturesque Tour from Geneva, &c.) a view is given, in this portion of the route, by moonlight. The effect is magnificent.

The village of Gondo next presents itself, distinguished by its inn, which looks like a prison of banditti; and, at a distance of a league further, during which the scenery softens a little, the village of Isella, on the frontiers of Savoy. Here our baggage was examined on the part of the Sardinian government.

The Gallery of Isella has nothing at all of the gloomy character of the others. Its situation is rendered striking by the falls of the Doveria, and the numerous cascades which leap down from the lofty cliffs on either side of the Valley; but the excavation is comparatively of little magnitude, and we received the impression that the engineers might as easily have removed the whole protruding portion of the rock, as have scooped a passage through it. But we perceive that we are getting difficult to please in galleries.

We imagined here that we were gliding at once into Italy; but all on a sudden the cliffs, which had begun to sink and recede, closed in upon us as wildly as at Gondo itself. The rain, at this time, descended in torrents; the sluices of the mountain-rocks were opened; and innumerable cascades sprung from their summits, and fell upon our heads in minute drops, or were blown away in mist. The scene was the most comfortless and dismal we had ever beheld. These enormous precipices, at the foot of which we trickled like a drop of water, seemed to be without end. The dark grey sky, without light or shadow, rested on their summits, and closed in the Valley like a roof. A monotonous *hish!* extending, one would have thought, through all nature, at once tormented and fatigued us. The rushing of the wheels was so perfectly in tune that it seemed a part of the sound; and the trampling of the horses' feet (observed for the first time), while it divided the measure, only added to its wearisome uniformity.

All this, however, had at length an end—but without the contrast which makes one cry out, thank heaven! The Valley widened slowly; the trees grew richer and more numerous as we descended; fields—houses—vineyards—cattle—men and women—all came gradually in sight. Still we were not in Italy—the Italy of our imagination. We were yet on the Alps. The *wildness* indeed was a little *tamer*: but it was not tameness our eyes and

our hearts longed for, but softness, and beauty, and richness, and voluptuous luxuriance.

A struggle seems to take place between the genius of the mountain and that of the vale. Here we meet fertility—there barrenness; here are cultivated fields—there naked rocks; here gently swelling hills—there a narrow and rude defile. Are we on the Alps? Are we in Italy? The question appears to be decided *against* the hopes that had unconsciously arisen within us, and we are thrown back in imagination many a weary league. The mountain-rock heaves itself, according to custom, over the road, and plunges into the torrent below. We enter, with something between a shudder and a sigh, the Gallery of Crevola; midway we stretch our neck out of the carriage, and look wistfully through a rude window which is bored in the side next the river; soon we emerge again—after having traversed about a hundred and eighty feet of subterranean passage, and shut our eyes upon the glare of daylight.

By and by, we re-open them, as we hear by the sound of the waters that we are crossing a bridge. A new world bursts at one flash upon our sight. It is Italy—it is the Italy of our imagination! A vast plain lies before us, covered with the richest vegetation. Two rivers glide through it. Groves—orchards—vineyards—corn-fields—farm-houses—villages, are thickly intermingled; and every where around, villas, of a dazzling whiteness, gleam like pearls in the rich green groundwork of the picture.

We are in Italy. The roads are strewed with fragments of marble, and the walls adorned with portraits of the saints. We are in the land of the sculptor, the painter—and the idolater. The Bridge of Crevola has shut in the Valley of the Simplon. The Val d'Ossola is before us. A new costume amuses our eyes; and a new language falls like music on our ear. Yes, we are in Italy!

The plate exhibits a view of part of this rich country; with some of the houses of the small town of Duomo d'Ossola, as seen from the Bridge of Crevola. Near the town rises a *sacra monte,* or Calvary, on which (but not now in sight) there are *stations* for prayer, presided over by figures as large as life in terra-cotta. The Toccia rolls through the valley, and is met at the further end by the road, which crosses it by a handsome bridge, invisible in the distance. On the right a village is indistinctly seen.

Duomo d'Ossola is supposed to be the Lepontian town of Ptolemy, which he calls Oscela. Leandro Alberti calls it Duomo di Oscella. It contains about fifteen hundred inhabitants, who are quiet subjects of his Sardinian majesty as heir of James VIII. Duke of Savoy, to whom their great grandfathers were sold by the Milanese. Here the route of the Simplon, properly so called, may be said to terminate; although the grand highway bearing that name is only stopped by the triumphal arch now building at the walls of Milan.

An attempt has been made by Eustace and

others to depreciate the Galleries, which excited so much of our admiration, by comparing them with other excavations, such as those at Gibraltar and Salzburg. These gentlemen forget the effect of *circumstances,* and, although travellers themselves, write about places, not as they exist in reality, but as they see them on the map. The works in question, and the other peculiarities of the Simplon road, are assuredly among the most extraordinary of the labours of man. The sound of the hammer and the chisel, in these awful solitudes, must have been like a kind of profanation. The sudden glare of the blasting-powder, and the thunder which followed, rolling among the desert Alps, must have seemed like a challenge to the spirits of the waste. But there is no need to draw upon the imagination. The distance from human dwellings—the difficulty of access—the dangers of the avalanche, the storm, the precipice, and the torrent—all are circumstances which enhance the magnitude of the undertaking, and which should not be forgotten in contemplating the results. If a temple were built on the summit of Mont Blanc, what should we think of the traveller who sneered at its architecture, because it did not equal in magnificence that of St. Peter's at Rome?

There are in all six of these galleries—although they are diminished to five by Mrs. Starke, and increased to ten by Mr. Bakewell. The bridges are not so easy to count. Mrs. Starke says fifty;

Mr. Bakewell twenty-two; and the latter number has been adopted by Mr. Conder in his "Italy." The truth is, there are twenty-two *considerable* bridges—but of all dimensions *many hundreds.* An anonymous pamphleteer, in whom we place much confidence, from his correctness in all other facts, states the number, between Glyss and Sesto Calende, at six hundred and eleven. Eight only are remarkable: those on the Saltine, the Ganther, the Chevasca, and the Frasinone; with the Ponte Alto, the Bridge of Crevola, and those over the Trefiume, at Baveno, and over the Toccia near Menangione.

There are ten houses of refuge, finished and unfinished.

From Arona to the Gallery of Algaby—the portion completed by the Italian engineers, the rest having fallen to the share of the French—there are three hundred and two aqueducts, if we may rely on a German writer.*

By the same authority we learn that there were two hundred and eighty thousand cubic metres of wall and parapet built in the same space; and one million, five hundred and thirty thousand cubic metres of earth employed in filling up hollows and forming terraces. The number of the workmen occupied in this labour, day and night for four years, was from four to six thousand; and they blasted one hundred ninety-nine

* Anton Johann Grosz. Handbuch fur Reisende.—p. 379—81.

thousand, eight hundred cubic metres of rock, with one hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds of powder!*

The expence of the works on the whole route is stated by Mr. Conder, on respectable authority, at twelve millions of francs; but this, we believe, is erroneous. In 1811, five millions had been expended by the Italian government, and in 1812, six millions by the French; which, with one million granted in addition for a bridge over the Ticino, at Sesto, make up the twelve. But the actual expences of the French, at a later date, are said to have amounted in all to nine millions, and those of the Italians to eight millions, forming a grand total of seventeen millions of francs.

This is no more than about six hundred and eighty thousand pounds! How many bridges could we throw over the Thames for such a sum!

* The metre is $39\frac{37}{100}$ English inches.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOLD-VALLEY.

Our Italian fellow-traveller, whose good humour seemed to have been somewhat disturbed by the view taken by his French wife of the case of the Ladies of the Avalanche, now roused himself suddenly. The balmy breath of his own Italy smoothed his brow, and gladdened his heart; and, with returning kindness, he encircled — or, rather, half circled—the ample waist of madame with one arm, while with the other he pointed out to her notice the various lions of the road. The very weeds that hung trailing down the walls were objects of interest to him. They were Italian! The verdure of the grass—the peculiarity of its green—the trees—the birds—the chips of marble that strewed the road—all were features that marked the identity of a country which he had no doubt described in his wooing as an earthly paradise.

Madame, on her part, had either no taste for

such things, or was determined to punish his presumption, in differing with her in opinion, by wounding him through that generous self-love which men call patriotism. At any rate, her comprehension was very slow. She mistook one thing for another. A flower, as she called it, but which was proudly pronounced by her husband to be "only an Italian weed," was set off immediately after by a weed, which in like manner she admired as an Italian flower. The most offensive mistake, however, although, to say the truth, a very natural one, was confounding the sexes of the passers by.

"Is that a man?" she would cry—"Is that a woman? Mon Dieu! how oddly you do dress in Italy! Do you see those two creatures lying like dogs in the sun? Tell me which is the husband, and which the wife!" The sleeping figures were Piedmontese of the lower class, and it was really a matter of some difficulty to determine their sex. Both man and woman were dressed in coarse woollen cloth, of a dark and dirty red colour, with handkerchiefs hanging upon the head. The latter wore, by way of corset, a "thing," as Mr. Brummell would say, resembling a waistcoat, extending up to the neck, and drawn so tightly round the bosom as wholly to remove the beautiful peculiarity of the female form. One wore red woollen stockings; the other sported his, or her, as red skin. Both were barefoot.

As you advance, however, into the Valley of Ossola, this ungraceful and extraordinary dress

disappears. The handkerchief falls off, and discloses a neatly-arranged coiffure of dark and redundant hair. A long silver pin runs through the knot behind, balanced at each end by an oval or circular knob of silver, or imitation-pearl, about the size of a pigeon's egg. The women of higher rank wear lofty combs, which serve to fasten both the hair and a veil of black crape or lace, that hangs down behind, and floats upon their shoulders.

The aspect of the fields, however, is alone sufficient to inform us that we have crossed the Alps. The vines are here as much for ornament as use; and the poetical taste of the Italians displays itself in the thousand forms they are made to assume. The orchards are hung with these beautiful festoons; the corn grows under their rich canopy, that floats high above the field; and here and there a temple of Bacchus, built of his own vine, raises its dome over the land where he is still almost a god. No where do we see, as in France and Germany, a *field of grapes*—vying in elegance with a field of potatoes. Nothing reminds you that they are cultivated as a merchandize. They still wave above your head, as they did in the days of Anacreon — mystic groves, sacred to pleasure, and poetry, and love. In France, the shadow of the vine may fall upon you as you enjoy the "dolce far niente" at the porch of your cottage-door; but here, even in the midst of the fields, you may "sit down under your own vine and your own fig-tree."

The oratories by the road-side become more numerous and less pleasing. They are little apartments of stone, adorned with portraits of the Virgin-mother, daubed upon the wall with red or yellow paint. No vases, no votive flowers, decorate the unsightly shrine; and the grating of course is omitted, there being nothing to steal.

The road, in its descent to the Lago Maggiore, crosses several times the river Toccia (which gives its name to the valley), over handsome bridges. Opposite to one of these—the Ponte Maggiore—opens the Valley of Anzasca, leading up to Monte Rosa. This magnificent mountain, which is supposed to be only about two hundred and fifty feet lower than Mont Blanc, is seen from a great part of Lombardy; but its valley is still more an object of curiosity and admiration to the people, containing as it does within its bosom the mighty talisman—gold.

These mines are mentioned by Pliny, and must at one time have been very considerable; the senate having decreed that no more than five thousand slaves should be permitted to work them, lest the farmers should become too rich. At a later period a thousand workmen were employed; but this number has now greatly decreased. The inhabitants of the valley, however, have all a right to look for ore; and some, who are called *minerali*, have no other profession.

In dark and stormy nights, as we were told, these minerali watch for small lights that are seen

upon the hills; and if they are able in the morning to find the exact spot of their appearance, they are sure to be rewarded for their care by finding gold.* There was enough of the romantic in this statement to arrest our attention; but we met with little satisfaction in our enquiries. We are as ignorant as may be, we thank heaven, of natural philosophy, or any other osophy; and to this it may be owing that we "took in" exceedingly little of a scientific oration pronounced on the subject by a German, who joined us at Duomo d'Ossola, and whose mouth had not been once opened, for any purpose whatever, till now. Our Italian, however, was more intelligible, whether he spoke more to the purpose or not; and the gentle reader, if she or he pleases, may set down the origin of the storm-lights of the Valley of Anzasca to the following circumstances.

THE STORM-LIGHTS OF ANZASCA.

I have seen them myself (said the Italian), and they are wholly different both in appearance and situation from the *ignis fatuus*. The main road from the Lago Maggiore to the western parts of Switzerland at one time ran through the Valley of Anzasca; and it was once my fortune to be

* Mr. Schoberl, whose book we have before alluded to, is less positive. He says, we know not on what authority, that on repairing to the spot indicated by the light, "if they find any decomposed flints, they conceive strong *hopes* of success."

detained all night at a cottage in one of its wildest defiles, by a storm which rendered my horses ungovernable. While leaning upon a bench, and looking with drowsy curiosity towards the window—for there was no bed except my host's, of which I did not choose to deprive him—I saw a small, faint light among the rocks in the distance. I at first conceived that it might proceed from a cottage-window; but, remembering that that part of the mountain was wholly uninhabited, and indeed uninhabitable, I roused myself, and, calling one of the family, inquired what it meant. While I spoke, the light suddenly vanished; but in about a minute re-appeared in another place, as if the bearer had gone round some intervening rock. The storm at that time raged with a fury which threatened to blow our hut, with its men and horses, over the mountains; and the night was so intensely dark that the edges of the horizon were wholly undistinguishable from the sky.

"There it is again!" said I. "What is that, in the name of God?"

"It is Lelia's lamp!" cried the young man eagerly, who was a son of our host. "Awake, father! Ho, Batista!—Vittorio! Lelia is on the mountains!" At these cries the whole family sprung up from their lair at once, and, crowding round the window, fixed their eyes upon the light, which continued to appear, although at long intervals, for a considerable part of the night. When interrogated as to the nature of this mystic lamp,

the cottagers made no scruple of telling me all they knew, on the sole condition that I should be silent when it appeared, and leave them to mark uninterruptedly the spot where it rested.

To render my story intelligible, it is necessary to say that the *minerali* and farmers form two distinct classes in the Valley of Anzasca. The occupation of the former, when pursued as a profession, is reckoned disreputable by the other inhabitants, who obtain their living by regular industry; and indeed the manners of the minerali offer some excuse for what might otherwise be reckoned an illiberal prejudice. They are addicted to drinking, quarrelsome, overbearing—at one moment rich, and at another starving; and in short they are subject to all the calamities, both moral and physical, which beset men who can have no dependence on the product of their labour; ranking in this respect with gamesters, authors, and other vagabonds.

They are, notwithstanding, a fine race of men —brave, hardy, and often handsome. They spend freely what they win lightly; and if one day they sleep off their hunger, lying like wild animals basking in the sun, the next, if fortune has been propitious, they swagger about, gallant and gay, the lords of the valley. Like the sons of God, the minerali sometimes make love to the daughters of men; and, although they seldom possess the hand, they occasionally touch the heart, of the gentle maidens of Anzasca. If their wooing is unsuccessful, there are comrades still wilder than their

own, whose arms are always open to receive the desperate and the brave. They change the scene, and betake themselves to the highways when nights are dark and travellers unwary; or they enlist under the banners of those regular banditti, who rob in thousands, and whose booty is a province or a kingdom.

Francesco Martelli was the handsomest gold-seeker in the valley. He was wild, it is true, but that was the badge of his tribe; and he made up for this by so many good qualities, that the farmers themselves—at least such of them as had not marriageable daughters — delighted in his company. Francesco could sing ballads so sweetly and mournfully, that the old dames leant back in the chimney-corner to weep while he sung. He had that deep and melancholy voice which, when once heard, lingers in the ear, and when heard again, however unexpectedly, seems like a longing realized.

There was only one young lass in the valley who had never heard the songs of Francesco. All the others, seen or unseen, on some pretext or other, had gratified their curiosity. The exception was Lelia, the daughter of one of the richest farmers in Anzasca.

Lelia was very young, being scarcely sixteen; but in her quality of an only daughter, with a dowry in expectancy equal to more than *one* thousand Austrian livres,* she attracted considerable

* The Austrian lira is equal to about eight-pence halfpenny English.

observation. Her face, on minute inspection, was beautiful to absolute perfection; but her figure, although symmetrical, was so *petite*, and her manner so shy and girlish, that she was thought of more as a child than a young woman. The "heiress of old Niccoli" was the designation made use of, when parents would endeavour to awaken the ambition of their sons, as they looked forward to what *might be* some years hence: but Lelia, in her own person, was a nonentity.

Her mother had died in giving her birth; and for many a year the life of the child had been preserved, or rather her death prevented, by what seemed a miracle. Even after the disease, whatever it might have been, had yielded to the sleepless care of her father, she remained in that state which is described by the expression "not unwell" rather than in perfect health; although the most troublesome memento that remained of her illness was nothing more than a nervous timidity, which in a more civilized part of the country might have passed for delicacy of feeling.

Besides being in some degree shut out from the society of her equals by this peculiarity of her situation, she was prevented from enjoying it by another. While her body languished, the cultivation of her mind had advanced. Music, to which she was passionately attached, paved the way for poetry; and poetry, in spite of the doctrines of a certain school you have in England, unfitted her for association with the ignorant and unrefined.

That Lelia, therefore, had never sought to hear the ballads of Francesco was occasioned, it may readily be believed, by nothing more than an instinctive terror, mingled with the dislike with which the name of one of the ruffian minerali inspired her; and, in truth, she listened to the tales that from time to time reached her ear, of the young gold-seeker, with somewhat of the vague and distant interest with which we attend to descriptions of a beautiful but wild and cruel animal of another hemisphere.

There came one at last, however, to whom poor Lelia listened. She was sitting alone, according to her usual custom, at the bottom of her father's garden, singing, while she plied her knitting-needle, in the soft, low tone peculiar to her voice, and beyond which it had no compass. The only fence of the garden at this place was a belt of shrubs, which enriched the border of the deep ravine it overlooked. At the bottom of this ravine flowed the river, rapid and yet sullen; and beyond, scarcely distant two hundred yards, a range of precipitous cliffs shut in the horizon.

The wild and desolate aspect of the scene was overshadowed and controlled, as it were, by the stern grandeur of these ramparts of nature; and the whole contributed to form such a picture as artists travel a thousand miles to contemplate. Lelia, however, had looked upon it from childhood. It had never been forced upon her imagination by contrast, for she had never travelled five miles

from her father's house, and she continued to knit, and sing, and dream, without even raising her eyes.

Her voice was rarely loud enough to be caught by the echoes of the opposite rocks; although sometimes it did happen that, carried away by enthusiasm, she produced a tone which was repeated by the fairy minstrels of the glen. On the present occasion she listened with surprise to a similar effect, for her voice had died almost in a whisper. She sang another stanza in a louder key. The challenge was accepted; and a rich, sweet voice took up the strain of her favourite ballad where she had dropped it.

Lelia's first impulse was to fly; her second, to sit still and watch for a renewal of the music; and her third, which she obeyed, to steal on tiptoe to the edge of the ravine, and look down into the abyss, from whence the voice seemed to proceed.

The echo, she discovered, was a young man, engaged in navigating a raft down the river—such as is used by the peasantry of the Alps to float themselves and their wares to market, and which at this moment was stranded on the shore, at the foot of the garden. He leant upon an oar, as if in the act of pushing off his clumsy boat; but his face was upturned, like one watching for the appearance of a star; and Lelia felt a sudden conviction, she knew not why, that he had seen her through the trees while she sat singing, and had adopted this method of attracting her attention without alarming her.

If such had been his purpose, he seemed to have no ulterior view; for, after gazing for an instant, he withdrew his eyes in confusion, and, pushing off the raft, dropped rapidly down the river, and was soon out of sight.

Lelia's life was as calm as a sleeping lake, which a cloud will blacken, and the wing of an insect disturb. Even this little incident was matter for thought, and entered into the soft reveries of sixteen. She felt her cheeks tingle as she wondered *how* long the young man had gazed at her through the trees, and *why* he had floated away without speaking, when he had succeeded in attracting her attention. There was *delicacy* in his little contrivance, to save her the surprise, perhaps the terror, of seeing a stranger in such a situation; there was *modesty* in the confusion with which he turned away his head; and, what perhaps was as valuable as either even to the gentle Lelia, there was *admiration*, deep and devout, in those brilliant eyes that had quailed beneath hers. The youth was as beautiful as a dream; and his voice!—it was so clear, and yet so soft—so powerful, yet so melodious! It haunted her ear like a prediction.

It was a week before she again saw this Apollo of her girlish imagination. It seemed as if in the interval they had had time to get acquainted! They exchanged salutations—the next time they spoke—and the next time they conversed. There was nothing mysterious in their communications. He was probably a farmer's son of the upper valley,

who had been attracted, like others, by the fame of the heiress of old Niccoli. He, indeed, knew nothing of books, and he loved poetry more for the sake of music than its own: but what of that? — the writings of God were around and within them; and these, if they did not understand, they at least felt. He was bold and vigorous of mind; and this is beauty to the fair and the timid. He skimmed along the edge of the precipice, and sprung from rock to rock in the torrent, as fearless as the chamois. He was beautiful, and brave, and proud; and this glorious creature, with radiant eyes and glowing cheeks, laid himself down at *her* feet, to gaze upon her face, as poets worship the moon!

The world, before so monotonous, so blank, so drear, was now a heaven to poor Lelia. One thing only perplexed her: they were sufficiently long—according to the calculations of sixteen—and sufficiently well acquainted; their sentiments had been avowed without disguise; their faith plighted beyond recall: and as yet her lover had never mentioned his name! Lelia, reflecting on this circumstance, condemned, for the moment, her precipitation; but there was now no help for it, and she could only resolve to extort the secret — if secret it was—at the next meeting.

"My name!" said the lover, in reply to her frank and sudden question; "you will know it soon enough."

"But I will not be said nay. You must tell me now—or at all events to-morrow night."

"Why to-morrow night?"

"Because a young, rich, and handsome suitor, on whom my father's heart is set, is then to propose, in proper form, for this poor hand; and, let the confession cost what it may, I will not overthrow the dearest plans of my only parent without giving a reason which will satisfy even him. Oh, you do not know him! Wealth weighs as nothing in the scale against his daughter's happiness. You may be poor for aught I know; but you are good, and honourable, and, therefore, in his eyes, no unfitting match for Lelia." It was almost dark; but Lelia thought she perceived a smile on her lover's face while she spoke, and a gay suspicion flashed through her mind, which made her heart beat and her cheeks tingle.

He did not answer for many minutes; a struggle of some kind seemed to agitate him; but at length, in a suppressed voice, he said—

"To-morrow night, then."

"Here?"

"No, in your father's house; in the presence of—my rival."

The morrow night arrived; and, with a ceremonious formality practised on such occasions in the valley, the lover of whom Lelia had spoken was presented to his mistress, to ask permission to pay his addresses; or, in other words,—for there is but short shrift for an Anzascan maid—to demand her hand in marriage. This was indeed a match on which old Niccoli had set his heart; for the

offer was by far the best that could have been found from the Val d'Ossola to Monte Rosa. The youth was rich, well-looking, and prudent even to coldness: —what more could a father desire?

Lelia had put off the minute of appearing in the porch, where the elders of both families had assembled, as long as possible. While mechanically arranging her dress, she continued to gaze out of the lattice, which commanded a view of the road and of the parties below, in expectation that increased to agony. Bitter were her reflections during that interval! She was almost tempted to believe that what had passed was nothing more than a dream — a figment of her imagination, disordered by poetry and solitude, and perhaps in some measure warped by disease. Had she been made the sport of an idle moment?—and was the smile she had observed on her lover's face only the herald of the laugh which perhaps at this moment testified his enjoyment of her perplexity and disappointment? His conduct presented itself in the double light of folly and ingratitude; and at length, in obedience to the repeated summons of her father, she descended to the porch with a trembling step and a fevered cheek.

The sight of the company that awaited her awed and depressed her. She shrunk from them with more than morbid timidity; while their stony eyes, fixed upon her in all the rigidity of form and transmitted custom, seemed to freeze her very heart. There was one there, however, whose ideas of

"propriety," strict as they were, could never prevent his eyes from glistening, and his arms from extending, at the approach of Lelia. Her father, after holding her for a moment at arm's length as with a doating look his eyes wandered over the bravery of her new white dress, drew her close to his bosom, and blessed her.

"My child," said he, smiling gaily through a gathering tear, "it is hard for an old man to think of parting with all he loves in the world: but the laws of nature must be respected. Young men will love, and young lasses will like, to the end of time; and new families will spring up out of their union. It is the way, girl—it is the fate of maids, and there's an end. For sixteen years have I watched over you, even like a miser watching his gold; and now, treasure of my life, I give you away! All I ask, on your part, is obedience —aye, and cheerful obedience—after the manner of our ancestors, and according to the laws of God. After this is over, let the old man stand aside, or pass away, when it pleases heaven; he has left his child happy, and his child's children will bless his memory. He has drank of the cup of life—sweet and bitter—bitter and sweet—even to the bottom; but with honey, Lelia,—thanks to his blessed darling!—with honey in the dregs!"

Lelia fell on her father's neck, and sobbed aloud. So long and bitter was her sobbing that the formality of the party was broken, and the circle narrowed anxiously around her. When at last she raised

her head, it was seen that her cheeks were dry, and her face as white as the marble of Cordaglia.

A murmur of compassion ran through the by-standers; and the words "poor thing!—still so delicate!—old hysterics!" were whisperingly repeated from one to the other. The father was alarmed, and hastened to cut short a ceremony which seemed so appalling to the nervous timidity of his daughter.

"It is enough," said he; "all will be over in a moment. Lelia, do you accept of this young man for your suitor?—come, one little word, and it is done." Lelia tried in vain to speak, and she bowed her acquiescence. "Sirs," continued Niccoli, "my daughter accepts of the suitor you offer. It is enough; salute your mistress, my son, and let us go in, and pass round the cup of alliance."

"The maiden hath not answered," observed a cold, cautious voice among the relations of the suitor.

"Speak, then," said Niccoli, casting an angry and disdainful look at the formalist,—"it is but a word—a sound. Speak!" Lelia's dry, white lips had unclosed to obey, when the gate of the little court was wrenched open by one who was apparently too much in haste to find the latch, and a man rushed into the midst of the circle.

"Speak *not!*" he shouted, "I forbid!" Lelia sprung towards him with a stifled cry, and would have thrown herself into his arms, had she not been suddenly caught midway by her father.

"What is this?" demanded he sternly, but in rising alarm; "ruffian—drunkard—madman!—what would you here?"

"You *cannot* provoke me, Niccoli," said the intruder, "were you to spit upon me! I come to demand your daughter in marriage."

"You!" shouted the enraged father.

"You!" repeated the relations, in tones of wonder, scorn, rage, or ridicule, according to the temperament of the individual.

"There needeth no more of this," said the same cold, cautious voice that had spoken before; "a wedding begun in a brawl will never end in a bedding. To demand a girl in legitimate marriage is neither sin nor shame; let the young man be answered even by the maiden herself, and then depart in peace."

"He hath spoken well," said the more cautious among the old men; "speak, daughter; answer, and let the man begone!" Lelia grew pale, and then red. She made a step forward—hesitated—looked at her father timidly—and then stood as still as a statue, pressing her clasped hands upon her bosom, as if to silence the throbbings that disturbed her reason.

"Girl," said old Niccoli, in a voice of suppressed passion, as he seized her by the arm, "do you know that man?—did you ever see him before? Answer, can you tell me his name?"

"No!"

"No!—the insolent ruffian! Go, girl, present

your cheek to your future husband, that the customs of our ancestors may be fulfilled, and leave *me* to clear my doorway of vagabonds!" She stepped forward mechanically; but when the legitimate suitor, extending his arms, ran forward to meet her, she eluded him with a sudden shriek, and staggered towards the intruder.

"Hold—hold!" cried the relations, "you are mad—you know not what you do—it is Francesco, the mineralo!" She had reached the stranger, who did not move from where he stood; and, as the ill-omened name met her ear, she fainted in his arms.

The confusion that ensued was indescribable. Lelia was carried senseless into the house; and it required the efforts of half the party to hold back her father, who would have grappled with the mineralo upon the spot. Francesco stood for some time with folded arms, in mournful and moody silence; but when at length the voice of cursing, which Niccoli continued to pour forth against him, had sunk in exhaustion, he advanced and confronted him.

"I can bear those names," said he, "from *you*. Some of them, you know well, are undeserved; and if others fit, it is more my misfortune than my fault. If to chastise insults, and render back scorn for scorn, is to be a ruffian, I am one; but no man can be called a vagabond who resides in the habitation and follows the trade of his ancestors. These things, however, are trifles—at best they are only words. Your real objection to me is that I am POOR. It is a strong one. If I chose to take your

daughter without a dowry, I would take her in spite of you all; but I will leave her—even to that thing without a soul—rather than subject so gentle and fragile a being to the privations and vicissitudes of a life like mine. I demand, therefore, not simply your daughter, but a dowry, if only a small one; and you have the right to require that on my part I shall not be empty-handed. She is young, and there can be, and ought to be, no hurry with her marriage: but give me only a year—a single year; name a reasonable sum; and if by the appointed time I cannot tell the money into your hand, I hereby engage to relinquish every claim, which her generous preference has given me, upon your daughter's hand."

"It is well put," replied the cold and cautious voice in the assembly. "A year, at any rate, would have elapsed between the present betrothing and the damsel's marriage. If the young man, before the bells of twelve, on this night twelvemonth, layeth down upon the table, either in coined money, or in gold, or golden ore, the same sum which we were here ready to guarantee on the part of my grandson, why I, for one, shall not object to the maiden's whim—*provided it continues so long*—being consulted, in the disposal of her hand, in preference to her father's judgment and desires. The sum is only three thousand livres!" A laugh of scorn and derision arose among the relations.

"Yes, yes," said they, "it is but just. Let the mineralo produce three thousand livres, and he

shall have his bride. Neighbour Niccoli, it is a fair proposal; allow us to intercede for Francesco, and beg your assent!"

"Sirs," said Francesco, in perplexity mingled with anger, "the sum of three thousand livres—" He was interrupted by another forced laugh of derision.

"It is a fair proposal," repeated the relations; "agree, neighbour Niccoli, agree!"

"I agree," said Niccoli disdainfully.

"It is agreed!" replied Francesco, in a burst of haughty indignation; and with a swelling heart he withdrew.

A very remarkable change appeared to take place from that moment in the character and habits of the mineralo. He not only deserted the company of his riotous associates, but even that of the few respectable persons to whose houses he had obtained admission, either by his talents for singing, or the comparative propriety of his conduct. Day after day he laboured in his precarious avocation. The changes of the seasons were not now admitted as excuses. The storm did not drive him to the wine-shed, and the rain did not confine him to his hut. Day after day, and often night after night he was to be found in the field—on the mountains —by the sides of the rain-courses—on the shores of the torrent.

He rarely indulged himself even in the recreation of meeting his mistress, for whom all this labour was submitted to. Gold, not as a means

but as an end, seemed to be his thought by day, and his dream by night, the object and end of his existence. When they did meet, in darkness, and loneliness, and mystery, it was but to exchange a few hurried sentences of hope and comfort, and affected reliance upon fortune. On these occasions tears, and tremblings, and hysterical sobbings, sometimes told, on her part, at once the hollowness of her words, and the weakness of her constitution; but on his all was, or seemed to be, enthusiasm and steadfast expectation.

Days and weeks, however, passed by—moons rolled away—the year was drawing to its wane, and a great part of the enormous sum was still in the womb of the mountains. Day by day, week by week, and month by month, the hopes of the mineralo became fainter. He could no longer bestow the comfort which did not cheer even his dreams. Gloomy and sad, he could only strain his mistress in his arms without uttering a word, when she ventured an inquiry respecting his progress, and then hurry away to resume, mechanically, his hopeless task.

It is a strange, sometimes an awful thing, to look into the mystery of the female mind. Lelia's health had received a shock from the circumstances we have recorded, which left her cheek pale, and her limbs weak, for many months; and to this physical infirmity was now added the effect of those dumb, but too eloquent, interviews with her lover. The lower he sunk in despondency,

however, and the more desperate grew their affairs, the *higher* her spirits rose, as if to quell and control their fortune. Her hopes seemed to grow in proportion with his fears, and the strength which deserted him went over as an ally and supporter to her weakness. Even her bodily health received its direction from her mind. Her nerves seemed to recover their tone, her cheek its hue, and her eye its brilliancy.

The cold and sluggish imagination of a man is unacquainted with half the resources of a woman in such circumstances. Disappointed in her dependence on fortune and casualty, Lelia betook herself to the altars and gods of her people! Saints and martyrs were by turns invoked; vows were offered up, and pilgrimages and religious watchings performed. Then came dreams and prodigies into play, and omens, and auguries. *Sortes* were wrested from the pages of Dante, and warnings and commands translated from the mystic writings of the sky—

"The stars, which are the poetry of heaven."

The year touched upon its close; and the sum which the gold-seeker had amassed, although great almost to a miracle, was still far—very far, from sufficient. The last day of the year arrived, ushered in by storm, and thunderings, and lightnings; and the evening fell cold and dark upon the despairing labours of Francesco. He was on the side of the mountain opposite Niccoli's house;

and, as daylight died in the valley, he saw, with inexpressible bitterness of soul, by the number of lights in the windows, that the fête was not forgotten. Some trifling success, however, induced him, like a drowning man grasping at a straw, to continue his search. He was on the spot indicated by a dream of his enthusiastic mistress; and she had conjured him not to abandon the attempt till the bell of the distant church should silence their hopes for ever.

His success continued. He was working with the pickaxe, and had discovered a very small perpendicular vein; and it was just possible that this, although altogether inadequate in itself, might be crossed at a greater depth, by a horizontal one, and thus form one of the *gruppi*, or nests, in which the ore is plentiful and easily extracted.

To work, however, was difficult, and to work long impossible. His strength was almost exhausted; the storm beat fiercely in his face; and the darkness increased every moment. His heart wholly failed him; his limbs trembled; a cold perspiration bedewed his brow; and, as the last rays of daylight departed from the mountain-side, he fell senseless upon the ground.

How long he remained in this state he did not know; but he was recalled to life by a sound resembling, as he imagined, a human cry. The storm howled more wildly than ever along the side of the mountain, and it was now pitch-dark; but on turning round his head he saw, at a little

distance above where he lay, a small, steady light. Francesco's heart began to quake. The light advanced towards him, and he perceived that it was borne by a figure arrayed in white from head to foot.

"Lelia!" cried he in amazement, mingled with superstitious terror, as he recognized the features of his young fair mistress.

"Waste not time in words," said she, "much may yet be done, and I have the most perfect assurance that now at least I am not deceived. Up, and be of good heart! Work, for here is light. I will sit down in the shelter, bleak though it be, of the cliff, and aid you with my prayers since I cannot with my hands." Francesco seized the axe, and stirred, half with shame, half with admiration, by the courage of the generous girl, resumed his labour with new vigour.

"Be of good heart," continued Lelia, "and all will yet be well. Bravely—bravely done!—be sure the saints have heard us!" Only once she uttered any thing resembling a complaint—"It is so cold!" said she, "make haste, dearest, for I cannot find my way home, if I would, without the light." By and by she repeated more frequently the injunction to "make haste." Francesco's heart bled while he thought of the sufferings of the sick and delicate girl on such a night, in such a place; and his blows fell desperately on the stubborn rock. He was now at a little distance from the spot where she sat, and was just about

to beg her to bring the light nearer, when she spoke again.

"Make haste—make haste!" she said, "the time is almost come—I shall be wanted—I *am* wanted —I can stay no longer—farewell!" Francesco looked up, but the light was already gone.

It was so strange, this sudden desertion! If determined to go, why did she go alone?—aware, as she must have been, that *his* remaining in the dark could be of no use. Could it be that her heart had changed, the moment her hopes had vanished? It was a bitter and ungenerous thought; nevertheless, it served to bridle the speed with which Francesco at first sprung forward to overtake his mistress. He had not gone far, however, when a sudden thrill arrested his progress. His heart ceased to beat, he grew faint, and would have fallen to the ground but for the support of a rock against which he staggered. When he recovered, he retraced his steps as accurately as it was possible to do in utter darkness. He knew not whether he found the exact spot on which Lelia had sat, but he was sure of the surrounding localities; and, if she was still there, her white dress would no doubt gleam even through the thick night which surrounded her.

With a lightened heart—for, compared with the phantom of the mind which had presented itself, all things seemed endurable—he began again to descend the mountain. In a place so singularly wild, where the rocks were piled around in combinations

at once fantastic and sublime, it was not wonderful that the light carried by his mistress should be wholly invisible to him, even had it been much nearer than was by this time probable. Far less was it surprising that the shouts which ever and anon he uttered should not reach her ear; for he was on the lee-side of the storm, which raved among the cliffs with a fury that might have drowned the thunder.

Even to the practised feet of Francesco, the route, without the smallest light to guide his steps, was dangerous in the extreme; and to the occupation thus afforded to his thoughts it was perhaps owing that he reached Niccoli's house in a state of mind to enable him to acquit himself in a manner not derogatory to the dignity of manhood.

"Niccoli," said he, on entering the room, "I have come to return you thanks for the trial you have allowed me. I have failed, and, in terms of the engagement between us, I relinquish my claims to your daughter's hand." He would then have retired as suddenly as he had entered; but old Niccoli caught hold of his arm:—

"Bid us farewell," said he, in a tremulous voice, "go not in anger. Forgive me for the harsh words I used when we last met. I have watched you, Francesco, from that day—and—" He wiped away a tear, as he looked upon the soiled and neglected apparel, and the haggard and ghastly face, of the young man. "No matter—my word

is plighted—farewell.—Now call my daughter," added he, "and I pray God that the business of this night end in no ill!"

Francesco lingered at the door. He would fain have seen but the skirt of Lelia's mantle before departing!

"She is not in her room!" cried a voice of alarm. Francesco's heart quaked. Presently the whole house was astir. The sound of feet running here and there was heard, and agitated voices calling out her name. The next moment the old man rushed out of the room, and, laying both his hands upon Francesco's shoulders, looked wildly in his face.

"Know you aught of my daughter?" said he: "Speak, I conjure you, in the name of the Blessed Saviour! Tell me that you have married her, and I will forgive and bless you! Speak! —will you not speak? A single word! Where is my daughter? Where is my Lelia?—my life —my light—my hope—my child—my child!" The mineralo started, as if from a dream, and looked round, apparently without comprehending what had passed. A strong shudder then shook his frame for an instant.

"Lights!" said he, "torches!—every one of you! Follow me!" and he rushed out into the night. He was speedily overtaken by the whole of the company, amounting to more than twelve men, with lighted torches, that flared like meteors in the storm. As for the leader himself, he seemed

scarcely able to drag one limb after the other, and he staggered to and fro, like one who is drunken with wine.

They at length reached the place he sought; and, by the light of the torches, something white was seen at the base of the cliff. It was Lelia. She leant her back against the rock; one hand was pressed upon her heart, like a person who shrinks with cold; and in the other she held the lamp, the flame of which had expired in the socket.

Francesco threw himself on his knees at one side, and the old man at the other, while a light, as strong as day, was shed by the torches upon the spot. She was dead—dead—stone dead!

After a time, the childless old man went to seek out the object of his daughter's love; but Francesco was never seen from that fatal night. A wailing sound is sometimes heard to this day upon the hills, and the peasants say that it is the voice of the mineralo seeking his mistress among the rocks; and every dark and stormy night the lamp of Lelia is still seen upon the mountain, as she lights her phantom-lover in his search for gold.

Such is the story of the storm-lights of Anzasca, concluded the Italian; and the only part of it which is mine is the translation into the language of civilized men of the sentiments of a rude and ignorant people.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LAGO MAGGIORE.

At Mazzone, opposite the mouth of the Valley of Anzasca, we had it in our power to transfer our person from the diligence to a boat, which we were told would carry us in equal safety to the Lago Maggiore. We preferred, however, letting well alone, according to the proverb; and the rather, that the taciturn German began to open on the occasion of various cargoes of white marble passing us in their way to Milan.

The country through which we now travelled was not particularly striking—at least to *us*. The view of the distant waves in a storm at sea would not impress very powerfully the imagination of one who had just sailed through the midst of them.

At Feriolo, we find ourselves on the banks of what may turn out to be either an inland sea or a great pond. It continues to expand as we proceed; and by and by we recognise (not to mention

the aid our penetration receives from our fellow-passengers) that it is the Lago Maggiore itself. At Baveno, half a league farther on, a magnificent view breaks upon the traveller. You will first remember from whence we have just come, and what has been the nature of our prospects since we parted with the Lake of Geneva; that our fare has consisted of rocks, and mountains, and glaciers, and forests; and that our soul has drunken only of the black torrent, the rain-course, and the waterfall.

Now, fancy a sheet of water before you, or rather beneath you, as smooth—for so it happens—as a mirror, and as extensive—for the imagination glides in between the hills that only *seem* to form its frame-work—as a sea. Here a gigantic precipice totters over the brink, to admire its shadow

"———floating many a rood"

upon the surface. There a fine hill, as green as an emerald to the very summit, sweeps down in graceful undulations to the water's edge; while behind, in the distance, stands a range of blue mountains, edged with white, not looking towards the lake, or caring about it, but belonging, as it would appear, to another system.

Villas and cottages of every description, from the neat to the graceful and elegant, speck the sides of the hills, and the margin of the lake; and here and there a solitary chapel sends the faint sound of its mezuin bells among the hamlets of the

vale. Surrounding these, dark groves of chesnut sometimes relieve the marble whiteness of the houses, and contrast finely with the radiant green of the vines that canopy the corn-fields.

Among the figures in the landscape, an Italian lass trips along, with her ripe and well-sunned cheeks, and glowing eyes; perhaps to join a procession of her companions, which is seen winding in the distance, with the priest at its head, walking under a silken canopy, and attended by boys in white robes, and the sacristan and his sleepless bell. On the lake, all is brightness and repose. The boats, with their square sails hanging lazily from the mast,

"Float double, 'boat' and shadow;"

and of the double-floating islands it is not easy to tell which is the more substantial, that of the air or that of the water.

Only a part of this picture could be compressed to advantage in the small area of the opposite engraving. Among the principal objects are, a fantastic assemblage of palaces, terraces, groves, and gardens, on the right, which receives the name of Isola Bella, or the Beautiful Island; on the left, the Isola dei Piscatori, consisting of a cluster of cottages, with a spire in the midst; and, in the distance, one of the Madre Islands, opposite the town of Palanza. The foreground, where the artist stood, exhibits part of a vine-dresser's shed,

judiciously selected to characterise, with its accompanying details, the scene and the country.

The farthest of these islands has four terraces on the south side, rising amphitheatrically, and planted with orange and lemon-trees. An extensive walk, richly overhung with vines, and a profusion — not to say a *con*-fusion — of laurels, cypresses, and pines, with the aloe, the cactus, and other exotics (growing in the open air), ingratiate it with the modern English taste.

Isola Bella is not so fortunate. According to our older travellers, it is an enchanted island— an earthly paradise: Mr. Simond, on the other hand, says that it is like a Perigord pie, stuck all over with the heads of woodcocks and partridges; and Mr. Brockedon declares it worthy of the taste of a confectioner!

This island was originally nothing more than a *slate rock;* from which it has been metamorphosed, by the magic of wealth, into a debateable land of inkshed between ancient and modern taste. In the year 1673 it was purchased by the Borromeo family, and built up into a regular form by means of walls and terraces supported on arched work. These were covered with earth, removed, at a vast expence, from the main land; and the terraces, or hanging-gardens, rising a tone end of the island in a pyramidal form, planted with orange and lemon-trees. The rest of the space is laid out in gardens, and encumbered with a palace; statues and pinnacles surmount the ballustrades wherever

there is room for them to stand; and the air is troubled with fountains and jets of water at every turn.

We are ourselves a warm admirer of the wild and the natural, but still we do think that ridicule is here out of place. A pyramid of terraces is in reality not more *unnatural* than the spire of a church; the only question is, whether it is well or ill-suited to its location. It seems, however, to be assumed by most modern writers that *all* gardens should imitate woods, and *all* avenues meander like sheep-walks. Why so?—or, rather, why do they not extend their principle to other works of art and taste? Should not *houses,* by the same rule, imitate caverns?

The bare slate rock, of which we are discoursing, was turned, in our opinion, to the very best purpose of which it was capable; and, had it even been converted into a gardener's shop, with pyramidal ranges of flower-pots prettily disposed all round, as we see them in the suburbs of London, there would have been nothing offensive in the spectacle to the eye of true taste. The Lago Maggiore is by no means the place for any fierce affectation of what is imagined to be *natural* taste. The upper part, it is true, is mountainous, opening into one of the valleys of the Rhætian Alps, which form the background; but in general the lake is of a very different character. Towns, and villages, and gardens, and chateaus, are scattered round its banks; its bosom is a highway

of commerce; and we are at present (having left Baveno) rattling along its margin, on an elegant and substantial stone pier, or terrace, thirty thousand metres long.

The lake, which forms a point of meeting of three countries, Piedmont, Switzerland, and Lombardy, is said to be between fifty and sixty miles long, and five or six broad. It is formed by the Ticino (or Tesino) descending from St. Gothard through the Val Levantina; the Toccia, contributing the torrents of the Simplon and the Gries; the Negoglia, throwing in the waters of the Lake Orta; and the Tresa, those of the Lake of Lugano. It was called by the ancients Lacus Verbanus; and a modern *alias* is, the Lake of Locarno.

Nothing can be more delightful than the drive between Baveno and Arona. The mountains, though sometimes majestic, have no ruggedness of outline, and are clothed with the richest vegetation to the summit. The dark chesnut, the pale olive, and the mulberry-tree, already hung with spoilers stripping its leaves for the silk-worm, diversify the groundwork with their varying shades of green; while the poetical vine, flinging its festoons from shrub to shrub, seems to prepare for a jour de fête.

Arona is situated in a sheltered situation at the foot of a cliff, and is chiefly remarkable as having given birth to the celebrated Carlo Borromeo. This personage, born of an illustrious family, and possessing a princely fortune, was Archbishop of

Milan at an early period of life. Were we to judge of him, as some writers have done, by his attempts to reform his clergy, the austerity of his life after he had cast off the usual follies of youth, and his acts of private benevolence and self-devotion, we should pronounce him to have been one of the most meritorious saints in the modern calendar. He was also a persecutor, however, and a pursuer, even unto blood, of those who differed with him in opinion, a disturber of the peace of foreign countries, and a stirrer-up of citizen against citizen, and subject against prince.

His actions, in truth, afford no data by which to judge of his character, for one class of them neutralises the other. We ought to think, however, in human charity, that his natural disposition pointed to virtue. But with him all things were subservient to one great object—the preservation of the Roman Catholic Church; and neither his good nor his bad actions, being both derived from the same spring, can be referred distinctly to vice or virtue. The end, in his rule of morality, sanctified the means; and actions changed, not merely their name, but their nature, according to their applicability to the holy purpose he had so much at heart. Pius IV., conspicuous for his villainy even among the popes, was the uncle, master, and patron of Carlo Borromeo; Paul V. admitted him, by the title of San Carlo, among the patent nobility of the Romish heaven; and the people of Milan, a hundred and thirteen

years after their idol's death, raised a gigantic statue to his honour, which still extends its arm in blessing over the ancient possessions of his family.

This statue stands on a hill above Arona, and looks down upon the town, and the ruins of its castle, in which the saint was born. The granite pedestal is forty-six feet high, and the figure sixty-six feet. Like the image Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, it is formed of different materials; being partly of bronze, partly of copper, and partly of wood and stone. A sort of stair in the interior, formed of iron props round a pillar, conducts the curious traveller to the head of the archbishop, where there is room for four persons; who, as Simond says, may enjoy the gratification of "hearing through his ears, breathing through his nostrils, and looking out of the pupil of his eyes, as if it was a window."

The scenery of Arona, which is built in the shelter of a small promontory, is very striking. Directly in front, on the opposite side of the lake, is another promontory, with the village of Angera (or Anghiera) at the base, and its castle crowning the heights. The annexed view, however, is not taken from this place, but from a narrower part of the lake, where the scene is still more effective. The water is observed extending in the distance to the right, till shut in by the mountains, and the heavy masses of clouds; for the lake has been roused from its slumber, and its peaceful

smiles chased away by a storm. In the foreground some boats have reached the land just in good time; and the men are employed in dragging them hastily upon the beach.

After leaving Arona, the road forsakes the banks of the lake till its waters have narrowed into the Ticino. The hills, which at Arona shut in the view, gradually sink, and allow the traveller once more to see the chain of the Alps in the background, with Monte Rosa in the midst. We are at present in the Sardinian territory, and have just left its principal port on Lago Maggiore; but on the opposite side of the river stands Sesto Calende, a Lombard-Venetian village.

A flying bridge, half boat half raft, the navigation of which is assisted by a cord stretched across the river, receives us without deranging the ceremony of our places, diligence, horses, passengers and all; and in a few minutes we find ourselves in Lombardy. The situation of Sesto Calende is pleasing, and in itself it may be reckoned rather a handsome village, but it has nothing particularly striking.

We now fairly enter upon the great plains of Lombardy. Vast fields of grain, adorned with vines and mulberry-trees, extend on either hand; but there is nothing to diversify the landscape, except the greater or less distinctness with which the Alps are seen through the haze of the distance. Town after town, and village after village are approached, passed through, and left behind. We

begin to weary at length of the very fertility of the country, and to wonder if there is nothing more to be seen in Italy, when we find ourselves on a sudden, without the slightest preparation, transported, as if by magic, at the gates of a magnificent city.

CHAPTER VIII.

MILAN.

It is not wonderful that travellers, who frequently contradict one another so flatly on subjects which every one who has learned to count by his fingers might be supposed to be master of, should differ with regard to the general impression made upon them by extensive and complicated objects, such as cities. The many authors, for instance, who have described the city of Milan, from personal observation, are unanimous in nothing except the determination to disagree. Mean—princely—common-place—splendid—every adjective of dignity or disgrace, has been applied to it successively. One modern traveller declares it to be a magnificent city, "in which a poor-looking house is as rarely to be seen as a palace elsewhere;"* while another avers as distinctly that there is "nothing

* Simond.

very striking either within or without to recommend it."*

Under these circumstances, it might be expected of a humble and hasty peregrinator, like ourselves, that we should just keep out of harm's way as well as possible, and indulge only in such peaceable generalities as may be assented to without dishonour by all parties. And we will do something of the sort. We will tell M. Simond, and those who pin their faith upon his sleeve, that *they* are right; that Milan *is* a very magnificent city—with several broad streets, a handsome corso, a walk on the ramparts unrivalled in Europe, and a cathedral unrivalled any where. And to Mr. Rose and his adherents we will say that *they*, too, are right—that Milan has really nothing very striking about it, either in its streets, *not many* of which are wide, or in its architecture, which is exceedingly plain, or in its general appearance, which is nothing more, and nothing less, than respectable.

And all this taken together is really a very fair account of Milan. To those who, full of the reputation of the Duomo, rush at once from their hotel to visit it, encountering on the way some vast and stately buildings even in the narrowest streets; who, after saturating their souls with the sunny magnificence of the exterior of the temple, dive into the gloom that hangs, even at mid-day, over its gigantic columns, and is only penetrated here

* Rose's Letters from the North of Italy.

and there in the distance by the dull, indefinite light of a painted window, and the tapers of the altar; who then hasten to the *corso* in the neighbourhood, where their way is impeded by *hundreds* of splendid equipages, filled with half the nobility of Italy, and extending, till lost in the distance, along the ramparts, where an army might march in open columns—Milan assuredly will appear a very magnificent city.

But to the more methodical traveller, who sees these things only in their turn; who sets down, day after day, the results of his observations, and sums up arithmetically at the end of his week or month — we are not very sure that the whole amount will come to any thing greatly beyond the common-place. There is less meanness, less wretchedness, about the houses even of the poorer class in Milan, than we have seen almost any where; but for that very reason there is less *magnificence* in the result they produce. They are not picturesque in themselves; and they do not heighten the effect of other buildings by contrast. The houses of the wealthy, on the other hand, are spacious, but without architectural grandeur. You look in vain for the marble palaces of Venice, on which the merchant-princes of the republic lavished the treasures and the taste of Europe, and in vain even for the ruins of an earlier Milan, the *Mediolanum* of the Romans, and the Athens of Northern Italy.

Milan was a city of war from the beginning.

It was twice utterly destroyed, and twice rose again from its ashes. Its fate might be read in its plan and architecture, even if history were silent. Its Roman remains were allowed to crumble as they chose, or were pressed into modern service. Its old palaces were nothing more than domestic fortresses, intended for protection as well as shelter, in times when safety was a matter of more moment than show. Its houses were crammed as closely as they could stand within the walls. Churches and convents disputed the space with the dwellings of the inhabitants, and even cemeteries exhaled their pestilential breath among the abodes of the living. Without, all was silence and solitude; for a suburban house would not have been worth a month's purchase to the boldest tenant.

Then came—not suddenly, or by magic, or as Lady Morgan will have it, in the train of Napoleon —but in the due process of time, and gradual course of events, the improvements and outside virtues and civilization of the moderns. The city was cleansed of its filth and convents; old houses were pulled down and new ones built; promenades were carried along the ramparts; and gardens planted even within the walls. The corners being thus rubbed off, the indentations filled up with *plaster of Paris*, and antiquity, as it were, white-washed, Milan became at once a splendid and a common-place city.

M. Simond puzzles himself with the inquiry, why Milan should be where it is, and not somewhere

else. With the Ticino on one side, the Adda on the other, and the Po in front, all three navigable rivers, why should it have subjected itself to the trouble of canals?—and, in the neighbourhood of the finest lakes in the world, why should it have set itself down in the middle of a dead flat? The answer is, that Milan was built at a time when neither the transit of merchandize, nor beauty of situation, was of the slightest moment to the architects. It was not till the twelfth century, after the city had risen from the ruins in which it had been laid by Frederick Barbarossa, that the canal was cut from the Ticino; and the necessities of commerce did not demand that the Adda should be opened till a much later date.

Another question arises, more worth answering, because more deeply connected with the philosophy of social life. It is, why should the Milanese, in the midst of persecution, and steel, and burning, and blood, and ashes, have stuck so pertinaciously to a site rendered valuable by no commercial advantages, and agreeable by no natural ones? Why should the inhabitants, scattered by the edge of the sword, have returned to build again upon the smoking ruins of their habitations?—and why should Milan, after all its vicissitudes, be at this moment what it was in the days of Virgil—at least so far as rank, and fashion, and elegance are concerned—the Athens of Northern Italy?

The gregarious habits of man are controlled and directed by other instincts unknown to the lower animals. Milan was once the capital and residence of the Emperors of the West; and this distinction preserved it from desertion for centuries after its profanation by Attila and his Huns, and the consequent withdrawal of the imperial court. This has no doubt ceased to be the proximate cause; but it is perhaps the parent link in the chain of causes and effects. A factitious importance has attached itself to the city, and hallowed the very soil around it. In our days, the great still love to rendezvous with the great; and the little love to witness the meeting, and to breathe at least the atmosphere of nobility.

> "Oh! 'tis the sweetest of all earthly things,
> To gaze on princes, and to talk of kings!"

Milan, in short, is the fashion; and will be so, perhaps, while the Austrian Cæsar reigns in Italy —till the national character re-awakes, and the Italians become men.

In this city the traveller first finds some of the traits of Cisalpine manners which amused his imagination at home. The chairs of the cafés are moved into the open air; and the progress of the passer-by is impeded, not as in London by a drunken brawl, but by crowds of well-dressed men, sipping coffee and reading newspapers in the street. The windows and doorway of many of the shops are thrown into one opening, and only separated

from the trottoir by a thin curtain. The same sort of curtain serves as a door to the churches.

Few of the women, except those of the highest class, wear bonnets. The black veil suffices for every thing, and gives one the idea of a city of nuns. Beauty is assuredly not a plentiful commodity here. For our part we make it a sacred duty to inquire into such things—and, to let the reader into a secret, we entertain a great respect for our own opinion on the subject: it is, therefore, with some confidence we say at once, that the Milanese are not pretty.

An Englishman, whom we fell in with accidentally, was of a different opinion, and persuaded us to go to the *corso* with him, that we might have the pleasure of being proved to be in the wrong. The corso of an Italian town is what used to be called the mall of England; and, in Milan especially, it is the resort of all the gay and the idle within the ramparts. The carriages of the nobility are so numerous (amounting sometimes to three or four hundred) that a general halt occasionally takes place, and thus an opportunity is afforded to the humble pedestrian of gazing on the high dama's "brow of pride."

The dama, on her part, is nothing loath. The opportunity is obligingly taken to arrange her coiffure, or adjust her slipper; and many a murderous glance is shot the while through the loopholes of her slim fingers at the upturned eyes and open mouths on the trottoir. On this occasion we

did see many lovely faces — but they were not Milanese. Our chance-friend was astonished at the extent of our information. Although only three days in the city, and very slightly acquainted with its society, we were able to name almost every one of the "stars" in the galaxy. There was indeed *but* one whom we did not know.

> "The face recalls some face, as 'twere with pain,
> You once have seen, but ne'er will see again.
>
> One of those forms which flit by us when we
> Are young, and fix our eyes on every face;
> And oh! the loveliness at times we see
> In momentary gliding, the soft grace,
> The youth, the bloom, the beauty which agree
> In many a nameless being we retrace,
> Whose course and home we know not, nor shall know,
> Like the lost Pleiad, seen no more below!"

If our incognita was a Milanese, we hereby recall the verdict we have pronounced anent the beauty of the women; for charms like hers, if impartially distributed, would set up a whole nation of spinsters.

As to the philosophy which draws a line of beauty between the upper and lower classes, we will have nothing to say to it. The former class, according to the Italians themselves, have the monopoly in Milan, and the latter in Venice. This might have passed very well some centuries ago; but the population of all Europe has, for more than one generation, been too much intermixed and stirred together to render the existence of any

distinction of the kind very probable now. What are called the upper classes of Milan are the flower of Italy—perhaps of Europe: the young, the fair, the idle, and the luxurious. Milan is a city of pleasure—a common rendezvous of rank, and fashion, and wealth, and elegance, and love. Venice is less so. Her day is past; her palaces are crumbling into that wave from which they rose, like a dream and an enchantment, and human beauty shrinks from the lesson. The only distinctions remaining, in our day, between the appearance of the classes, is caused by the habits of the individual; but the stuff or materiel of beauty is the same in all. Field-labour and hard fare, for instance, are but indifferent cosmetics! It is a common and a true remark, that in England the peasant-girls, and in Scotland the ladies, are the handsomer. The reason is that, in the latter country, the lower women work harder, and generally in the open air; while, in wealthier England, the same class has not rougher exercise, or more of it, than is necessary to fill out the muscles to the mould of beauty. In Venice, where the women have no field-labour, and where they are never exposed, even by accident, to the contingencies of climate, it is not wonderful that the poor should appear to singular advantage.

But we find we are getting upon a hobby, which, like the horse of the calendar, a king's son, in the Arabian Nights, may chance to whisk one of our eyes out with the end of his tail, and make us

see all on one side. Heaven knows we have more to look at than the women before we get to our journey's end!

Before us at this moment stands the Duomo of Milan. We have said somewhere else, and only half in joke, that it is "like a temple of pastry, such as we see in the confectioners' shops on twelfth-night, which a fairy has converted, at the desire of some good little boy, into solid marble." We cannot say we like the simile; it puts us too much in mind of Mr. Simond's perigord pie, which we cut up on the Isola Bella; but we repeat it here, because the idea, profane or not, did pass across our mind on the spot.

The building is of white marble, that looks like alabaster, and is carved and fretted almost into sponge-work. The façade, the doors, the windows, the pillars, are loaded with bas-reliefs, comprehending the most poetical subjects in Scripture history; upwards of two thousand statues stand wherever there is room for their feet; and a hundred and four pinnacles, great and small, surmount this extraordinary edifice.* These slight and elegant spires, more especially, are loaded with carving resembling the work on a Chinese fan, and on most of their summits stands a statue. The loftiest of all sustains a colossal figure, in gilded copper, of the Virgin, to whom the temple is dedicated; and

* The original plan comprehends 3500 statues and 135 spires.

around it sixteen others, of smaller dimensions, support gilded stars and angels.*

The effect of all this may be conceived, provided you bear in mind that the length of the whole mass is five hundred feet, its width a hundred and eighty feet, and its height, to the summit of the centre spire, three hundred and sixty feet! We have nothing to do with the architectural faults of the building, in which the intermixture of the Grecian with the Gothic, or rather Tudesque taste, is severely censured by connoisseurs; but, to one who is happily ignorant of the schools, there can be nothing in art, we think, more magnificent, more delightful, more odd, more fantastic, and more absurd, than the Duomo of Milan.

The brilliance of the marble, and the laborious lightness of the details, relieve, in some measure, the effect which the vastness of the mass, and even the costliness of the material, might have produced; and we draw aside the drapery, and enter the interior as we would a theatre. There is no contrast finer, and more surprising, in the whole range of poetry, than this. The alabaster palace has vanished; and we find ourselves suddenly in what seems to be a subterranean temple, in the midst of darkness and mystery, and in the silence and shadow of death.

We first observe, in the distance, a circle of

* The centre spire is modern, as Mr. Cadell says, and not an addition of Brunelleschi, in the fifteenth century, according to Mr. Wood's account. The architect was Francesco Croce.

burning lamps at the shrine of San Carlo Borromeo; and behind it, more faintly, the high altar, illumined by wax tapers. At the sides, several smaller lights distinguish lesser altars; and above, a few narrow windows admit, as if in disguise, some rays of daylight through the stained glass. When the eye becomes accustomed to this strange obscurity, we perceive that the body of the building is not broken into chapels, as in most other Catholic churches, but that the whole forms one vast and splendid vault, in the figure of a Latin cross.

The parts of this figure are separated by fifty-two pillars of marble, channelled into an almost octagonal form; besides nine immense inter-columns, uniting at the wall with as many half-pillars, which support the arches of the roof. Near the door, there are two columns of red granite, supporting the inner façade, which are supposed, on account of their size and weight, not to mention their exquisite polish, to be the most magnificent blocks of sculptured stone in the world. Beyond these, to the left, stands the baptismal font, an immense vase of porphyry, which held formerly, it is said, the ashes of Saint Denis. Pulpits, pillars, and statues of gilded bronze are among the less considerable ornaments; but among these should be distinguished, in the upper part of the vault, a reliquary containing a *nail* of the true cross, surmounted by a glory, the golden rays of which, touched by the light of lamps that are kept

perpetually burning before the shrine, produce a magnificent effect.

The choir, with its marble walls, statues, and sculptures, is one of the finest things in the interior; but curiosity is led away from it by the sight of doors and windows in its lower part, which open into a subterranean chapel called the Scurolo. From this the visitor passes into another, where the ghastly remains of San Carlo still lie in state, surrounded with plates of silver recording his actions, and marble images representing his virtues. The miserable ruin of mortality, dressed in pontifical robes, ornamented with diamonds, is laid in a coffin formed of pieces of rock crystal set in silver, a present from Philip IV., King of Spain.

We at length shut our eyes upon the altars, pictures, and statues which surround us in this abode of gloom, and piety, and splendour, and which seem to become more numerous the further we advance. Even Saint Bartholomew himself, with his skin hanging over his shoulder, in a fashion which leads one to expect the cry of "clo! clo!" from his skinned lips, cannot now detain us. Time presses; a vision of the Printer's Devil seems to jog our elbow reproachfully; and we ourselves want air and daylight.

We are on the roof of the temple, which is covered with slabs of marble, and forms a promenade absolutely unique. Here you wander

through the forest of sculpture, with leisure to examine into and admire its details. The fertile plains of Lombardy are around you, specked with towns and villages, and sparkling with rivers and canals. The horizon is bounded on the north by the Alps, on the south by the Appenines, and towards the west by the Piedmontese hills. Mont Blanc and the Great Saint Bernard, which form the highest part of the Alpine chain, are about a hundred and twenty miles distant; the Simplon eighty miles; and the Appenines, and hills of Piedmont, from sixty to ninety miles.

The view of the Duomo, as presented in the plate, was taken from behind. It is enough to give an idea of the manner of the architecture; but not of the general form of the building. This, however, is not to be regretted, the front-views being already more than sufficiently numerous.

There are several other churches well worth the notice of the traveller; and the theatre of La Scala is supposed to be the finest opera-house in Europe. The latter, however, was not open during our visit; and as we have no mind to turn our Christmas Offering into a *memento mori*, we shall, for the present, let the former alone.

The Brera, or Palace of the Arts and Sciences, is a great resort of strangers. It is, in fact, the university of Milan, and contains an institute of sciences, an academy of fine arts, a gallery of pictures, a public library, a cabinet of medals, an exhibition of casts, and schools of drawing,

engraving, painting, architecture, sculpture, perspective, modelling, &c., besides a botanic garden. In the gallery, we of course admired the pictures that were pointed out to us as being worthy of admiration; and, did space permit, we should not hesitate to repeat, like other travellers, all that has been said before on the subject. The Library, besides the famous MS. of Leonardo de Vinci, and some fragments of Cicero, contains a Virgil which belonged to Petrarch, with a Latin note on the first leaf, in the poet's hand-writing, preserving the following memorial of Laura.

"Laura, illustrious by her own virtues, and for ever celebrated in my poems, first appeared to my eyes, in my early youth, in the year of our Lord 1327, on the 6th day of April, at matins, in the church of Saint Clare, at Avignon. And in the same city, on the same month of April, on the same 6th day, at the same early hour, in the year 1348, her light was taken away from the light of the world, when I, alas! was at Verona, unconscious of my calamity. The mournful account reached me at Parma, by letters from my Ludovico,* in the same year, on the morning of the 19th of May. Her most chaste and all-beauteous body was interred in the burying-ground of the Franciscans, on the evening of the day on which she died. Her soul, I verily believe, returned, as Seneca says of Africanus, to heaven,

* A natural son of the poet.

from whence it came. I have thought proper to indulge myself in a melancholy pleasure by thus recording the sad event; and I do it on a leaf which comes often before my eyes, to put me in mind that there is nothing now of value in the world, but that, this chain of the soul being broken, I ought to escape altogether from Babylon. And to do this will be easy, by the grace of God, to one who is able to reflect with courage on the useless cares, the vain hopes, and the disappointments of life."*

In spite of our hurry, the arch of the Simplon,

* We cannot refrain from copying the portrait of this celebrated woman from the "Lives of the Italian Poets," by our talented and amiable friend, the Rev. Henry Stebbing.—"Her hair was of a golden brightness; her complexion purer than the virgin snow; her eyes so vividly sparkling that they resembled the stars—but withal so soft and tender in their expression, that they inspired only feelings of love and reverence. In stature she was tall, and exquisitely graceful in her carriage; her voice was clear and musical, and her manner of conversing always indicative of the dignity and sweetness which had an equal share in her character. The splendour of her dress corresponded to her beauty. Belonging to the noblest class of society, she was accustomed to appear in public apparelled in the costliest robes and jewels. Sometimes her vest was of purple, embroidered with flowers of gold, and bordered with azure; at others, her delicate form seemed enshrined amid roses, and richly adorned with precious pearls and diamonds. Her hair was generally left to flow loose over her neck and shoulders, but it was sometimes fastened up in a knot, and parted plainly on her forehead." If this description is thought too high-flown, it should be recollected that the materials were obtained from a poet and a lover!

now the *Arco della Pace*, must not be forgotten. Its origin is said to have been an arch erected hastily, in wood and plaster, at the *Porte Orientale*, on the occasion of the nuptials of Prince Eugène and the Princess Amalie, in 1806. The architect, Louis Cagnola, received the highest praise, and the work altogether was thought to be so extraordinary that it was ordered to be raised anew in marble, in a more fitting place, and in record of more important affairs.

When Napoleon was the lord of the ascendant, the arch was destined to be the grand gate of the Simplon road; but just when the basements and four bas-reliefs had been executed, intelligence was received of his fall, and the works were stopped. A new project afterwards occurred to the Austrian government. The arch was to commemorate the peace given to Europe by the allied powers of Austria, Russia, and Prussia; and the bas-reliefs being unsuitable—relating only to *nuptials*, as we are told by the obliging ninny who writes the Milan Guide—they were removed, and others substituted. These nuptial reliefs represented, among other things, the entrance of Napoleon into Milan after the battle of Marengo! As for the figures of Minerva, Hercules, Mars, and Apollo, and those of the emblems of Lombardy, History, Vigilance, and Poetry, at the base of the columns, they would suit the new subject just as well as the other, and were therefore retained.

This monument, composed of marble, with the

bas-reliefs in bronze, stands at the bottom of a great plain, called the *Piazza d'Arme*. The immense columns are each formed of a single block of marble, from the quarries of Crevola. Stairs lead up the sides to the summit of the edifice, which, when finished, will be crowned with the Triumph of Peace, an allegorical picture in bronze, containing fifteen figures of a gigantic size.

In the meantime, there are wars, and rumours of wars, in Europe. The Peace of the Kings has been broken by the people. The successor of Napoleon has followed him into exile. A voice is up among the nations—

> " —— not from one lone cloud,
> But every mountain now hath found a tongue;
> And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
> Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!"

Would that the Arch of Peace were finished!

CHAPTER IX.

MILAN TO VENICE.

We left Milan at night—in the diligence as usual—attended by an Austrian gen-d'arme by way of outrider. Among the passengers was a Milanese lady, on her way to Venice, to join her husband, a Venetian. We discovered afterwards that they were people of wealth and respectability, and we were indebted to them for some useful introductions. At present, however, our colloquies with the fair stranger partook more of entertainment than utility—to speak in common language, although we cannot ourselves see clearly the difference—and the night was very agreeably spent in disquisitions touching Life in Lombardy.

The English, by her account, are still lions of some magnitude even in Milan. One gentleman, in particular, whom she named, excited at once our envy and curiosity.

"He was the only Englishman," said she,

" resident in the city. All Milan was dying for him. Maids—wives—widows—no one was exempt from a passion that seemed like the plague. He was indeed very fortunate!"

" And what was the meaning of all this? Was he *rich?*" said we, falling, in the surprise of the moment, into the moral *shibboleth* which declared our country.

" No, no," replied the Milanese, shaking her head.

" Was he a man of extraordinary talent?"

" No, no," repeated she.

" Then the dog must have been handsome!"

" No, no, no!" said the Milanese—" In truth I hardly know what it was owing to. Poor ——! he had spent all his money before he reached Milan; and he was so stupid! and so ugly!—indeed he had no other merit than that of being an Englishman!"

Bergamo, the first considerable place we reached, stands upon the side of a hill, which may be considered a part of the base of the Alps. The situation is fine, and the view from an old castle, which overlooks it, extends over a series of plains that are bounded only by the distant Appenines. It is a manufacturing town, of about thirty thousand inhabitants, and more distinguished for its silks and iron-ware than for its architecture.

From Bergamo the road winds for thirty miles along the foot of the Alps, through a highly cultivated country, which Hazlitt compares to

"a gentleman's kitchen-garden, or the nursery-grounds in the neighbourhood of London." We then arrive at the ancient city of Brescia (Brixia) celebrated for the repeated visitations it has undergone of fire, pestilence, and the sword. The population amounts now to nearly forty thousand.

At Desenzano, we find ourselves on the southern shores of the Lago di Garda, the Benacus of the ancients, the waters of which rise, in stormy weather, like those of the sea. The character of this lake is very different from that of the Lago Maggiore. It is embosomed in the Alps, except at this (the southern) extremity, and presents, through a length of nearly forty miles, a succession of scenery more remarkable, notwithstanding the fine hills that rise near the water's edge, for its general grandeur, than for beauty. The peninsula of Sermione, on the north-west, looks like an island. Some ruins are still shown upon the cliff, as all that remains of the house of Catullus. From these, you see through the olive-trees the village below, with its Gothic tower, and in front the dark waters of the lake. The situation is one which, in our opinion, disposes more to melancholy and reflection than to voluptuous love.

After passing the space between the two southern arms of the lake, we arrived at the fortress of Peschiera, built upon the spot where its waters escape, by the river Mincio, to join the Po. This is the ancient Ardelica, where the famous interview

took place between Attila and Pope Leo I. The "Scourge of God" had overrun almost the whole of Northern Italy, and was preparing to roll the devastating torrent of his Huns over the south. The senate assembled in consternation at Rome, and the flight of the emperor was actually proposed, when the happier idea suggested itself of a mission to the barbarian; and some senators, headed by Saint Leo, the pontiff himself, set out for the Benacus.

Attila, instead of rending the holy man to pieces, like a ravening beast, lay down before him like a lamb. He granted the peace he desired, called back his blood-hounds, and recrossed the Danube, from whence he returned no more. Some catholic authors, to render the miracle more miraculous—or rather to give the honour to their trumpery saints, which is in reality due only to genius or eloquence—have invented a romance on the occasion. They say that Attila, being questioned by his wondering chiefs, after Leo retired, answered, trembling, that he could not have refused the ambassador's demands, whatever they might have been,—the apparition of an old man having stood beside him, during the interview, with a drawn sword pointed at his breast.

At the village a boat may be hired to visit the lake. The navigation, however, is really dangerous, on account of the suddenness and violence of the storms to which it is subject. Long after the tempest has died away, the waves rise foaming

to a height which makes the traveller on the banks fancy he is upon the sea-shore. This phenomenon, which is noticed by Virgil in the Georgics, may be owing to the depth of the water being greater and more uniform than is usual in the smaller lakes. The Lago di Garda, besides, extends for upwards of thirty miles in an almost straight line, and, supposing the wind to blow in this direction, it is not difficult to conceive that the uniform agitation of the water, which we term billows, may be very considerable.

Having crossed the Mincio, we find ourselves in that part of the Lombard-Venetian kingdom which is under the government of Venice.

Verona, our next stage, is praised, by almost every traveller who indulges in the pride of a journal, for its splendid situation "at the foot of the Alps." The Alps, notwithstanding, unless some strange *glamour* "came o'er our een," are too distant to enter, except as framework or background, into the picture it composes. We will not quarrel about the number of yards, or miles, which entitle a place to the credit of such respectable propinquity; but there must be some limit. The testimony of an artist, however, may be required to support so insignificant a dictum as ours; and we are happy to be enabled to present to the reader, on the opposite page, a few lines containing Mr. Stanfield's affidavit on the subject.

Verona stands on both banks of the Adige, and the appearance of the city is picturesque and

somewhat singular. On one side of the river, the ground it occupies is nearly a plain; while, on the other, the houses are built on the steep of a hill, surmounted by walls and towers. Between, the Adige rushes brawling and foaming, as if it was still in the wild valleys of the Tyrol.

Verona was a considerable town of Venetia at the commencement of the Roman empire; but it must have increased greatly in extent in modern times, since Silius Italicus represents the river as *encircling* the ancient city. This must allude to a curve made here by the Adige, the base of which, towards the land, was fortified by a wall in the third century, built by the Emperor Gallienus. The other fortifications, including those on the hills, on the left bank, were not erected till the fourteenth century, by one of the Scaliger family.

We were not disappointed by the Amphitheatre —which is saying much. The external wall, only a fragment of which remains, probably improved its appearance; but it could have added very little to the real, and nothing at all to the apparent, height of the edifice. This wall was of red marble; but the inner one, or the wall of the body of the building, is, to all appearance, of *brick*. The deformity is caused by the disappearance of a marble facing, which usually covers the surface of public buildings in Italy.

Even the houses of some private individuals at Verona are faced with white marble, which, however, is not polished when used in this way. When

intended to be done in the most solid manner, the stone is built in at the same time with the bricks; but frequently there are only holes left for receiving it.

The interior of the amphitheatre is a hollow elliptical cone, the surface of which is composed of the seats.

"On entering the arena," says Forsyth, "I felt all the grandeur, and fitness, and show, and capacity, of the elliptical form, where the *cunei* are divided vertically by cardines, and the upper range is separated from the lower by one narrow ambulatory."

This description is correct; but Mr. Conder, who seems to have a terrible feud with Forsyth, gives one which is just the reverse, on the authority of somebody (Simond, perhaps, although we have not his book at hand,) who appears to have visited the amphitheatre with his eyes shut. Among other things, he says that, the whole fabric being roofless, the rain penetrates into the wretched hovels in the interior of the vaults! The roof is the *seats*, of solid blocks of stone, built one upon the other, as in a flight of stairs; and even if the rain entered by the vomitories, the mouths of which are like caverns, it would have great difficulty in getting to the bottom through the intricacies of the interior.

Looking down from the highest of these vast circles of seats, they appear to terminate almost in a point. There is room, notwithstanding, on what once was the arena, for a wooden theatre,

It must be strange to the Veronese to hear the sound of fiddling on the very spot where the roar of wild beasts charmed the ear of their ancestors. They forget these things, however, or rather they are afraid to remember them. The very name of their country seems to sound like treason; and we heard the word "Austria" repeatedly used by Italians to designate Italy.

The paintings on the outside of the walls—a sort of decoration which seems to be general in this part of Italy—are here, in many cases, of consider able merit, and a few are apparently of some antiquity. The street oratories have a lamp burning, both day and night, before the Virgin and Child—the former being always the more important idol of the two.

The women are veiled, as at Milan; but the veil is white instead of black. The contrast is as pretty as it is striking; but the colour at Verona is somewhat trying to the complexion. Among the lower class of females, the pin, run through the knot of the hair behind, is either laid aside or much shortened; but, to make amends, the knob of silver, or mother-of-pearl, is increased from the size of a pigeon's sometimes to that of a goose's egg.

The Milanese lady was very anxious that we should visit "the tomb of Juliet," which it seems is still extant, although Mr. Cadell could not find it. Juliet, however, is with us an idol of the imagination which we would not willingly profane. Most

people have little superstitions of the kind, and heaven knows the world requires them!

A nearer view of Verona, taken by Mr. Stanfield from the heights, represents the city to the utmost possible advantage. The cypresses on the left do not grow in a churchyard, as we might imagine from our English associations. The cypress, as Pliny mentions, was introduced from Crete, and became a favourite ornament of the Italian villas.

Thirty miles of a good road, through a well-cultivated country, brought us to Vicenza (Vicentia, the Vicetia of Pliny). This may be called a modern city, as it was only a little municipal town in the time of the Romans; but, recent as its date may be, it is already crumbling into ruins. It is a city of palaces and hovels; where genius cannot protect from desecration the high places it raised.

Palladio, the master-spirit of the spot, was born here in 1518, and, in the architecture of his native place, raised a mausoleum for himself which kings might envy. A simple catalogue of his works would fill more space than we can afford; yet we cannot help pausing an instant at the Olympic Theatre. This celebrated edifice was meant to imitate, in the interior, an ancient theatre. The seats rise in a semicircle, like those of our galleries, to a considerable height, as they are very narrow, and terminate at the top in a Corinthian colonnade. Below, the proscenium forms a magnificent, perhaps too gaudy, arch, opening upon the

stage; the scenery of which consists of several diverging streets formed of wood and stucco.

So correctly is the perspective of the scene preserved, in the construction of the stage and the picture, that a space of about twenty feet appears to comprehend the whole of an extensive street; and nothing surprises us more than that, in our modern theatres, where the principle is at least recognized, it should not be reduced more completely to practice. Mr. Galiffe remarks, that there are very few plays which this scene of action would suit. This is true; but a moveable scenery —at least of the localities most frequently brought into view, such as streets, and the interior of large houses—might be constructed, on the scenic principles of the ancients, at as little expence of money, and almost as little of room, as the paintings at present substituted. Another objection of the same writer is, that a person who is seen approaching, at the further end of a perspective vista, must appear extravagantly disproportioned to the scene. Mr. Galiffe, however, is not aware of the extreme complaisance of the human organs in such circumstances; and we ourselves, till we chanced to witness a very curious exhibition in London, were utterly ignorant of the power of practical perspective. The report which we furnished to the public on this occasion—for we do not like to keep anything good to ourselves—was printed in a periodical now defunct and forgotten; and, as it illustrates the principle reduced to practice by Palladio, the

reader perhaps will not blame us if we reanimate it here. He will please to recollect that the puppets spoken of are figures from a few inches to two feet high. *

"For our part, we could see very little difference between the stature of the actors and that of the spectators; a misgiving, indeed, came over us on detecting certain minute strings or wires ascending from the heads of the former to the ceiling: this has an awkward effect; it looks like constraint and tyranny, as if the apparently living beings before us were forced to do their work by the fear of instant hanging. The figures eat, drink, smoke, light candles, blow them out, fall in pieces and pick themselves up again, multiply, subtract, and divide themselves, turn into tables, and clouds, and goddesses, and, in short, go through more extraordinary metamorphoses than the heroes of Ovid, and more extraordinary adventures than the hero of himself, Baron Monchausen. We have said that, though previously aware of their Lilliputian dimensions, the puppets appeared to us to be as large as life, and the *properties* to be of the usual size. They did so: and therein we think lies one great charm of the exhibition. The *deceptio visus* would be altogether incomplete, were the pigmy heroes obliged to throw their gambols on a stage of common construction. They

* The scene is in the Argyle Rooms, and the exhibition the Théâtre du Petit Lazary.

have, therefore, been furnished with an arena for their achievements, which, by the application of the principles of perspective, not only invests them in a great measure with the character of *free agents,* but elevates them, if not in reality, at least in appearance, which is the same thing, even with puppets, to the stature of perfect men.

"The manner in which this has been accomplished is easily explained. Instead of *seeming* to approach each other, as the sides of an extensive vista do, when receding from the eye, the wings, or side-scenes, here *actually* converge, and would ultimately meet were they far enough produced. In the same way, too, by elevating the floor of the stage, and depressing its ceiling as they respectively recede, the appearance presented by the earth and sky, under similar circumstances, is materially embodied; and thus the mind, from being accustomed to account for the diminishing of objects on the principles of perspective, and to resolve so familiar a phenomenon into the effects of distance, is unconsciously led to retrace its steps, and from the presence, if we may so speak, of distance, to attribute to objects in the back-ground the same dimensions which it knew or imagined them to be possessed of, when placed more immediately under the eye of the observer. The scene in which Harlequin eats and drinks affords a striking instance of this mental miscalculation; for there are few, we believe, who would credit that the wine-decanter there made use of

is no longer than the fore-finger; and that the diameter of the candlestick does not exceed that of a moderate-sized quill."

Such is the magic of the perspective employed in the ancient theatres; but, to meet the obvious objection that experience, or close observation, would destroy the illusion, we subjoin the account of a little experiment we made in a subsequent visit to the exhibition.

"In spite of the authoritative air with which we delivered our opinion on the nature of the illusion, we could not help feeling some secret misgivings. If our theory be correct, argued we to ourselves, if the apparent size of the figures be produced by our habit of reasoning on the principles of perspective, then it requires only a simple act of volition to see them as they really are; we have only to bear in mind, while fixing our eyes on the puppets, that there is little or no real distance between them and us, but merely an imitative perspective caused by the converging of the four sides of the stage. This experiment failed: the figures retained their assumed proportions in spite of us, although we stood at the back of the orchestra. Our theory, therefore, was utterly false, or the habits of the mind are more fixed and inveterate than philosophy has yet dreamed of, and, after the indulgence of a few cycles, must become actually part and parcel of our nature.

"To ascertain the fact, it was necessary to

introduce the testimony of individuals whose habits could not be supposed to be completely formed; for which purpose we brought into the theatre children from the age of two to seven years, and the result was no less satisfactory than curious. The puppets were seen in their true dimensions, and pronounced by those unsophisticated witnesses to be *little boys and girls.* Ignorance is thus wiser than wisdom. The longer we live in the world the more confused and distorted our perceptions become. A child is your true philosopher: he sees things as they are, and detects, at a glance, a thousand points of ridicule and absurdity in what commands the veneration of his grandfather. How short is childhood! In a very few years he has ceased to laugh—because, through the film that has gathered upon his eyes, he sees no more any thing that is laughable. Little things appear great if they are spied through the perspective of pomp; folly is wisdom if his bells be silver; and puppets are kings, if their robes be but trimmed with ermine."

After leaving Vicenza, the country flattens, and every trace of the picturesque disappears. The trees are pollarded, with only a great tuft left at the top; and the women themselves, in compliance with the general fashion of deformity, wear round black hats, exchanged for straw as we get nearer Venice.

First, however, we arrive at Padua, a rare old city, where no one need see the sun who does

not choose it. The streets have spacious arcades on each side, supported by massive pillars. The whole place looks like a cloister. It seems the university, and not the city, of Padua. This, we think, is only natural; for we remember, with a smile, that in 1407 the Venetian Republic forbade the teaching of science any where else than here.

Galileo was professor of mathematics at Padua for twenty years; and it was soon after he left his chair that he found himself in a less easy position, before a very different audience—the Court of Inquisition at Rome.

"Firstly," said the holy fathers, "your doctrine of the sun being in the centre of the world, and immoveable, is absurd in itself; secondly, it is false in philosophy; and thirdly, it is damnable, being contrary to the Scriptures. And again, your doctrine that the earth is *not* the centre of the world, nor immoveable, is, in the first place, absurd in itself, in the second place, false in philosophy, and, in the third place, an error, to say the least of it, in point of faith."

After publishing (in 1632) his "Dialogi della due massime sisteme del mondo, Tolemaico e Copernicano," he was again cited before the inquisition, and thrown into its dungeons. A part of his sentence was that he should repeat before them, every week for three years, the seven penitential psalms. His book was burnt; and the author was not liberated till 1634.

The Brenta, to our eyes, appeared an ugly,

sluggish, canal-like stream; and its summer palaces set down in the most uninteresting of all possible situations—great, bare, ruinous, poverty-stricken houses. Some of them, notwithstanding, are by Palladio, and the architecture, doubtless, is fine, if one could bring his mind to think so.

But a breath is on our cheek, which the islander recognizes among all the winds in the world. We feel that we are near the sea; and our heart begins to beat with delight and expectation. The ground is so level, however, that we have no more view than if we were in Holland. There is a town, or a village, in front—but it does not look like a sea-port. Yet we cannot be mistaken: we are near the sea.

CHAPTER X.

THE SEA-CYBELE.

THE shades of evening were already beginning to fall, when we found ourselves on the high-road to Venice. The old diligence was discarded, as being "of the earth, earthy," and therefore unfit to approach the tower-crowned goddess. The new one was of a long, narrow, barge-like shape; the interior being a comfortable apartment, half cabin, half pavillion, capable of holding luxuriously a dozen persons. The horses we did not see, as our view was intercepted by the front of the diligence; on which the conducteurs (for there were two of them) stood, one on each side, in the most picturesque of attitudes.

It was a warm, dull, hazy evening, with scarcely a breath of wind to raise the dust, had there been any, on the road. The road itself was as smooth as if it had been constructed of molten glass, and of a dead blueish colour. The motion was of so

dreamy and poetical a character, that it gave the idea of a journey through cloud-land; and looking around you on the field of road—for the track itself was somewhat vague and unprecise—you might indeed have seen a sort of vision of the clouds, a faint-lined, vapoury representation of the sky.

Not a word was spoken by our fellow-travellers; they all seemed to be impressed with the seriousness of men entering upon an adventure of some consequence. The conducteur of the old diligence sat without moving a muscle, and yet by no means in an attitude of rest or enjoyment. Even the Milanese lady was mute—she who had talked every inch of the way from "Milano la Grande"* to the Gulf of Venice. She leant against the door in an attitude of expectation that was almost solemn from its silence. No wonder. We had left *terra firma* behind us, and were now on our way to visit the daughter of Heaven and Earth—that mythological queen, whose "tiara of proud towers" is beheld rising from the Adriatic.

Heavier and heavier the shadows of evening

* Similar epithets are popularly applied to almost all the cities of Italy. Venice was once called *Venezia la Ricca*; Rome is still *Roma la Santa*; Naples, *Napoli la Gentile*; Genoa, *Genova la Superba*; Florence, *Firenze la Bella*; Bologna, *Bologne la Grassa*; Ravenna, *Ravenna l'Antica*; and Padua, *Padova la Dotta*. Of these cities, Ravenna is the most fortunate in its designation, the applicability of which will increase every day; while the holiness, gentility, magnificence, beauty, fertility, and learning of the others will perhaps soon follow—some have already followed—the riches of Venice.

gathered upon the surface of the lagoon. We could see, however, at length, that the channel through which we glided, and which is one of the great water-roads of Venice, began to assume a more regular and highway-like form. Low banks, on either side, if our optics did not deceive themselves in the gloom, shut in our path from the common surface; and these, as we advanced further, were crowned with some works that were either fortifications built of stone, or were hewn by our imagination out of the shadows of night. Soon the channel grew wider, or the darkness increased; the banks vanished; and for some time we glided on with scarcely any thing to remind us that we were awake, except a dreamy consciousness of motion.

Suddenly the sea-diligence stopped; and, looking up, we saw the apparition of a man, as if standing on the water, with a lamp in his hand. The apparition glided into the boat, and, without uttering a word, extended its lamp within two inches of our individual physiognomy, and almost blinded us with the glare. This infliction continued for upwards of a minute; during which time we could see, through our trembling lids, that a pair of keen eyes were fixed in attentive perusal of our features.

"What is your name?" demanded the spectre. We answered to the best of our knowledge.

"And your country?—your profession?" Being satisfied on these points, the lamp was withdrawn, and its light next fell on the pale but pretty face

of the Milanese. Two or three common physiognomies were then visited—which, indeed, were nothing more than sets of features, such as noses, eyes, and mouths; and when at last the short head, and red, coarse, sensible, strongly-marked countenance of the old conducteur had loomed out in the light, both lamp and ghost vanished, and we were left as before in the dark.

When our optics became a little accustomed to the situation in which they were placed, we detected the dull outlines of a building streaked against the heavy sky; and the idea, which turned out to be correct, passed across our mind, that we were temporary prisoners at a sort of *dogana* or custom-house, which serves as a toll-gate, as well as guard-house, on this water-road. In the meantime, to our great relief, the lamp of our own cabin was lighted; and, being thus afforded wherewithal to see that we were in no danger of sudden death, the agitation of our blood began to subside, and finally settled at the point of romantic and poetical sensibility.

We were again in motion; the building disappeared; and we all relapsed into the quietude and silence which the adventure of the dogana had interrupted. We had not long been in this state, however, when a—something—shot past us in the gloom, which stirred our heart like one of those faint touches of electricity that startle without alarming. We caught but a momentary glimpse of it as it passed; but this was sufficient to awaken

a confused train of images, which lay inert in some remote and boyish depth of our fancy, surrounded by a thousand golden or gilded associations. In itself, however, it formed a singular contrast to the phantoms of the mind it had called up. It was as mystic, and as black, as midnight. It was like a coffin borne upon a cloud. It was as silent, and as fleeting, and as dim, as a shadow.

"Gondola," said the conducteur, looking at us.

"Gondola," muttered, at the same instant, the mouths that belonged to the sets of features, while the eyes were turned towards ours.

"Gondola," whispered the pale and pretty Milanese. The word was syllabled by half a dozen voices at once, "each under each;" and to the assortment of the tones it may be owing that we recognized, for the first time, the music of the Italian language.

Another, and another gondola glided past us, like figures in a dream; and, like the water-fowl seen by mariners when approaching the end of their voyage, they indicated the propinquity of the land. We had soon sufficient presence of mind to watch for the floating shadow, and catch it with our eyes before it faded. The first was empty:—it was like a sea-undertaker going home for one of his customers. The next, on turning round a sharp angle, received the light of our lamp full in its funereal vault. A female form reclined upon the cushions, in an attitude of poetical

languor. Her face, instead of being indebted to us for its illumination, seemed to emit a halo of light,

"Making a sunshine in the shady place;"

and her rich and jewelled apparel gave the idea of some princess of the Arabian Nights travelling by the agency of enchantment.

We were in Venice. We saw before us the "turritam Telluris imaginem medio oceano figuratam." Some faint lamps were reflected in the water, and enabled us to obtain a notion of the outline of the houses, rising perpendicularly out of the deep. We glided, by and by, into a narrower, and, apparently, a more populous street:—but where were the inhabitants?—where the crowd, the bustle, the roar of carriages, the thousand voices, that are associated inseparably in our fancy with the idea of a city at night? Some shadowy figures crept along the base of the walls, or looked down upon us from a bridge as we passed under the arch. Were these the Venetians? Was this City of the Silent the Venice of our enchanted youth—the Venice of our dreams and longings—the Venice of memory—the Venice of poetry, and passion, and romance?

We had arrived. We ascended some steps, and stood on the *terra firma*—if there is such a thing—of Venice. The affair of our luggage was soon arranged; the conducteur made his bow; the Milanese, received by her husband and two servants

in livery, bade good night; and we, left in the care of a porter, set out in search of a bed. The Leone Bianco was at hand; and instead of stepping, as we expected, into a gondola, or into the water—for every thing had, by this time, suffered a sea-change in our imagination—we crept along the houses, by a narrow pathway; and, after crossing a marble bridge, and threading some streets that looked like the courts where you see written in London "no thoroughfare," arrived at the hotel.

The Leone Bianco was once, perhaps, a Venetian palace, several of which have been converted into hotels. It seemed spacious and dreary, with a hall as large as an English house, paved with marble, and ornamented with statues. We engaged a comfortable, but by no means handsome, apartment—if we should not rather use the word in the plural; for a curtain, drawn across it in the middle, answered the purpose of a partition between the sitting-room and dormitory. The only thing which struck us particularly, at supper, was the ignorance of the waiter of the existence of such an article as Italian wine. French and German were his staple commodities; and he indeed produced a bottle of Rhenish, not much inferior to the vin du pays on the banks of the Rhine. What was better, it was labelled "Johannisberg," of the famous vintage of 1822, and went down to the bill at about half the price it would have fetched with such a name where the grapes grew. We dreamed all night of enchanters, and enchanted

ladies, and Childe Harold, and the Arabian Nights; and when the morning was far advanced—or rather, to confess the truth, when it did not want a very long time of mid-day—we were awakened by the unusual silence of such an hour.

The descriptions of Venice which refer the surprise of the traveller to the circumstances of its situation producing a resemblance to *shipboard*, are calculated to convey a very erroneous idea of the place. The gondolas are no more like boats than they are like dolphins; and the marble palaces which we see at this moment from our window, rising up from the bosom of the Adriatic, cannot by possibility remind you of the sides of a man of war. The fancy which detects and enlarges upon such resemblances might devise a pun, but could never comprehend a poem; and he "who hath no music in his soul," has no business in Venice.

As far as our eye can reach—and this is a considerable distance, the sinuous sweep of the Canale Grande being beauty and majesty combined—we see a city of marble. We step from our marble hall upon a marble terrace, and descend by marble stairs, if we are so minded, into the bosom of the sea. At some distance to the right, the view is bounded by an immense edifice of marble—which, since it spans the canal, must be called a bridge;—and this is the Rialto. At first, the rough surface of the precious stone grates upon our imagination, accustomed as it is, with such materials, to all

the effeminate minutiæ of sculpture and polish: but, by degrees, the prejudice wears off, and the effect seems rather to add to than diminish the magnificence. It seems as if the architects had not thought it worth while to smooth their marble!

The Rialto, which was finished in 1591, consists of a single elliptic arch. Like the other bridges, it is steep, and is ascended and descended by flights of steps. Two rows of shops, traversing its whole length, divide it into three paths, the middle, or main street, being of a convenient breadth. The Rialto is always crowded—for standing-room is a scarcity in Venice—but the merchants are supposed to have congregated in the Exchange near it. It was here, doubtless, that Shylock was so cavalierly treated by Antonio. "Pierre," says Mr. Matthews, "could not well have chosen a worse place (than the bridge) for his evening walk of meditation." Mr. Matthews is wrong. All the company of Venice had, as usual, repaired to the Piazzo di San Marco; and, as the French had not, by that time, thought of planting gardens in the sea, Pierre had no choice. The other streets, or lanes, of Venice are only about eight feet broad; and this would afford an area preposterously small for a conspiracy.

Of the smaller water-streets, a very good idea will be conveyed by the opposite engraving. The edifice on the right is the church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, built towards the end of the fourteenth century, and chosen, probably, by Mr. Stanfield,

as one of his subjects, in honour of the great picture of Titian which it contains—the Assassination of San Pietro Domenicano. This picture, which is supposed to be the master-piece of the artist, was transferred to the Louvre in Napoleon's time, where it underwent a very extraordinary operation.

In the passage from Venice to Marseilles, it had got wet, and, when laid out in a warm place after arrival, the board and the size-ground on which it was painted having dried sooner than the colours, the latter split into scales. In this predicament, it was determined to transfer the picture to canvass; and the delicate operation was undertaken by Hacquin, under the superintendance of a committee of the Institute, consisting of two painters and two chemists. Gauze was first pasted on the painting, and, when this was dry, another covering of gauze, and then two successive layers of grey paper. When all was completely dry, it was laid upon a table, face downwards, and part of the wood removed by means of small saws, one acting perpendicularly, and the other horizontally. A plane, with a convex edge, was then applied, in the most delicate and gradual manner; and then another, with the edge broken into teeth, so as to answer the purpose of a rasp; and the board, being thus reduced to the thickness of a sheet of paper, was moistened with water, and taken off, in minute portions, with the point of a knife.

The distemper, or size-ground was next removed,

by means of water, and the back of the painting exposed. This, being found to be altogether dried up with age, was rubbed with cotton, dipped in oil, to restore its flexibility, and wiped with a muslin rag. It was then painted over with white lead and oil, instead of the former ground, and in this state was allowed to dry for three months. When the ground was sufficiently dry, it was pasted over with gauze, and the gauze with canvass; and the picture was then detached from the table, and laid upon its back.

The layers of gauze and grey paper being successively detached with water, the scales were moistened with thin flour paste, and covered with an oiled paper. A heated iron was then cautiously applied, and the painting rendered flat. The same minute care was taken in fixing it upon the canvass, which was not attempted till the ground had received two additional coats of white lead and oil, with gauze between. The picture was then put into the hands of a painter skilled in repairing, and entered upon a new lease of its existence.

The view which we are enabled to present of the Dogana is still more strikingly Venetian than that of the church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo. The building is magnificent, but it is not the magnificence we find elsewhere. There are towers, and domes, and pillars, and statues, it is true, and these we see at London or Paris; but, over all, there is a dash of the *fantastic* which seems to tell, even before you look to its base, that it is

not a common architectural palace, raised upon the bosom of mother earth. The square tower, which contrasts so strangely with the domes, appears to be of older date. It is surmounted by statues, bearing on their shoulders a golden globe; on which a figure of Fortune stands upon one foot, and turns with the unstable wind.

The time chosen by the artist is during a storm; and this is somewhat rare at Venice—at least in its sea-phenomena. The lagoon is protected from the violence of the Adriatic by a range of sandy islands, and the stone bulwarks called murazze; and within these the water is so shallow that no ordinary wind can produce the appearance which is called a heavy sea. Sometimes, however, there is no want of this accompaniment. The waves rise, and fret, and shout, and grow alternately dark and pale with passion. Woe betide the gondolas that have not time to get home before the riot commences! They are knocked about like egg-shells, and sometimes crushed as easily. The inhabitants crowd upon their terraces to look on in silent alarm, or contribute their oaths and halloos in aid of the mariners' fund. The agitation communicates even to the courts and lanes of the ocean-city. The market-women are set to dance with their cabbages and cauliflowers. All Venice is in an uproar.

But to enumerate the buildings and the scenes worthy of a traveller's curiosity is a task altogether wide of the scope of our present undertaking. Nostri *non* est farrago libelli. We shall be amply

satisfied if we can convey to the indulgent reader a general idea of places and peculiarities, and produce, for his delectation, some refraction, however faint, of the pleasure we ourselves experienced in our journeyings. To do this, as regards Venice, and to blend in the picture we shall present some of its moral as well as physical attributes, we must be allowed to transport him to the Piazza di San Marco, what time the shades of evening begin to steal over the bosom of the lagoon. If the said reader belongs to the communion of the Kirk of Scotland, let him not enquire for *which* evening of the week the invitation is given. Let him come forth with a smooth brow and an unsuspecting eye, saying to himself—or *singing* (to shew the absence of all manner of guilty knowledge)—

"If ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

The Piazza di San Marco is an oblong, rectangular area, elongated from east to west, of about eight hundred feet in length, by three hundred and fifty in breadth. As you enter, by the west end, the first coup d'œil is astounding. You imagine that the whole mass of marble before you is a single building. This effect is produced by the deep and lofty arcade which runs round three sides of the Piazza, and the uniform character of the architecture. Presently, however, you discover that each side, although uniform in itself, differs widely from the others. On the south is the Procuratorie Nuove, a range of buildings which formerly served

as the habitations of the procurators of state, and was afterwards converted into an imperial palace by the French and Austrians successively. It is built of Istrian marble, richly decorated, and dates from the sixteenth century. On the north is the Procuratorie Vecchie, more severe in its architecture, and with the windows disposed in arcades. On the west, where the spectator is supposed to stand, the continuation of the grand arcade covers the vestibule of the great staircase of the palace, built on the ground once occupied by the church of San Geminiani. On the east, or opposite side of the oblong, is a building which, from its general outline, you have some suspicion of having seen before in pictorial representations.

The suspicion is soon confirmed; for no such mass of domes and minarets, and no such jumble of east and west, of Paganism and Christianity, of antiquity and modernism, ever existed elsewhere. And yet you are surprised, and almost ready to revert to incredulity, till you observe that it is the rich *colouring* of the edifice which makes you at a loss to identify it with the one so familiar to you in engravings. Without the temple of Saint Mark, the Piazza would not be Venetian. It would merely be a range of magnificent buildings; and its site might be the square of the Louvre, or Waterloo Place, or any where else. The temple, however, imparts to it that dash of the odd, the fantastic, the unworldly, which is Venetian by patent. Although forming only one side of the

oblong, it controls and binds, as it were, the other three. In a word, it flings the shadow of its character—for no man can describe Venice who will not venture to write nonsense—upon all the rest.

You are at first struck with the appearance of four or five heavy leaden cupolas, which transport your imagination to Constantinople. Beneath these, a kind of balcony traverses the whole front, forming the upper part of the façade, and appearing to have been constructed for the purpose of supporting a whole forest of pinnacles, statues, spires, crosses, and other ornaments. Below is the door-way, receding to an immense depth, arch within arch, clustered with columns; and just above it, in the centre of the gallery, the four bronze horses of Lysippus seem to prance out of the building. But to name the parts of the edifice is nothing. To form an idea of the effect, you must imagine the whole surface to be incrusted with oriental marble, and loaded with paintings, bas-reliefs, bronze, gilding, and Mosaics. The *hundreds* of columns before your eyes are of verd-antique, porphyry, serpentine, and other precious marbles; and the very pavement is inlaid with the same gorgeous materials. To this profusion of *colour*, still more than to its strange, fantastic form, we attribute the singularity of the effect produced by the Cathedral of Saint Mark.

Advancing along the magnificent pavement of the Piazza, which is of square pieces of grey marble,

with white tracery, the picture becomes more complete; the indistinct daubs of colour resolve into splendid paintings, and the innumerable touches of green, and red, and white, and grey, are marshalled into ranks of antique columns. In front of the Temple stand, at equal distances, three pedestals of bronze, decorated with bas-reliefs, on which are planted the flag-staffs that supported, in former times, the standards of Cyprus, Candy, and the Morea, the three vassal-kingdoms of the republic. To the right, almost on a line with these poles, which, in the gaudy taste that predominates over the whole spot, are painted red, is the Campanile, a square tower of brick, two hundred and thirty feet high, ornamented at the top with oriental marble. At its base, in exquisite contrast, a little lodge stands, constructed by Sansorino, entirely built of marble, and loaded with statues and bas-reliefs of admirable workmanship. From this spot a view is obtained of the Palace of the Doges, extending on a parallel line, somewhat retired, with the Temple, and making one side of a street, short it is true, but of extraordinary splendour, the other side of which is formed by the Library of Saint Mark. This street is called the Piazzetta, and terminates on the quay, on which are planted two columns of oriental granite, one surmounted by the winged lion of St. Mark, and the other by the statue of Saint Theodore, the first patron of Venice.

Nearly opposite the quay is the Isola San Giorgia.

To the left, round the Ducal Palace, is the road, either by land or water, to the arsenal, the public gardens, and the church of San Pietro di Castello. A view is annexed of this Temple, which was the Cathedral of Venice, from the first ages of the republic till 1807, when the patriarchal seat was transferred to the Basilicon of Saint Mark. The view comprehends the buildings of the arsenal to the left.

But we have time to ascend the Campanile, before it becomes too dark to do more than mellow the picture. We mount, not by a staircase, but by an inclined plane without steps, winding between the outer and inner wall of which the tower is composed, and accessible, it is said, on horseback. Emerging into daylight, in a gallery near the summit, we see the peopled waters of the lagoon around us, separated from the main body of the sea by a chain of islands. Venice is at our feet, forming, apparently, a single island, although in reality broken into many; and through it winds, like a serpent, the Canale Grande, spanned in the middle by the Rialto, and communicating, directly or indirectly, with one hundred and forty-seven smaller canals, which are the water-streets of the city. Including the suburbs and more distant villages, which form a total of nearly seventy islands, there are three hundred and six public bridges, almost all of marble, in the area immediately beneath our eye. On the west, about thirty miles distant, are the porphyry hills of

Eugania, rising abruptly above the plains; on the south-east rolls the Adriatic; on the east, on the opposite coast of the Gulf, the mountains of Istria rest like clouds upon the horizon; and the Friuli, or the Julian Alps, run like a frame-work round almost all the rest of the circle, extending from the Istrian frontiers of Carniola, to the Tyrolese mountains near the Lago di Garda.

While we are gazing on this magnificent picture, the insect-like forms creeping about the Piazza di San Marco at our feet catch our eye, and, by the attraction of humanity, drag us from the clouds. We descend, to mix with our fellows on the surface of mud, water, and marble. As we descend, small things become great, or our perceptions contract to suit the sphere in which they are exercised. The Temple of Saint Mark before us appears a work of giants instead of pigmies; and as its vaulted door-way, of bronze and marble, seems to swallow up the crowds of worshippers, we suffer ourselves to be drawn into the vortex.

When we vanish from daylight, we find ourselves in a vaulted vestibule, occupying the whole of the front, the walls of which are a single mass of Mosaic, inlaid in gilded glass, with the figures of coloured glass and composition. Besides the columns which support the vaulting towards the interior, there are eight of ornamental marble, which belonged—as we were told, and who shall gainsay it *here*?—to the Temple of Solomon. From the vestibule, we enter the body of the church by

one of three doors, which are inlaid with silver. Here the extent of the edifice—the distant vaultings, covered with Mosaics—the paintings—the images—the columns of porphyry, verd-antique, and coloured marbles—the pavement, spotted with jasper, agate, and lapis lazuli—the gilded capitals and cornices—the brazen lustres—the gold and silver crucifixes, and other paraphernalia of the altars—all dash, as it were, against the imagination by one *momentum*, and produce rather an indefinite impression of grandeur than a distinct perception of it.

But the effect, be it understood, is not glaring, as one might fancy from the catalogue. The vastness of the edifice, the eternal gloom which envelopes its recesses, nay, the very object and purpose of its institution, as a temple of religion, conspire to chasten the effect which might otherwise arise from the gaudy magnificence of its details. At this moment especially—when the flame of the lamps burning before the shrines is almost confounded with the warm and mellow light of evening, that falls, still more mellowed, through the painted windows—there can be nothing more grand and more solemn than the impression conveyed to the mind by the whole picture.

Nor are the living figures unworthy of the scene. We perceive here, for the first time, a passion and abandonment of religious feeling which surprises, almost terrifies, our northern imagination. Some, on entering the door, have cast themselves prostrate

on their faces upon the marble pavement; some kneel upon the threshold, extending their arms towards a favourite idol, dimly visible in the distance by its golden halo; some grovel at the base of an image, clasping its feet, or leaning their brow against the pedestal, as if in an agony of self-abasement and religious despair. Every where the attitudes are graceful and picturesque, because they are the effect of enthusiasm and not of study. Some half-naked men, more especially, in the garb of sailors, arrest our attention. They stare wildly around them for a moment, as if uncertain of the localities, and then rush up towards the high altar, where they throw themselves on their faces, or cling to the rails like malefactors hung up by the arms. One is impressed with the idea that they are cast-away mariners who have just rushed in, wet and naked, from the sea, to offer up their vows in the first solemn transports of gratitude for the preservation of their lives. Beyond, at the high altar, and in the recesses of the various chapels, the priests, in their splendid dresses, and surrounded by worshippers, are engaged in the services of their poetical superstition; prayers are chanted at one shrine which are unheard at the next; every where, except in the immediate neighbourhood of any particular congregation, an indefinite murmur fills the ear; and the sounds are at once modulated and confused by the tones of the distant organ swelling fitfully between.

We are again in the open air, although scarcely

in daylight, and, with a sensation of relief, we bound along the marble pavement of the Piazza. It is now crowded with company, and resounds with the music of a military band stationed near the northern arcade. A new kind of superstition attacks our imagination. The cathedral, with its heathen domes, and odd pinnacles, and statues, and bronze, and gilding, and many-coloured marbles, seems no longer a Christian temple, but a palace of faëry. Every thing is strange, fantastic, and antique. Our sea-Cybele is again a goddess, with "her tiara of proud towers;" and at this instant she is worshipped, as of old, by her Corybantes, with the sound of drums, tabors, pipes, and cymbals.

As the company arrive from all quarters, we are impressed with the idea that this is not a mere assemblage for an evening promenade, but a grand dress-party. Not a single one of what are called the lower orders can be detected, by our optics at least, in the crowd. The women wear in general white veils, not to conceal the face, but to form a drapery behind, from which it shall advance in more beautiful relief. Many have only a comb of extravagant height, with the hair fantastically, and we suppose fashionably, arranged; some are decorated with the shawls of bead-work peculiar to Venice; and some with jewels and the rich gold chains for which this city is famous.

Daylight gradually disappears; but a calm, blue, clear vault of sky overhangs the Piazza. The cafés are lighted up; awnings are spread beyond

the arcades; the ladies are handed to seats, within doors or without, as they choose; and ices, coffee, and liqueurs, with the delicious cakes and confections of Venice, make their rounds in profusion. In the meantime, musicians and operatic performers take their stand before the various cafés. Here a romantic ballad—there a tender duet—in a third place a tragic scene—and in a fourth a comic opera—all are performed by turns. One café, on the north side, the ladies delight more especially to honour, and it presents a perfect galaxy of beauty. Another is haunted by the splendid Greeks, and another by the Turks, beards, caftans and all, lounging over their pipes in lazy magnificence. We caught a peep, among the rest of the dramatis personæ, of a great, greasy, Capuchin friar, evanishing through the vestibule of the palace staircase, with his heavy sackcloth cloak, girdle of cord, and little black skull-cap.

The north arcade seems to be the fashionable promenade. It is, in some places, lined on the outside with rows of seats, receding far into the piazza; and, in the inside, the doors and windows of the cafés are blazing with light and beauty. The crowd of loungers between is so great that occasionally a stand takes place for many minutes. Some, however, extend their walk to the other sides of the square before returning; and some, stepping out of the arcade altogether, wander into the main sea of marble, as the body of the now half-dark and half-deserted piazza appears. These

adventurers, who look like spirits gliding slowly in the gloom, generally go in pairs—

"They both are young—and one is beautiful!"

The morning of another day broke before we retired from this scene, to dream of the Arabian Nights and the palace of Aladdin.

The islands in the neighbourhood of Venice may be considered as the villages dependant on the city. Among these Murano was once celebrated for its glass-manufactories. In the year 1300, glass mirrors were not manufactured any where else in Europe; but now Paris, London, and Vienna are all superior in this article to the original work-shop. At Murano the staple article, at the present day, are the small beads of which the bead-shawls alluded to above are made. The village is half a mile from the city, and it forms, as the reader will see, an agreeable object in the lagoon.

Murano, with Mazzorbo and Burano, were formerly subject to Torcello, the seat of a bishop, four miles and a half farther off, in the same direction, the north-east of the city. Some inhabited islands formerly existed still more distant; but these have disappeared, having been washed away by the sea. Torcello itself, once a populous island, the summer-haunt of the Venetians, and in remoter times the court city of the Scourge of God, is now almost a desert.

Mazzorbo is an island of fishermen, who live in such huts as the one next door. Oysters are

plentiful and good in the lagoon; and turbot, soal, flounder, mullet, dory, and skate, are all abundant (not to mention *frog* in such society) in the markets of Venice.

These productions thrive, while the city falls to ruin and decay. The drum and the tabor awake the nightly echoes of Saint Mark, and the gay Venetians meet to bow, and smile, and eat ices on the Piazza, where the flags of vassal kingdoms once fluttered in the wind. "Yet a little while," croaks hoarsely a traveller of our day, "and Venice will be a baby Babylon, with the substitution of the gull for the bittern, and of the porpoise for the fox!"*

* Mr. Rose.

CHAPTER XI.

THE VALLEY OF THE ADIGE.

From Venice we retraced our steps to Verona, with the intention of entering the Tyrol by the Valley of the Adige. We departed from, as we had approached, the sea-Cybele by night. So much the better. Who can tell what change might have "come o'er the spirit of our dream," had we left the tower-crowned goddess in the light of day? But we entered her island-temple in the dark, and we left it in the dark. She is to us, therefore, a kind of oasis in the waste of night—a bright spot surrounded by clouds, to which sometimes our wearied thoughts, in the midst of the cares and vexations of the world, may "flee away and be at rest."

Between Padua and Vicenza, we fell in with one of those processions which, in Catholic countries, give an air of old-world simplicity to the popular

religion. It consisted of more than a hundred females, headed by a single priest, and accompanied by some boys in white gowns, and the sacristan ringing his bell. They traversed the fields, with a quick step, and in regular array, chanting a hymn; with the purpose, as we were told, of blessing and sanctifying the produce of the earth, and of offering the incense of praise and gratitude to the Giver. They were all in their holiday dresses of virgin white, and almost all arrayed in the white veil so dear to the eastern Lombards. The youngest came first, consisting of little children, crowned with flowers; then the young maidens, with well-sunned cheeks, and flashing eyes; then the staid matrons, looking business-like, and discreet; and, lastly, the tottering grandmothers, with their hair as white as snow. At the next village, we found the streets strewed with flowers, which the piety of the inhabitants had spread under the feet of the procession as it passed.

This agreeable picture put us in mind of one of the most interesting exhibitions we had seen in Venice. It was a congregation of females in a church, all in that golden period of life when the girl is neither quite a child, nor quite a woman They were on their knees, round the altar of Saint Valentine! It was a pretty sight, and the name of the idol full of pretty associations. As we passed by, many a white veil was thrown, as if accidentally, from the pale but rich cheek it

overhung, and many an upturned glance—arch, languid, or

"Severe in youthful beauty——"

told to our imagination the nature and meaning of their worship. We did not choose to destroy so pleasing an illusion—if illusion it was—by questions which might refer us to some cold and heartless superstition.

At the first post from Verona, we entered once more the gorge of the mountains, through a passage formed by perpendicular cliffs, only wide enough to admit the torrent and the road. The Adige is a fierce, brawling, muddy stream, of a dirty yellow, resembling the colour of the rocks that overhang it. These rocks, however, are picturesque and romantic in their form, and, although generally bare on the sides, are crowned with vegetation on the summit; while, here and there, a beautiful village, surrounded with trees and fields, relieves the eye with its agreeable contrast. The Valley reminds us, in many points, of the scenery of the Valley of the Rhone; but without the splendid glaciers in the distance to shut in the picture. Near the second post,* on the ridge of an almost perpendicular mountain, stands the convent of Madonna della Corona, which, with its trim white

* A post is two German miles, and each German mile is reckoned as a two hours' walk.

walls, gleaming so far above the traveller's head, produces a very peculiar effect.

The Valley becomes more wooded as we advance along the banks of the torrent to Volargna. Passing the village, the castle of Chiusa appears in sight, perched upon the crags of a precipice which is washed by the Adige. The road now crosses the river, leaving on the left the venerable giant Monte Baldo, one of the most magnificent objects in the scenery of this region. Between Forte Guardara and Arsenigo, we traverse the forest of Vergarra, once a favourite haunt of banditti. From Arsenigo, the last Veronese village, we penetrate, through a very difficult defile of naked rocks, till we reach Porghetto, the first in the jurisdiction of Trent, and formerly the frontier between the Tyrol and the Veronese when they did not belong to the same master.

Roveredo, the first town on the Italian side of the Tyrol, stands in an amphitheatre of mountains, the arena of which forms the Valley of Logarino. It is built on the banks of the Leno, a little way to the left of the Adige. The castle, which commands the Valley and the road, is one of the most singular buildings of the kind we have seen, resembling more a light-house than a fortress. The town, which appears in the engraving to the left, at the bottom of the Valley, is the capital of the Circle of Roveredo, and contains between fifteen and sixteen thousand inhabitants. It is a place of considerable commerce, chiefly in grain

and silk, and employs, on an average, nine hundred silk-weavers.

Among the lofty mountains in which the Valley is embosomed, the chain of the Monte Baldo is conspicuous, extending from north to south nearly fifty miles. Towards the east, it appears to be altogether inaccessible, offering a front of naked and almost perpendicular cliffs; but, on the west, the approach is softened by swelling hills, intermingled with meadows, forests, and valleys. The summit is a dreary region of rock and snow, completely covered during eight months of the year. The highest peak of the chain is the Colma di Sarcaga; but the Altissimo di Nago, three German miles from Roveredo, and the Monte Majore, a little beyond, afford the most convenient points of view. From the latter, the Lago di Garda, and the whole of the Veronese are visible, with the Euganian hills in the distance; and, in clear weather, the Adriatic itself is said to enter into the magnificent picture, with the "wandering Po," and the southern Appenines behind. On the north, the view is shut suddenly and sternly in by the Tyrolese Alps.

After leaving Roveredo, the country opens a little, but still retains the wildness of its character. Several villages and castles animate the picture; among which Romagna and Aldeno on the left, and Castel Besano on the right, occupy the most commanding situations. After passing Volano, a small place, offering nothing of interest to detain

the traveller, we reach Calliano, a miserable old town, with its houses falling into ruin, and musket-bullets sticking in the walls. This was the scene of a battle between the French and Austrians. Here also the Venetian army was beaten and destroyed in the year 1487, by the Archduke Sigmund, and its general, Robertus Sanverino, slain. The inhabitants look as if they were still scared by the remembrance of these events, and had no heart to repair their habitations, rent and blackened by the curse of war. Passing through a narrow defile, guarded by Calliano, we arrive at the ancient city of Trient, or Trent.

Trent is seated on the Adige, in a rich and beautiful valley, surrounded by the Alps, rising in so wild and precipitous a manner as to convey the idea of their being inaccessible. Some useless fortifications give it the appearance, without the reality, of strength; but the streets are sufficiently wide and regular, and the place, upon the whole, has the aspect of ease and security. In the church of Santa Maria Majora, a large picture is pointed out to the admiration of the traveller, containing the portraits of all the members who attended the palavers of the Council of Trent in the years 1545 and 1563. In summer, owing to the peculiarities of its situation, the town is insupportably warm, and in winter the cold is in the same extreme. The number of inhabitants amounts to nearly twelve thousand.

Crossing the Adige by a wooden bridge, the

route proceeds, through a wilderness of limestone rocks, to Selurn, where there is a fine cascade near the inn. In this neighbourhood, there are the ruins of an old castle in a very singular situation. It is built on the peak of an enormous insulated rock, the side of which, next the main body of the mountain, forms an almost perpendicular precipice. From the other points it appears to be scarcely more accessible; the only approach —if there be any at all—lying among cliffs, and fragments of cliffs, that look like the ruins of a mountain rent asunder by an earthquake. You are told by the peasants that no traveller has been able, in our day, to reach the spot; and that the original tenants were dislodged by *spirits*, since which time a human foot has never crossed the threshold. In Mr. Brockedon's splendid work, "The Passes of the Alps," there is a vignette of this castle; but the artist-author knows as little about its history as we do ourselves. After this the Valley resumes its beauty; and from Neumerkt to Brançol and Leifers, presents the appearance of an orchard in the midst of the Alps. At Leifers, we again cross the Adige, and enter Botzen.

Botzen, like the other towns in the Valley of the Adige, is seated in a beautiful vale, surrounded by an amphitheatrical range of mountains. The plain, which is watered by the Talfers and the Eisak, as well as the main torrent of the valley, looks like a vine-garden, interspersed with orchards, and dotted with country-houses. The immediate

site of the town, however, is unequal; and the streets, of old-fashioned architecture, are narrow and lofty, and the houses ill-lighted and encumbered with balconies. The Botzeners are not beyond their town in appearance. Even the wealthier inhabitants still wear the long-waisted, sad-coloured coat of their ancestors, and suffer their hair to hang in lank tresses upon their shoulders. The women wear wide jackets; and if their petticoats are somewhat of the shortest, there are *three* of them, one over the other, like the capes of a great-coat; and on the head they have a round, black cap, with ears, or horns, protruding behind, and peeping over the horizon of the skull, when seen in front, in a very ominous manner.

Botzen has a considerable trade in wine and fruits, and is the commercial depôt between Italy and Germany. Four great fairs are held in the year; during which the goods are placed under arcades in a single, long street, one side of which is called the Italian, and the other the German arcade. The number of inhabitants is nearly seven thousand one hundred.

Beyond Botzen the scenery becomes romantic in the extreme. The mountains, with their ridges covered with snow, are broken into fantastic pinnacles, and crowd and press round the valley in attitudes that seem the point of union between the grotesque and sublime. The vines extend to a great distance up their rugged sides, and appear, indeed, to be stopped only by the laws of climate.

Every inch of ground susceptible of cultivation has been wrested from the dominion of nature; and every where the footsteps are visible of a bold, hardy, and industrious people. By and by we pass the castle of the Counts Waldenstein, which looks down upon the road to the right. The Eisak, a torrent fed by the snows of the Brenner, rushes foaming through the valley. On either side, picturesquely situated, churches and country-houses come successively into view; and white cottages seem to hang upon the steeps, and gleam far up the mountains, till confounded, to the eye, with the snows of the summit.

The costume of the people is not, to us, among the most insignificant of the things which here catch our eye and amuse our imagination. The women, however, we must own, and we do it reluctantly, look far more comfortable than either elegant or picturesque. The hat resembles in form a good fat sugar-loaf, but is scarcely so pyramidal at the top. In colour, also, it resembles a loaf of sugar—and one of the purest steam-manufacture. It appears to be made of a downy sort of cotton fabric. White frills terminate the gown sleeves at the elbows, from whence black gloves descend to the first joint of the fingers. The gown is of a dark colour, and the waist, bound with a bright blue cestus, so high as to interfere grievously with the most beautiful proportions of nature. If you add to the portrait a reasonable series of petticoats, decently covering the knee, and a pair of

shoes as unlike the slipper of Cinderella as the boldest imagination can picture, you may form some notion of a Tyrolese beauty of the banks of the Eisak. It must be added, however, in the matter of the head-gear, that the upper part of the cone is sometimes dispensed with, and that the cap, in this case of black or brown fur, fits close to the head, and gives it a most strange, and, if we must say it, unsightly appearance.

The men, on the other hand, sport their broad-brimmed hats, gaily twisted, and trimmed with red and blue cord. The waistcoat is red, and almost covered with blue suspenders, three or four inches broad, connected under the throat by a broad band, which has all the effect of embroidery. Inexpressibles, nicely adjusted to the shape, meet a short jacket, of similar proportions, at the waist, which is girded tightly with a band of embroidered leather. The stockings are usually white, with Hessian boots, or buckled shoes.

A group of young peasants in this dress, lounging about the church-door, for the day was Sunday, contrasted finely with a party of travelling pedlars who chanced to pass by, loaded with mousetraps and other small wares. The latter looked like banditti in disguise. Their swarthy faces, adorned with huge whiskers and mustachios, were half concealed by the overhanging brims of their bonnets. They wore broad, black girdles, with pouches and flasks—but no weapon of offence except the long staff that supported their steps.

It was, we think, at this part of the route a spectacle commenced of a very extraordinary nature, peculiar, we trust, for the sake of good taste and right feeling, to the Tyrol. Besides the painted oratories we became acquainted with in Italy, we encountered here, every now and then, a ghastly figure of "Him crucified," as large as life, coloured to resemble a corpse, and dabbled with gore. This awful image is nailed upon a cross at the roadside, with a little roof of boards above the head, to preserve it from the rain. But not merely in the roadside, but in the gateways, and in the halls of the hotels, does the Accusing Witness lift up his testimony. Wherever you go, the livid face meets your eyes, and the bleeding hands are held up in sorrow, warning, or reproach. We need scarcely add, that the image is no more regarded, by the eyes that have dwelt upon it from infancy, than the portraits daubed on the walls of the oratories in red paint—and indeed, in one instance, we saw it, by the side of a rock, converted into a fountain, with water spouting from the stomach!

As we leave Deutschen behind, we part with the more gentle and agreeable features of the landscape. The valley becomes narrower; the road is compressed, as it were, in the fierce grasp of the mountain-cliffs; and the torrent rushes foaming through the narrow passage, as white as its native snows. Beyond this, but still in the midst of all that is wild and magnificent in mountain-scenery, is the village of Kolman. On the opposite side of

the valley, on a peak of the mountain, and seeming to form part of the rock itself, stands the castle of Trostburg (Tronsberg in the engraving). To the left of the castle, on the very summit of a mountain, there is a village, with its church and tapering spire.

We can conceive nothing more wild, more picturesque, and indeed more fantastic, than this castle of Trostburg. One is perplexed to discover how the owners contrive to climb into their nest at all; but, this possibility conceded, it is easy to imagine what a den of terror the place may have been in feudal times. The passage by the Tyrol is the oldest, and was the best-frequented—if it is not so still—of all the grand avenues to Italy; and it was perhaps well worth the while of the original proprietors to build such a toll-house on the way. We were told that the present tenant is the Baroness of Gottenberg.

When we pass Kolman, some alteration takes place in the costume; and the women dress more showily, if not in better taste. We see some broad-brimmed straw hats, profusely trimmed with broad blue ribbons; the sleeves are of a different colour from the boddice, and the petticoat different from both. The men have assumed the conical hat, with the point of the cone a little flattened, which we usually see on the stage as the costume of the Tyrolese peasant.

The next village is Clauzen, with the Capuchin convent of Seben on the heights above it. This forms

an object still more striking, we think, than the castle of Trostburg. It stands on the edge of one of the most terrific precipices in the valley.

The valley now appears to terminate in a wide amphitheatre; in the middle of which the town of Brixen appears, set down at the point where the Eisak is joined by the Rienze, another mountain-torrent. Brixen is the residence of a bishop, and contains four thousand inhabitants. There is nothing worthy of remark in the architecture of the place. The houses are covered with wood, as is usually the case in a mountainous country, where timber is the cheapest, and, owing to the mountain-torrents, the most come-atable commodity. There is a manufactory of iron and steel at Fulpmesz, in the neighbourhood, which possesses a considerable reputation.

The finest view near Brixen is obtained on Mount Salve, from whence you can see the Valley of the Inn in its whole extent, and trace the river in its course into Bavaria. On one side, the background of the picture is formed by the Alps that separate the Tyrol from that country. In every other quarter of the compass, you find yourself surrounded by an ocean of mountains, whose white heads it is hardly possible for a stranger to recognize individually.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PASS OF THE BRENNER.

We enter now upon the classic ground of the Tyrol—for every inch between this and Innsbruck is hallowed by some association connected with "the war of liberty." Let no one sneer at the name. If the Tyrolese *preferred* the dull, leaden tyranny of Austria, to the rugged, cold-iron one of Bavaria, their efforts to throw off the latter yoke were a war of liberty. It is a hard case if a man cannot wear even his fetters in this world in any way he chooses.

There were many things, besides, in the old system of government, which rendered it agreeable to the people. Their prejudices were respected, and their national vanity flattered. The master knew the value of his servant, and was content to humour him in small things, in order to secure his zealous services in great. The Bavarians, on the other hand, when the country was basely surrendered to

them by the treaty of Presburg in 1806, snatched at it as a robber seizes his prey. They were too dull to comprehend the character of their new subjects, or too heartless to respect it. The Tyrolese found out (perhaps for the first time!) the blessings of the Austrian rule; they remembered that their fathers, and their fathers' fathers, had fought under the banner of the two-necked eagle; and at the first imperial proclamation, filled as it was with sneaking excuses and flatulent promises, and elicited only by the victories of Napoleon, the ally and master of Bavaria, they rose up in exultation, and cried out like one man, "To your tents, O Israel!"

The night of the 8th of April, 1809, was the time appointed for a general insurrection. Sawdust was seen floating down the Inn and other torrents; and the peasants knew by the signal that the time was come. It was answered instantaneously by discharges of musketry, and the clang of alarm-bells echoing through the valleys; and as the night closed in, heavy and starless, hundreds of fires, lighted on the mountain-heights, spread from post to post the tidings through the country. The Bavarian troops, confounded by the suddenness with which discontent had ripened into war, were thrown into tumult and confusion. The actual amount of the danger was hidden in the dark; although the bale-fires on the cliffs revealed the fact, with sufficient distinctness, that the whole of the peasantry were in arms. A column of French

troops, consisting of three thousand men, on their march to Augsburg, found themselves suddenly in the midst of the din of battle, and were captured, in spite of a spirited resistance, with all their guns, eagles, and colours; and, after a series of hard fighting, eight thousand French and Bavarians surrendered, on the 13th of April, at the village of Wiltau, near Innsbruck, to the victorious peasants.

But it is not our present task to describe a struggle, the result of which brands with eternal dishonour the name of Austria. We trust that, on the next emergency, she will call in vain on the brave peasants of the Tyrol; whom she first sold to an enemy—then tempted into rebellion—and then betrayed and abandoned. The *next* emergency! Has it not arrived? Look at the situation of Austria and her sister Prussia at this moment—hemmed in between a line of freedom on one side, and a line of revolution on the other. On the east, the line commences with Hungary, and extends through Poland to the shores of the Baltic; on the west, the frontiers of liberty, beginning with Bavaria, only end at the sea-dykes of Holland!

Past Brixen, the scenery still continues as wild as before; and the Eisak, losing its dead yellowish colour, foams along through the valley as white as snow. We pass the castle of Randeneck, and enter a defile, with some ruins near the opening. At Mühlbach, the country again enlarges, and the road wanders through meadows dotted with trees

and ruins. At Mauls another defile commences, in which there is little more than room for the road and the torrent. The passage is guarded, at the farther end, by the castle of Sprechenstein on one side, and that of Reiffenstein on the other. Beyond this, a chapel marks the place where the French invasion stopped in 1797; and soon after we reach Sterzing.

Sterzing is situated in a marshy plain, at the foot of the mountains, on which you can trace distinctly the various grades of climate. They are cultivated to a considerable height from the bottom; then comes a belt of firs, then of barren rocks, and then of snow. To the left, the white pinnacles of the mountains are among the most picturesque we have seen; on the right, the round, bald head of the Brenner indicates the path we are to pursue. The town itself contains about thirteen hundred inhabitants, and, with its white-washed walls, has rather a neat appearance. It is the Urbs Styriacorum of the Romans; and in their time contained a mint, principally for sestertii, coined from metal found in the neighbourhood.

Soon after leaving Sterzing, we begin to ascend the Brenner, and to remark the change in climate and vegetation. This, however, is the lowest mountain in the great chain of the Alps; and, to one who has crossed the Simplon, the route will not appear very extraordinary. Many places here having been rendered remarkable by the heroism of Hofer and his comrades, we took advantage of the slowness

with which we knew the diligence would wind its way up the heights, to walk on before, and examine the localities at our leisure.

Mr. Brockedon, who is the only English authority on the subject of the Tyrol, points out a spot between Sterzing and Brixen as the scene of a very remarkable *ruse de guerre* of Hofer. We could not ourselves, however, obtain any precise information; but it struck us, on looking at the place, that it neither answered to the existing descriptions, nor was in itself likely to have afforded facilities for such an exploit. Mr. Brockedon once remarked to us, ingeniously, that the very absence of steep precipices rendered the story more probable, inasmuch as the impetus of the rocks thrown down upon the enemy would have gathered force from the length of the descent. This, however, is to consider the Bavarian column as a stationary body, without the power of motion or escape. The truth, we believe, is, that several affairs of the same kind took place during the war, and have been confounded one with another. The story Mr. Brockedon tells appears, from the similarity of some expressions, to be the same which is related in the Annual Register, not of the Valley of the Eisak, but of the passes of the Brenner on the Innsbruck side of the mountains.

"We had penetrated to Innsbruck, without great resistance," says the authority cited in the Register, "and, although much was reported about the Tyrolese stationed upon and round the Brenner,

we gave little credit to it, thinking the rebels to have been dispersed by a short cannonade, and already considering ourselves as conquerors. Our entrance to the passes of the Brenner was only opposed by a small corps, which continued to fall back after an obstinate, though short, resistance. Among others I perceived a man, full eighty years of age, posted against the side of a rock, and sending death among our ranks at every shot. Upon the Bavarians descending from behind to make him prisoner, he shouted aloud, hurrah! struck the first man to the ground with a ball, seized the second in his arms, and with the ejaculation, 'in God's name!' precipitated himself with him into the abyss below. Marching onwards, we heard, from the summit of a high rock, 'Stephen, shall I chop it off yet?' to which a loud 'nay,' reverberated from the opposite side. This was told to the Duke of Dantzic,* who, notwithstanding, ordered us to advance. The van, consisting of four thousand Bavarians, had just stormed a deep ravine, when we again heard, over our heads, 'Hans! for the most Holy Trinity!' Our terror was completed by the reply that immediately followed, 'In the name of the Holy Trinity, cut all loose!' and, ere a minute had elapsed, thousands of my comrades in arms were crushed, buried, and overwhelmed by an incredible heap of broken rocks, stones, and trees, hurled down upon us."

* Lefevre.

The anonymous author of the "History of Hofer,"* describes a similar incident as occurring in the Valley of the Eisak. "One extraordinary method of destruction," says he, "used by the Tyrolese on this occasion ought not to be omitted. They had, by the direction of Harpinger, felled several enormous larch-trees, upon which they piled large masses of rock, and heaps of rubbish; the whole being supported by strong cords, by means of which they were suspended over the edge of a precipice. During the action, the Tyrolese decoyed a body of the enemy's troops, by appearing to retreat, immediately under the spot, when, in an instant, the ropes were cut, and the whole structure came thundering down upon the heads of the unfortunate troops beneath. Few had time to escape; the principal part of them were instantly crushed to death; a death-like stillness succeeded to the tremendous noise of the falling avalanche, which was only interrupted by the shrieks of those who were perishing in the ruins."

The only incident of the kind, indeed, in the same work, in which the merit of the contrivance is given to Hofer, is described as taking place on the heights above Sterzing, at the very commencement of the struggle.

* Printed at Leipsic in 1817, and translated into English in 1820. The author is supposed to have either been an eye-witness, or to have derived his materials from one.

We had almost reached the summit of the pass, when, perceiving the diligence like a speck at an immense depth below us, we ventured to wander from the road, to examine, at more convenience, the details of a picture which was one of the most striking we had yet fallen in with in the scenery of the mountain. The road does not here, as is the case on the Simplon, reach the very summit of habitable earth, where the glaciers, sheathed in ice, pierce onward to a height which the eagle never thinks of visiting. The top of the Brenner was still several thousand feet above our head; and the region of snow had not yet commenced. We were on the side of a defile not approaching in sublimity the abyss of the Saltine, but still richer in the points of pictorial effect which catch the eye of a painter. The road skirted round a kind of recess in the mountain, forming an irregular area of from two to three hundred feet in diameter, where the traces of cultivation were still visible round the ruins of a cottage. The inner sides of this recess were formed by a wall of almost perpendicular rock, surmounted by a belt of firs and larches that stretched, as far as the eye could follow, along the side of the mountain. In the depths of the valley in the distance, on the side of Sterzing, the white walls of a village, and a church-tower, were seen gleaming through the trees. A torrent, probably an arm of the Eisak, was occasionally visible, as it foamed along the bottom.

The place was singularly still. The sight of the village, instead of interrupting the idea of solitude, seemed, by the distance, and the apparently impracticable nature of the interval between, rather to confirm and strengthen it; while the blackened ruins of the cottage served to associate the spot with the things of the past, and to divorce it from all concernments of the present. It was not strange that our imagination, heated with the tales of Hofer and his band of heroes, which had filled up the conversation half the way from Brixen, should have applied the localities around us to its own purposes. We, in fact, lost ourselves during some minutes in a reverie, in which the spirits of the gallant and devoted Tyrolese passed by, like the forms that rose upon the dream of Ossian in "woody Morven." Just at this moment an old shepherd, climbing up by a path that was concealed among the brushwood, stood before us with the suddenness of an apparition.

An idea passed through our mind for which we blush to this good hour. Untouched by the solemnity of the scene and its noble associations, our thoughts reverted, on the instant, to—Paternoster Row! Here was a scene painted to our hand—here an epoch worthy of the pen of Scott—here a living chronicle of the days of other years! Visions of hot-press and foolscap swept across our sight—

"And lo! three 'twelve-mos' smoked upon the board!"

The shepherd, however, turned out to be—a

shepherd. No ingenuity of ours could lead him to form the remotest idea of what we wanted. The spot had, indeed, been the field of a skirmish, and a bloody one. The men of the village in sight had come out in the morning to meet the Bavarians at the pass; and, before evening, the waters of the torrent, died with a redder hue than that of the setting sun, had rolled anguish and dismay among their homes and families. This was all. No one had acted a braver part than his neighbours —no one was more closely connected than the rest with the human sympathies of his friends or survivors.

"Even the women fought," added at last our impracticable informer.

"Ay!—the women?—perhaps the *young* women?" said we in renewed hope.

"No, not so young," replied the peasant, "those who had their sons and husbands to help."

"But, perhaps, there were others who *would* have assisted if they had dared—who hovered about the field at a distance—who—"

"Yes, there was one, and she was young enough, for that matter. But it was not fear that kept her back, neither was it patriotism that urged her forward. Leonore, you see, was betrothed to a young man of the name of Hans, who is now—"

"Never mind what he is now, were he a field-marshal! Sit down, my fine old fellow, and tell us what kept Leonore back, if it was not fear,

and what urged her forward, if it was not patriotism." The shepherd did not sit down, but, striking his iron-pointed pole into the ground, and leaning upon it, in a fashion which showed that it was his customary mode of resting, began to discourse somewhat as follows.

THE LOCK OF THE PASS.

Leonore, said he, was not one of us by birth. She was born among the Swiss mountains to the west, and was thirteen years of age before her mother, who was a widow, married a Tyrolese, and left her country for ever. Her brother, born in the same hour with herself, finding something disagreeable in the new alliance, left the wedding-party before it had half reached our valley, and, wandering away to the north, took service as a soldier with the Bavarians.

Leonore wept bitterly for a while after this desertion, for she had loved her brother with a love passing that of women; but, by degrees, she was comforted. She heard of the lad's establishment in the army, and occasionally a little token of his remembrance would reach her through some circuitous channel. By and by there came affairs of her own to mind: for Leonore had grown to the years of the ripeness of the human affections, and Hans delighted in the smiles of the foreign maid more than in the chace of the chamois. He was the boldest hunter and the surest marksman

in the valley; and, being young and beautiful, according to the beauty of men, and withal of a true and generous heart, it was with the approbation of the whole community that his love was given and accepted by one whom we looked upon already as our own, and who was generally said to be the fairest among the daughters of the valley.

Between the courtship and union, however, there came the wrongs of our country, and her revenge. Even our remote rocks were red with the light of the war-beacons, and our native torrent yet redder with the blood of our kinsmen and their foes. There was but one heart in the village that did not beat in unison with the rest, and that one was Leonore's. Her brother was a Bavarian soldier; and, although his regiment had not yet joined the locust-troop that ate up the fruits of our valleys, it was stationed near the frontiers, and might soon be expected in the Tyrol. Leonore thought of these things till she became almost mad. At the meetings of the village, she listened, with a glowing cheek, to the speeches of her young lover, with which he stirred the hearts of his comrades as with a trumpet; but, when alone, she wept as one who would not be comforted.

It was not strange that she should expect a frontier regiment, in such a time, to march through one of the great passes that lead into the interior of the country; but that she should expect to see her *brother*—to single him out, among a body of many thousand men, marching perhaps in close

column, or fighting every inch of their way—and think, in such a sudden emergency, to be able to lure him over to the cause of liberty and honour, must surely be ascribed to a species of phrensy. She was rarely at home. She passed whole days, and sometimes whole nights, wandering among the passes, and watching for the footsteps of war. She seldom spoke; she scarcely ate enough to support human life; and, if nature at any time sunk into a feverish slumber, in a few minutes she would start up unrefreshed, as if reproaching her carelessness. By degrees she attained to such a knowledge of the wild localities of this part of the mountain as no one had ever before possessed.

Our valley, in the meantime, became populous with the ranks of war; for Hofer and his comrades assembled in great force to guard the passes of the Brenner. This is the grand route into the interior of the country, and the highway into Italy. Leonore was the most watchful, and, it must be said, the most skilful of the Tyrolese sentries; for her faculties were sharpened by exercise, and stimulated by the strongest and holiest feelings that can stir the breast of a woman. The main pass, and the only one by which it was supposed that a considerable body of men could penetrate, was not so much the object of her solicitude as the smaller creeks of the mountain, known only to the chamois-hunter. In this, she reasoned on the bloody experience the enemy had lately received; and concluded that, while forcing the

main pass, he would endeavour to pour round, by some other duct, such a stream as would surround the comparatively small body of Tyrolese. Were this manœuvre determined upon, she knew that her brother's regiment would, in all probability, be selected to carry it into execution; for it was formed entirely of mountaineers, chiefly Swiss, who had been accustomed to the cliff and the torrent from their infancy. She at last satisfied her mind that there was only one pass by which a column detached on such a service could hope to penetrate freely enough to be of any use, and to this spot she devoted the whole of her vigilance.

No certain information had as yet been received that the Bavarian troops had quitted Innsbruck, on their march to the Brenner; but news to this effect was expected every instant. Leonore, as usual, betook herself to her post at the earliest dawn, and sat down behind a rock, from which she could obtain a view of the defile without being herself seen. All was silence and solitude, as at her former watchings; but, at length, her quick eye detected a chamois bounding among the rocks in the distance, with a certain peculiarity in its motions which led her to suspect that it had seen the form, or heard the footsteps, of a man. Another hour passed away, and at length she saw a human figure in the same direction. The figure remained stationary for two hours, seated on a cliff, and appeared to be that of a goat-herd watching his flock. It then disappeared.

Some time after, she saw the same figure nearer the straits of the pass, where she was herself concealed. It was in the dress of a mountaineer of the poorer class, and was provided with implements of fishing. It at length lay down by the side of the torrent, and seemed intent on nothing more than the means of obtaining a dinner before the sun should rise high enough to destroy the probability of success. When it was at last noon, and all nature seemed to be fainting with the heat, the fisher arose, and stepped quickly up the side of the ravine. It was not, however, to seek for shelter among the trees; for, appearing in one place, he disappeared in another—sometimes crossing the torrent, and sometimes ascending so high as to be seen upon the edge of the horizon, standing tall and still among the larches that were marshalled on the heights. More than once he was invisible for an hour at a time; but, on appearing again, he was always nearer Leonore. At length the sun sunk slowly behind the mountain, and the mantle of evening fell heavily around. She still continued to watch, but more with ear than eye; and, when at length the tardy moon rose in the heavens, she was convinced that the prowling shadow was still flitting around. Soon the sound of a man's footsteps could be detected by her practised ear, and the crashing of branches as he climbed among the trees; but the sky was now so covered with clouds that the moon, although in her third week, had scarcely any power over the scene.

She became sure, from the near sound of the steps, that the spy was at hand, and that the secret of the pass, which she was convinced he sought, was on the eve of being discovered. The rock, behind which she was concealed, appeared to close in the valley with an impassable barrier; and, till just on the spot, it was difficult, if not impossible, for any one to conjecture that a narrow path led round the base, and opened the whole ravine. Leonore gazed with soul and sense through the chink, formed by the imperfect meeting of two parts of the cliff, which had hitherto served for her window of observation; but, as a sound that resembled the panting of a man or animal met her ear, moved by an uncontrollable impulse, she suddenly stood up, and, leaning over the precipice, looked down upon the path below.

Just at this instant the moon suddenly emerged from her veil of clouds, and threw a light as distinct as that of day upon the spot. A man was below, with upturned face, and ready hand placed upon the butt of a pistol in his girdle, as if alarmed by the slight noise her motion had made. The man was her brother! A thrill of instinctive delight was the first emotion of which Leonore was conscious. He was her brother—her twin-brother! His face was like a reflection of her own in some dark lake on which the shadow of the rock had fallen! It is impossible to say what were the feelings of the Bavarian soldier on this rencontre; but, from the silent gaze of both, it is

probable that he either sympathised with his sister, or was rendered mute and motionless for the moment by some qualm of superstitious astonishment. The next instant a low whistle was heard at a distance; the moon withdrew her light as suddenly as it had been bestowed; and the spy, allowing himself to slide rapidly down the sides of the glen, disappeared in the trees without having uttered a word.

Leonore watched for some time. She even ventured at last to call out the name of her brother; but the sullen echoes of the rocks were the only reply; and, when the sound had died muttering away, she sprung upon her feet in anguish and dismay. What was she to do? Was she to allow the Bavarians to sweep, like a torrent of blood and fire, through the valley of her adoption? Was she to sacrifice the cause with which the very existence of her lover was identified? Or was she to betray her only brother to the enemies that thirsted for his life? There even mingled with the struggle of her feelings some of the same spirit of national honour which ennobles the base bargain by which a Swiss sells his blood to a master. Her brother, it appeared, was trusted by his officer; stripling though he was, he had gained a reputation for fidelity and courage; he was chosen to spy out, in the midst of a thousand dangers, a path for his comrades, and perhaps to lead on the forlorn hope of the attack. Leonore's heart yearned after her brother, yea, as the heart of a mother yearns after

her only son. She thought how he had grown since she last saw him—how strong he had become—how noble-looking, and beautiful, and brave!—and tears of love and pride gushed from her eyes.

Her tears, however, did not melt the resolution she had taken. In the middle of the night she knocked at the window of Hans's sleeping-room, in his solitary cottage. When the young man saw her, by the faint glimpses of the moon, with her bloodless face, and dishevelled hair floating on her shoulders, he believed that a spirit stood before him, and was fain to catch by the window for support, as he muttered an invocation to the Blessed Mother for assistance.

"Be not afraid," said she; "clothe and arm yourself, and follow me, without a word, and on the instant!" She then sat down, and leaned exhausted against the wall of the cottage till her lover was ready. When he came silently out, she started up, and glided on before him, till they reached the spot where she had seen her brother, which was at the distance of some miles.

"Hans," said she, "there is no time, and no need, for long explanations. The Bavarians are at hand: how near I know not—but nearer than you imagine. It is intended that, while forcing the main pass, a detachment shall steal round by this rock, and plunge, like a vulture, upon the Tyrolese, from the heights of their own mountains. In this detachment—something tells me, at its head—will be my brother!" She had hardly concluded

the sentence, when Hans sprung to the bottom of the rock, and ascertained in an instant the practicability of the pass.

"You have saved our village, Leonore," said he, returning,—"perhaps my country!"

"Listen: I have little more to say."

"Say it as we walk, then; lean upon my arm, and let us return as quickly as your strength will permit."

"I shall say it here. I cannot walk with you, for I am faint and exhausted; and if I could, I would not. My brother, I have said, will be in the detachment. If he is slain by you, or your comrades—or wounded; if one golden lock of his beloved head is injured——"

"Leonore, what do you mean?"

"Listen!" and she knelt upon the rock on which she stood, and raised her arms towards heaven: "if one drop of my brother's blood is spilt, I swear—"

"Hear *me* swear!"

"Swear not! You will act, I know, as becomes a man and a Tyrolese: as for me, I have a duty of my own. I swear, if the disclosure I have now made shall end in the injury of my dead father's son—of my only—my twin-brother—as soon shall heaven league itself with hell as the blood of our races mingle! It is no heavy penalty, Hans, the loss of even a true hand like this—and perhaps, as a sister, I should try to assist it with my prayers and my tears. But I know that you are as tender

as you are brave; I feel that, as your eyes rest on that face, which you will know by mine, you will think (and she allowed her lover to draw her to his breast, while her voice was broken by the weeping she could no longer control)—you will think that he is—the brother of your Leonore!"

"Forsake me, heaven," cried Hans, "if I do not! May the arm wither that falls upon his head except in kindness and mercy!" He had scarcely done speaking, when a distant cannonade announced the advance of the enemy, who had already fallen upon the piquets of the Tyrolese. Hans strained his mistress to his bosom, kissed her pale, damp cheek, and bounded away over the rocks to the rendezvous of his comrades.

When Hans reached the head-quarters of the Tyrolese, he found every thing in good order. Hofer was encircled with his trust-worthy band; every instant a messenger dropped in with intelligence; the motions of the Bavarians were as well known as if the whole force had been in sight; and no other feeling was manifested in the ranks save impatience. Some small detachments had been sent off to annoy and bewilder the enemy on his entrance into the gorge of the mountains; but it was determined that the main body should try the issue of a decisive struggle in the advantageous position they at present occupied. Under these circumstances, the news brought by Hans produced little effect upon the leaders. He had no voucher but the word of a maid who was reputed to be half crazed, and

whose brother, at any rate, was in the Bavarian service. Hans, besides, had been too successful in the chace, in love, and in ball-firing, to be without enemies; and the result of his communication was an order either to join the skirmishers or to fall into the rear.

"You will repent this!" said the chamois-hunter, as at last he drew his hat moodily over his brows, and prepared to depart. "But for me, I have no right to forsake my country because her affairs are directed by unskilful or self-willed men. I go to interpose at least one true heart between the tyrant and his victim."

An hour after he had left the council of the chiefs, as Leonore was sitting alone in her cottage, the latch was lifted, and Hans, followed by his favourite dog, stepped in with a quick but unhurried pace.

"Leonore," said he, taking her hand, and looking sorrowfully on her thin and marble-like countenance, "if the news you gave me to-day be true, you shall never see me more. Keep this dog: let him not follow me where there will, perhaps, be too much of death without him. If I fall, be kind to him for my sake; and think, to the last moment of your life, that you were dearer to me than any thing else in the world—except my country." He kissed her pale lips as he spoke, and went out.

"Hans!" cried she, with a start, as she flew after him to the door, "remember that you are the life of Leonore!"

"Farewell — farewell!" The dog uttered a

moaning and reproachful yell, as he found himself shut in from his master; and Leonore, throwing herself on her knees, endeavoured to keep up her sinking spirits by prayer.

Drearily the day wore on; and Leonore, who had been calmed by her religious exercise, began to be startled anew by thoughts that rose black and indefinite, like spectres, upon her dream. One moment she listened, as if to hear some intelligible sound from the distant ravine—the next, she ran to the door, as if in the determination to follow her lover, and share his fate. Some mysterious misgiving, however, always held her back: when she would have put her hand to the latch, her nerves trembled, and she felt as if she had not courage to raise it; and at last she sate down, for indeed her limbs could no longer support her, and sunk into a kind of apathy, that seemed—if such a thing be possible—like misery without consciousness.

From this she was startled by a sudden howl, from Hans's dog, that rung through the cottage. The animal had been lying for some time in a profound slumber; but, awakened by a dream, sprang upon his feet, and looked earnestly and piteously into Leonore's face. At the moment, the idea of her brother passed across her thoughts. Her heart smote her, for she had not thought of her brother since Hans's departure!

"O Blessed Mother!" cried she, almost with a scream, "if he can be false!—and if I have betrayed the blood of my twin-brother for a kiss!

Why didst thou howl, dumb witness? Didst thou see a spirit—ha?" The dog moaned, and licked her feet, and then crept on his belly to the door.

"Thou shalt go, then," said she, "but upon one condition: that thou shalt carry my curse to the murderer of my brother! Let thy voice be even as a voice of despair in his ear, and let him look upon thy face and die!" She opened the door with the fever-spot burning in her cheek, and the light of phrensy in her eye; and, when the dog sprung forth with a joyful yell, sank down in a chair, and broke into screams of hysterical laughter, that were heard over the village.

Hans, in the meantime, armed as usual, had taken the way alone to the secret pass. He lay for two hours, couched under the rock which had been Leonore's place of observation, with the purpose of picking off the Bavarian leaders as they advanced, with his unerring rifle, and then of defending the passage, sword in hand, as long as his strength held out. By this means, he should at least gain time for his countrymen; for the straits were so narrow that he should have to contend against only a single enemy at once. No enemy, however, appeared; and, by and by, the sky darkened, and it came on to rain as if heaven and earth were meeting. Hans grew impatient. He began almost to doubt the information he had received; and, at last, he rose from his lair, and, plunging into the thicket of firs and larches, resolved to explore the

ravine to its opening, till he should either meet with the Bavarians, or be satisfied that Leonore had been mistaken.

He had not journeyed far, peeping out every now and then, like a wild animal from its covert, when a dull hollow sound at the bottom of the ravine convinced him that the time was indeed come, and the men. They were concealed from him by a range of rocks which overhung the torrent, and were, perhaps, crawling painfully by the edge of the water—if indeed the late drought, only interrupted since the last two hours, did not afford them a broader margin for their march. As the belt of thicket extended without break from his destined place of action to where he now stood, the communication was secure; and even if the space had been more open, it was not improbable, from the extreme suddenness and violence of the rain, that the locks of his enemies' fire-arms were drenched—the Bavarians being, in such matters, far less complete in their appointments than the Tyrolese hunters. Hans, therefore, determined to swing himself down the sides of the ravine, to obtain a view, through the interstices of the rocks, of the force he was to combat at such odds; and, for his escape, if detected, the mountaineer trusted to his rifle and the fleetness of his foot.

When he had gained the edge of the belt of thicket, he found that there still intervened a considerable descent of bare earth, from which the vegetation had been washed by the rains; and, while

considering whether it would be practicable to re-ascend it with sufficient speed, if discovered, the branch of the tree with which he supported himself snapped, and he plunged—not altogether unwillingly, but still without the precautions he would otherwise have practised—to the edge of the rock, against which he came with such force that a portion was detached from the summit and fell over. The glance he was able to take of the bed of the torrent, before withdrawing his head, was only instantaneous —but it was sufficient to make him tremble for his country. Full seven hundred men were below him, marching with as much regularity of order along the edge of the shrunk river as if their route had been on a highway. Their muskets glittered on their shoulders; and, no less than the adjustment of their arms, the aspect and bearing of every man of them declared the practised gladiator.

The descent of the stone appeared to be noticed by the individuals composing the van of the detachment; but it was probably attributed to the violence of the rain, which still continued unabated. The circumstance, however, was laid hold of as an excuse for continuing, or embittering, some tumultuous discussion that had arisen; and presently Hans could hear the word "halt!" pronounced from company to company, and the whole body stood still.

"By ——!" said a harsh voice in front, "I will go no farther — hoodwinked and blindfolded, as one may say—at any man's pleasure. Thunder of heaven! what are we here for, when our

comrades are at work on the other side of the mountain?"

"Besides," added another, "if we arrive (and it does not seem to me to be likely that we shall do so at any time) *after* the main pass is forced, will not even the discomfited fragments of the Tyrolese be strong enough to cut us in pieces?"

"But that is not all," chimed in a third, "although by ——, there is logic in both! I myself saw a stone fall from this here rock; and more by token I *felt* it; but that's neither here nor there. We all know the tricks of these misguided peasants; who, being ignorant of the honours and usages of war, make no more ceremony of bringing down a field-officer than I would in popping at a wolf. Now, the thing is this: if our guide is picked off before we reach what he calls the lock of the pass, how the devil are we to apply the key? If our general did not think himself strong enough to beat the enemy in a fair way *with* us—what is he to do *without* us? And, finally, if we do not sup at Sterzing to-night—thunder and lightning!—*where* are we to sup at all?" A hoarse murmur of applause followed this speech; during which Hans half raised his rifle to his eye, as he watched for an opportunity of seeing the guide, on whose life depended the success of the expedition, and, perhaps, the fate of the war itself. He succeeded in creeping to a position, from which he knew a single motion of his head could bring the whole scene before him; and then waited till some speaker

should address the unruly audience, from a point (indicated by the voice) likely to draw their eyes in an opposite direction. He did not wait long. A voice, which seemed to proceed from an eminence near the middle of the torrent, began to expostulate in a tone of vexation, mingled with anger and contempt.

"Comrades," said the speaker, "I have not deceived you with regard to the time, which you will find on consulting your watches; although the difficulties of the route may have caused it to seem longer than we could have wished. With regard to the distance, I solemnly assure you that we are now not more than two hundred yards from a place where I can point out with my finger the lock of the ravine. It is true that till then your safety must depend upon mine: but will not you trust, for five minutes longer, the same fortune which has led us on in triumph for as many hours? At the same time, I freely and cheerfully consent to any man's turning back who has not a mind to go on. I waive my title to call such conduct treason or desertion; for, by and by, it will be deeds, not words, we shall require. And now, all of you whose stomach for the adventure has left them—to the right-about!—and the rest come on!—Forward for Bavaria! March!" Hans raised his rifle to his eye, and brought it on a level with the ridge of cliff and the spot from whence the voice proceeded; but the speaker had removed, and the whole column was again in motion. The Tyrolese shifted his position,

and, darting behind the rocks, ran on for about twenty yards; where, having drilled hastily a still better vista for his eye and barrel, through some thick moss that fringed the summit, he obtained a full view of his man. The Bavarian's musket, however, protected his neck; his cap was sheathed with metal like a helmet; and, in attempting to hit him in the body, there was some chance that the blow would either be broken by his arm, or make only a superficial wound on either side. Hans, therefore, again ran on.

The next time, the guide was surrounded, and completely hidden, by a knot of soldiers. The elevated part of the route, where it forsook the water's edge and climbed the line of rocks, was at hand—the spot from which he had said truly that he could point out with his finger the lock of the pass! Hans bitterly regretted that he had not fired when he had had an opportunity of striking; but all he could do now was to run on to the place where the column would begin to ascend, and there, if no favourable chance occurred of executing his task secretly, to attract the attention of the victim by boldly presenting himself.

He reached a spot that seemed constructed for the very purpose of assassination. The rock at this place overhung the torrent, which rolled below in a dark and deep volume; and the traveller, rising from the level path, was under the necessity of stepping upon the very edge, while he climbed his way to the summit of the cliffs. In this situation

he would be full in view of a person stationed behind the rocks, which are broken into jagged chasms and fissures. Here the chamois-hunter crept: here he crouched—his rifle at his eye—his finger on the trigger—and murder, that looked as beautiful as virtue, and perhaps was so, in his thoughts.

The next moment the guide, who had impatiently outstripped his comrades, stepped full in view upon the edge of the cliff. He was a young man—in fact, a mere stripling—and of a slight and active figure. His face, however, was turned in the opposite direction, as he seemed to examine the localities of the place; and Hans waited patiently till he should wheel round, being determined, for fear of any lurking protection in the dress, to trust his bullet no where else than in the brow of the victim.

The youth turned round, and his eyes rested for an instant on the very spot where the marksman lay. Hans grew blind. The blood rushed back to his heart, as if by every duct in the body, with a force that threatened instant suffocation. His faculties were confused; he felt as if immersed in some ghastly dream; but, in the midst of all, the idea of Leonore presented itself with appalling distinctness. Her fears were prophetic—those fears which he had set down as the dreams of a girl, ignorant of the world, and dwelling on the image dearest to her fancy till it seemed to fill the foreground of every picture presented to her mind. Her brother—the wandering Swiss—the houseless, friendless stripling, was the leader of the Bavarians!

There was no time for thought—or rather there was too much. Terrible were those moments which contained within their little circle enough of agony to embitter a whole lifetime! The youth was in the act of springing, in proud impatience, upon the cliff which impeded his view. The throats of the Bavarians had already opened in a wolfish cry, only half suppressed, at the prospect of rising from the gulf in which they had so long been swallowed. Hans broke into a cold sweat. At the moment, the sound of distant cannonading swung heavily over the mountains. The main pass, no doubt, had been forced, and the Tyrolese driven back upon the village! The sweat dried upon Hans's brow; his muscles contracted; his features became as rigid and as white as marble. The cry of Leonore, as her image fled from his eyes, was drowned in the shrieks of his country. He fired: and the brother of his beloved, springing several feet into the air, fell into the torrent, a bleeding corpse!

A sound ran through the ranks resembling that of a strong and painful aspiration; and, when it sunk suddenly into silence, nothing was heard but the sullen plunge of the body, as the torrent eagerly devoured and swallowed up the blood-offering. The next instant the men, raising their muskets to their shoulders, looked in the direction from which the shot had come, expecting to behold the whole force of the peasants rising like apparitions upon the heights. They saw only a single man, standing upon the summit, with his rifle lowered,

and gazing wildly upon the red marks that floated down the river. A moment was lost in surprise and confusion of mind; but the next, more than fifty triggers were drawn at the same instant. The greater number missed fire, the powder having been damaged by the rain; but some shots told. The hat of the Tyrolese was first observed to fall; then a fragment was torn away from his sleeve and the arm it contained. The pain of the wound, however, seemed to awaken the human instincts that for a time had been overwhelmed in his heart's despair, and the assassin turned round and fled.

The secret of the pass was preserved. Bare and horrid the guardian rock hung over the ravine which it closed in, in a manner that forbade the slightest hope of a passage; and Hans, directing his flight in an opposite direction up the sides of the steep, sought to lure the adventurers to a spot where they would be visible from many of the huts and villages of his countrymen. He flew in safety. A charm seemed to hang over his life: for the bullets of the Bavarians, who followed in his track, baying like blood-hounds, shattered the bushes and tore up the ground around him, without injuring a hair of his uncovered head. In another vigorous bound he had gained the wood, and was in safety; but just at that moment a louder and fiercer howl drowned the shouts of the soldiers, and his dog was seen on the brink of the fatal rock! The animal glared for an instant upon the scene of strife, and then bounded down the passage. The secret was

discovered. The Bavarians, abandoning their pursuit of a single enemy, rushed towards the lock of the pass. Hans reached it before them. He fought as if the strength of his country was in his single arm. Borne back by numbers—faint, bleeding, mutilated—he defended every step, every inch of the narrow track, even to this spot. Here the villagers, returning in triumph from beating one portion of the enemy, arrived in time to exterminate the other.

"And Hans?" cried we, as the old man drew his staff out of the ground, as if his tale was finished, —"the brave, the noble, ay, the *virtuous* Hans? He recovered from his wounds! Perhaps, at the fall of his country, he sought for honour in the ranks of Napoleon? There was one Tyrolese—we saw him ourselves—absent, proud, and melancholy; the love of ladies, and the envy of men. It was in the time of the Hundred Days——"

"It was not Hans," said the peasant—"guess again."

"Where is Hans?" we demanded, in a low voice. The old man pointed, with his staff, to a mound of earth near the base of the rock.

"And Leonore?" said we, when our voice became steady enough for the question. He pulled off his hat as he turned away in silence. A woman, for whom the mute and respectful salutation was meant, came slowly up the path, with a basket of flowers on her arm, and walked towards the grave.

She was about middle life, and of a slight and attenuated figure; and her head was covered with a thick, black veil. We bent low as she passed; and, walking away, with a dim eye and a swelling heart, left her alone with her glorious and beloved dead.

When we reached the main road again, we found the diligence waiting at the top of the pass. Here we saw the Eisak for the last time, leaping from the side of the mountain, near its source—a ravine clothed with dark firs, in which the snow-waters of the Brenner are collected. The road, on beginning to descend, skirts along the margin of a little lake, the parent, we were told, of some fine trout, which are the staple dish at the inn-tables on both sides of the mountain.

It was night before we completed the descent, and the effect of the lamp-light was singularly fine. The precipices, along the edge of which we seemed to stagger, were magnified till they resembled the wonders of the night-mare; and, as the red flame fell upon the horses and tinged the faces of the postillions, an air of romance was conferred upon the whole scene which we shall not readily forget. The daylight view annexed, however, is better than any night-scene our pen could draw. It comprehends the city of Innsbruck in the distance, with the river Inn.

At the bottom, we passed a village called Steinach, near the banks of the Sill, which is said to be greatly exposed to the danger of avalanches. In

the year 1827, this part of the country was completely buried in the snow, and all communication with the rest of the world cut off for a considerable time. We now entered a highly cultivated valley, and passing the castle of Anersberg, the seat of the noble family of Trantsohn, arrived at the little town of Mattrei. The road soon after leads by the side of the abbey of Wildaw, and presently we found ourselves in Innsbruck—commonly written Inspruck in England—the capital city of the Tyrol.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CITY OF THE MOUNTAINS.

INNSBRUCK is a handsome town, magnificently seated on a plain, surrounded by mountains, and on the banks of the broad and rapid Inn. The river seems to flow through it; but the portion on the left bank is considered as a faubourg. The spot is 2124 French feet above the level of the sea.* The houses are built entirely of stone, and are of very solid construction, from four to six stories high. The walls, being either whitewashed, or painted some delicate colour, such as light yellow or pale blue, have a pretty and *cleanly* effect; but in the height of summer must, for the same reason, be too glaring for the taste, as well as injurious to the eyes.

* Zallinger, Sammler für Geschichte und Statistik von Tirol, v. 4. p. 5. The details throughout the text, relating to the statistics of the Tyrol have been carefully compared with the "Handbuch für Reisende" of Anton Johann Grosz, 1831.

The town is laid out with unusual regularity, having a single grand street running through it, breadth-ways, from which most of the others diverge. This street, of which a view is annexed, is at once handsome and picturesque. The mountains appear to close it in, at the upper end; and, looking towards them as he ascends the street, the spectator is impressed with a sentiment approaching to awe by their dark and threatening aspect. The principal object in the foreground is a column, richly decorated, and bearing, among other inscriptions, the following, which explains its purpose.

"MARIÆ VIRGINI MATRI IMMACVLATÆ FILIÆ DIVÆ ANNÆ OB HOTESTAM BAVARIVM QVAM GALLIVM ANNO MDCCIII TYROLVM INVADENTES VTRINQUE TAMEN ET ŒNIPONTO QVIDAM IN FESTO S. ANNÆ TRIDENTO AVTEM IN NATIVITATE B. M. V. DEPVLOSOS TYROLENSIS PROVINCIA IN PERPETVAM DEBITÆ GRATITVDINIS TESSERAM PRÆSENS MONVMENTVM EX VOTO POSVIT."

Towards the end, nearer the centre of the town than the column, the line of street is bordered on either side with arcades, resembling those of Padua, but with the arches pointed and dark; and where the street is terminated by another, running across the bottom at right angles, and also provided wit arcades, the vista is closed by a house having part of the roof gilded, which, in a particular light, has rather a striking effect. At the commencement of the arcades, a street to the left (as you look towards the mountain) leads to the church of the Franciscans; which is, perhaps, the only

building in Innsbruck that will detain the traveller long.

This edifice was built by Ferdinand I. and is chiefly remarkable for the monument of Maximilian I. erected there by order of the former. The monument stands in the middle of the church, and occupies a considerable portion of the whole area. In the middle of the picture appears a sarcophagus of white marble, with inscriptions in golden characters on a black surface. The figure of Maximilian is conspicuous on the top, in a kneeling posture, with the face to the altar; and, around it, twenty-four representations, in bas-relief, commemorate his actions. But, whether an actual appurtenance to this monument or not, a series of twenty-eight statues, which stand around it, lining the sides of the church, attract as much of the attention of the spectator, and seem to form, with the centre-piece, one magnificent group.

These are of bronze, about seven feet high, and exhibit extraordinary richness and variety in the drapery. Some are in armour from head to heel, some in crowns and robes, and some in court-dresses. The original idea of the assemblage was conceived by Maximilian himself; who wished to raise statues in memory of the most illustrious Knights of Christendom, such as Glodwig, Godfrey de Bouillon, and King Arthur. When the emperor died, however, and took his post himself as the chief worthy in the group, his grandson Ferdinand changed it into a family gallery; where the spectator may now feast

his eyes on the features, male and female, of the heretofore representatives of the ancient and imperial house of Austria.

The cupola of the church of Saint Johannes von Nepomuck may also be pointed out as worthy of notice. This holy martyr, who was constrained to throw himself over the bridge of Prague, seems to be held in great esteem in the Catholic churches of Germany, most of which have a statue or a painting to his honour. In the one we have now mentioned, there is a pictorial representation of his martyrdom, in which the saint is seen swimming in the river, with the cross in his arms. The Duke of Bavaria and his soldiers stand by with torches, the light of which is lost in a blaze that comes from heaven.

For the rest there is nothing very remarkable in the mountain-city; unless its variety of balconies should be mentioned, both those of northern and southern origin, or, in other words, those that are covered or uncovered. A few of the houses are painted on the outside with portraits of the Virgin or Saint Florian; the latter being the individual who keeps the Protector Insurance Office, in the Catholic heaven, against fire.

Innsbruck, however, if not very interesting in itself, is the point, or centre, from which every thing that is interesting in the country may be seen. The natives trudge into the city, from the most distant valleys, as if for the very purpose of showing themselves. Here the odious, round, fur wig meets

and nods to the white sugar-loaf, and the lofty black cone pulls itself off to both. Some have no covering on the head at all, except the one provided by providence; which is combed away from the face, and hangs, in twisted chains, down the back. The waists of some ladies describe a right line from arm-pit to arm-pit; and the whole figure would have the appearance of a well-stuffed sack, were it not for a most magnificent bump which rises mid-way, and vindicates the picturesque of nature. The petticoat generally covers the knee, if it does nothing more, and is of, at least, two colours, such as light-blue half way down, and dark-blue the rest. The boddice is as fine as the most profuse colourist could make it; and is often ornamented, over and above, with blue suspenders like those of the men: but what was the nature of the article which receives support from this machinery we had not an opportunity of examining.

The public walks are as delightful as artificial walks can be. One runs by the river-side, and is laid out in imitation of natural groves, in such a manner as to make the most of a very confined area. Another consists of an extensive garden, with a greenhouse and fountains. Both, however, were comparatively deserted; and this, to whatever cause it may be owing, we have observed to be the case with the promenades of almost every town we have yet visited in the course of this journey.

In the immediate neighbourhood, the remains of the ancient Roman road are seen near the convent of

Wilten, where the Sill forms a cascade, partly artificial. At a league's distance is the castle of Ambras, situated on a beautiful hill, with a waterfall behind. This edifice was formerly enriched by a cabinet of antiquities, founded by the Archduke Ferdinand. In 1806, however, it was removed to Vienna, where it now forms the Ambrasian Gallery, near the Belvidere; and the only ornaments of the castle remaining are, some family pictures of the House of Hapsburg, and a few specimens of armour of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It was here that the famous Wallenstein met with an accident, which, perhaps, contributed to form his character, and *make* his destiny. While at Ambras, in the situation of page to the Margravine of Burgau, he fell out of a window, and, by a kind of a miracle, was taken up unhurt. The circumstance took a singular hold of his enthusiastic mind. He thought that a life so preserved must be destined for some lofty purpose; and ever after acted as became the illustrious child of fate. From the roof of the castle, there is a view of Innsbruck, Hall, and ten villages of the Valley of the Inn.

At the same distance is the defile of Kranewitten, which presents some of the most frightful scenery to be seen in the Tyrol. The Schönberg is distant a single post, from which you discover the glaciers of Mutterberg, and the valley of Stubay. This valley is ten leagues long, and resounds with the Cyclopian hammer, being peopled by blacksmiths. The Martinswand, a magnificent range of rocky mountains,

bordering the White Valley, is three leagues and a half distant, and is visible from our bed-room window in the Goldene Adler. It was in these terrific solitudes that the Emperor Maximilian, while hunting the chamois, in the year 1493, lost his way. The inhabitants relate that an angel at last appeared to him and pointed out the path; but Hertius, the German historian, says that, after having been twenty-four hours alone, the emperor was seen accidentally by a shepherdess, who brought her brother to his assistance. The road is now so good that a similar accident could scarcely happen in our day; and the traveller requires nothing more from the angels of the White Valley than a draught of milk. The mountain affords a fine view of the Valley of the Inn.

The forest of Schaber is three leagues distant; the beautiful meadows of Zierl, four; and Mount Solstein, which commands a view as far as Munich, six. The salt-mines of Hall are four leagues and three quarters; the silver-mines of Schwatz, six; and the gold-mines of Zell, in the Zillerthal, twelve. Among the more distant points for excursion may be mentioned the glaciers of Octzthal, which are twenty leagues from Innsbruck; the waterfall of the same name, sixteen; and Ortlerspitz, one of the loftiest mountains in Europe, thirty-nine. In both the Upper and Lower Valley of the Inn, there are mines of calamine, copper, and lead, and manufactories in brass-work, glass, and steel. The environs of the city itself are rich in mineral waters.

Our own excursions were limited to rambles on foot among the mountains and valleys in the neighbourhood of the river; and of these we can give but a very indifferent account—for, to say the truth, we forgot, in our individual gratification, the demands of an expectant, or at least expected, reader. We can conceive no higher pleasure in this world than a summer's stroll through the Tyrol, with a knapsack on our back, and a staff in our hand. If to these we had the good fortune to add a few silver coins in our pouch (and a very few would suffice), and—not so much for companionship as just by way of an excuse for letting out our voice now and then, when the chest rose, and the muscles swelled, and the heart grew full—a bit of a dog by our side, a rough, touzy tyke of a terrier, —we would not change places with an emperor.

On the right bank of the Inn, as it approaches Innsbruck, the country is very picturesque, the avenues to the mountains leading between sloping hills, and through defiles covered with wood. On the opposite side, the huge black cliffs ascend abruptly from the valley, and present an unbroken mass of shadow, till the eye reaches the region of snow and ice. The plains between are laid out in rich pastures, groves, and orchards, with here and there a cottage or a hamlet peeping through the trees. The Inn rolls in the midst, a broad and abundant stream, and gives an appearance of freshness and animation to the whole picture.

Sometimes a raft is seen, floating down, from the

recesses of the Tyrol, some family or tribe of mountaineers, with their whole worldly possessions. The raft is adapted, in point of size, to the number of the colony it is meant to transport; and is constructed of nothing more than rough trunks of trees floored over, and navigated by two persons, fore and aft, each provided with a broad oar to direct their course. The current answers for wind and steam together; and onward glides the vessel, through solitudes where the scream of the eagle is heard above their heads, and where the wild goat looks down upon them in surprise from the cliffs.

As they draw nearer to the mountain-city, a stir may be seen in the floating village. The adventurers make haste to array themselves in all the bravery of their native valleys; and instructions seem to be given, from one to the other, to comport themselves with the propriety which the importance of the occasion demands. The young women are anxiously assisted by their mothers to arrange their head-gear and plait their hair; while their ruddy cheeks grow yet more ruddy, flushed with dreams of conquest, with anticipations of novelty and delight, with the thousand dazzling but indefinite hopes of innocence and youth.

On arrival, the raft, which, though it descended, cannot ascend the current, is hewn to pieces, and sold for timber or firewood; and the passengers are dispersed, like its materials, over the country. Few find their way back to the valleys from which the descent was so easy and so pleasant. Alas! what

a string of stale moralities might be appended to this history!

It seems extraordinary to us, that a country and a people so interesting—and, what is of more consequence to the fashionable literature of our day, so melo-dramatic—should be so little known in England. With the honourable exception of one part of the "Passes of the Alps," we do not know an English book that even professes to give an account of the Tyrol. In French, we have met with nothing that could satisfy any reasonable curiosity; in Italian, we find a pamphlet dedicated to the description of a southern portion of the country; and in German alone is there any thing approaching to detail. For our own part, we have, at present, no opportunity, and no room, to attempt filling up the hiatus—although we shall hope, at some future period, to be able to tell at least all that we know: and, in the meantime, we devote the few pages we can now spare to a sketch, in our hasty way, of the country and its inhabitants.

On the north, the Tyrol is bounded by Bavaria; on the east, by Austria, Carinthia, and the eastern portion of the Lombard-Venetian kingdom; on the south, by western Lombardy; and, on the west, by Switzerland. The Swiss frontiers are merely imaginary lines of geography; for, in reality, the two countries form one territory of nature. The Tyrolese appear to be continuations of the Swiss mountains, presenting the same physical character, and the same classes of vegetation; while the animal productions,

including man himself, bear distinct traces of their common identity. The lakes and valleys, however, dwindle as the borders of Helvetia are left behind; and the Tyrol seems to be a debateable land of the Alps, where they thrust their white heads in from all quarters, and in the wildest confusion. The loftiest of these mountains in the Tyrol, and in all Germany, is the Ostler. Towards the east, there is the same indistinctness in the borders; but the Bavarian and Italian frontiers are intelligibly drawn.

From the height of the mountains, every variety of temperature may be experienced in a walk of a few hours; but in general, towards the north, the climate is still more severe than might be expected from the geographical situation of the country, while in the south it is in the same degree mild and warm. Cattle is the staple commodity in the north, where there is little room for agriculture, and where the soil is unproductive; in the south, wine, silk, and fruits, are rich and abundant.

The country is divided politically into seven circles: those of the Upper and Lower Inn, Botzen, Puster, Roveredo, Trent, and Bregenz. In these circles there are twenty-one principal towns, thirty-two smaller towns, and fifteen hundred and fifty-eight villages. The population of the whole country does not exceed seven hundred and sixty-two thousand.

Brave, honest, and faithful, but superstitious and bigotted, the Tyrolese of the present day seems to owe

both his good and bad qualities to the physical peculiarities of his situation. Shut in by his mountains, by the poverty of his country, and by his own fierce and warlike character, from admixture with the rest of the world, he retains the same faith and prejudices that hung like a nightmare upon Europe in the iron ages. These, however, are counteracted in their moral influence by other circumstances. The narrowness of the valleys rendering them insufficient for his support, he is compelled to wrest a hard subsistence from the mountains. He scatters his grain, or plants his vines, wherever they will grow, and is only stopped in his hardy agriculture by the influence of climate. The same cause makes him a "mighty hunter." If the valley is insufficient, or the mountain churlish, he has recourse to the exercise, forbidden or not, of his rifle, and preys upon his fellow-commoners of nature—the roe, the stag, the wolf, the bear, and the chamois. Danger becomes habitual, and is therefore unattended with fear. A spirit of martial honour stands in place of the rules that dominate the plains; and on the peaceable habits of the agriculturist are engrafted the wild virtues of the outlaw.

The skill in firing, for which the Tyrolese are famous, was acquired in the chase. Before it became a matter of honour and rivalship, it was an affair of business—a part of their every-day calling. It is now a point of national pique; and the man who never shot a chamois can put a bullet through a target, at a distance from which an English

marksman could hardly see the bull's eye. The traveller is perpetually reminded of this peculiarity in the people. Every where there are rifle-shots ringing through the valleys, and knots of peasants contending for the prize. Even the troops of the line convert their drill into a manly pastime; and are seen and heard returning from the field, with their well-riddled target borne home on their shoulders, to the music of the drum and fife.

At meetings where the professed business is rivalry, it could hardly be that the parties should separate without a fight. This, indeed, is a very common consummation of a ball-firing match; but in the Tyrol, as in England, there are certain laws of honour enforced by the bystanders, which invest the *turn-up* with an extrinsic dignity, and, from a dog-like grapple, convert it into an exhibition of strength and skill. One of the spectators is elected, before commencement, the judge of the battle; and this honour is usually awarded to acknowledged strength, as it sometimes falls to the lot of the judge to enforce the laws by means of a drubbing. The conqueror has the right to pluck the feather from his enemy's hat and stick it in his own. The appearance of three feathers at once in any hat is a general challenge, and shows that the wearer considers himself—and is ready to refer the fact to the arbitrament of sticks or fisticuffs—the best man in the valley.

Among the amusements of the people, the most singular are the dramatic representations, performed

not by professional actors, but by the peasants themselves. These, we believe, are now almost peculiar to the Tyrolese; but they were formerly practised in Bavaria, Swabia, and Switzerland. The drama is planned, and the parts studied, during the long nights of winter; and the author is generally either the schoolmaster or the shoemaker—for there is an affinity in the Tyrol, as well as in England, between poetry and leather. When the fine summer days begin, the audience assemble, from far and near, either in the court of a farm-house, or on the banks of the river. At the expence of a few kreutzers, they take their places in the sun, and remain from mid-day until evening.

The performance commonly consists of three distinct pieces: the first, a religious mystery; the second, a sort of national melo-drama; and the third, a drollery or farce. The mystery sometimes represents the life of Christ in a dramatic form; sometimes it is a saintly legend; and sometimes a story from the Old Testament, such as the judgment of Solomon, or Joseph in Egypt. In the melo-drama, there is always a person whose influence on the action of the piece is derived from the elevation of his religious character. In his hands, the cross is used like the magic sword of Harlequin; and the rosary is a chain strong enough to control the laws of nature themselves. There is also a comic personage, who answers to the clown of England—abundance of tyrants, who are always Pagans —and last, not least, the devil himself, in the shape

of a huntsman. This last character plays a thousand tricks, till he is at length discovered, and vanishes with a most unamiable smell, and in the midst of thunder and lightning.

When the piece of The Passion is performed it is garnished, between each act, with texts from Scripture which bear reference to the part of the action that is to follow. These interludes, however, are sometimes pantomimic representations of what the next act is to display at length; and, during their performance, an angel reads the programme, exhorting the spectators, and pointing out the passages which should come most home to their business and bosoms.

The farce is accompanied with instrumental music, and contains the secret history of the village, plentifully sprinkled with scandal and railleries. If any thing ridiculous takes place before the curtain, since the commencement of this long entertainment, it is straightway lugged into the piece, and the audience are made to laugh at their own folly and absurdities.

The Tyrolese are passionately attached to the memory of their great patriot, Hofer. At the head of our bed there is a printed memorandum, framed and glazed, which purports that Hofer once lodged in this house, where he arrived on the 15th of August, 1809. Our bed, be it known, since we have mentioned such a thing, is stuffed with the husks of Indian corn, according to a custom that is also prevalent in Italy. If Mr. Cobbett's speculation

succeeds, and the plant becomes general in England, the people will find it much more comfortable, cleanly, and easily arranged, when used in this way, than either flock or wool.

The Goldene Adler, independently of being the house where Hofer lodged, is a primitive inn, at once cheap and comfortable. Having paid our very moderate bill, leaving a gratuity for the servants, the chambermaid came into our room, and, seizing our hand, kissed it! We did not recollect at the moment that this was a customary way of expressing gratitude in such cases. We were hurried, indeed, and taken at a loss: and, in short, without an idea of gallantry, or any thing else, but simply from not knowing how to act on the occasion, we returned the salute on the damsel's lips. She appeared to be grateful for the new compliment, and, curtseying low, thanked us again, and withdrew.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE VALLEY OF THE INN.

We left Innsbruck with a German Swiss, who hoped that he should prove to be very good company, speaking, as he told us, *un parole* of French. The road winds along the left bank of the river, in the magnificent Valley of the Inn. Sometimes it diverges to a considerable distance from the water's edge, but always returns, as if loth to quit it entirely. The first post is Zierl, a dirty and gloomy village; the next Platten, cheerfully situated in an open part of the valley. At Talfs, rather a populous and thriving place, we dash at once into the mountains, and wander for some distance among woods and rocks. At Ober-miemingen, the third post, a neat and prettily-situated village, we have not rejoined the Inn, which lies lost in the valley.

Near this, a very remarkable scene catches the eye of the traveller. The principal object is the castle of Clumm, a fine ruin in a splendid situation. It looks down into the valley, in the depths of

which the Inn is concealed. On the opposite side, the mountains form a noble background to the picture. All that we could learn in the neighbourhood and at the next post—although assisted by the German Swiss, whom we took with us on the strength of his *parole*—was, that the castle was supposed to be a Roman ruin, and that it had been occupied, from time immemorial, by peasants.

The road now plunges into an extensive forest of firs; and, after traversing a most romantic glen, we arrive at Nassereit. The situation of this place is singularly wild and gloomy. It is hemmed in on three sides by perpendicular mountains of naked rock; but, on the fourth, the view opens into the Valley of the Inn. The next post is Imst, a large village, situated on the declivity of a hill, so steep that in the whole place there is not a foot of level ground. The village was almost wholly destroyed by fire some years ago, and has not yet wholly recovered.

We now cross the river by a very handsome wooden bridge of three arches, raised upon stone pillars; and, leaving on the right an old square tower perched on what seems to be an inaccessible point of the steep, arrive within sight of the superb mountain of Arlberg, towering like a gigantic fortress above its neighbours. The effect of the sunset on the snows of the mountain, contrasting with the broad brown shadows at the base, is inexpressibly fine.

We enter the village of Zums, passing a new

convent of the Sisters of Mercy. This establishment is endowed with large estates, although the number of nuns is limited to twelve. These ladies, agreeably to the rules of the founder, Vincenz de Paula, take the vows for only one year. In the house there is a hospital for females, and in the village a school, which the nuns attend every day.

From Imst to Landeck, the next place, the post is three German miles, instead of two, the ordinary distance. Landeck is a village snugly niched in a corner of the valley. The mountains rise around it in wild confusion, and a torrent foams by its side, crossed by a wooden bridge. An antique castle, built upon a rock, looks down upon the houses. Here the Inn and we separate. The river turns abruptly to the left, and we pursue our course towards the Arlberg.

From Landeck the posts are Fliersch, Nasserein, Stuben, and Dalaas. We then arrive at Bludenz, entitled to a remark as a substantial and comfortable little town. The name of this place is sometimes spelt with a P, and perhaps should be so; for we observe that the Tyrolese are in the habit of substituting p for b, and vice versa. The women wear a black cap stuck upon the back of the head, shaped like a helmet, and the crown composed of gold lace. It is made of something like velvet, in open work, and has a light and pretty effect.

The Valley now widens gradually; the mountains begin to sink; and every variety, in wood and water, hill and vale, delights the eye. Such a view

as the one annexed is beautiful and striking in itself; but we have been gazing so long upon the walls of a cabinet containing only modifications of the same sort of landscape, that the best prospect for us now is the door to get out.

Some superb mountains to the left, crowned like fortresses, seem the natural boundary of the picture; and, accordingly, we find them to be the last in this part of the Tyrol, and see the grey mountains of Switzerland rising in the distance. Passing through the small, but beautifully situated, town of Feldkirch, we enter upon a series of plains stretching to the left as far as the eye can see. As we advance, they are dotted with hamlets and cottages, and covered with corn, vines, and orchards. They are, indeed, rich to extravagance in all the treasures of vegetation; and, to one approaching from the comparatively barren mountains of the Tyrol, appear a perfect paradise.

The inhabitants of these delightful plains seem to be grateful for the blessings they enjoy. Procession after procession has this morning crossed our path, ringing bells, chanting prayers, and waving banners. The people seem to be happy; and the women, we conjecture, are not over-worked, as several handsome, and many pretty, faces, present themselves in the passing crowds. The young women, more especially, are fond of this harmles: and poetical employment. We are glad to see its for it proves that they have not too much to do in the drudgery of the fields; and, at their age,

the task of grouping a picture for the admiration even of such an idler as ourselves, is better than the work of a man or a horse. As well as the helmet-cap, which still continues in fashion, we observe a flat circle of straw laid upon the head, like a gipsy hat, with scarcely any crown. With good features beneath, the effect is bewitching.

We cross the river Aachen—which, with the Rhine and the Bregenz, flows into Lake Constance—by means of an immense wooden bridge, completely covered, and fully as long, we should think, as Waterloo Bridge. The Aachan is at present only an inconsiderable stream, and one would be surprised to find such a structure surmounting it, but for the extensive beds of sand and gravel on either side, which prove that sometimes it must be a great river. We are now in the immediate neighbourhood of Lake Constance, although we rarely catch a glimpse of its broad bosom; but at last we enter the little town of Bregenz, built on the south-east shore of the lake.

Near Bregenz is the castle of Pfannenberg, situated on a rock, which overlooks the Bregenzer Klause, a defile which communicates between Swabia and the Valley of the Rhine, and has been frequently the scene of sanguinary conflicts. The lake itself is too extensive, and the shores too narrow, to present a very romantic aspect from this point. The Sea of Swabia, as it was called during the middle ages, is an immense sheet of water, the surface of which is broken by only two islands,

that of Meinau, on the west, and the one on which Lindau is built on the east. The latter is not distinguishable from the main land when viewed from Bregenz, but the Bavarian town forms a very beautiful feature in the landscape.

The elevation of the waters of the lake is greatly influenced by the melting of the Alpine snows. Sometimes it rises six or eight feet in a few days, and sometimes, though rarely, upwards of twenty feet. It is also subject to a similar change, although shorter in duration, and partaking more of the nature of a temporary agitation than of a regular rise, the cause of which has not yet been ascertained. This phenomenon is characterised by the flux and reflux of the lake, sometimes more than once in an hour, to the extent of about two feet. Tempests are not unfrequent, and, in particular, the wind called Föhn, or more classically Favonius, is dangerous to navigation. The Alpine torrents that tumble into the lake at this end appear to have a two-fold action, at once keeping up the supply of water and diminishing its surface. The gulf mentioned by Amnianus Marcellinus is now *terra firma*, with the exception of some inconsiderable spots, which serve as memorials to vindicate that author's correctness.

Although the northern and western sides are bordered by plains, rocks, and even mountains, rise from the water's edge to the east, south, and south-west. Here, however, all is quiet beauty, of the character that softens rather than delights; and,

on a calm, clear day, we could fancy no better employment than to lie down on one of these verdant slopes before us, and dream away an hour on the banks of Lake Constance.

The road from Bregenz to Saint Gall lies through one of the most delightful plains in the world. In the middle of it we fall in with the Rhine, which, even now, identifies itself with the "exulting and abounding river" of our imagination. Passing it in a boat, which swung us all over without dismounting, we entered what appeared to be a *forest* of apple and pear-trees of gigantic size, diversified with vineyards and corn-fields. By and by the ground cleared, and Lake Constance, which we had approached again, through these fragrant and blooming avenues, appeared stretched out before us like a sea, with vineyards on one side, climbing the gentle hills, and rich pastures on the other, sweeping down to the water's edge. The hour was sunset; and as the glorious luminary sunk behind the horizon in the distance, appearing to dip into the lake itself, the picture was one of the finest we had ever beheld. The torrent of golden light, rushing from one end of the expanse to the other, was, for some time, painful to the eye in its excess of splendour. By degrees it became mellow and more mellow, while a soft, grey, mist-like hue appeared to be closing in around, and mantling over it, from the sides of the lake. At last, fading imperceptibly, the light altogether disappeared, and the vast mass of water lay cold, and heavy, and dim, and silent before us.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BANKS OF THE RHINE.

Our opinion is now decided that the women in this part of Switzerland are prettier than those of the Austrian dominions which we have just left. And, judging from the coiffure, which, with us, is an important *moral* feature in the dress of a woman, we would say that they are themselves far from being unconscious of their charms. It is the grand object to show as much of the face as possible. The hair is combed sedulously back; and the bonnet—sometimes the black helmet, and sometimes a very small round cap of showy cotton—is stuck lightly upon the comb. The little girls wear no artificial covering whatever, but the hair is plaited, and hangs down in chains at each side, which sometimes meet, and are fastened with a ribbon, at the waist behind.

Saint Gall is rather a considerable place, irregularly built, but clean, and filled with fountains. It stands on the little river Steinach, between two hills, and commands some very beautiful views—particularly one of Lake Constance, which is visible at a short walk from the houses. It is a busy,

bustling town, where the noise of the shuttle is never at rest. We noticed here a custom which is somewhat annoying to the shy and retiring Englishman. Every soul in the town thinks it his bounden duty to salute a stranger by pulling off the hat. We had been accustomed to this civility on the part of the country-people on the road; but here, in the middle of the street, or wherever you meet with the inhabitants, you must go through the ceremony with every body who has a hat to doff. On foot, or in a carriage—nothing is a protection; morning, noon, and night, you must stand to be bowed at by the whole population.

We again bend our course towards the lake, and reach the town of Constance. It was here that the famous council was held in 1414, to determine which of three rival popes was the legitimate son of Saint Peter. The hall where the council sat is still shown; and, what is much more interesting, the prison of Huss. The reformer, as well as Jerome of Prague, was burnt by the priestly fiends. From their ashes arose the doctrine of Luther.

Following the course of the Rhine, through a rich and picturesque country, we reach Schaffausen, one of the most primitive-looking old towns we have ever seen. When we entered, we found that a civil war raged in the canton. The inhabitants were all armed with swords, muskets, and pistols, with belts round their waist, of leather or cord, as it happened. Some were exercising before the Poste, which was converted into a place d'armes; some were manfully carrying away their loaves from the

baker in the manner of a military ration; and some were haranguing the women on the prospects of the war. A revolution, it seems, had broken out the day before. The peasants rose in arms, and marched upon the authorities of the town; and a battle took place, in which several ounces of blood were spilt. Loyalty and good order, however, triumphed; and it was hoped that the devoted gallantry of the Schaffauseners would stop for ever the march of revolutionary principles in Switzerland.

The engraving conveys a very excellent idea of the picturesque and antique appearance of the town. Indeed the inhabitants themselves, notwithstanding the influx of visitors, have a very primitive look. The fountains, which are really the *puits d'amour* of the old French romances, serve as the rendezvous of lovers in the evening. The lasses gather round with their buckets; and every now and then, as some "bright particular star" approaches the place, you may see a young man, who had been waiting anxiously in the shade of the houses, hasten up to join his mistress.

Half an hour's walk from Schaffausen are the celebrated Falls of the Rhine, supposed to be the largest in Europe. We rose early for the purpose of visiting the scene, and left the town in the grey of the morning, as soon as the gates were opened. Passing through a wretched village, we descended to the river-side, and, traversing the premises of a charcoal-burner, speedily found ourselves on the banks of an extensive and almost circular port, into which the waters of the fall discharge themselves.

Our first sensations partook somewhat of disappointment; for, although the volume of the water is enormous, we had expected a loftier fall.

Crowning the heights, on the right, there is the rude chateau of Laufen, and, on the left, some commoner houses, built on the overhanging rocks. Between these two points the torrent foams, and leaps with the noise of thunder over a rugged precipice into the gulf below. Midway, and appearing to rest upon the very edge of this precipice, are two enormous rocks, which disturb the course of the torrent, and add to the wild sublimity of the fall. One of these resembles a human head, resting on the narrow neck; and, the illusion being increased by the hair-like foliage on the top, it must present, in the gloom of the evening, or by moonlight, a very singular and ghastly appearance. The twilight, indeed, we were told, is the best time to see the falls of Laufen: and we believe it. When the deep, broad shadows of the rocks cover the depths of the glen, the white waters of the torrent, gleaming with a strange and unnatural light, must have a powerful effect upon the imagination.

From Schaffausen we proceeded to Bale; and, after traversing a part of the grand duchy of Baden, arrived at Strasbourg, in France.

Here we reach the termination of our journey for this year, and Mr. Westley's devil, jogging our elbow, cries "Hold!—enough!" Before us lies the magnificent course of the Rhine, till it plunges into the sea, with all its vine-wreathed hills, and

castellated steeps. Our path, coursing round the palace of Charlemagne at Aix—for it exists still for us—opens in the distance into the Netherlands, and, leading through the cities of Antwerp—Ghent—Bruges—traverses the new kingdom, and leaps into its old neighbour Holland. There it wanders from Rotterdam to Amsterdam, and half a dozen other dams, and, circling round the country, reaches the edge of the sea what time the waters begin to crisp, and the fields to look white, and women's faces blue.

Most gentle reader! will you come with us next year? If we have succeeded this time in imparting to you even a very inconsiderable proportion of the pleasure we ourselves experienced in the actual journey, we are sure you will consent! And next year, you know, we shall be more accustomed to each other. You will have learned to pardon, while you smile at, the little oddities and absurdities of your travelling companion; and, perhaps, to look over more serious defects, for the sake of the honesty with which he describes his impressions, and the unprejudiced eye with which he regards this fair and wonderful earth, and his brethren of mankind who inhabit it. Extend towards him, if you can, the same indulgence he is ready to grant to others; and let your heart answer, if your lips be mute, when he bids you, as he does now—kindly, cordially, lingeringly—Farewell!

J. Westley and Co. 27, Ivy Lane.

C. S. König
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