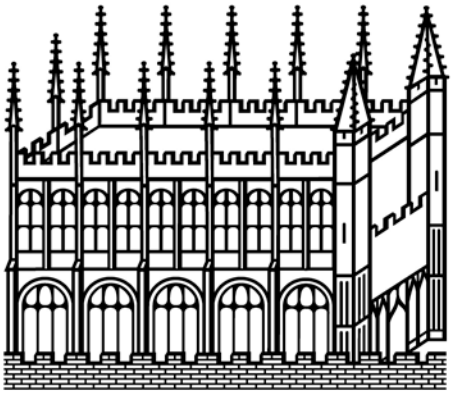

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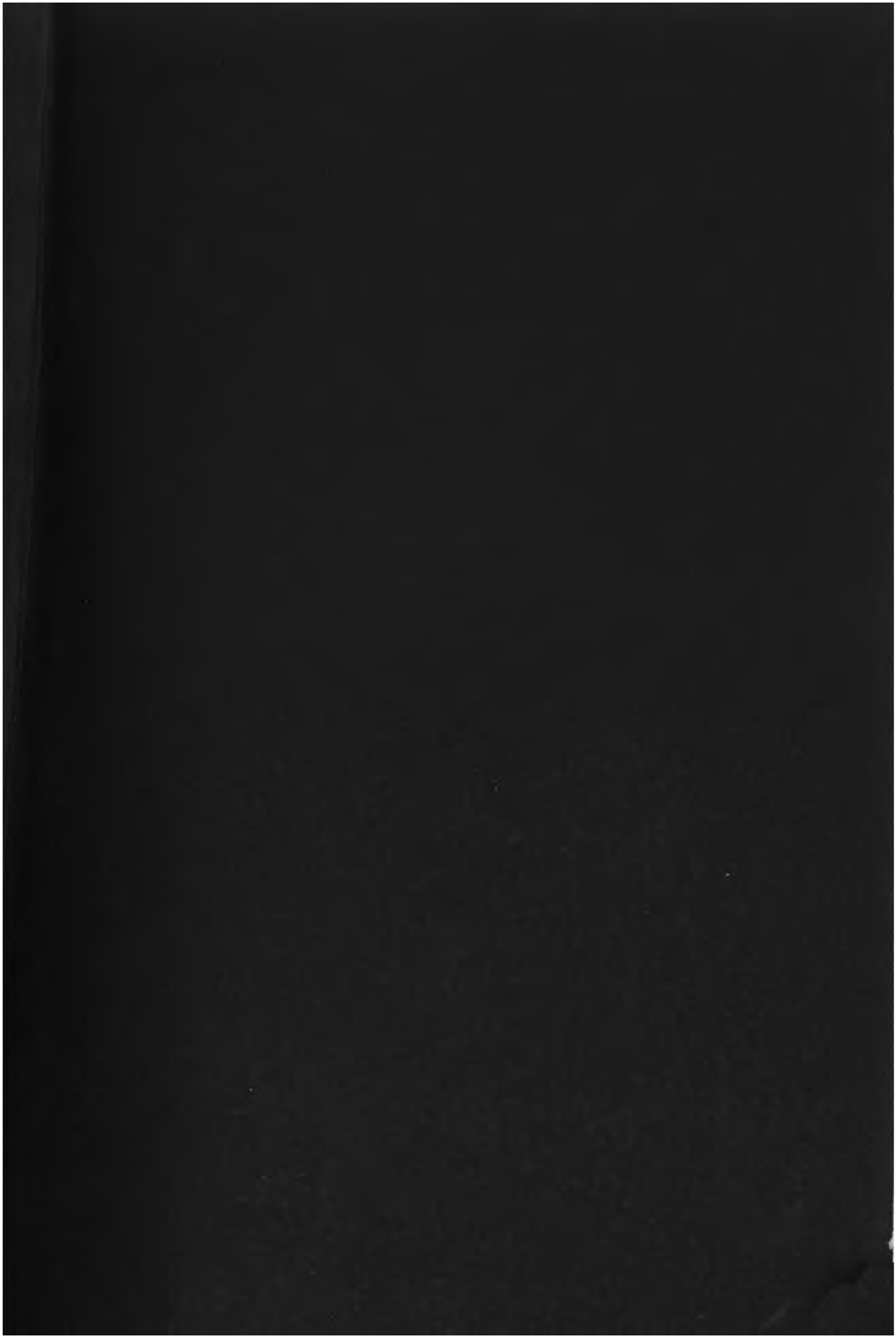

AUTUMN HOLIDAYS

OF A

MAN OF BUSINESS.

MANCHESTER:
JOHN HEYWOOD, 141 AND 143, DEANSGATE.
LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.

PREFACE.

THESE sketches refer only to well-known scenes, and contain nothing either new or striking.

Though the writer has no higher aim than to interest and amuse an idle hour, it is not without great hesitation that he ventures to submit this little volume to the public.

JOHN ASHTON.

MANCHESTER,
March, 1876.

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AUTUMN HOLIDAYS.

CHAPTER I.

BRUSSELS.

Two hundred and fifty miles of express railway travelling on a hot day in autumn is more than a little fatiguing, and accordingly, when we found ourselves at Dover we relinquished our original intention of crossing the Channel that night, and deferred it to the following day. I had several times previously passed through the town, but my recollection of it was nothing more than a vague remembrance of a few somewhat rough and dimly-lighted streets, hastily traversed either under the influence of recent discomfort and suffering, or in a sufficiently strong anticipation thereof. After refreshing ourselves at the hotel, it was therefore with a certain feeling of satisfaction that I sauntered down to the pier to see the mail-boat depart. It was a rough, dark night, and as the unfortunate passengers embarked on the steamer, I had a vivid anticipation of their sufferings for the next two or three hours, and hugged myself in the comfortable consciousness that I was not to share them.

Dover is a pleasant, cheerful town, and not deficient in historical associations and objects of interest, but it is most powerfully connected in my mind with the dreadful *mal de mer*, and with David Copperfield, Betsy Trotwood, Mr. Dick, and the scenes and characters of that charming novel.

Next morning, however, arose bright and fine, with a calm sea glistening in the sun, and we not only cross

without sickness but positively enjoy the brief sail. I am inclined to think the discomfort and suffering usually attendant on this passage are in most cases greatly heightened by its being almost invariably taken in the night. Travelling by night is always fatiguing and unpleasant, but in this case especially so.

We disembark at CALAIS, under the eyes of gendarmes with cocked hats and swords, and amid the usual noise and confusion. Certainly there seems to be an unnecessary amount of exclamations and gesticulations among the Frenchmen, but it appears to be inseparable from their nature in certain circumstances. We extricate ourselves as soon as may be, and take the train to Brussels. In due course the well-known horn sounds, and we speed on. Now we are passing through the fertile plains of France amid the pretty landscapes, trees, and corn-fields. Ever and anon we see a village with its diminutive white houses with red-tiled roofs, which present a most picturesque appearance. At the stations, the clean, sunburnt peasant-women and children offer us grapes and peaches for sale, tastefully and invitingly arranged in small baskets. Now we see a blue bloused peasant walking wearily along the white dusty road, or a group of them, men and women, working in the fields, who pause in their occupation to gaze at the train as it rushes by. At a small town on the Belgian frontier we stop to undergo that nuisance of Continental travel—the examination of luggage. The delay is long and tedious, but is borne by the French travellers with exemplary patience, but not so by the English, and the national privilege of grumbling is abundantly exercised. At length the door of the room in which we have been confined is opened: we rush out, take our places in the train, and so on through the Belgian plains and towns to Brussels.

THE BELGIAN CAPITAL is a most pleasant and attractive city from every point of view. It abounds with objects of interest, ancient and modern, to the student, and is full of agreeable resorts to the mere pleasure seeker. What can be more enjoyable than a drive or walk through

the beautiful Bois de Cambre, with its winding walks, cascades and lake, or a visit to the Zoological Gardens, which if not very rich in specimens, yet contain some that are unique. Its aquarium, situated in a romantic grotto, would alone repay a visit.

The Grande Place is certainly unequalled for the number of ancient and picturesque buildings which surround it, including the magnificent Hotel de Ville. The splendid pile of St. Gudule, with its stained windows and gorgeous interior, and its constant stream of worshippers, of all classes and conditions, offers a scene on which you do not soon weary of gazing. The Park, with its fine fountains and great trees, the galleries of paintings, the statues, palaces, and churches, and numerous other ancient buildings, offer attractions which would take a long time to exhaust.

The light and pleasant *café* life which is so universal here strikes an Englishman with all the charm of novelty. These places are full almost from morning to night, yet it is altogether exceptional to see anyone who has drank to excess. Indeed the mild aud harmless beverages which for the most part suffice for the Belgians could hardly produce an inebriating effect in whatever possible quantity taken. We see here that it is quite possible for men to meet, for social intercourse and enjoyment, without the heavy drinking and excess too common on such occasions in our own land. Would it be possible for two average Englishmen to sit down as I saw two gentlemen do here, and amuse themselves for an hour with chat, and a game or two at dominoes, with no other refreshment than tumblers of coffee. Yet they seemed deeply interested in their game, and quite satisfied with their beverage.

But the absence of drunkenness, coarseness, and vulgarity, and the presence of their opposites, is not the only thing which strikes you. One cannot walk far in any of the streets of the great English towns without meeting some miserable specimens of humanity—ragged slatternly men and women, and barefooted and half-naked

children, these latter apparently neglected alike by their parents and the State, and whom our abounding national and individual philanthropy has apparently failed to reach. So far as my observation has extended, such sights as these are extremely rare, not only in Brussels but in many other Continental towns.

It is a humiliating thing to an Englishman to reflect that his great, wealthy, and powerful country, full of noble-minded and patriotic men and women, the home of peace and freedom, is yet in some respects so far behind several of the poorer countries of the Continent. That it is so is undoubted: why it should be so is not easily answered.

The comparison between a Continental and an English Sunday has often been made, to the disadvantage of the former. The parochial Englishman lifts up his hands in pious horror at the mention of the former; and yet it would come out of the comparison not unfavourably in many points.

The Belgian churches are all well filled in the morning by apparently devout congregations, composed not of women only but largely of men. It is quite true that the after-part of the day is given up to amusement and recreation, but in the majority of cases it is of a harmless and innocent description. The whole population apparently turns out in the afternoon and evening, the parks are filled with well-dressed people, who sit under the trees at little tables, chatting, reading and amusing themselves in various ways. The *cafés* are full, so are the numerous gardens, free galleries of painting and sculpture, museums, and other places of amusement or instruction. Many of the shops are open, and there is little to distinguish the day from an ordinary one. No doubt this strikes an Englishman somewhat painfully, but he cannot fail to notice the universal order, courtesy, and temperance; and if he could bring himself to believe that innocent receation on this day was allowable, he would see little to which he could object. Doubtless, however, there are other features more objectionable: the open

theatres, casinoes, and the like; but I venture to think these places are not much frequented by the better class of people, though I have but imperfect means of judging.

Contrast with this our English Sunday, with its churches, open indeed, but almost entirely neglected and unattended by the masses of the population, and by the pernicious pew system, practically reserved for the middle and upper classes. The grand open areas of the Belgian cathedrals are free to all, and those who worship there do so on terms of perfect equality, from nobleman to peasant. Our miserable class distinctions we carry into the presence of the Almighty—at their church doors such distinctions cease.

Their poor do attend public worship—ours, in great measure, spend the early part of the day in stupid indolence, and the afternoon and evening too frequently in active dissipation. Our workmen too often rise on Monday morning dull and soddened with the last night's debauch, and with empty pockets—theirs refreshed and exhilarated for the work before them. To the latter numerous sources of refined enjoyment and instruction in libraries, picture galleries, and the like are accessible—with us such places are carefully and strictly closed.

I have no wish, upon the whole, to exchange our Sunday for theirs, but there is much in the parallel I have attempted to draw which may furnish food for reflection.

Englishmen are supposed to be more distinguished for honesty and straightforwardness than for sentiment and politeness. No one can be long in Brussels without being gratified with the universal courtesy he meets with from everyone, from the highest to the lowest, and he will observe little traits of sentiment which are pleasing. A Belgian will always raise his hat to the lady in charge at a *café*, or in a shop, and even to a passing acquaintance. If a funeral passes along the streets you will see the men uncover, from the cabman on his box to the passenger on the pavement. There is not much perhaps in little matters like these, though for my part I think our social

life would gain by an infusion of the spirit which dictates them.

I may say a word for the admirable cleanliness and excellent cookery of the Brussels *cafés*, and the reasonable charges. The *garçon* is always dressed in black, with the whitest of shirts and apron. The table-covers, dishes, and plates, are spotless. The choice of dishes is always large, and the viands delicate and appetising. Many of the *cafés* are beautifully decorated and adorned with pictures, mirrors, and carving. All are brilliantly lighted, and some are arranged amid trees, shrubs, and flowers. The principal theatre is one of the handsomest and best arranged I ever saw, and the prices of admission various and not high.

Reverting to the cathedrals, and to the scenes of Catholic worship they exhibit, a stranger cannot fail to be struck with its remarkable character. The numerous altars they contain, adorned in a greater or less degree, are seldom without their devotees. Nothing is more common than to see a poor man or woman, side by side with one of higher station, kneeling on the floor, or chairs, in front of these altars. As we stand gazing on the scene a poor peasant woman enters, approaches an altar, and producing a thin candle or taper, lights and fixes it before the shrine, then kneels down and offers her prayers. Scenes like these have been described very frequently by non-catholic writers, and usually in most disparaging terms. This devotion is said to be a mere empty formality and superstition, which fails entirely to absorb the minds and feelings of those who engage in it. Dickens has described most graphically scenes of this kind in Italy, but entirely in the sense of condemnation. He says of one of the Roman churches: "In one church a kneeling lady got up from her prayer for a moment to offer us her card, as a teacher of music, and in another a sedate gentleman, with a very thick walking staff, arose from his devotions to belabour his dog, who was growling at another dog, and whose yelps and howls resounded through the church, as his master quietly relapsed into his former train of

meditation, keeping his eye upon the dog at the same time, nevertheless." Of others, he says: "They got up from prayers to beg a little, or to pursue some other worldly matter, and then kneeling down again resume the contrite supplication at the point where it was interrupted."

All this may be true enough of Italy, as to which I can say nothing from personal observation, but it is certainly incorrect, or at least greatly exaggerated, so far as my limited observations in Belgium, France, and Switzerland have extended. Unquestionably the very reverse is true of the Brussels churches. Superstitious, it may be; but in nearly every case the devotion is sincere and absorbing to all outward appearance, while here and there you may see an upturned face plainly indicating the very ecstacy of remorse, thankfulness, or supplication.

After all it is to be feared we English Protestants too often carry with us abroad, along with other national conceits and prejudices, so strong a religious bias as to render us unable to do justice to Roman Catholicism. There is quite enough to condemn in it without shutting our eyes to its merits. We can find material enough for adverse criticism, without presenting unjust and exaggerated descriptions of what is yet, beyond all question, the most powerful Christian church in the world, nineteenth century enlightenment notwithstanding.

Brussels has been called a miniature Paris, and though in some respects it will not bear comparison with that beautiful city, yet upon the whole it is more interesting. The brief and hasty sketch I have given is but an exceedingly imperfect *resume* of the many things it possesses to delight and interest a traveller.

CHAPTER II.

CATHEDRALS.—LICHFIELD.—DR. JOHNSON.

"Far from me and from my friends," said Dr. Johnson, "be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, and virtue."

CERTAINLY no Englishman can visit the ancient city of WINCHESTER, associated as it is with many important events in our national history, and full of precious monuments of the bygone time, without a feeling far removed from indifference. If you come to it fresh from some of our busy commercial towns, its quiet streets and old-world look seem to have transported you to long-past times. The importance it once possessed has long ago departed, and it derives its sole interest to a visitor now from its old monuments and associations.

The city abounds in ancient edifices, of which the most notable are the Cathedral and Wykeham's College. Besides these are the ruins of the Castle, the West Gate in tolerable preservation, the remarkable and unique "High Cross," and many others.

On a beautiful morning in autumn we leave our hotel to visit the Cathedral. It is a large and imposing building, but much decayed and worn on the exterior, especially so in places. It is surrounded by noble trees, now in full verdure, and under them and amongst the graves some fine sheep were feeding on the grass which grew in the immediate vicinity. It was a quiet, tranquil scene, and filled the mind with sweet and solemn musings.

When we entered the church the usual morning service was in progress, but the clergy and the worshippers only filled a very small place in its great precincts, while the

voice of the reader or preacher was quite inaudible in many parts of it. There arose in your mind a strong feeling that, as a matter of taste and adaptation, these grand aisles and lofty nave and chancel needed the gorgeous ceremonial of the Romish faith to give full effect to their architectural splendour. This church is one of the largest in the kingdom, and perhaps the most ancient, its origin being traced doubtfully to the second, but certainly to the seventh century. It has shared like all the rest in the vicissitudes of our national history, and bears many traces of the rough usage it received during the civil wars.

It is a majestic pile architecturally, and abounds with beauties of detail in carving and decoration. The choir, with its marble pavement, its rich ornamentation, the magnificent east window, and the lofty vault, is remarkably beautiful. It is rich in monuments, and interesting as the burial place of many of our ancient kings. The tomb of William Rufus occupies a prominent position, and the bones of several others are contained in mortuary chests ranged on each side the choir. These are inscribed with the names and dates of decease of the several monarchs whose remains are deposited in them. One of the inscriptions runs as follows :—

"In this chest, and that opposite to it on the other side, are the remains of Canute and Rufus, kings, Emma, queen, and Wina and Alwin, bishops."

On the opposite side is this inscription :—

"In this chest, A.D. 1661, were promiscuously laid together the bones of the princes and prelates which had been scattered about by sacrilegious barbarism in the year 1642."

Another remarkable tomb is that of William Wykeham, on which is the following :—

"William, surnamed Wykeham, lies here overthown by death.
"He was bishop of this church, and the repairer of it.
"He was unbounded in his hospitality, as the poor and rich can equally prove.
"He was likewise a sage politician and counsellor of the state.
"His piety is manifested by the colleges which he founded—the first of which is at Oxford, the second at Winchester.
"You who look upon this monument cease not to pray
"That for such great deserts he may enjoy eternal life."

Another contains the following :—

"Here resteth the body of Mr. Isaac Walton, who died the 15th day of December, 1683."

There are many other old tombs of bishops, &c. The city is quaint-looking, and contains old houses and streets and other traces of antiquity. The valley in which it stands is pretty and fertile, and abounds with fine trees, and is intersected by the clear and rapid Itchen.

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL is in every respect inferior to Winchester, though in itself an interesting and remarkable edifice. It suffered greatly in the civil wars when the Parliamentary troops were quartered in the church. The devastation they committed was terrible. "They threw down the organ and destroyed the screen, stripped the tombs of their brasses, and defaced the sculpture; broke down the pulpits, pews, and tabernacle work, and tore into fragments the Bible and service-books, scattering their leaves over the church; in addition to which they defaced the carvings both of the interior and exterior of the church, and broke the stained windows."

All our ecclesiastical edifices then existing suffered greatly from the same fanaticism, and though a great deal has been done, and especially of late years, in the wayof restoration, much of the damage they then received is irreparable.

The Cathedral of GLOUCESTER is also a magnificent building, with an especially beautiful choir. "The great elevation of the vault, the richness of the design, the elaborate tracery which covers the walls, and the vast expanse of the eastern window, render it an almost unrivalled specimen of the florid style of architecture." There are some particularly fine and very ancient cloisters, and a "monk's lavatory," both in remarkably good preservation. The stained glass of the great east window is a splendid specimen of the art; and, though five centuries old, its colours are brighter far than modern skill can produce.

That of WORCESTER is remarkable for its architectural beauty. Vast sums have in recent years been spent in

its decoration and general restoration. The interior is simply gorgeous, having been wholly restored to its original, and perhaps more than its original, splendour. The most remarkable tomb it contains is that of King John. This was opened in 1797, and the remains of the monarch, much decayed, were visible. On the head was a monk's cowl, "placed there before burial as a passport through the regions of purgatory. The body had been wrapped in an embroidered robe, made, it was supposed, of crimson damask. Nothing remained of it but the cuff. Fragments of a sword and scabbard were also found. The exposure of the relics of kingly mortality caused their speedy destruction, the whole mouldering to dust."

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL is distinguished by its pointed spires, and for Chantrey's beautiful monument of "The Sleeping Children." It also contains the bust of the "great cham" of literature—Johnson. Its situation is especially good—surrounded by fine old trees, verdant lawns, a quiet pool, and the antique residences of the close. Like the rest, it suffered great injury in the civil wars, and is almost denuded of its ancient monuments.

In the civil wars, Lord Brook, a Parliamentary general, had vowed the destruction of Lichfield Cathedral, which he called "a hateful temple of episcopacy." He had prayed for some special token of God's favour on his purpose. He was killed in the street by a shot from the Cathedral Tower, and the Royalists said he had his token, but not in the way he anticipated. The place where he fell is marked by a stone slab let into the wall of a house.

So of many other of our old Cathedrals which it has been my delight to visit, but one can only repeat the same things in describing them. All are closely associated with our national history, and each possesses its peculiar and distinct place therein, and its own record of pious deeds and stories of the olden time. The appearance and general character of these buildings varies little. Architectural differences, of course—a few tombs more or less—stained windows, carving and ornamentation of varying

beauty, and other points of difference of greater or less importance. Yet one never ceases to admire these "poems in stone." Their grand architecture, wonderful proportions, and, above all, the air of antiquity of which they are redolent, impart to them a solemn and impressive beauty.

Though it has been said, and is said, that it is difficult to find any proportion between their modern use and the cost of restoring and maintaining them, and while the prejudiced Dissenting mind sees in them nothing but "dark Gothic prison houses," to others of more liberal and generous thought there is a view in which their value is inestimable.

I do not refer so much to their being splendid records of ancient piety, or valuable historical monuments, which it would be utterly unworthy of the nation to suffer to fall into decay, but to the influence they exercise on the minds and feelings of those who visit them now.

Even to the few whose narrow thoughts would regard them as mere monuments of ancient darkness and superstition, or to others in whom the cold, dark creed of Materialism has deadened the immortal instincts, even on such their silent grandeur, hallowed associations, and ancient origin must exert a powerful, even if unacknowledged, influence. To the mere lover of the beautiful they are an abiding source of the most refined pleasure; while to the antiquary they possess a heightened and peculiar interest.

What Englishman, be his creed what it may, but is proud of these ancient temples? And constituted as we are, what man can pace these noble aisles without having his mind filled with pure and ennobling thoughts and purposes?

Who can see them without reverencing that zeal and genius which designed and executed them, and that age which devoted such grand and noble efforts to the glory of the Supreme? Are not such influences needed in our time, when cold, hard Utilitarianism is so prevalent, and when bitter polemics and religious feuds have so far deadened the spirit of Christianity?

The chief purpose of my visit to Lichfield was to see Dr. Johnson's birthplace.

One of the first objects which met our view was his statue in the market-place. It is not a very elaborate work of art, either in design or execution, but conveys a fair idea of the man.

At the shop of Mr. Lomax, a stationer, which is opposite the monument, are several relics of the doctor, which were courteously shown and explained to us. His chair—a common-looking wooden one, with long legs, railed back, stiff and uncomfortable—stands in the shop. Mr. Lomax also showed us his stick, a light coloured thick cane, strongly shod, and with an ivory head and tassel; his wife's wedding ring, which he informed us the doctor wore ever after her death; also his Prayer-book, an old-fashioned little volume, with print of the smallest; another book containing pencil notes in the doctor's own hand; a letter of his to Miss Porter; and some other things, all of which we receive on the authority of the owner.

The house where he was born is close by. The book-seller's shop in Johnson's father's day is now a draper's. The occupant was ignorant, or professed to be so, of the room where the great lexicographer was born, and apparently did not like being troubled on the subject, and accordingly we did not see the interior. The building is a plain structure, and remains almost exactly as it was over a hundred years ago!

In a museum in the city there are other relics. The doctor's large silver shoe buckles; the blue and white saucer in which his roll was placed each morning at breakfast, which he called "Tetty," after his wife; and some other trifles. I was greatly interested in these relics and in seeing the quiet town in which this remarkable man was born, and which was intimately associated with his later years. The inimitable picture of him—his sayings and doings—which Boswell has given us rose to my mind, and I recalled the grave, good-natured, but rough man whom he depicts.

His Tory prejudices were amusing and sublime in their

arrogance. An illustrative anecdote occurs to my memory, which runs, if I am not mistaken, somewhat to this effect: Johnson was weeding a garden, and, as he pulled up the refuse, threw it over the wall into his neighbour's ground. On being respectfully remonstrated with, his reply was, "Sir, the dog's a Dissenter."

Of all his contemporaries, the meek Boswell and the improvident, vain Goldsmith have the greatest interest for me. Fielding, I think it is, who says no man writes but for fame or money; and though neither Johnson nor Goldsmith got much of the latter, they both received their meed of the former in their own day, and to both it was grateful.

It is a splendid literary tonic, and a high gratification to read now and then the sonorous, heavy, majestic English of "Rasselas," and contrast it with the feebleness of many of our later compositions. In another way the matchless simplicity and beauty of the "Vicar of Wakefield" is extremely enjoyable. Both productions are unique and admirable, and they form as great a contrast as existed between the men who respectively wrote them.

CHAPTER III.

THE LAKE OF GENEVA.—CASTLE OF CHILLON.

FROM BERNE to Lausanne, by railway, There is nothing for some time of striking interest in the country passed through, though it is always varied and more or less beautiful. At intervals we gain glimpses of the Bernese Alps, or views of rugged and precipitous mountains which are nearer to us. Through a narrow valley, and passing minor stations, we reach Freiburg, famous for the magnificent organ contained in its Cathedral; and on again, through an undulating and fertile country, past Romont, with its walls, watch-towers, and castle, ever and anon catching glimpses of Mont Blanc, or other peaks of the range; through a rocky defile and a tunnel, and there bursts upon us a magnificent view of the Lake of Geneva and its mountains far below us, a lovely panorama of tranquil beauty and magnificence.

We take up our quarters at Ouchy, in certainly one of the finest of the many splendid hotels of Switzerland. Its grand rooms, charming grounds, and the glorious scenery amid which it stands, make it a delightful place for a temporary sojourn. At this time it was thronged with visitors from all parts of the world, who filled its rooms or traversed its grounds, and imparted an element of liveliness and gaiety to the scene which made it still more enjoyable.

Lausanne is most picturesquely situated on the slope of a mountain, at a considerable height above the lake, and from many points in its vicinity extensive views of the surrounding scenery are visible. It possesses a

cathedral, which stands in the highest part of the town, and is a conspicuous object; and near it a terrace, shaded by great trees, and presenting a fine view of the town, lake, and the distant Alps. From this place we witnessed a glorious sunset, and lingered long watching its effects on the wide panorama below us.

There is nothing, however, of particularly striking interest in the town, and it is, from its situation, a most fatiguing place to move about in, the steep ascents and long flights of steps being very frequent.

The scene presented at dinner to-night, when the large hall of the hotel was completely filled by hundreds of visitors, was very remarkable. The varieties of dress and manners, the toilets of the ladies, the display of jewellery here and there, and the lively and various conversation on all sides made up an interesting spectacle. During the repast a band plays. When it is over the company adjourn to the terrace and grounds, or saunter along the shores of the lake. Some will go and take a boat, gay with coloured awning and red cushions, and with coloured lamps swinging to and fro, and will be rowed lazily on the quiet water in the gloaming.

Opposite to me, as I sit out on the terrace indulging in a cigar, is a little party sitting at a small table under a tree, a lamp behind, which glitters and flickers among the foliage. One of the party, a lady, is perfectly radiant with jewels. These gleam and sparkle in the imperfect light with every movement of the wearer. Around us are people of all nations, and the various conversations are conducted in every European language. A glance at the visitors' book has shown us that we have a Princess, a few Barons and Counts, an English Lord, one or two Baronets, and a crowd of other less distinguished personages. Who is your next neighbour or your *vis-a-vis* at dinner or elsewhere is delightfully uncertain, and conversation does not always gratify your curiosity. To-night there was a brief sensation. A small party who went out in a boat got upset, but fortunately the accident happened not far from the shore, and no further harm than a severe

ducking ensued. It was a fine starlight night and I wandered some distance along the shores of the lake. Gaining an eminence I sat down in a retired spot to gaze upon the scene before me. The clear and tranquil water lay beneath me; in its bosom was reflected the gleaming stars, or the masses of great mountains which stood on its shores, or in its vicinity. The deep woods which clothed their sides were dimly seen in the uncertain light, while their towering summits presented a still fainter outline. The scene was one of deep tranquillity and solemn beauty, well described in Byron's lines :—

> "The mirror where the stars and mountains view
> The stillness of their aspect in each trace
> Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue."

My thoughts gradually wandered from the scene before me to other parts of this earth on which these stars look down—silent, trackless deserts; mouldering ruins of ancient cities; vast and gloomy forests, or towering mountain ranges, never seen by civilised men; broad rivers flowing through countries as yet unknown; the icy fastnesses of the north and south, which hold their secrets with so firm a grasp. Upwards I gaze at those brilliant constellations, and remember that our great globe is but one of countless others which move in the trackless realms of space, and which may, for aught we know, be counterparts more or less of earth, and the abode of intelligent existences! Musing thus, thoughts arise "beyond the reaches of my soul," and I lose myself in the profound mysteries that surround me. But it is time to return, and I slowly make my way back to the hotel, pondering on the scene and the thoughts to which it has given rise.

The Lake of Geneva is about forty miles in length, and of various widths from two to eight or ten miles, and of great depth. Its waters are of a deep blue tint, and abound with fish. The shores present most varied and beautiful scenery—in some places open for miles, in others the mountains arise close to its banks, or sheer out of the water, and beyond these are other ranges of various outlines, while the view is bounded in one direction by

Mont Blanc and the neighbouring mountains fifty miles distant; in another, the deeply-wooded heights of the Jura range are a conspicuous object. The shores, for the most part, are highly cultivated, and are studded with numerous towns, villages, and private residences, along their whole extent. As a whole, the scenery is less grand and imposing than Lucerne, but it presents a variety and extent and an element of sweet calmness wanting in that most romantic spot. No description can give any adequate idea of the exceeding beauty of this lake, but you feel that it fully merits the enthusiastic encomiums which have been passed upon it by many distinguished men. It has one strange phenomenon: At uncertain intervals, and without any apparent cause, the water suddenly rises several feet, and as suddenly subsides to its original level. These motions are called *seiches*, and are conjectured to arise from the unequal pressure of the atmosphere on the surface at various times. The lake is also subject to occasional storms, and has in many places rapid currents, so that its navigation in small boats is somewhat precarious.

One can easily understand the passionate attachment a Swiss exile retains for his country. His emotion on returning to it is thus described by Rousseau:—

"The nearer I approached to Switzerland the more I felt myself agitated. The moment in which, from the heights of the Jura, I discovered the Lake of Geneva, was one of ecstacy and ravishment. The view of my country—that country so dear to me, where my heart had overflowed with torrents of delight—the Alpine air so salutary and so pure—the soft air of my native soil, sweeter than all the perfumes of the East—this rich and fertile land—this unique landscape, the most beautiful with which the human eye was ever struck—delightful abode to which I had never found an equal in the world—the aspect of a free and happy people—the sweetness of the season—the serenity of the climate—a thousand delightful recollections which awakened all the feelings I had tasted there—all this threw me in such transports as I cannot describe, and seemed to give back to me at once the enjoyment of my whole existence."

We visited many of the places around the lake, associated with great names or special natural beauties, but I shall only refer to one—

The CASTLE OF CHILLON. The situation of the castle is strikingly romantic. It is completely hemmed in by immense mountains, and is built upon an isolated rock some seventy feet from the shore. Access to it is gained by a drawbridge, and the building presents an irregular mass of pointed roofs and towers which present a most picturesque appearance. Numbers of the pretty boats which have brought visitors are moored to the rock, and their gay appearance, the deep blue waters of the lake, the gray old walls, and the surrounding mountains and woods make up a most lovely picture.

The castle derives perhaps its chief interest now from Byron's magnificent poem, and one reads it here with greatly heightened pleasure. It is offered to you for sale in various languages, together with photographs and various trifles in wood carving. We are taken first into a fine old room, once the chapel of the castle, then down some dark steps to the dungeons, which are below the level of the water, and lighted by narrow apertures in the walls :—

"There are seven pillars of gothic mould
In Chillon's dungeons, deep and old ;
There are seven columns, massy, and gray,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray—
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevices and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen, and left
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh meteor's lamp—
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain."

* * * *

Here is the pillar to which it is supposed Bonnivard was chained. That narrow short path worn in the stone pavement is the one he trod for six long weary years.

Along, among the pillars in the gloom, and in a dark recess, our guide strikes a light, and we see dimly a beam, black with age, on which prisoners were secretly hung.

Near to it is a rough mass of rock, in the form of an inclined plane, and on this the condemned are said to have passed the night before their execution. Here is a

strong wooden pillar, scarred and burnt in places, to which prisoners were bound and then tortured, to extort confessions. Here is a dark deep chasm (*chambre des oubliettes*), frightful, black, and terrible, once to be descended by steps, now fallen away, and which goes deep down in the rock beneath the lake. In its black depths many have no doubt worn out to a miserable death, forgotten and lost to the world.

It is said that many of these dungeons could be secretly filled with water from the lake, which the prisoners confined in them could not of course possibly escape. One tried to imagine the human sufferings these gloomy vaults must have witnessed, the groans of the tortured, or the silent agony of strong men, of those who were executed or otherwise done to death in their horrible precincts. The thought was dreadful, and one shuddered at the images the imagination conjured up.

There are many other interesting old chambers in the upper part of the building, some of them having remains of decorations and carving of a very rich description, and from the summit a fine view is had down the lake. When we emerge into the glorious sunlight and free air, we are conscious of an emotion of thankfulness that the dark deeds of tyranny and wrong, of which this old castle has been the scene, are gone for ever.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LIZARD.—KYNANCE COVE.—FALMOUTH.

THERE is a lovely walk along the coast of Mounts Bay to the little village of St. PAUL. The road winds along the further shore of the bay and commands splendid views of its vast expanse and bold headlands, with the picturesque "guarded mount." Passing through a rough little village redolent of fishy odours and full of grave, brown-faced fisher folk, and merry, barefooted, sunburned children, and turning to the right, up a long steep hill, we are in the little village of Paul. It is a small place, consisting of scattered, roughly-built cottages, wholly inhabited by fishermen and labouring folk. It has a small, weather-beaten church, which bears on its tower the date of 821, and a little inn where, doubtless, the oracles of the village sit on windy and rainy nights, and discuss with becoming gravity local topics and public ones, so far as the latter come within their knowledge.

The churchyard contains many graves of drowned seamen, to which have been added lately those of the purser and baker of the ill-fated Schiller, whose bodies were washed up near by. Here also is the grave of Dolly Pentreath, who died in 1788, aged 102 years:—

> "Hail Mousehole birthplace of old Doll Pentreath,
> The last who jabbered Cornish."

A tablet to her memory has been recently erected by Prince Lucien Bonaparte, and the then rector of the parish. From the hill on which the village stands is a splendid view of sea and shore, and the winds wander about it wild and free.

From PENZANCE to HELSTONE by coach. This is a large town, and one of the best in Cornwall. It was market day, and its hilly streets were crowded with vehicles, produce, and market people.

From Helstone by coach again to THE LIZARD, a long and not particularly interesting drive. The point of land called The Lizard is a bold elevation, and its precipitous front descends 186 feet to the sea. It is crowned by a large lighthouse with many buildings and store-rooms attached to it. It commands a fine view of the ocean and the adjacent coast, but has no very special and distinguishing features. The rocks about it are bold and the sea fine.

After exploring its vicinity, we walk along the cliffs to KYNANCE COVE. It was a magnificent but very rough walk along the irregular line of heights which face the sea, and presented constantly changing views of grand coast scenery. Everywhere the foot of the cliffs was marked by a broad line of foaming surf, and the rocks assumed the most singular and varying shapes. How shall I attempt to describe what the guide-book says is not to be written about Kynance Cove, which, after long scrambling and climbing, we at length reached.

Imagine then a deep inlet in the rocky coast, round which precipitous cliffs rise, sheer and vertical, to the height of three or four hundred feet. The cliffs in one place are somewhat broken and shelving, which enables you to descend to the shore. You stand on a beach of the purest white sand; far above and around you are the beetling rocks, and on the small space before you lie scattered immense fragments which have been detached from the heights above. One of these is so large and lofty as to be called the "Asparagus Island." These rocks are water-worn into the most curious shapes, and abound in caverns and fissures. You clamber over, walk between them, or enter the "Parlour," "Drawing Room," or "Kitchen," which names have been given to the principal caverns. Now stand back and watch that enormous green wave (on which no boat could live) come rolling in.

See how the clear green water breaks into masses of milky surf as it rolls over between, in, and among these rocks and caverns. Some it covers with foam, or dashes great clouds of spray up the dark faces of others. Here is another wave: listen to the heavy thud as it strikes a lofty rock and is hurled back in impotent rage in a cloud of spray which the wind carries right over you. You do not care about being wet, but take care, for if you get too near it might be something worse than a wetting. See that wave rushing with swift speed between two rocks. It has compressed the air, and now look how the water is driven back in a tremendous jet, and with a loud roar.

Our guide tells us that once a more than usually venturesome young lady was all but washed from the rock by the water in her anxiety for a near view of this singular phenomenon. Fortunately nothing worse happened than the thorough drenching of both herself and the old salt, and he averred she rather enjoyed it than otherwise.

When the tide is out you can clamber over all the rocks, enter into the caves, and search for marine specimens; or if you are a geological student, investigate the composition of the beautiful hard serpentine of which these cliffs are largely composed. I think those who have seen or may see this place will agree with me that it is the most enchanting and curious bit of marine scenery they ever beheld. The whole neighbourhood, though wild and lonely enough, affords the materials for a week's occupation in excursions of the most enjoyable description. So back again over the windy moors to Helstone, and from there to Falmouth.

Both this county and Devonshire are extremely hilly, and it seemed to me almost impossible to find more than a few hundred yards of level ground anywhere. In walking you are constantly either panting up hills or stumbling down them. The horses are driven up and down roads I should have thought utterly impracticable, and the drag is on and off incessantly. This very coach, heavily loaded as it was, was driven out of Helstone up a

street not more than three feet wider than itself, and so steep that it looked frightful. But the poor beasts were urged and shouted at, and we got to the top only to go down again, and so on *ad infinitum*.

There was much waste and barren land to be seen on these drives, and here and there an isolated cornfield, whose produce is too small to form a rick, but is built up in sheaves in the field till disposed of.

Long after dark we reach FALMOUTH, where there is one of the finest hotels in Cornwall.

Like nearly all the other Cornish towns we saw, the old part of Falmouth is a collection of miserable tenements, forming narrow dirty streets in which it is wholly impossible for two vehicles to pass each other.

The more modern part is good, and the town is most beautifully situated and has a splendid appearance from the sea, the houses rising in regular gradations up the sides of the hills overlooking the magnificent bay and harbour. These hills are richly wooded, and the two headlands at the entrance to the bay are crowned by forts armed with superannuated guns.

The river Fal, which empties itself into the bay at this point, is very pretty, the groves of trees coming right down to the water's edge, and presenting pretty combinations and romantic views and vistas.

The bay was full of yachts (a regatta was impending), steamers, and other craft, chiefly small, and the scene as we sailed about it, in full view of the wide expanse of ocean, the bold headlands, and deeply wooded hills, and the romantic looking town, made up a beautiful picture.

CHAPTER V.

LYDFORD.—THE DART.—TORQUAY.

The railway from Plymouth to Lydford passes through the splendid scenery of Bickleigh Vale. It is an extensive valley enclosed between hills of varying height, which are for the most part clothed with heavy woods, while the valley itself is full of rich meadows and luxuriant verdure. Seen from the train, it presents a constant succession of beautiful and varying scenes, all of the most striking and interesting character. The rivers which run through it abound with fish, and the whole district is a favourite one with artists as well as with those who, as ordinary tourists, visit it merely for its romantic beauty.

Stopping at the quiet old town of Tavistock, and after a brief ramble, we take the coach to Lydford. The road winds over great moors, at a high elevation, which are now covered with bunches of yellow and purple gorse. From these heights a wide expanse of country is visible, including a portion of the vast, brown, dreary, treeless expanse of Dartmoor.

On a high and very steep hill we pass is a singular old church. It is very small, having only one window, and is built of rough rag-stone. It is far from any habitation, and only to be reached by a hard climb, and in the winter time is exposed to the rough blasts of all the winds of heaven. It is said to have been originally built in the far past by some one who, in great peril at sea, vowed, if saved, to build a church on the first point of land he saw. This being the one, in fulfilment of his vow the church was built here, and I understand is still used. The devil

is said to have done what he could to prevent its erection, but unsuccessfully, as the event proves.

Anon we arrive at LYDFORD, a small scattered village on the edge of Dartmoor, whose barren expanse is visible for miles. We proceed at once to visit the Falls. They are situated in a narrow, deep valley, full of trees and wild undergrowth. The ravine is of great length, and is intersected by numerous paths. You can follow the stream which flows down the valley for a long distance, and constantly get changes of view of the most romantic character. The Fall itself is of considerable height, some 120 to 150 feet, I should judge, but the volume of water is not great, and the rock down which it comes presents a slight incline, so that the water rather slides over than falls from it, but the height breaks it into white foam, and the contrast with the dark-red rock, and the green masses of trees and shrubs which encompass it, give a fine effect. In one place, at the bottom of the valley, is a little cave opening out at the foot of a huge rock, almost completely covered with creepers and hanging foliage. A tiny stream issues from the narrow opening, which is, however, too low to enter far except by the Pixies, whose haunt it is supposed to be. The hard rock of the floor of the gorge is worn away in places by the action of the stream, and now you have quiet clear pools under over-arching trees, now a bubbling torrent as it forces its way amid the rocks which obstruct it. The whole place is very beautiful and romantic, and we pass some hours in devious wanderings in this wooded defile.

From Plymouth to Totnes, a clean, quiet old town, which possesses the ruins of a castle, old and ivy-covered, and a church which is of great age and worth looking at. From Totnes, by a miniature steamer, down the river Dart. This is a most lovely river. There is nothing whatever of the wild and majestic in its scenery, but for richness and tranquil beauty there are bits on this stream not to be surpassed by any river scenery in the kingdom. It winds in long still reaches, amid low but richly wooded hills, dotted here and there with little villages or pretty

private residences. The view constantly varies with the turnings and windings of the stream, but is always sweetly beautiful; and when the scene, as now, is gilded by the rays of the setting sun, the picture is most splendid.

DARTMOUTH, as its name proclaims, stands at the junction of the river with the sea. The town is situated on both banks, and is extremely pretty. As you walk along the banks from the town to the coast, the finely wooded hills rise far above you on your right, while down below, the river, fringed by white houses peeping between the foliage, and dotted with trim little yachts and fishing boats, and the open waters of the sea in front, make up a striking and beautiful picture. On the beach at the mouth of the river are some large rocks and caves, much water-worn and very picturesque. Higher up the river are two hulks of old wooden line-of-battle ships, moored in mid stream, and now used as training schools for naval cadets. We went over one of these and wondered at its size, strength, and the quantity of timber it contained. It was beautifully clean, and admirably adapted to its present use. There is an old church in Dartmouth, and some antique buildings in the Butterwalk.

In our erratic wanderings we found ourselves one night in a small country town, which, however, possessed a theatre; and on that particular night *Hamlet* was to be presented, and we availed ourselves of the opportunity. For the place, the scenery and appointments were good, and the theatre fairly sized, but very low roofed. The stage was so diminutive that the actors appeared immense. When "Hamlet" stood by "Ophelia's" grave, his plume was level with the top of the tower of the church; or, in the scene on the battlements, with the highest bastion. He all but collided with the "Ghost" in his rush in the scene where he begins, "Angels and ministers of grace," &c. The "Ghost" cleared his throat twice distinctly during his address. The "King" was terrific so far as black beard and moustache could make him so, and justified the admiration of a young maiden who sat near me, who

said to a friend, "Doesn't he look awfully grand?" The monarch, however, laboured under one disadvantage; he was only about five feet six inches, and "Laertes" was over six feet high. This rather marred the effect of his speech "There is a divinity doth hedge a king," &c. The "Queen" looked and acted like a waitress; and one of the "players" was dressed in modern fashion, presumably from the wardrobe having given out. The "Hamlet" was barely tolerable; the "Ophelia" the best acted part—but what pearl-powder and pencilling! But, ye gods, what a "Horatio!" The actors were heartily applauded, and the performance appeared to give unqualified satisfaction to the audience.

From Dartmouth to TORQUAY. The town is beautifully situated on a slope facing the sea, and presents a striking appearance. The houses rise one above another up the sides of the hills; their white walls peep out amid masses of trees and foliage. The surrounding country is one of the richest districts in England, and is broken up into delightful hills and valleys, full of pretty walks and fine views.

We drive out to Watcombe, a small village near the foot of a great rock, on the shores of a little inlet of the sea. From this we make our way, by a difficult and perplexing path, to Babbicombe Bay. This is a lovely spot—a little bay whose shore is covered by pure white shingle, and is enclosed by lofty beetling rocks and cliffs, in places covered with masses of deep green foliage. The scene, as you stand on the narrow beach, is one of the greatest beauty, and the solitariness and silence which usually characterise the place lend it an additional charm.

Anstis' Cove, which lies a little nearer Torquay, is also a charming spot. You gain it by a steeply descending and winding path from the cliffs above it. When you reach the shore, and turn to gaze on the scene around, you are strongly impressed with admiration of its beauty. The beach is steep, and covered with loose shingle, on which lie large masses of water-worn rock. On one side

the ravine is shut in by precipitous cliffs, to which here and there the green vegetation clings. On the other rises a lofty but less precipitous hill, entirely covered by trees, and under and about them coppice, brushwood, and grass, and which is full of winding and romantic paths. Sit down on one of the rocks on the beach, and regard the scene, and listen to the only sound which breaks the deep silence—that of the waves, as they roll and dash among the loose stones of the beach, or strike the rocks and break back in clouds of white spray, and acknowledge that you have rarely seen one more beautiful or enjoyable.

CHAPTER VI.

HEIDELBERG.—BALE.

FROM Bingen by train to Mayence, where we got a passin glimpse of the town and its fortification, with the sentrie pacing the ramparts, their bayonets glistening in th moonlight. Then on to HEIDELBERG, where we make a brief stay. This is a particularly pleasant town, on th Neckar, containing, however, with the exception of th Castle, nothing of special note. Its immediate environs and the surrounding country, however, are exceedingly beautiful and interesting. The town, or the modern part of it, is clean, quiet, and dull, the streets are generally broad and lined with trees, the houses for the most part regularly and well-built. It contains a university, one of the oldest in Germany, and a very extensive and valuable library. As is well known, it is a great place for education, and schools and pensions are very numerous. The neighbourhood abounds in pleasant walks and drives. Among the former is a long and handsome promenade along the river bank, planted with trees: the latter are almost numberless, and comprise every variety of scenery.

We drove out to the Wolfsbrunnen, a little village about three miles from the town. The road winds up and down among the beautiful wooded hills, and by its sides fruit trees are growing in large numbers. We make a detour to reach the summit of one of these hills, and from it we gain a most extensive view of the town and castle, the valley of the Neckar, the Rhine, Odenwald, with the masses of the Black Forest in the distance. I am unable to say how far we could see, but I have seldom

beheld so extensive and varied a panorama even from a much greater elevation. The Wolfsbrunnen has its tradition, of course, as we should have found out when we arrived there if we had not known it before, for on a tree in front of the inn was a board containing the following rather striking attempt at English: "At the inn is to have the tradition of the Wolfsbrunnen." "The tradition in question records that a beautiful enchantress was here killed by a wolf; hence the name." There are a number of ponds containing trout, and the stream which supplies them is used to propagate the fish. On our desiring to see this we are introduced into a dark outhouse, through which the little stream is carried in a sort of long trough, and when the cover of this was raised we saw the "speckled beauties" in great numbers, and displaying marked activity. The environs of this place are very rich and luxuriant, producing fruit and flowers in profusion, but except this trout breeding there is nothing else worth note.

The students at the university are much given to duelling—I suppose of that eccentric and extraordinary kind which has so frequently been made the subject of merriment among us at home. If I am correctly informed, the whole body, except the face, is securely padded, the eyes protected, and the combatants then attack each other with swords. The worst that comes of it, as a rule, is a few slashes and scratches in the face, with a possible loss of a portion of the nose. These little affairs are usually settled in a forest near here, and I am told are of frequent occurrence. Among the students who were lounging about, I observed one young fellow who had evidently been very recently engaged, for his face was one mass of slashes, scratches, and cuts, the marks of which more or less I should think he would retain for life.

Our hotel was a beautifully-clean and pleasantly-situated house, but I am unable to say that the *table d'hôte* (which by the way is served at two, not at six, as in France and Belgium) was at all equal to the French

cookery. It was the same at Cologne. The dishes are good enough, but plain and substantial—none of those piquante, delicate strokes which give so great a charm to a French dinner. In fact the average German dinner bears a strong resemblance to our own, both in its good and bad features. It was a very quiet affair—none of that bright, sparkling conversation which distinguishes a French *table d'hôte*, but a silent, steady attention to the work before them, on the part of the Germans, who formed the greater portion of the visitors.

But the most striking feature about Heidelberg is the picturesque and noble ruins of the castle. These occupy a commanding position on a wooded hill about three hundred feet above the Neckar. The towers, buttresses, terraces, walls, gateways, and battlements make up a picture which, for magnificent grandeur, is, so far as I know, without a parallel. The buildings are now, of course, wholly in ruins, and their noble proportions are to some extent concealed by the trees amid which they stand and the ivy which partially covers their venerable walls. The castle is supposed to have had its origin about the end of the thirteenth century; to have been added to and adorned by various Electors in the succeeding centuries; to have been greatly injured in the frequent wars; and, finally, to have been reduced to its present condition by those universal destroyers, the French armies, in some of their numerous ravaging and Goth-like incursions into Germany. It is approached by a fine avenue of trees, and is surrounded by a modern garden full of the most delightful walks and abounding in ever-varying views. Anything grander and more imposing than the view presented by the inner courtyards it is impossible to imagine. The centre, filled with the remains of fountains, statues, &c., partially overgrown with flowering shrubs and ivy—the great extent, height, and noble façades of the surrounding ruins, presenting various orders of architecture, light, elegant, and richly decorated, or massive and bold—the numerous busts and statues which adorn the fronts fo the various buildings—the tiers of windows—the noble

gateways, towers and turrets—make up a melancholy but majestic picture not easily forgotten. If you have any poetry in your nature this monument of past greatness and splendour will give you the highest gratification.

The ruins are of great extent, and there are yet many rooms and subterraneous passages in tolerable preservation. In one of the cellars is the great "Heidelberg Tun," capable of containing 49,000 gallons, and on the top of which a broad platform is constructed; a trap door in this, when open, gives you some idea of the size of this huge cask. Near it is a wooden figure of a court jester who, in his day, it is said, drank immense quantities of wine.

From Heidelberg to Bale, a long railway journey which carries us far into the night before it is accomplished. The speed on the German railways is much lower than on ours, but the time is fairly well kept. Till you get accustomed to it you are apt to be a little startled by the appearance of the guard's face at your window when the train is travelling at considerable speed. I never could quite understand the object gained by this somewhat perilous walk outside a train in motion, but it is the universal practice, not only in daylight but after dark. On the Swiss railways the carriages communicate, and the guard passes from one end of the train to the other internally. The construction of the carriages otherwise is much the same as ours. On German railways boxes are fitted to all the carriage doors to receive tobacco ashes, and I imagine the reserved carriages are for non-smokers. On the Swiss and some of the French railways the coaches are made with both outside and inside seats, the drawback to the former being the smoke from the engine, which is driven over them.

The RHINE, at Bale, is pretty wide, and the current rapid, the water a light green, and the stream is spanned by the well-known bridge. The town is light and cheerful, but does not contain much to detain a traveller. The Munster is a remarkable edifice, with two lofty towers. It contains several tombs, notably that of Erasmus. Attached to it are extensive cloisters, which give out on

the Pfalz, a terrace planted with fine chestnut trees, and from which a good view of the town and suburbs is visible.

A day in Bale satisfied us, and we took the train to LUCERNE, fifty miles distant, which we were four hours in reaching. It was an extremely hot day, and the journey was not a little tedious. We begin to see something of the Swiss mountains as we proceed; and wooded hills, ravines, and valleys, pretty and highly cultivated, are numerous.

The roads are lined with ripe fruit trees in abundance, and along them the heavily laden carts, drawn by oxen, pass slowly on at intervals. Now we get a glimpse of the snow-clad summits of the Jung-frau and other Bernese giants, and the picturesque Swiss buildings begin to appear. These are so distinctive a feature in every Swiss landscape that I venture to quote the description given of t'.em by a recent traveller.

"To see the cottages of the Alps in picturesque perfection go to the neighbourhood of the Bernese Oberland. There a wealthy peasant's house is quite a gem. The walls of the ground floor are usually built of stone, plastered and whitewashed. In this there are the kitchens and offices; above this level all with the exception of the chimneys is of wood. On the first floor are the parlours, the best bedrooms, and often towards the back some chambers for grain and other stores. Besides the staircase from the entrance below access is commonly obtained to the house by an external flight of steps, which lead from the front to a railed gallery running all along the side, into which a door opens from the first floor. Very commonly there is a gallery of this kind on both sides of the house, each with its door; one giving more direct access to the living rooms, the other to the store chambers. The windows, glazed with small panes in wooden casements, and provided with jalousied shutters, often painted green, are placed close together along the front of the house. The second floor is partially in the roof, which is low in pitch, and is covered with wooden shingles, the eaves projecting for at least four feet, and under their shelter

another railed gallery runs along the front and sides of the house. On this stage, also, the windows, as far as possible, are made to look front. Above this floor there are generally two or three garret-rooms in the apex of the roof, used for bedrooms or for stores. In many houses the beams are richly carved, the walls panelled and ornamented with sculptured or painted devices, the balustrades of the balconies carefully worked, and even the ends of the shingles on the roof are cut shield shape. Owing to the force of the wind it is often found necessary to secure these last by long beams or heavy stones, arranged in rows, and lashed firmly down. Often on the beams and panels the builders' names are inscribed, together with appropriate texts of Scripture, such as "Except the Lord build the house their labour is but lost that build it;" or couplets like the following, freely rendered from the German :—

> "This house in God's hand standeth stout;
> Bide weal within and woe without."

The corner-posts and brackets also, which support the roof, are frequently very richly carved. The stables, carthouse, barn, &c., are in a separate building, after a similar but plainer pattern; but in a poorer house all are under one roof, the horses, &c., being on the ground floor, and the hay stored at the back. This arrangement is very common in every part of the Alps."

The train passes slowly on past Lake Sempach, a broad sheet of water. The town of that name on its shore was the scene of a great Swiss victory five hundred years ago. Anon the line intersects a fir wood, on leaving which we get a view of the dark mass of Pilatus; then, skirting the banks of a small, beautifully clear river, we pass through a tunnel and emerge on the banks of the lake, and are at Lucerne.

CHAPTER VII.

LUCERNE.—THE RIGI.

LUCERNE contains many fine hotels. Certainly the first-class Swiss hotels are most magnificent buildings, some of them almost palatial in their appearance and adjuncts; great rooms, splendidly fitted and furnished, and containing every luxury and convenience that could possibly be desired. Taken altogether, I never saw anything to equal them for size, brilliance, and comfort; and though I thought the *table d'hôtes* at most of them inferior to the French, yet they were superior to what I had met with in Germany. According to my experience, the charges even in the best of them are much lower than in first-rate hotels in the South and West of England and Scotland, while none of the latter will bear comparison with them in most essential particulars. I have paid as much, if not more, for the same accommodation in a dingy, stuffy hotel in England as in many of these Swiss palaces.

The town of Lucerne is sufficiently curious and interesting. It is situated on the banks of the Reuss, a rapid torrent of clear green water issuing from the lake. This river is crossed by several bridges, some of them covered, and the interior decorated with singular old paintings. The town is enclosed by walls, with watch-towers, which give it a unique and old-world appearance. There are some interesting ancient buildings, containing antique carving, stained windows, and paintings; but the natural scenery amid which the town lies absorbs all your attention. I am tempted to lay down my pen in despair of giving any adequate idea of the beauty and grandeur of

the scenery of the Lake of Lucerne, and yet I shall attempt it after my own fashion. Imagine, then, an irregular sheet of clear water, some twenty-five miles in length and from one to four or five miles in width. Sheer out of this lake on all sides and through its whole length arise almost numberless mountains, ranging in height from 4,000 to 8,000 or 10,000 feet, and beyond these again other mountains as far as the eye can reach. In some places, the former approach each other closely, and in others are more widely separated. The lake has two arms, which stretch to the right and left, and are some miles in length, and as it winds among the mountains its general conformation shows bays, creeks, promontories and straits, with here and there a diminutive island. This crowd of mountains, which arise out of or stand in the immediate vicinity of the lake, present every possible variety of scenery. In some the lower slopes are covered with gardens, fruit trees, and dwellings; above, dark forests clothe them to the summit. Others present nothing but bare and rocky precipices and sheer declivities, down which in places foaming torrents sweep into the quiet waters of the lake. The higher peaks are frequently covered by clouds, but here and there in your field of vision rise the solemn snow-capped summits of the giant Alps. On the narrow shores of the lake, or on the lower slopes of the mountains, are numerous pretty towns and villages, while higher up the sides are isolated chalets, picturesque in themselves, and most romantically placed. Imagine the surface of the water dotted with boats with bright coloured awnings, which flit here and there over its calm surface; its banks crowded with travellers from every part of the civilised world, and drawn from all classes of society, and you have but a very inadequate conception of the romantic beauty of the spot. Nor are historical associations wanting to give additional interest to its natural beauty.

On a fine bright morning we sail up the lake to Fluelen, at its extremity, amid scenes of great beauty and picturesque effect. Grim old Pilatus, with his black and rugged peaks, so prominent an object at Lucerne—the

Burgenstock, covered with dark forests—the cheerful Rigi, and many other mountains, towns, and villages, are passed. Now the banks approach each other, and the sides are sheer rocky precipices. Anon we pass out and the lake widens. Through occasional openings we get sight of the loftier mountains with their white peaks.

Here we pass miniature fields and gardens, rich in fruits and pasture; there, dark deep woods which come down to the water's edge. Here, a turn in the lake shows us numbers of mountains, with little villages nestling at the feet of some, and tiny fields cultivated to the lake's closest margin.

We have got into the region of alpenstocks, for almost everybody on the steamer carries at least one. Delicate-looking ladies appear with these, with, in some cases, an array of names burnt thereon, which would, if genuine, almost qualify the owner for admission to the Alpine Club. Here is a delicate-looking youth, of some seventeen or eighteen years, who, according to this test has "done," besides other minor climbs, Mont Rosa and Mont Blanc. There a lady, not as slim as she once was, who has yet, apparently, been up some 12,000 feet. These things puzzle me till I call to mind that, in every Swiss shop where they sell these articles, there are notices, "Sticks marked here," and I suppose you could have the whole Alpine range branded on an alpenstock, if you paid for it, without any impertinent inquiries being made. Here are two travel-stained pedestrians, however, their faces red with sun and wind, and carrying staffs with blunted ice axes attached, but not a name appears upon them. Doubtless these are your genuine climbers. Among the people on board is a party of young Swiss ladies, and I regret to say I could not consider any of them handsome, and the more so as it was my general observation.

But here we are at Tell's Chapel, and there is the rock on which the great patriot sprang out of Gessler's boat. There are one or two rudely-executed frescos on its walls; and once a year mass is celebrated in it, though where the people stand I cannot tell, for it is only a little open

structure which would not hold more than twenty or thirty persons.

Soon after we arrive at Fluelen, a small place, overshadowed by huge mountains of 10,000 feet high. The scenery, as may be imagined, is grand in the extreme.

From this we drive to Altorf, a little town at the foot of the St. Gothard Pass. Ever and anon the sound of bells, the loud cracking of a whip, the cry of the driver, and a post carriage covered with dust, and with its one or two travellers snugly ensconced within, dashes past us.

The road winds about among the mountains which arise on all sides in majestic beauty. This quaint little town is said to have been the scene of the exploits of Tell, and it certainly is full of him. A great statue of the patriot stands in a conspicuous part of the town. He is represented in the act of fitting an arrow to a bow, presumably in connection with the story of the apple. In another place is a crude fresco representing him with uplifted face to heaven, as beseeching aid before he aims at the apple on his son's head, who is represented standing at a little distance. There is a curious old fountain and statue, around which are gathered a group of peasants, engaged apparently in idle gossip. Here is a little old church, where a priest is repeating prayers in presence of a few old women and children. The churchyard is full of crosses marking the graves. Many of these are decorated with wreaths of flowers; and on the wall, near one grave, is a rough painting of some sacred subject. The situation of the town, the grand mountains, the picturesque houses, the old church and monastery, and the people, make up a profoundly interesting scene.

We return to Lucerne to dine; a band plays in the hall the while; and after dinner we stroll about the garden and the promenade along the quay, look into a *café* or two, and amuse ourselves with observation of the gay crowd of visitors.

Next day to Fitznau for the RIGI. The railway is the most extraordinary piece of engineering possible. The small engine, peculiar in shape and construction, is

placed behind two large open carriages, both in ascent and descent; in the former case propelling, in the latter retarding. The gradients are something awful—one in four (Mont Cenis one in twelve)—the line narrow, and the descent from it so sheer and profound that one cannot help shuddering. An accident on an ordinary railway is bad enough—one here means simply total destruction to everyone. The slightest failure of the engine and brakes and down into the depths below goes the train and everybody in it. When you sit in the carriages they are tilted up to such an extent as to make it a little difficult to keep your seat at the upper end. But this feeling of nervousness soon diminishes, and before the hour and a half or two hours which it requires to reach or descend from the summit (about three and a half miles of railway) is almost gone. The pace in both cases is very slow, and the care used very great, and as a matter of fact I believe no accident has ever happened.

If from below you look at the train creeping up the mountain it seems unpleasant enough. The ascent in this way, however, is easy and luxurious, and you smile at the panting pedestrians slowly toiling up the mountain as you pass them. As we ascend the view expands beneath us, and near the summit is the Kaltbad, a place much frequented by people for whom its peculiar position and air has been recommended. It is a pretty large building, painted green and white, and as it was erected long before the railway was made, and all the materials of which it is composed had to be carried up the mountain, it must have been a work of great labour. The Rigi-Kulm is a fair-sized hotel, a little below the summit and close to the terminus of the railway. We speedily gain the highest point, and the celebrated view, which is said to embrace a circuit of three hundred miles, is before us. A vast and splendid panorama it is. Immediately beneath our feet lie the Lakes of Lucerne and Zug, diminished almost to pools, on which you can just see the boats and steamers. Rivers are like thin streaks of white as you trace their course in the plains. Numbers

of towns and villages scattered over a wide extent of country are visible in every direction, forests, rivers, lakes, and castles, can be seen and named. Far distant is seen a vast chain of snow-clad mountains in endless number and variety, looking wondrously pure and beautiful, resting against the evening sky. Nearer, rugged, rocky heights, or others covered with deep forests or verdant grass.

The view from the Rigi is undoubtedly an extensive and magnificent one, but withal, the more important and striking parts of it are too distant to impress you as strongly as they otherwise might.

We did not stay the night, but one of our party, who had previously done so, was wholly disappointed in seeing the sunrise. The morning was cloudy and misty, and the usual scene totally invisible. In fact, my friend's experience was identical with that of the Englishman who recorded his disappointment in the lines—

"Seven weary uphill leagues we sped
The setting sun to see:
Sullen and grim he went to bed—
Sullen and grim went we.

"Nine sleepless hours of night we passed
The rising sun to see:
Sullen and grim he rose again—
Sullen and grim rose we."

On a favourable morning, however, it must be a magnificent sight, judging from a somewhat similar view on the Uetliberg, the faint streak—

"Soon as the morn, in orient purple dressed,
Unbarred the portal of the roseate east"—

gradually changing to a bar of gold which tips the lofty peaks in succession with gorgeous and changing colours, and gradually bringing each feature of the varied scene into view, and finally flooding it with light, and waking the landscape into life and beauty.

We descend the mountain as we ascended it, and so back in the quiet evening to our hotel. The scene tonight, on the shores of the lake, was very beautiful—

numbers of boats skimmed its surface carrying lamps and adorned with flags, and the effect as they moved about was strikingly pretty. For awhile, after darkness had fallen, we had some vivid but harmless lightning. The effect of the broad flashes lighting up for a second the mountains and water before us was startling and grand. Later the moon shone out splendidly, and added new beauties to the scene. As we strolled about we became aware that some notable person had arrived. The French flag was suspended over the door of the Grand National Hotel, and the trees on the promenade, the boats, &c., were hung with coloured lamps.

We were not long in discovering that the distinguished visitor was M. Thiers. A large crowd of visitors and inhabitants had gathered round the hotel, in front of which a band was playing national airs. Here comes a procession of Swiss youths bearing flaming pine torches; they form in front of the hotel, and sing several national melodies in their peculiar native style. During this the veteran statesman made his appearance on a balcony, his face and figure, however, being only imperfectly visible. There was no speech making; and after a time the torches were extinguished and the crowd dispersed, and ere long silence and darkness reigned supreme.

CHAPTER VIII.

FRESHWATER BAY.—THE NEEDLES.—TUNBRIDGE WELLS.

FROM Ventnor to Freshwater Bay by coach. There is some pretty scenery on this drive. I was particularly struck with the extreme beauty of the situation of some of the numerous private residences we passed, and admired greatly the splendid gardens and grounds, rich with flowers and fruit trees, in which they stood. Towards the end of our drive, however, the country became comparatively flat and uninteresting, and lost that abounding fertility which had hitherto been so marked a feature.

FRESHWATER BAY is a small and intensely quiet place, and there are few private residences in its vicinity. There is no gas in the place, and it is quiet enough to satisfy the most exacting in that regard. It is, however, a beautiful spot—a little bay surrounded by downs and low rocky cliffs, with a rough shingly beach, on which loose rocks are scattered. One of these is of large size, and has the form of a rough arch. It is a rather remarkable object. The sea is beautifully clear, and the whole adjuncts make up a remarkably pretty picture. To saunter at night under the gleaming stars, on the smooth lawn by the hotel, and watch the rolling sea breaking against the rugged cliffs, and to realise the deep tranquillity, was most enjoyable. On a glorious morning we saunter over the wide-sweeping down which stretches from here to Alum Bay and the Needles, ever and anon pausing to lie on our backs on the smooth green turf, and gaze up into the blue sky in dreamy idleness.

Alum Bay resembles Freshwater, except that the cliffs

are much higher and the bay itself is larger. Some of the heights which surround it are on the sea face streaked with various colours. We take a boat from an old boatman, who informs us he is seventy-five years old, but pulls with the vigour of a young man. He told us he had once been a pilot on this coast, but had lost his certificate through—as we inferred—a slight mental obliquity on the question of the revenue. We pass between the two sharp-edged rocks of the NEEDLES and into Scratchell's Bay. This is an extremely narrow, stony beach, cut off from the shore at each end by projecting cliffs, which extend round and completely overhang the miniature beach. They are of considerable height, and, being pure white, glisten dazzlingly in the rays of the sun. Our boatman showed us what he called a path up the nearly perpendicular cliffs, which I should have thought almost impracticable for a cat, but up which he said he had seen many a keg of brandy carried. We embarked again, and he rowed us into a cave in the rocks, which it is only possible to enter in calm weather, and even now the rise and dash of the water at its extremity made me not sorry to get out of it. In rough weather the waves rush in here with a heavy, booming sound, like that of a distant gun. The neighbourhood abounds in wild, heath-covered hills, and altogether is the most barren and wild part of the island. The roll of the waves about the Needles Rocks is very fine, and the place altogether is wild and beautiful enough; but it appears to be little visited, at least in comparison with other parts of the island. There is a fine view from the downs near here. Hurst Castle, the mainland, and the lovely waters of the Solent are full before you.

At Yarmouth, where we made a brief stay, the proprietor of the inn was, I understood, rather a celebrated naturalist. The coffee-room was full of specimens of an interesting character.

I do not know anything more enjoyable than to turn out early in the morning at Cowes, and have a sea bath; then walk back along the shores of the Solent, inhaling

the fresh and invigorating breeze, and watching the movements of the crowd of yachts, steamers, and boats constantly moving over the surface of the water. It is a beautiful and lively scene.

It is a glorious sail from Cowes to Ryde. The sea is pleasantly rough this morning, and full of vessels of all sorts. There is a regatta going forward, and the graceful yachts, with tall piles of snowy canvas, dash past us under the smart breeze, driving clouds of foam and spray from their bows. The shore presents varied and beautiful scenery of wood and water; smooth lawns approach the brink of the channel, or heavy trees all but dip their lower branches in it; woods, meadows, gentle hills, and pretty villas, alternate with charming variety. Leaving the island, and passing along the coast, pausing here and there on the way, we find ourselves eventually inland at TUNBRIDGE WELLS.

Of four of our inland watering-places, Leamington is pretty and attractive, full of pleasant walks and gardens.

Cheltenham is dull and insipid, straight uniform streets and houses, and contains no single thing worth looking at a second time.

Bath is an obsolete place, living in the memories of the past, when people were cured, or thought they were, by the waters, and presents little attraction to a visitor now. The days of Lydia Languish, Sir Anthony Absolute, of Beau Nash, and even of Messrs. Pickwick and Tupman, are surely gone, never to return!

Tunbridge Wells is also an old-world place—its ancient glory has departed; and though both it and the rest may still attract numbers of visitors, the celebrity it had when Johnson, Richardson, Colley Cibber, Garrick, and the Earl of Chesterfield, were to be seen walking in the Pantiles, is vanished like a dream.

Thackeray, in "The Virginians," describes the scene at the "Wells" in those days. I may quote a few lines:—

"There was indeed a great variety of characters who passed. * * Then came by my Lord Chesterfield, in a pearl-coloured suit, with his blue ribbon and star. * * * Do you see that great big, awkward, pock-marked, snuff-coloured man, who hardly touches his beaver in reply to my lord's salutation? * * His confounded

impudence. * * Do you know who he is? It's one Johnson, a dictionary maker. The fat man he is walking with is another of your writing fellows, a printer, his name is Richardson. He wrote "Clarissa," you know. The dictionary maker, who had shown so little desire to bow to my Lord Chesterfield, was here seen to take off his beaver and bow almost to the ground to a florid personage in large round hat with bands and a gown, my Lord Bishop of Salisbury, &c."

What difference there may be in the waters of these various springs I know not, but they are all more or less disagreeable—though of course you make a point, being in the place, of at least tasting them. Yet Tunbridge is a beautiful place. The air is light, sweet, and exhilarating to a striking degree. The "Wells" is a straggling place, partly on a hill and partly in a valley, and intersected by a breezy common. The neighbouring country is extremely picturesque, and there are many walks and drives well worth taking. One of these is to a place called the "High Rocks"—a number of huge masses of granite or other hard substance scattered about in a wood full of winding paths, and rather romantic and interesting. The Pantiles is a flagged area with trees on one side and old-fashioned shops on the other, and has doubtless altered little in appearance these hundred years. It is still the favourite promenade. You drink the waters at one end of it, and after a certain number of progressions to and fro drink again. A band plays at times to enliven the exercise.

We returned to London by one of the four-in-hand club coaches, capital vehicles and splendidly horsed. They do the thirty-nine miles with three changes in four hours sharp. The horses, however, were a trifle too spirited for my taste. I remember at one change, after the new team had been harnessed, the off leader more than once assumed the peculiar attitude of the unicorn in the Royal Arms of England, and varied it by an insane desire to enter the inn window near by. The "Whoa's," "Steady boys," &c., had no effect on his playful fancies, and it began to look a little awkward when our coachman, a splendid professional whip, called out sharp and hard, "Give him his head," which was accordingly done, and off

the whole four started at a high gallop, our driver pulling as hard as he could. Down the hill we went at a rattling speed, so fast that I presume the least attempt to turn the coach must have resulted in an upset. Fortunately the descent was straight and not long, and opposite to it was a long hill which the coachman assured us "would take it out of 'em," which, to my satisfaction, it did after a time. We were congratulated afterwards upon having gone down the hill in the shortest time known in the annals of the journey. What a lovely drive it was through the rich scenery of Kent. Now we rise to the top of a hill, and a great expanse of richly wooded country is below us. Now the road winds between long lines of majestic trees which meet above it. Now we rouse a pretty village with our wheels and the lively horn. Here we skirt a long paling covered with the green weather tints; over it we see a splendid park full of noble-spreading trees, and here and there in its vistas we spy the timid deer bounding away deeper into the wood. Here is a quiet pool reflecting in its depths the trees which shadow it. There a poor tramp, dusty and foot-sore, resting himself on the roadside. Here at a park gate, under grand trees, are two or three fair young English girls who have strolled down to see the coach pass by, to whom we raise our hats in respectful salutation, and for whose entertainment the guard performs a complicated solo on the horn. Here is one of those charming old country inns with swinging sign, and a large elm tree before the door which rises high above the house. There is a bench outside under its shade, and through the open door we get a glimpse of the snug bar and the pretty garden in the rear. Here is a breezy upland, rich with verdant grass, over which the sweet winds range at will. Anon we descend again into the wooded grounds below. Stop to put the drag on! Not so. Our dexterous guard slips down and adjusts or removes it as the case may be without arresting our progress. So on till we near the great metropolis, and by-and-by we are involved in its busy streets, and our rapid career is changed to a walking pace.

CHAPTER IX.

BERNE.

FROM Interlaken, a short railway journey, to the head of Lake Thun, where we take the steamer. The lake is somewhat larger than that of Brienz, and its scenery in the upper part much resembles that of the former. Similarly it is encompassed by mountains, some of great height, of which the Stockhorn and the Niesen (both between seven and eight thousand feet) are the most conspicuous. Many of these arise sheer out of the water, and their outlines are sharply defined against the blue sky and their dark masses reflected in the clear depths of the lake. Anon we pass a little village nestling at the foot of a mountain—or an old chateau, or a picturesque castle, or a romantically-situated private residence, while woods, vineyards, and the precipitous mountains, are about us on all sides. We stop occasionally at some of the villages on the banks, and at one take on board a party of young ladies, apparently, from the specimens they carry, returning from a botanical excursion, and who are all provided with the inevitable alpenstocks.

In due course we arrive at Thun, a prettily-situated picturesque old town, surrounded by villas, some of which are remarkably handsome. We leave the steamer here, and take the railway again to BERNE, through a various and well cultivated country, dotted with villages, whose white walls, red tiled roofs, and green blinds, present a striking feature in the landscape. Our hotel, at Berne, was an ancient edifice; but it was by no means a pleasant house to stay in. It was dark, heavy, and comfortless;

and contrasted unfavourably with the splendid hotels in other parts of Switzerland.

Berne is an intensely quiet, dull place; and, as far as I could discover, destitute of anything in the shape of amusement. At nine o'clock in the evening all the shops are closed, and the streets silent, dark, and almost deserted. The few *cafés* we saw were poor, small, and uninviting; though no doubt that description would not apply to all in the city. The situation of Berne, high above the Aare, which winds round it, is picturesque enough; and the town contains much that is interesting and beautiful. In the principal streets the footways are completely vaulted over by the projection of the upper stories of the building, which makes them sufficiently dark and gloomy. It is full of fountains; and in more than one street a stream of clear water is conducted down the centre. Many of these fountains are adorned with curious and grotesque statues. Everybody knows that the emblem of Berne is the bear, and the effigy of that animal appears in every imaginable position, and in every quarter of the town, including the Bears' Den, where he appears in *propriâ personæ*. The Cathedral and Council Hall are each remarkable and interesting buildings in their respective features.

We could not visit Berne, of course, without seeing the famous clock, though we came near missing its special feature by staring intently for some time at the wrong dial. The cock, the old man, the bears, and the harlequin, went through their wonted performances, just before and at the striking of the hour. The guide book says the sight always attracts a number of admirers. Having seen it, however, I cannot conscientiously consider myself as one of the number. Many of the streets of Berne are narrow and dirty, and some have no footways; but the street scenery is curious and quaint enough; and the dress, manners, and habits of the people, are very interesting. Round the fountains is nearly always gathered a group of women, filling water jars, washing vegetables, and gossiping. Here and there, in the street, in front of

the houses, is a family engaged in cutting wood for the winter stock. The father saws the logs, the son chops them up, and the daughter carries the fragments away in a basket.

A great feature at Berne is the view it commands from various points of the Bernese Alps. We saw them from the Cathedral terrace, which is presumably the best point of view. I am quite unable to say how many or what peaks are included in that long range of snow-clad summits which appears before you, but seeing them as we did, under the glow of a brilliant sunset, the sight was one of great splendour. As the various peaks successively caught the sun's rays they would glow like fire, or anon change to violet, green, yellow, in quick succession, till at last the cold grey shadows crept over them, the glorious tints faded, and the beautiful dream was over.

We met here a grave-looking American gentleman, whom I shall call the Professor. He was a great talker, as will soon appear, and his subjects were very various. Just now in the *salon* he was engaged in proving to an elderly lady, from statistics, that she was upon the whole considerably less liable to accidents in travelling than in staying at home. Later on in the evening—at the usual rendezvous, the smoke-room—he was engaged in earnest conversation with a fellow-traveller, on widely different and very grave subjects. These chance meetings among men whom a few days widely and for ever separates, are often of singular interest, and he must be dull indeed who does not learn something from these often strangely-constituted gatherings.

The Professor's companion was advancing the opinion of Macaulay that, apart from revelation, we were no nearer the solution of the ever-recurring problems of existence than our predecessors were three thousand years ago, and that an educated European, guided by reason only, is no more likely to be right on these questions than a Blackfoot Indian; that all the philosophers and scientific men, either of ancient or modern times, have not thrown one single ray of light upon them, and never can.

"It is impossible to deny the fact," said the Professor; "and yet men always have, and, I suppose, always will, strive to penetrate the veil, hopeless, apparently, as is the task. I cannot think that Bulwer Lytton's ideal world, where such questions were given up by common consent as absolutely and utterly insoluble, will ever find its realisation, or that Goethe's counsel that men should give up the wild impatience for the solution of mysteries placed beyond the boundaries of human faculties will ever be generally adopted."

"The bounds of the knowable and attainable are wide enough," returned the other, "to find employment for the greatest and most persistent efforts of the intellect, and yet in a sense they are narrow, for from whatever point the investigation be begun, the journey to the boundaries of the unknown is a short one, and every accession of knowledge tends only to show how very little we really know. But after all," he added, "the great majority of mankind in every age have troubled themselves little about the mysteries of existence, and have spent their days either in frivolous pursuits and enjoyments, or at least in indifference to the riddle of the world which perplexes the few."

"There is this to be said," replied the Professor—"that difficult questions like these are completely outside of the sphere of active duty, that, as Goethe says, 'is wide, sufficing, and ennobling to all who work in it.' But after all," he added, "the boundaries of the knowable and attainable are constantly shifting; each advance in human knowledge widens their limits, and it is hard to say what inquiry, however apparently at present beyond the range of human faculties, will be ultimately useless. Though it is perfectly true that no investigations ancient or modern have as yet thrown any appreciable light on some of the darker problems of existence, on the other hand it is impossible to over-estimate the benefits the world has derived from the studies and investigations of thoughtful men. Take the time of Rabelais, the condition of which we may infer from his coarse but humorous satire—though

in his day the density of the clouds of ignorance and intellectual and moral darkness was beginning to abate. What has changed the moral aspect of Europe since those days? Christianity is the same—the Bible is not altered. We say in general terms it is progress and enlightenment, but had not this its first beginnings in the thoughtful, studious meditations of men who were many of them decried and persecuted for their writings, teachings, and discoveries? In view of this fact I should be extremely reluctant to discourage any man from thoughtful, honest investigation in any direction."

From this point the conversation veered to the question how far the light of reason and natural religion sufficed to direct the life and regulate the actions. Though the Professor admitted the elevation and purity of the moral teaching of the Gospels had never been and could never be excelled, he yet maintained "that reason and human law are sufficient to direct the lives and regulate the actions of all who desire to practice virtue and purity of heart." In proof of this he quoted from the teaching of Confucius two of his famous maxims: "Do unto another what you would he should do unto you, and do not unto another what you would not should be done to you. Thou only needest this law alone," says Confucius; "it is the foundation and principle of all the rest." Again, "Combat night and day against thy vices, and if by thy cares and vigilance thou gainest the victory over thyself courageously attack the vices of others, but attack them not before this be done." Or further, he said, take the sublime inscription on the Chinese temples: "To the First Principle, without beginning and without end; He has made all things; He governs all; He is infinitely good, infinitely just; He enlightens, He sustains, He regulates all Nature."

"Again," said the Professor, "take the exordium to the laws of Zalencus, an illustration in a different time and country: 'Every citizen ought to be persuaded of the existence of the Divinity. It is sufficient to observe the order and harmony of the universe to be convinced that

chance could not have formed this splendid structure. Every man should be the master of his own mind; he should purify his soul, disengage it from all evil, persuaded that the Divinity cannot be served obediently by the perverse, and that He bears no resemblance to those miserable mortals who allow themselves to be dazzled by magnificent ceremonies and by sumptuous offerings. Virtue alone, and the constant desire to do good, are well-pleasing to Him.' Quotations like these might be indefinitely extended," added the speaker; "and even in the Koran, and the teachings of Buddha, like sentiments are to be found, and it will not be denied that the teaching I have quoted would, if followed, be fully adequate to sustain the position I have laid down." *

"Certainly," said the other; "if men in all ages had regulated their conduct by precepts like these, the history and present condition of the world would have been widely different. But it was as true then as it is now, that pure instructions are disregarded by the vast majority of those to whom they are addressed, and the day seems yet far distant when such precepts will form the ruling principles and guide to the conduct of all."

I regret to say that this conversation had the effect of reducing the four or five gentlemen who at first listened to or occasionally took part in it to the Professor, his friend, and myself, and shortly afterwards we also separated for the night.

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* The Duke de Chaulnes once said to Dr. Johnson "that the morality of the different religions existing in the world was nearly the same." "Ay, my lord," answered the Doctor, "but the Christian religion alone puts it on the right basis."

CHAPTER X.

WARWICK.—KENILWORTH.—STRATFORD.

Let me attempt to sketch a few scenes in grand old Oxford. We are in the broad walk, a magnificent avenue of chestnuts, which cast long shadows in the vista beneath them, or on the banks of the Cherwell or Isis. We wander along under the shady trees which dip their branches in the stream running by. We are in the Cathedral of Christ Church—the voices of the choir intone the familiar words, and the old arches echo with the sound of the organ. There on that wall is the bust of Democritus, junior, the well-known Burton, the author of that wonderful and learned tome, "The Anatomy of Melancholy." For three hundred years have those stony eyes looked on the varying scenes beneath. There is the effigy of some old bishop, with mitre and crozier, and here that of some other ancient dignitary, and over all the lofty vault, hoar with age. We are in the Sheldonian theatre, where the prizemen declaim their pieces amid a running fire of personalities from the wild undergraduates in the galleries above. There is the seat of the provost; here sit the doctors in gowns and hoods; there the men who are to receive a highly-prized distinction. On that bench has sat many a man whose name is now a household word. We are in the quadrangle of a college. Around us are the grey old cloisters, with the students' rooms above, in the centre a level carpet of grass, and in the walls here and there some quaint old figure or weather-worn carving, and over all the rich mould of age. We are in the Bodleian, midst old manuscripts and books

of priceless value and the deepest interest, or in the hall where erst Charles held his parliaments in those stormy times—a glorious room with fretted roof and walls and antique windows, through which can be dimly seen the waving trees outside.

There is Magdalen College, a splendid pile standing out distinctly in a burning sun, and close by its beautiful grounds, dotted with trees of rare luxuriance and enlivened by parterres of blooming flowers. Here, up this long vista of trees was Addison's favourite walk, still called by his name. Or, lastly, we are on the top of the Sheldonian, and the countless spires and towers of old Oxford lie beneath us in an unequalled panorama. There can be no doubt that these monuments of ancient days have a powerful influence in forming the character of each succeeding generation, and have their part in that past which is among the most powerful elements in forming a national character. A nation like the American, with comparatively no past, is widely different from one which has a chequered but grand history to look back upon.

The first sight of the beautiful pile of WARWICK CASTLE —that glorious relic of old England, and little altered by time from its ancient magnificence—is, indeed, one to be remembered. Through its portals the great king-maker marched in and out, and the hapless Gaveston was led to execution. The great court with the towering walls of the surrounding buildings, pierced with curious windows flanked by battlements and towers—the richness and variety of the architecture—speak eloquently of the olden time, and make up a scene on the bright summer day not soon forgotten.

All England mourned when the news came that this splendid historic building had taken fire and was seriously injured. We are glad to see and hear, however, that the damage done was not so great as was, I believe, generally thought, and that the restoration—so far as restoration was possible—was far advanced to completion.

As is well known the interior contains many valuable paintings, ancient furniture and arms, books and articles

of *vertu*, and it was gratifying to learn that comparatively few of these had been destroyed. The panel portraits of the family were burned, but most of the rest of the pictures were saved.

We entered the castle under a deep archway, and in passing were invited into the lodge to see some armour said to have appertained to the "great Earl." Certainly, he must have been a great man in a double sense to have wielded the long ponderous sword and mace which were shown to us. In any case, the armour and weapons were very ancient, and possessed strong interest of their own.

It would be a profitless task to attempt to describe in detail all there is within the building to interest you. The grand old rooms, the antique furniture, the priceless paintings, old armour, tapestry and gilding; the deeply-recessed windows from which noble views were visible; the Beauchamp Chapel, with the tomb of Richard, Earl of Warwick, who died in 1439, with his recumbent effigy clad in complete mail, and with hands clasped on breast, in attitude of prayer; the rich carved work of the altar and stalls, the fretted roof and gorgeous stained windows—the rays of the declining sun shining through, which fill the interior with a glory of colour. We are in the armoury and see all sorts of defensive and offensive arms, from the Roman sword and shield to the mail and chain doublets of more recent days. The Warwick vase in the grounds is a unique specimen of ancient art.

The grounds are remarkable for the great cedar trees which grow in one part of them, and which are said to be the finest in the country. The old gardener told us that so great had been the destruction caused in the grounds by visitors plucking flowers, cutting their names on trees, and the like, that no one was now permitted to traverse them unattended.

From Warwick to Kenilworth—a short railway journey and a walk along the road, a sharp turn to the left along a narrow lane covered with trees which meet above it, across a little brook, and the ruins of old KENILWORTH mouldering and ivy-covered, burst on our view. The castle,

like all others, has its special history, and had its vicissitudes of fortune. It was finally destroyed during the Cromwellian epoch. It is chiefly interesting from having been the scene of great revels on the occasion of Elizabeth honouring its owner, the Earl of Leicester, with a visit of nearly a week's duration, and which cost him an enormous sum of money.

Kenilworth was a grand building then, with mighty towers and walls, and great halls and rooms a-blaze with light and luxury, according to the time. Now the sumptuous edifice is entirely broken into ruins—not a single chamber remains—only crumbling walls, and a tottering tower. There is another and perhaps a greater source of interest attaching to these ruins, from the story in which Scott has revived their ancient glory. It is said, indeed, that but for the halo of romance with which he surrounded them the few remaining traces of the building would have disappeared; but since his time an effort has been made to preserve what then remained. With a fresh remembrance of his vivid and powerful novel in your mind, you wander about among these crumbling walls, with a dreamy and melancholy pleasure. Your recollection calls up the ill-fated Amy Robsart, the cruel and pitiless Earl, the melancholy and gallant Tresillian, the villain Varney, and the scenes and story with which these names are associated. Apart from these associations there is little to note in connection with the ruins of Kenilworth. They occupy a commanding position, and are beautiful in their decay. The village near has most of its streets and villas named after the characters in Scott's novel, so far as they will go.

From Warwick to STRATFORD is a pleasant walk, or drive, through a rich and interesting country. It was a burning day when we entered the famous town, which is a larger and more considerable place than I had fancied it. Stratford is very sensible of the attraction it possesses, for the way to Shakspere's house is very distinctly indicated by directions affixed to the walls in many parts of the town.

We are speedily in front of the conspicuous old-fashioned tenement, with its black and white front, and little porch, and diamond-framed windows. This is the room where the poet was born; a low-roofed, badly-lighted chamber, perfectly empty. The floor, the windows, the door, and other fittings, are of a rough but substantial character. The heavy planks of the floor are greatly worn, and full of crevices. The ceiling, walls, and small window panes, are literally covered with autographs—not an inch of vacant space remains. I suppose those of most note were whitewashed out, in the days before this building became national property. The only distinguished name (out of thousands) pointed out to us now was that of Scott, written on the glass of the window with a diamond. Here is the old kitchen, the flags of the floor broken in a hundred places, and with a capacious chimney, in the corners of which, no doubt, young Shakspere crept many a time and oft. So of the rest—we sat in Shakspere's chair (about which Washington Irving has his pleasant joke)—saw many memorials, which are here preserved, and the authenticity of which the lady custodian told us was guaranteed, so far as conscientious care could ascertain; old letters, books, legal documents and papers, rings and ornaments; a piece of the famous mulberry tree, which the peevish Goth cut down; Shakspere's school desk, hacked and cut in boyish fashion, and which we were told some recent American lady-visitors had kissed, in their enthusiasm; the well-known portrait, enclosed in a massive safe, and numerous other portraits, scarcely two of which agree in resemblance. We know next to nothing of the poet's life—we are in doubt how to spell his name—and, judging from what we see here, have no certain knowledge of his features.

There are numerous editions of his works, ancient and modern, some of the former containing plays not now mentioned in connection with his name. A letter, which he is known to have received, is enclosed in a wooden frame between two sheets of glass. This frame is fixed to a table, and turns on a pivot to allow of the letter being

read. After you have seen it it is covered by a thick cloth to prevent the light from injuring it. There is also the sign which was formerly fixed over the door when the house was a butcher's shop. The well-known words are readable, though nearly obliterated by former exposure to the weather.

However the nation may have neglected Shakspere's birthplace in the past, the most zealous care is now taken of it. It has been restored to its original condition, the adjoining tenement pulled down, and to avoid the risk of fire no artificial light is permitted to be used in it, it being warmed by hot-air pipes. The custodian showed us a bit of plaster, about an inch and a half long, which had fallen from the side of a door, and which had been immediately and carefully replaced in the best possible way. The fragment must not be lost, and to replaster the little gap was out of the question. The same minute care extended to every detail of preservation.

From his house we visited the site of his later residence in New Place, pulled down by the never-to-be-forgotten Gastrell. The same care was shown here; the bases of some of the walls remain, and the loose bricks are covered with wirework to preserve them; all the *debris* of the building had been carefully searched, and a few bits of moulding of ceiling, together with a miserable little battered tin candlestick, which were found, are carefully locked up in a glass cabinet in the adjoining house. They have here the veritable board on which he played back-gammon and sundry other things. Judging from its site the house must have been a pretty large one, and had an extensive garden. We were told that the lawn here is identically the same as the "great lawn" of which Shakspere writes, and very probably this is true, and as we walked upon it we beheld a scene very little altered from that which must have met his view—the same church, the same buildings for the most part—and our feet trod the same ground he must have walked upon frequently as he meditated and composed his later plays. At the foot of the lawn is placed a piece of sculpture

which, whatever its artistic merits, looks out of place in its present position.

After gathering a few branches of mignionette from the garden, we leave, and passing the grammar-school, and through the line of trees which skirt the churchyard path, reach Stratford Church. The familiar bust so often engraved and photographed is before us, and the light-coloured stone slab which covers his remains is at our feet. The well-known words, much worn, are there. I have read in a work on the subject, published some thirty years ago, that these words are, in point of fact, not Shakspere's. The writer avers that, apart from their un-Shaksperean character, he has seen them on some other ancient monumental stone, applied to an obscure person, and he has "little doubt they formed a regular part of the stock-in-trade of the sexton of the seventeenth century." However this may be, there is little question, I presume, that they had their effect in preventing the poet's dust from being disturbed. It is difficult to define the feeling which impresses you when you stand before this grave and remember whose ashes lie there. Deep and strong come to your mind many of those wondrous passages which have excited the admiration of the world, and which have stirred, and will stir, till time shall cease, the most powerful emotions of humanity.

From the church to the churchyard, at the foot of which flows the gentle Avon, its banks verdant with bright meadows and spreading trees; that river which Shakspere loved so well, and to which he is supposed to refer in the well-known passage from the "*Two Gentlemen of Verona:*"

> "The current that with gentle murmur glides,
> Thou know'st, being stopped, impatiently doth rage;
> But when his fair course is not hindered
> He makes sweet music with the enamelled stones,
> Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
> He overtaketh in his pilgrimage;
> And so by many winding nooks he strays."

There are other interesting visits to be paid in connection with Stratford and Shakspere, but I shall not refer to more.

What is that subtle influence we call genius? It is independent of time and place, and shows itself amid the most incongruous and unlikely associations. Why should this man possess in so remarkable a degree a power in which in the highest sense his contemporaries, and still less his successors, have had no share? A power, so to speak, apart from himself—one he could no more transmit to his children than impart to his friends—one which has placed him for all time on an inaccessible height apart and alone. He himself could as little explain that which stirred within him as we who are strangers to its influence.

Law and order, philosophers tell us, rule supreme in the physical world, but who shall define the subtle forces which govern the spiritual and intellectual? Was Shakspere what he was in virtue of some latent unknown law? If it be so, surely its operation must be intermittent and erratic. Or was the source of his genius that divine breath which, first breathed into the nostrils of man, made him a living soul?

CHAPTER XI.

MOUNTAINEERING.

One night, in the luxurious smoke-room of the Beau Rivage, at Interlaken, the conversation turned on the "teaching of the mountains," and mountaineering. We met here, again, the American gentleman whom I have called the Professor, and who was delivering himself of an earnest protest against the latter. The subject was taken up and discussed *pro* and *con* by several visitors. There was little difference of opinion on the former subject. I ventured to say that I thought the beauties and grandeur of mountain scenery would vary in their effects according to the temperament and disposition of the individual: that there were some whose emotions would be but feebly stirred by natural scenery, and upon whom its effects would be of the most transient description.

"Just so," said the Professor, "and on the other hand there are others whom it moves profoundly, and excites their deepest feelings. To me it seems in every case, more or less, it must tend to strengthen if not develope noble generous thoughts and impulses, and pure and exalting sentiments. I cannot imagine a man retaining grovelling meanness, or narrow views or prejudices, in presence of these grand sublimities."

"That is so, doubtless," I replied, "and a good illustration of it is to be met with in Mr. Whymper's book, 'Scrambles Among the Alps.' He had left, as usual, before daybreak, for the ascent of one of the high mountains, and had attained a considerable height before sunrise. Pausing in the ascent, he and his guide turned to see its

effect on the scene around them. Gradually the light strengthened, and, ere long, mountain peak, glacier, and snow-field emerged from the grey mists, and were dyed with glorious and changing colours. Whymper and his guide stood still, gazing in rapt admiration at the magnificent scene, and at last the latter fell on his knees, and, as the tears ran down his cheeks, exclaimed, 'Oh, the beautiful mountains! Oh, the beautiful mountains!' One cannot define the man's feelings, but surely their effect must have been of the character you indicate."

"No doubt," replied the other; "and though one might not act as this poor fellow did, yet I do not envy the man who in like circumstances would not share his feelings. But," he proceeded, "on the subject of mountain climbing I must repeat that I regard it as mere insensate folly—that is in cases where it involves danger to life and limb in a very high degree. Whether a man is justified in risking his own life in such foolhardy ventures I very much doubt, but in so far as his doing so entails like danger on his guides I have no doubt at all."

"Without arguing the former question," replied another, "you must remember that the services of these men are purely voluntary, and that they are eager for the work."

"Yes," replied the American, "because you tempt them with wages far greater than they can earn by their ordinary occupations. As to their delight in the work, let me ask how many of them voluntarily ascended these dangerous heights before the craze of climbing developed itself among you Englishmen, and how many of them would continue to do so if your wild expeditions ceased? The thing is utterly absurd. You struggle for hours, at imminent peril to life and limb, to gain some great height, and for what? Probably when you have reached it you have only just time to stand upon the mountain top (if it admits of your doing so, which is not always the case) before the waning sun warns you that you must descend. A brief ten minutes to half-an-hour on a giddy pinnacle, exposed to a biting blast which drives the snow in clouds about you and all but congeals your blood; a view (when

you are oblivious of danger and discomfort sufficiently to look at it, and when circumstances permit it to be seen) which is little if any better than may be gained from points accessible without danger."

"But, my dear sir," replied the gentleman who spoke last, "you exaggerate the danger, and besides, your argument would cover all other amusements which involve risk—fox-hunting, racing, and the like."

"I am not afraid of the legitimate issue of my argument," said the Professor, "but we are discussing mountain climbing at present, and I shall be glad to be shown that my statement, that it is attended with the highest danger, is unfounded; and you know Mr. Whymper, in his argument, admits that consciously and deliberately to place ourselves and others in known danger in these ascents is unjustifiable."

"Exactly," replied the other; "you do not distinguish between mere difficulty and danger. Difficult mountaineering certainly is but given health, strength, steady nerves, and some experience, and its dangers are few and easily provided against; for instance, we know there are crevasses, and we prepare for them, and so of the rest—ice-slopes, precipices, and the like."

"Whether it be at all possible to obtain security against foreseen dangers, I very much question," returned the Professor; "but my principal point is that the unforeseen ones are so great and numerous as to make the whole thing always not only extremely difficult but also always extremely dangerous. Not to insist particularly on the fact that most of these high ascents involve passing places where a single slip or failure of the nerves must be instantly fatal, what of concealed crevasses, avalanches, falling rocks, or showers of stones, mists and cold, darkness and exhaustion, and many other contingencies that the most experienced climber cannot guard against? What would you think of a man who put off in a frail boat, in a strong gale, to see its effect from the surface of the ocean, and to taste the sweets of imminent peril? Yet such a man would not be more foolish than hundreds of mountaineers."

This nearly overwhelmed the Englishman, but he replied, "I cannot deny the force of a good deal that you have said, but still the loss of life is small, and the pursuit is very exhilarating and enjoyable."

"I admit, sir, that the admirable pluck and resource of your countrymen have made the thing less fatal to life than could reasonably have been expected, but still lamentable accidents are not unfrequent. How many noble fine young men have lost their lives in these expeditions, and involved in their own destruction many of these poor Swiss, who, but for them, might have lived their days to their natural end. To my mind, one such occurrence as the Matterhorn accident should have been for ever fatal to the continuance of the pursuit, for it has no justification. If a man lose his life in trying to save that of another, he has done that which ennobles his memory; or, if he perish in the way of duty, there is nothing to regret; but it is most sad when lives are lost in what I must call unjustifiable foolhardiness in a pursuit which benefits nobody."

There was a pause after this speech, which was broken by the Professor saying, "If I am not wearying you, gentlemen, I will read you two or three extracts taken at random from some published accounts of ascents in the High Alps,* as bearing on the subject of our conversation, and proving my assertions."

We expressed our desire to hear them, and the Professor read as follows, premising that his extracts were incidents occurring in the course of three or four ascents of high mountains, with the names of which, or the men engaged in them, he did not think it necessary to trouble us :—

"First Ascent: 'B. and I were the first, and we thought we might venture to slide from one rock to the next, and so avoid the labour of step cutting, and the tedious precaution of using the ropes. *We* reached the lower station in safety, but R., who came next, lost his direction, and was going over to the left down a fearful slope of

* Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers.

three hundred feet high, too steep for us to see in what it ended, &c. It was a terrible moment, as there was only one chance. It was utterly impossible for him to stop himself, or for any of us to help him. R. showed great presence of mind. He did not utter a word, but threw himself on his right side, and stretched out his arm for me to grasp. Fortunately he passed just within my reach, and I was able to catch his hand and arrest his progress, otherwise it might have been a sad day for us all.'

"SECOND ASCENT: 'Looking now to the right, I suddenly became aware that high above us a multitude of crags and leaning columns of ice, on the stability of which we could not for an instant calculate, covered the precipitous incline. We were not long without an illustration of the peril of our situation. We had reached a position where massive ice cliffs protected us on one side, while in front of us was a space more open than any we had yet passed: the reason being that the ice avalanche had chosen it for its principal path. We had just stepped upon this space when a peal above us brought us to a stand. Crash! crash! crash! Nearer and nearer—the sound becoming more continuous and confused, as the descending masses broke into smaller blocks. Onward they came, boulders half a ton and more in weight, leaping down with a kind of maniacal fury, as if their sole mission was to crush the seracs to powder. Some of them on striking the ice rebounded like elastic balls, described parabolas through the air, again madly smote the ice, and scattered their dust like clouds in the atmosphere. Some blocks were deflected by the collision with the glacier, and were carried past us within a few yards of the spot where we stood. I had never before witnessed an exhibition of force at all comparable to this, and its proximity rendered that fearful which at a little distance would have been sublime.'

"THIRD ASCENT: 'It was an ugly place; the face of the rock went sheer down some hundreds of feet, and you had, whilst clinging to the rock, to cast one leg round it, and

feel for a resting place for the foot. As we were not tied a slip would have proved fatal. Happily we all got round safely; and after this we but once more encountered any serious peril. That was in passing a tall cliff, topped by a glacier, whose ice pinnacles here and there stood out over the edge, and appeared ready to fall. There was no other way to go, and we all hurried along as fast as the steepness of the rocks would allow, keeping as close to the cliff as possible. My companions seemed fully to appreciate the danger: many a wistful glance was cast upwards, and I felt very glad when we had left the place far behind.'

"FOURTH ASCENT: 'Onward we went along the arête, generally quite independently, but sometimes giving a helping hand to one another; and, in very awkward places, condescending to take hold of a strap held by one of the guides. When the rocks were bare of snow we could see what we were about, but when there was snow we had to try it first with our alpenstocks, as it often lay over the edge, in the form of a cornice; and several times I had the gratification of seeing my pole pass right through; and as I drew it back, and beheld the glacier right beneath me, I knew that had I unwarily put my foot there, instead of my stock, I should have gone down like lightning, and finally been dashed to pieces, thousands of feet below, in the horrible depths of the glacier.'

"Speaking of the descent, the writer of the account I am quoting from," said the Professor, "says: 'In short, if, to use an Irishism, in ascending and descending mountains, the descent came first, I think fewer exploits of this sort would be accomplished; but being once up there is no choice left—you must come down.'

"FIFTH ASCENT: 'From the spot where we were standing, however, the wall of rock appeared to go sheer down to the ice; there was no mode of descent that we could possibly discover, and on neither hand could we discern foothold even for a chamois. I saw that there was nothing to be done where we were, and that it was impossible to remain much longer clinging to the slippery ledges of these precipitous rocks. I briefly informed my companion

of the real state of the case, and told him there was but one course open to us, to return as quickly as possible to the top of the mountain. He expostulated, representing the impossibility of clambering again up the face of the precipice where we had frequently dropped from one ledge to another, and urged besides that there was no chance if we returned to the top of getting back to the inn that night.' There was nothing for it but to return, and the writer says: 'So steep was the climb, that at times I stood on a narrow ledge, with my fingers in clefts of the rock, and with my breast pressed against its face that I might not fall backwards, while H—— climbed up and stood upon my shoulders, so as just to reach some projecting fragment, and, after drawing himself up, would lie down and, stretching out his hand to me, help me to place myself alongside of him.' They were benighted on the mountain, and had to 'sleep' on a narrow ridge without food or adequate clothing. Their experience is thus described: 'Although we agreed that, in order to avoid the risk of falling over, we would not both sleep with our back to the precipice, yet ever and anon as we leaned a little against our fragile wall of stones, one or two of them would become displaced and go bounding away into the valley, some thousands of feet below. At frequent intervals we rose by mutual consent, stamped our feet upon our stony bed, for we did not dare to move six inches in any direction, and beat our arms after the fashion of London cabmen in cold weather. * * * Perhaps neither of us had ever before felt so immediately under the protection of a higher power as we did on that night.'

"These extracts," said the Professor, as he concluded his reading, "tell their own story without any comment of mine. It is only necessary to say that the ascents of which they are incidents were undertaken by experienced mountaineers. I cannot help adding, however, in reference to the pious expression contained in the last, that though doubtless sincere enough at the time, and one which would have been highly becoming and proper under other circumstances, what can we say of it remem-

bering that the danger which called it forth was brought about by premeditated and rash folly, as I think?"

A gentleman who had not yet spoken, but sat quietly listening, here remarked, "I entirely endorse your opinions, sir; and I may add that the most sensible part of Mr. Whymper's book, to which you have referred, is where in one of his ascents, and when near the summit of the mountain, he found himself clinging, spread-eagle fashion, and for dear life, to the surface of a rock on which it was impossible to stand and nearly impossible to creep, and one slip on which would have hurled him thousands of feet down, he asks himself plainly and simply if he is not a fool to have placed himself voluntarily in such a position; and he avers that if anyone had guaranteed him a safe deliverance on condition that he never again ascended a dangerous mountain, that he would certainly have accepted the offer. In reply to some remark made by him to the guide, the latter replied, as Whymper says, with more piety than logic, 'The good God has brought us up safely, and He will bring us down again also.' "It appears to me," continued the speaker, "that the most enjoyable part of these feats comes when you have got down in safety; but mountaineers, of course, would scorn to acknowledge such a thing. I met one of them a few days ago, his countenance suffused with delight. On my inquiring the cause of his satisfaction, I found it arose from the fact that he thought he had discovered a *new way* up a mountain—if possible still more break-neck and perilous than the old—and he was full of delight at the prospect of attempting it. I ventured to characterise the project as ridiculously absurd, but of course without avail."

The Professor's first opponent here remarked, "Your arguments are good, gentlemen. I cannot controvert them to any extent; yet I may say, notwithstanding, that I have many a time and oft been in like perilous positions to those you have described, yet nothing would induce me to give up the pursuit so long as youth, health, and strength permit me to engage in it."

"I thank you for your compliment," replied the Pro-

fessor, "and can only regret that my argument has met with the general fate; and I may express the hope, sir, that till your penchant for climbing is exhausted you may escape from its perils."

This conversation had lasted till bedtime. The Professor bade us good-night and retired, and the rest of us speedily followed him. As I laid my head on the pillow I thought the Professor had had decidedly the best of the argument, though something might have been said on the other side which was not said.

CHAPTER XII.

COLOGNE.—THE RHINE.

On a dull wet morning we take the train from Brussels for Cologne. There is nothing particularly remarkable in the country we traverse on this side Liege. This town is the centre of iron works and mines, and presents, so far as can be seen from the train, a considerable resemblance to Birmingham or Sheffield. The red brick buildings, mine-shafts, tall chimneys, and heaps of refuse, remind one strongly of the "Black Country." Between Liege and Verviers, where we lunch, the country is undulating and well wooded, and presents some fine views, with now and then an old castle perched on some rocky eminence, or a wooded ravine, down which flows a winding river. By-and-by we arrive at Herbesthal, the frontier German village, and the mellifluous French is exchanged for the rougher German, and the change in the language is not more striking than in the appearance and manners of the people. Your German is more steady and phlegmatic, perhaps more intelligent-looking, and decidedly more sparing of words and gestures than his French neighbours. Judging from limited observation I should say that the average physical type of the Germans is superior to that of Frenchmen, at least there is little question that it is so, so far as the respective armies are concerned. We pass on through the famous old city of Aix-la-Chapelle (the birthplace of Charlemagne, and the scene of great events in the bygone time) to Cologne, where we arrive as the evening shadows are deepening into night.

Our hotel was one of the oldest in the town, and dated

back to the times of the "grand tour," long before railways were dreamt of, or the irrepressible Cook had appeared on the scene. Travelling was travelling in those days, when you might be as many days in crossing the Channel as you are now hours—days of coaches and diligences, snowed-up roads, breakdowns on wild and desolate moors—days when it was no formality to carry arms and no uncommon thing to have to use them, and when the echo of a horse's hoofs on a lonely road excited emotions of the liveliest dread—days when many English gentlemen settled their differences at the sword's point, gamed away their estates, drank their two or three bottles of port per *diem*, ruffled it finely, and went to the dogs in the good old style. An Englishman abroad was then a much less familiar sight than now; and yet, doubtless, many of these "bloods" of the olden time had swaggered up this ancient wide oak staircase, or sat at these windows gazing at the same scene which met our view. The shadows of the past seem to hang about the huge place. It is dark and dismal, full of wide draughty passages, dingy wainscotings, and old timbered ceilings black with age.

From our bedroom window, at a breathless height, we get our first sight of the Rhine. Here it flows a broad, rapid stream, of a greenish white, a noble river as a river, apart from its historic associations. Just opposite to us it is spanned by a bridge of boats which, as we gaze, is opened in the centre to admit the passage of some vessels going down stream in the twilight. The hotel is full, and its proprietor is remarkably brusque and independent in his style, and evidently considers courtesy and politeness unnecessarily troublesome. There are people of all sorts and of various nationalities in the hotel, chiefly our own dear countrymen and women and our American cousins.

The chief feature of Cologne is of course the Cathedral. Certainly it is superbly magnificent as a piece of architecture; its beautiful and majestic proportions strike us with admiration. It is exquisite in detail and grand in the whole. Most people have seen it and everybody has

read about it. I will, therefore, only say that the interior is almost awfully impressive. The vast size, immense height, the splendour of its stained windows, shrines, and altars, the great arches of the nave, choir, and aisles, make it perhaps, as has been said, "the most magnificent and stupendous edifice ever raised by human hands to the service of the Creator." Yet it differs much in some respects from the Belgian cathedarals. There are fewer pictures and less carving and ornamentation. Above all, the constant stream of worshippers, candles before altars, priests and people more or less always present in the latter, tangible evidences of a living active faith, are here much less marked. To me it appeared rather a vast monument of an expiring faith than an evidence of a living one, and I certainly left it with a profound impression of solitariness and gloom.

When we left the Cathedral it was raining heavily, and the open surface sewers of the streets were running merrily. I had heard and read of the odours of Cologne other than the famous scent, and I certainly must add my humble testimony that the city affords a great and varied assortment of smells not always of a grateful or pleasing character. The streets are narrow and gloomy; in some of them you can touch the houses on each side with outstretched arms; they are horribly paved, and generally abominable. They are badly lighted, and you have to exercise great care in traversing them to escape plumping into open drains or other gaping holes. We strolled into one or two cafés *(gasthaus)*. Doubtless we were not in the best, but what a miserable travestie of the poorest of those we had seen in Brussels. Small, badly furnished, dark, and wholly unattractive. Here is one, a small room where a dozen or fifteen persons, including a soldier or two, are assembled drinking beer and smoking in almost complete silence. Here is another, however, larger and better filled, and where there is more excitement. As we enter, a pale young man in spectacles is singing what I understand is a patriotic song, and he certainly excites himself almost painfully, and his hearers

not a little. To him succeeds a rubicund little gentleman, who takes a lighter tone; and so it goes on, amid clouds of smoke and illimitable beer.

There is a great number of churches and ancient edifices of various kinds in Cologne, which are full of interest to the antiquary and the archæologist, many old paintings and carvings, and bits of street scenery, quaint and picturesque to a degree. Some parts of the city are less objectionable than those I have described; but, upon the whole, few travellers, I should imagine, would be tempted to make any long stay there. From Cologne to Bonn, where we take the steamer—a large and finely-appointed vessel—and are speedily on our way up the river to Bingen. It was a clear cool morning, and we had a large number of passengers, who arranged themselves in groups and parties about the deck, took out their guide books, and made all the requisite preparations for enjoying the beautiful scenery they anticipated. Yet it was not so with all. Some took little interest in the matter, and seemed more concerned about the expected dinner, and in smoking cigars and discussing Rhine wines the while. One English gentleman, after an hour or two, shut up his guide book in disgust, voted the Rhine an imposition, and was only anxious for the end of the journey. There are people, I am told, who will travel from choice in the *coupè* of a diligence while passing through the finest scenery of the Italian lakes or Switzerland, and I take it this gentleman must have been of this type. It is a full day's journey, however, from Bonn to Bingen; and for some hours before we arrived at the latter place the most ardent experienced a considerable diminution of their enthusiasm.

The first ruined castle was hailed with rapture. Its history and legend made the subject of eager sentimental or sceptical comment. The first "view" elicited a profusion of rapturous adjectives; but as the day wore on, and the castles, towns, villages, mountains, and vineyards presented themselves in endless succession, the eagerness diminished considerably. Murray or Baedeker was not

always consulted; and at last some of the less romantic turned languidly away, saying, "Ah! yes, only another castle!" "Yes, it is pretty and romantic, but I will not trouble you to read the description!" "By-the-by, do you know, sir, at what time we are due?"

It is only fair to say that the ruins and views are rather numerous, and it requires a large stock of enthusiasm to keep up to the end. Suppose, about mid passage, you have fallen into a kind of daydream of the varied events of which the banks of this river have been the scene. You muse of the feudal times and the knights who once dwelt in these fastnesses; of their ruthless conduct and bloody feuds; or of the Crusaders who left these castles to follow the banner of the Cross, and returned haply as wayworn pilgrims to find themselves dispossessed and betrayed. You think of the brave knight, Roland, coming back from the wars to find his fair Hildegunde had taken the vows, and was for ever lost to him. How he built his castle, and spent his days in gazing on the building which contained her; and when she died, as the pathetic record says, "From that moment Roland never spoke again; for a short time he dragged out his wretched existence, but his heart was broken; and one morning his sole attendant found him rigid and lifeless, his glassy eye still turned towards the convent chapel." This is a touching story, and you think how we have degenerated in these days of actions for "breach of promise," and how impossible it would be to find a modern Roland, and, shall I venture to say, a Hildegunde. The historic associations of the river are mainly but another name for the long catalogue of wars which have taken place on its banks, and you fall into melancholy musing as you consider how every step in the world's progress has been marked with blood and suffering, and how slow and painful that progress has been, high as has been the price paid for it. In these fancies and reflections you might dream away hours, but there is often an anti-climax, and it comes now in the shape of some extremely practical and unpoetical remarks from a fellow-traveller. So your visions fade into air,

and you are again in the realities of the utilitarian nineteenth century.

Tourists who write accounts of their travels are under great, if not always acknowledged, obligations to the guide book, which gives you, in shortest and tersest terms, the main historical facts relating to the various places described, the legends or stories attaching to them, and all other information which has any bearing upon the subject. What is easier than to crib from Murray a bit of history here, a legend there, or a descriptive passage in another place. If you have any ability at all in literary composition you have only to condense, alter, and tack together, with some words or observations of your own, these extracts, and you obtain the reputation of an author on the simplest possible conditions. Yet, easy as it would be to do so, it would be a work of supererogation, indeed, to describe the Rhine at any length or in detail: it has been done so often and so well as to have been long since entirely written out. A few of the rough, fresh, impressions made upon me by the scenery is all I shall attempt to give.

For some time after leaving Bonn its banks are uninteresting enough, and decidedly inferior to some of the river and lake scenery of England. Anon we pass the lofty vine-covered steep of Drachenfels, and see the first of the ruined castles which henceforward become so numerous on both banks. The river here is broad, and the current strong, and ever and anon we pass one of those enormous rafts of timber, each carrying quite a little village of wooden houses on its surface, or a steamer towing a long string of barges. As we pass on the scenery increases in beauty and interest—the hills are higher, the banks more cultivated, and the romantically-situated towns and villages more numerous. In many parts the river winds in its course, and the retrospective views are of great beauty and interest.

Let me endeavour to describe one of the many scenes we passed through. The river has narrowed in its course, and winding sharply through a gorge has more the

appearance, but for the current, of a narrow land-locked lake. On each side the hills, bare and rocky in some parts, in others covered with vines or masses of trees, approach each other closely. Look forward or backwards, and you appear to be enclosed in a romantic amphitheatre of mountains. On the summit of one or two of these are the mouldering ruins of ancient strongholds, clearly and sharply defined against the sky. Here and there, at the foot of these hills, are little villages, peeping out of masses of surrounding foliage, which contrasts beautifully with their white walls. Remember that almost every yard of ground and every object before you is redolent of the legends and times of the past, and has been associated more or less with some of the great events which make up the history of Europe. This and like scenes, varying more or less in interest and beauty, are what meet our eyes hour after hour as we pursue our journey. It would be a tedious task merely to enumerate the names of the various castles, villages, fortresses, and towns we pass, and quite impossible to give, even were it desirable, the merest outline of the events which have made them more or less famous. The most romantic and beautiful part of the Rhine, so far as I remember, is that which lies between St. Goar and Bingen. The scenery is wilder, more impressive and interesting, than in any other part of its course, but throughout its whole extent the best views are obtained, not from its surface, but from the heights which enclose it.

You hear a good deal about the various vineyards which clothe the slopes of the hills about you, and see the plantations where grow the grapes which produce many a well-known brand. The quality of the produce varies greatly, even in vineyards which are immediately contiguous to each other. The wine produced from the one may be worth, perhaps, twenty times the value of the other, and yet there is no discernible difference in the soil or other conditions of growth.

Our long day's travel is now nearly over, and as we approach Bingen the night is falling fast, and everything

is hidden from our view but the rushing stream as our vessel ploughs her way against it. So we leave the Rhine, our minds full of its scenes and the events with which they are associated. We think of the Roman legions which once trod its banks—of Charlemagne and the wars of the Middle Ages—the printing press which rose beside it—Luther, who, from its margin, uttered words that echoed through Europe—the armies of Napoleon which carried fire and sword, ruin and desolation, amid its fair scenes, and were driven back in their turn by the great European coalition—and amid all these changes the ancient river rolls on, calm and unchanged, to the sea.

"A thousand battles have assailed thy banks—
But these and half their fame have passed away—
And Slaughter heaped on high his weltering ranks:
Their very graves are gone, and what are they?
Thy tide washed down the blood of yesterday,
And all was stainless; and on thy clear stream
Glossed with its dancing light the sunny ray,
But o'er the blackened memory's blighting dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all-sweeping as they seem."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE "VICTORY."—CARISBROOK CASTLE.—LEGH RICHMOND.

BEING in Portsmouth, we, of course, went down to the harbour to see the old "VICTORY." The boatmen speedily put us alongside, and we ascended to her deck, and were conducted by a marine over the vessel. We saw the brass plate, let into the deck, bearing the words, "Here Nelson fell;" the gloomy cockpit where he died, his cabin, a letter he had written, and some few other things appertaining to him. Standing on the deck, one tried to realise the scene of Trafalgar—the terrible spectacle the decks of this ship must have presented—the clouds of smoke, the thunder of hundreds of cannon, the blazing ships, the cheers of the British, the groans of the wounded, and, amidst it all, the fatal shot which struck down the hero in the hour of victory. Outwardly the ship presents but little appearance of her age, but it is said by some that she has been so often repaired that not a timber of Nelson's vessel remains. How this may be, I know not, but the ribs and oak planking of the cockpit look old enough for anything. Internally she is, as the marine said, "a mere shell," nearly all the guns and internal fittings having been removed to adapt her to her present use as a training ship. Consequently one has only a faint notion of her appearance in her fighting days.

There is very little left of CARISBROOK CASTLE, but the ruins occupy a commanding position, and present a striking appearance as you approach them. The entrance gate is in fair preservation, and the keep retains somewhat of its ancient aspect; but there is scarcely anything

else, except the tottering crumbling wall. Clambering up the rough steps to the keep we gain a splendid view of the country. There is a well here sunk into the rock so deep, that you almost shudder to look down it. The water is remarkably pure and very cold. The chief interest attaching to the place now is in connection with Charles I., but the room he occupied is entirely gone. A window in the wall is said to mark its position. The thoughts naturally revert to that unhappy monarch and the stirring times in which he lived. That there was very much to esteem and admire in the character of Charles—that he died nobly, and as became a king—few deny ; but that in his policy and public conduct he was incurably deceitful, treacherous, and tyrannical, facts incontestably prove. That his success in the war would have struck a fatal blow to English liberty seems absolutely certain, and England owes a deep debt of gratitude to the pure-minded and patriotic men who resisted him. Of the greatest of these—Cromwell—the very widest difference of opinion as to his character and motives is still prevalent. Whatever these may have been, none but those utterly blinded by prejudice can fail to see that his sound judgment, military skill, and personal bravery, did for his country inestimable service of which the benefits remain to this day. Allowing for the times and religious fanaticism, and making all deductions, a great far-seeing and patriotic Englishman remains.

Of all the beautiful walks in England I know no finer than that along the cliffs from Sandown to Ventnor. There is nothing grand or imposing in the scenery, but for varied tranquil beauty and richness I do not know its equal. Let me try to give an idea of it. Now the path winds over a stretch of wide sweeping downs, covered with rich grass ; in front of us a wide tract of sea, dotted with ships and steamers in full sail, homeward or outward bound ; at our feet the bright clear water rolls and foams on the loose rocks on the beach, or ripples gently over the sand ; inland a wide view of lovely fertile valleys rich with corn and fruit, or gently rising hills

covered with trees, in all the richness of their autumn foliage. Anon the path descends through a wooded gorge and we are in a little quiet bay, with its miniature beach, destitute of boats or signs of life, the silence broken only by the rustling of the trees above, or the low sound of the waves as they roll gentle and placid to our feet.

Through Shanklin, a little village on the beach, we turn aside to see the Chine, a narrow chasm in the cliffs, full of trees. There is a winding path through the ravine, and a little rivulet which makes its way to the sea. Through the "Landslip," a rough and broken tract of rocks and earth, but now covered by trees and copsewood, and so on to Ventnor.

Many visitors to the Isle of Wight go to Brading to see the grave of "Little Jane." The village is a quiet, old-fashioned place, but has no other special attraction. Most people have read Legh Richmond's "Annals of the Poor," and one can understand the quiet pathos and melancholy beauty of his writings—the love of nature he evinced—his admiration of the scenery around him, which he so eloquently describes—when we see the scenes amid which he lived.

The village stocks still survive as a relic of the past. The church has no interest, and in the churchyard we see the little grave, and hear how "Little Jane" used to come here and sit under the trees in the summer time singing her favourite hymn.

There is a well-known hotel at Ventnor, one of the prettiest and most romantically-situated in the island. It nestles at the foot of a hill which rises high above it, and the house is covered with creeping flowering shrubs, which give it a sweet and attractive appearance.

The valley of Bonchurch, which lies deep down between the hills at Ventnor is most beautiful. The luxuriant foliage of the trees, the winding roads and wooded hills, make it like a fairy picture. Bonchurch church is not remarkable, but the churchyard is one of the most romantic beauty.

We had quite a scene at our hotel one night. One of

the visitors was a tall, whiteheaded, stern-looking, old gentleman, who proved to be an officer of the Confederate army. *Apropos* of Charles Dickens's "American Notes," he was holding forth on the subject of slavery. His argument, of course, was in the nature of a defence of the institution—how well and kindly the slaves were treated, &c. I do not care to repeat the opprobrious epithet he applied to our distinguished countryman, but I take it few Englishmen could sit quietly by and hear so detestable a system excused or defended in any degree, and I ventured to offer a few very mild remarks, in the way of dissent from the statements and views advanced.

I brought upon myself at once a storm of rage; the American rose from his seat and walked about the room in the heat of his anger. I will not give his language. I let him proceed in silence till the storm was over, and then, out of respect to the old soldier, and making allowances for prejudices and feelings born with him, and nurtured. no doubt, by all his past life, I quietly let the subject drop, and turned the conversation to less exciting topics.

I wondered afterwards what would have been the end of the scene if it had occurred in Carolina instead of in England.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BRUNIG.—THE GIESSBACH.—INTERLAKEN.

FROM Lucerne to Alpnach by steamer, a short sail down the lake of Brienz, through varied and beautiful scenery.

At Alpnach we take our places on the diligence, amid some confusion from the number of travellers, for the purpose of crossing the BRUNIG. We pass on at a smart pace through a lovely country full of orchards and gardens and rich pasturage. Anon we rattle through a quaint village, or pass through a shady wood, or skirt the banks of a lively river. We are constantly seeing crucifixes erected by the road side, or little shrines protected from the weather by a rude erection of stones. Through Sarnen, where we have some pretty views, and are struck with the peculiar dresses of the women—remarkable even among Swiss costumes. The lake of Sarnen is small, but extremely picturesque. The road now becomes steep, and passes through a thick wood which all but completely excludes the sun's rays, and soon after we arrive at Lungern, a large village at the foot of the Brunig, where we lunch.

From Lungern the road ascends by constant windings through a wooded gorge in the mountains, and presents a continual series of interesting and romantic views. The little shrines continue. Some are filled with fresh flowers. Ever and anon the little boys and girls run by the side of our carriage and offer us little bouquets or small specimens of wood carving. The path continues to ascend, and we see its lower portion now far beneath us. Anon we gain the summit, and begin to descend more or less rapidly till we reach Brienz.

Though this pass has no pretensions whatever to the grandeur and wildness of Alpine scenery, it is yet, as I think, extremely beautiful; the combinations of mountain, river, lake, and woodland scenery, the gorges and ravines you see and pass through, and the views from various points, prevented our feeling any weariness, though our journey over it occupied about seven hours.

Brienz is a small town or village situated at the foot of the Brienzer Grat, 7,300 feet high, and on the shores of a small lake, seven and a half miles long by two and a quarter wide. It consists chiefly of wooden houses, and as it only possesses some two thousand inhabitants is an extremely quiet place.

Here, as everywhere else in Switzerland, fine views may be obtained by ascending some of the neighbouring mountains. The lake is completely enclosed by lofty mountains, and is in some parts of immense depth. These mountains are clothed for the most part with heavy woods, the foliage of which is of an extremely sombre character. There is, besides Brienz, another village on its shores, and a ruined castle on one point in its circuit. The sides of the mountains are full of deep rifts or chasms, marking the course of winter torrents, which must be numerous and heavy, and their summits are mostly dark bare crags. To me the lake, or this part of it, presented a dull, gloomy appearance, and contrasted strongly with Lucerne. The winds occasionally rush out of the gorges with extreme and destructive violence.

We took a boat, and were rowed across the lake to GIESSBACH to see the Falls. On reaching the opposite bank we ascend by a winding path, for some time gaining occasional glimpses of the falling water. Near the terrace from which they are seen is a wooden house where the various specimens of carved wood work for which this place is famous are to be had. The cascades are seven in number, and fall from rock to rock from a height of 1,148 feet into the lake. I imagine it is impossible to see the whole from any one point, but the view from the terrace is extraordinarily beautiful. The sides of the cascades, through

nearly the whole of that great height, are thickly covered with trees and shrubs, and the effect of the contrast between the masses of white leaping water and the dark green of the adjacent vegetation is extremely fine. The volume of water is not, however, very great, and the general effect is pretty rather than grand. There are numerous points of view, and from a bridge which crosses the ravine behind one of the falls you can see the landscape through the veil of water which gives it a singular appearance. The whole effect of the scene is impressive and picturesque to a high degree.

We whiled away the time till darkness had set in, in order to see the illumination. A rocket shot up in the air, the lights were fired, and the falls illuminated with various colours. Now all would be red, now green, now violet, now a combination of colours. The effect was certainly marvellously beautiful, though withal very stagey, and perhaps, as the guide book says, the whole thing is of "questionable taste." After the illumination (lasting about five minutes) was over, we take our way in the darkness down again to the verge of the lake. Our boatmen preceded us with a lantern, and we picked our way carefully through the woods to the shore. There were several boats in addition to ours, the night was extremely dark, and we were in some fear of a collision, which would have been awkward. Some native in one of the boats amused himself by singing a weird sort of melody, or at least it appeared so under the circumstances.

From Brienz, down the lake by steamer, on a clear fresh morning. We stop to take up some passengers from the Giessbach hotel, and as they are embarking a party of young women, villagers, gather on the landing-place and join in singing one of those remarkable Swiss choruses, I presume for our entertainment. We speedily arrive at INTERLAKEN, where we stay at one of the many beautiful hotels the town possesses. They are not very large, but have most elegant rooms and beautiful grounds. The wealth of flowers and verdure in the garden of our own and the other hotels, the number of fountains, and

the grand and imposing character of the surrounding scenery, give this place a most charming appearance.

The town lies between the lakes of Brienz and Thun, on a low piece of ground, between two high ranges of mountains, and its vicinity abounds in interesting walks and drives. The most striking feature in the town itself is the splendid view of the Jung frau.

Through an opening in a range of darkly-wooded mountains you see its summit glistening, a pure radiant white, an unexpressibly beautiful spectacle. We are struck with the beauty of this little place wherever we go. The glorious colours of the flowers, the fountains, fine avenues of trees casting a grateful shade, and the magnificent combinations and varieties of mountain scenery, make it, indeed, like a glimpse of dreamland.

The scenes of Byron's *Manfred* are laid in the immediate vicinity of this place, the ruins of the castle of Unspunnen being near by; and the fine imagery of the poem doubtless had its inspiration from the surrounding scenery. I am tempted to quote a few lines of "Manfred's" soliloquy from the tower :—

> "The stars are forth—the moon, above the tops
> Of the snow-shining mountains, beautiful :
> I linger yet with Nature—for the night
> Hath been to me a more familiar face
> Than that of man, and in her starry shade
> Of dim and solitary loveliness
> I learned the language of another world."

The description of the summit of the Jung-frau is very fine :—

> "O'er the savage sea,
> The glossy ocean of the mountain ice—
> We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
> The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam
> Frozen in a moment—a dead whirlpool's image—
> That most steep fantastic pinnacle,
> The fretwork of some earthquake, where the clouds
> Pause to repose themselves in passing by."

At the foot of a high dark mountain, which towers grandly above it, is the Kursaal, a light wooden structure, with a garden and fountain in front. There are concerts

daily, and the place is much frequented by the visitors.

Our first excursion was a somewhat devious walk and ride ending at Grindelwald. Our path traverses at first fertile orchards and rich meadows, through several villages, and anon we plunge into the savage gorge of the Lutschine, and enter upon a scene of indescribable grandeur and gloom.

On the right and left of the narrow road rise great mountains covered with masses of sombre trees and undergrowth. Heavy clouds ever and anon hide the summits, or opening give us views of snowy peaks and barren precipices, with here and there a shining glacier. Down the centre of this steeply-ascending and narrow ravine dashes with furious energy the river Lutschine—a wild torrent, leaping from rock to rock which vex and tear its course, plunging the white spray far out, even to our feet, and making in its course a roaring noise which harmonises well with the wild scene.

> "With a flash and a plunge and a mountain murmur
> The gurgling waters arise and leap,
> And pause and hasten and spin in circles,
> And rush and loiter and boil and creep."

Here and there, as we pass along, we trace on the mountain sides, in fallen trees and *débris*, the course of the headlong winter torrents. Here let into the rock is an iron plate bearing an inscription which, according to tradition, records that on this spot a murder was committed: a fitting place in its wild adjuncts for a deed of blood!

Anon we pass wagons laden with blocks of ice from the neighbouring glaciers, or little bright sunburnt children pass who offer us various trifles for sale. Here are a flock of goats or cattle browsing on the mountain sides, with bells on their necks, which tinkle musically as they slowly move about. The wonderful agility and sure-footedness with which the goats traverse dangerous and apparently inaccessible places is surprising. They stand in or pass over with ease places where no human being could find safe footing. Here a little girl passes along singing one of those strangely wild Alpine songs, or a poor blind

beggar, oblivious of regulations to the contrary, solicits our charity from the roadside. We stop at a chalet to view a captured chamois, a pretty timid little creature, with large black eyes and budding horns, and feel an instinctive desire that it might escape.

On again through various scenes to Grindelwald, a scattered village in the valley of that name, which is bounded by the gigantic mountains of the Eiger, 13,000 feet; the Mettenberg, 10,500; and the Wetterhorn, 12,150. These vast mountains, with their great snowfields and glaciers, present an indescribably imposing appearance. The chief feature of Grindelwald, however, is the two glaciers which extend far into the valley. The causes of the formation of these masses of ice are well known, but the forces which regulate and determine their movements are still, I believe, a subject of dispute. That they do move with slow but irresistible force is, however, unquestionable. It is no uncommon sight in Switzerland to see their tongues in immediate proximity to corn fields, fruit trees, and dwellings. While it does advance the glacier does so with mighty power, driving everything before it—rocks, stones, trees, and whatever is movable in its course, and accumulates at its sides or extremity huge masses of *débris* called *moraines*. The causes which lead to the movements of glaciers in advance or retreat are usually balanced so that they seldom pass beyond their accustomed bed, though this rule is by no means invariable. From the lower portion of every glacier flows a stream of greater or less magnitude, which carries off the water which is constantly formed within it. The surface is usually rough and broken, and more or less full of cracks and fissures of uncertain depth. These last, as is well known, when covered by a thin crust of snow, form one of the many dangers of mountaineering.

The path to the upper glacier of Grindelwald presents no difficulties except such as arise from its extreme roughness, and the sharp ascents and descents. I experienced a feeling of the utmost pity for the poor apparently ill-fed and tended horses on which we rode to it; but the patient

brutes struggled along amid the loose boulders with steady perseverance. It is rough riding, and one rejoiced when the hour and a half it occupied was over. For some time we have had the light green mass of ice in full view, and, dismounting from our steeds, we cross the glacier stream on a frail foot-bridge, mount a long steep ladder, and are on the glacier itself. It is a rough irregular mass, stretching away out of sight before us up the defiles of the mountains. The surface is dull, grey, and dirty, and dreadfully rough and broken.

Though a warm autumn day it was extremely cold in its vicinity; indeed, the temperature of the whole valley is perceptibly affected by these two masses of ice. A sort of grotto or cave has been cut for some distance into the body of the glacier, and into this we pass. A most singular sight it was. The ice is green, transparent, and pure, and excessively cold to the touch and taste. The body of the glacier was apparently honeycombed in every direction, and the noise made by the water, as it percolated through the mass, was extraordinary. I confess I was not particularly anxious to prolong our stay in the excavation, for, apart from the extreme cold, one could not help fancying the frail arch behind us might collapse and imprison us where we were. Such a fear was, perhaps, idle, but the thing was at least a possible occurrence.

The unforeseen frequently happens in these places, for, about a twelvemonth before our visit, a lady, who did not care to enter the cave, waited for her husband, standing on the foot-bridge below the glacier. A sudden fracture of the internal ice released a large body of water, which carried away the bridge and the lady standing on it, and she was drowned almost before her husband was aware of the accident.

The sight of this mass of ice was a wonderful and curious one, and interested us greatly. The rain, which had long been threatening, now fell in torrents, as we—slowly and toilsomely for our poor beasts—made our way back. At one point, on our return, was stationed a peasant with an immense Alpine horn to awaken the echoes, and he cer-

tainly did it to some purpose, the reverberations being loud and long drawn out. We arrive again at the Grindelwald, and, after *trinkgelt* to our guides, we take a post carriage, and return through the driving rain and mists which swept through the valley. The heaving clouds buried the snow peaks in impenetrable gloom, leaving only the dark bases visible, while the rain fell as it only can in this country.

One might easily fill a volume with detailed description of the many points of interest which abound in this vicinity, but I shall content myself with a brief reference to two more, which are perhaps the most striking, premising that both are reached through scenery of the most magnificent description, but resembling in its main features what I have already attempted to describe. The Staubbach in the romantic valley of Lauterbrunnen, is a fall of water in unbroken and sheer descent from the summit of a rock 980 feet in height. Its volume in summer is not very considerable, but the immense height dissipates it into white spray long before it reaches the ground, and this is scattered by the wind in curious streams and curves. Byron compares it to the tail of a white horse streaming in the wind—

> "O'er the crags headlong perpendicular,
> And flings its line of foaming light along
> And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
> The giant steed to be bestrode by Death,
> As told in the Apocalypse."

The Wengernalp is a pass at some hours' journey from Interlaken, about 6,000 to 7,000 feet in height. Reaching a point some little distance from the summit we pause to rest, and hear the roar of the avalanches in the awful stillness. The sight, however, shows you little more than an apparently insignificant white cascade descending the mountain side, and one has to be reminded that these apparently insignificant torrents consist of huge masses of broken ice and *débris* of immense weight, which carry ruin and destruction in their track.

From this place and the summit of the pass the view

is indescribably grand. The Jung-frau, 13,671 feet, is unveiled before you, with her eternal shroud of snow and with all her glittering glaciers. The Monch, the Great and Little Eighers, and peaks innumerable, shoot up into the sky, their sides filled with glaciers, which reflect the sun's rays with dazzling brilliance, and their peaks shrouded in one universal mantle of gleaming unsullied snow. At your feet are tremendous precipices, for you stand above 6,000 feet above the level of the sea, but these peaks are 7,000 feet higher still.

In view of such a scene, we realise how poor and inadequate are mere words to describe its grandeur or the emotions to which it gives rise. The poet or even the painter must feel how insufficient are pen and pencil to depict it, even when hand and mind are guided by the inspiration of genius. One is conscious, in the presence of these majestic sublimities, of an overpowering feeling that words are intolerable and irritating, and that reverent silence is the attitude most grateful as well as most becoming—

"And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts—a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man—
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

CHAPTER XV.

ILFRACOMBE.—LYNTON.—BIDEFORD.

THERE is nothing very striking (as viewed from the deck of the steamer) in the scenery of the shores of the Bristol Channel, as you steam down it from Portishead to Ilfracombe. It consists for the most part of low hills, with rounded summits, covered with short grass. Here and there a rocky cliff stands out in bold relief; and at its foot a miniature beach, on which the waves break in foaming surf, which contrasts beautifully with the dark steep rock above. Here an open bay, or a bit of pretty woodland; then a succession of bare barren downs which run sheer into the water.

ILFRACOMBE is situated in a rocky inlet of the Devonshire coast; and its small harbour is enclosed by craggy steeps of some few hundred feet in height. The town is small, and very poor for the most part. It is intersected by various bays, hills, and coves. Though inferior to some other of our watering places, Ilfracombe is yet pretty in itself, and is romantically situated. It labours, however, under one great disadvantage in having no beach, and consequently none of the usual facilities for sea-bathing. The only place, I believe, available for the purpose, is a little cove, with a shingly bottom. In bathing upon it you run great risk of serious bruises from stumbling over, or being washed against, the rough projecting rocks, and we were told of more than one accident arising in this way. There is no boating, and the hundred lively sights and sounds of such a beach, for instance, as that of Hastings are entirely absent. All visitors to Ilfracombe

go to Lynton, a village on the coast, about eighteen miles distant.

It was a lovely morning when we took our places on the well-appointed coach which was to convey us to that place. It was a good road, as are all in Devonshire, but very hilly, and a severe one for the horses. There are many parts of it where the ascents and descents are very abrupt, and the turns extremely sharp. In one of these rather a serious accident happened some time ago, when the coach was overturned, and some of the passengers seriously injured. The driver appears to make a point of telling the story, just as you approach the critical spot, with the effect of making you slightly nervous.

We pass through Combemartin, a long straggling village of poor cottages, situate on the shores of a bay, at whose extremity are some considerable heights. On again, the road now skirting the coast, then taking a wide sweep inland, we pass through other villages, and in due course, arrive at our destination.

LYNTON is situated on a precipitous hill, about four hundred feet above the sea. Lynmouth is the name given to the village at the foot of this hill. It is a most picturesque and beautiful spot. The small bay on which it stands, overtopped and partially surrounded by rugged heights, the quiet little beach beneath the pretty village nestling on its margin, and in the background the deep and narrow gorges traversed by the East and West Lynn, which, joining their waters in the depths of the ravine, flow down in a mingled stream to the sea beneath.

These gorges, which extend far back between the hills, present scenery of the most varied character. In one, the adjacent hills are bare and rocky, and of singular conformation, or, in other places, are clothed with the dark foliage of the pine woods, and down the centre flows the seething and rapid little river.

The ravine of the East Lynn is somewhat different in the character of the scenery, the sides of the hills being entirely covered by splendid woods, which stretch right up to their summits. The narrow floor of the valley is com-

pletely covered by trees and a rich wild undergrowth of ferns and flowering shrubs. This leafy maze is intersected by numerous paths which wind about through the woods, up and down, now on the brink of the river, now high up the side of the narrow defile. The river which flows through it is of the clearest water, has a rapid descent, and makes in its course shimmering falls and eddies as it winds and turns in the shadow of the trees, or by banks rich with ferns and wild flowers. As you wander by its side, ever and anon the current is hidden by the luxuriant vegetation, or anon comes into view again peeping through the deep foliage. Where the two streams meet, in a delicious wood, a little romantic cottage has been built, and the sweet murmur of the water, and the rustling of the trees, are the only sounds which break the silence of the romantic spot. Without adopting the highly-coloured language of the guide book, few can view this pretty place without expressing themselves in terms of strong admiration of its beauty.

The "Valley of Rocks" is reached by a short but steep climb along the side of a barren declivity, and consists of a narrow valley enclosed by hills, covered with a soft green turf, or altogether bare, barren, or rocky, and of most fantastic shapes. The most remarkable of the latter is the Castle Rock, on which, in past days, a castle stood; and though it has long since disappeared a wild and weird legend, in which a mysterious "Black Monk" bears an important part, yet survives. This rugged mass is washed at its base by the restless sea, and presents the wildest aspect. The whole of this small valley is covered by huge masses of rock, scattered about in utter confusion, and presents a strangely wild appearance. From the summits of the hills the eye wanders over the wide stretch of ocean presented to the view, or to the desolate chaotic scene beneath.

So back again, in the gathering twilight, through the lovely Devonshire lanes. Now we pass through the dim shade of the trees which line the road, now by meadows rich with verdure; now we wind round the base of a hill;

now we ascend one, and the rugged coast, marked by the thin line of foam at its base, is visible for miles, and stretching in front the vast watery plain now sleeping in tranquil majesty. Anon the lights of Ilfracombe twinke in the distance, and ere long we reach that town.

"Pleasant old Bideford"—as Kingsley describes it—"the little white town sloping upwards from its broad tidal river, paved with yellow sands, and many-arched old bridge, where salmon wait for autumn floods, towards the pleasant upland on the west. Above the town the hills close in, cushioned with deep oak woods, through which juts here and there a crag of fern-fringed slate; below they lower and open more and more in softly-rounded knolls and fertile squares of red and green till they sink into the wide expanse of hazy flats, rich salt marshes, and rolling sand-hills, where Torridge joins her sister Taw, and both together flow quietly towards the broad surges of the bar, and the everlasting thunder of the long Atlantic swell. Pleasantly the old town stands there beneath its soft Italian sky, fanned day and night by the fresh ocean breeze, which forbids alike the keen winter frosts and the fierce thunder heats of the midlands; and pleasantly it has stood there for now perhaps eight hundred years, since the first Grenvil, cousin of the Conqueror, returning from the conquest of South Wales, drew round him trusty Saxon serfs, and free Norse rovers, with their golden curls, and dark Silurian Britons from the Swansea shore, and all the mingled blood which still gives to the seaward folk of the next county their strength and intellect, and, even in these levelling days, their peculiar beauty of face and form." The situation of the town is certainly extremely beautiful, the surrounding country for the most part being rich and verdant in the extreme.

We have a pleasant drive to Westward Ho, but the place itself is dreary-looking, and is scattered about on a wide open bay, whose shores are altogether flat and uninteresting.

From this we visit Appledore, a rough little place and presenting nothing of any special interest, and then back

to Bideford, through the sweet country full of fertile meadows, verdant trees, and gardens blooming with flowers. When we sight the broad calm river its wide reaches are gleaming in the evening beams, the old bridge casting lines of shadows on its tranquil surface, and the scene is one of unsurpassed tranquil beauty.

CHAPTER XVI.

PARIS.—BELLEVILLE.—CHAMPIGNY.

THE afternoon express from Geneva to Paris is usually crowded in the travelling season, and it was not without some difficulty we obtained places. At the frontier we had the usual stoppage for examination of passports and luggage, and the delay was long and inordinately tedious. On again, skirting the banks of the Rhone. Here the sleepy-looking cattle stand knee deep in a shallow reach of the river; there a solitary peasant is fishing from a heavy punt; now a long tunnel, the open country again, and gradually the darkness deepens over all, and we see nothing but spectral-looking trees, the dim outlines of mountains, and the lights flashing and flickering at the little stations as we speed through them. A pause at Macon for refreshments, and on again through the dark, silent country. It is midnight now, and we begin to feel very weary of the confinement and noise of the train. I try to sleep, but find it impossible for a long time. At last I fall into a heavy uncomfortable doze for an hour or two. I awake with a start, and find the light of morning is streaming through the carriage windows, and that we are nearing Fontainebleau. So we travel on, in a half comatose condition, till at 7-15 we draw up in the Paris station. The passengers who, like ourselves, have come the whole journey turn out, and a sleepy, draggled-looking party we appear as we claim our luggage and drive to our respective destinations. However familiar one may be with the gay and beautiful city, we return to it with a never-failing pleasure. Its well-known boulevards,

streets, and squares—its *cafés*, gardens, theatres, and palaces—its courteous, lively inhabitants—are always a source of interest and enjoyment.

That, amid all the scenes Paris has witnessed, Notre Dame should have survived at all is extraordinary; and the beautiful little church of Saint Chapelle has also had its escapes—a very narrow one in the last convulsion, for many buildings lay around it burnt and destroyed. It has a wondrously beautiful interior—a perfect mass of gorgeous decoration in painting, gilding, carving, stained windows, &c.

It would be extremely difficult to define the feeling which draws you to the Morgue. You know in advance you will be shocked and sickened with what you may see, yet you go; and, more extraordinary still, you find it difficult not to repeat your visit. It was a bright, beautiful morning when, being in the vicinity, I entered the place. People were passing in and out as usual; some stood staring through the glass for a considerable time. Somebody says that it is common to see them eating oranges, cracking nuts, chattering, and laughing, utterly indifferent to the sight before them. It may be so, but such a sight has not fallen within my own observation. The few people assembled this morning were serious enough. A momentary glance at the horrible interior and I hastily quit the place, sick and staggered. The brilliant streets, the gay sunshine, and the thousand exhilarating sights around me, seem an utter mockery. I appear to have had a glance under the surface of the glittering deceit. Paris was hardly Paris to me for the rest of that day, nor did I lose the impression for many many days afterwards. It was not so much that I was haunted (as Dickens describes his sensations after a similar sight) by the body I had seen, though that idea was painfully present, as that I wearied myself in endless speculations as to the cause which had led this poor Frenchman to put an end to his existence. I met a hundred times on the streets men who I thought closely resembled him, laughing, chatting, and full of life and gaiety, and the

ideas excited were painfully depressing. The contrast between the poor unknown drowned outcast and the light frivolity and gaiety everywhere visible, constantly suggested itself. We could not escape the horrible that day, for being subsequently in the Buttes de Chaumont, when near a high rock in the grounds we were beckoned by some of the park-keepers and shown the place on the rock from which a young Frenchman had precipitated himself the night before. He was comparatively rich, and it was said he had committed the rash act from jealousy. But enough, and more than enough, of this.

The Bois de Boulogne will long bear, in the destruction of its trees, the effects of the siege. While looking at Mont Valerien, a superannuated soldier, with several medals, informs us it is "the fort which kept a million Prussians at bay." The traces of damage which the Madeleine and the Arc de Triomphe received are nearly obliterated, and the restoration of the Tuileries and the Hotel de Ville is rapidly progressing. While we were in the Madeleine mass was being celebrated, and the effect of the organ and the splendid voices of the choir was very impressive. The gorgeous dimly-lighted interior, the richly-robed priests, attendants, and acolytes, and the crowd of kneeling worshippers, made up a solemn scene. A notice is posted requesting visitors not to move about during divine service; but, notwithstanding this surely unnecessary request, I was witness to conduct, on the part of a few of my countrymen and women, which made me blush. This party consisted of an elderly gentleman, two young ladies, and a young gentleman, apparently his son and daughters. The whole party had the bad taste and irreverence to make their way (the young people with glasses to eye, staring about them) among the kneeling congregation, almost to the foot of the altar. There they stood, until requested to retire by an official, and they then sauntered coolly out of the building, evincing in their demeanour the same contempt for and indifference to the feelings of everybody about them which they had shown from the first. Such flagrant conduct was the more

surprising as they had the appearance of educated people. Perhaps, in the happy consciousness of a clearer faith and a more intelligent religion, they deemed it their duty to show their contempt for a worship and a scene which would have excited, at least, respect and reverence in a heathen. It is conduct like this which goes to give our countrymen the unhappy reputation they commonly have abroad. No wonder the Parisians delight in caricaturing the travelling Englishman. Many a funny sketch in the shop-windows we stopped to laugh at.

We spent an hour in the picture galleries of the Louvre. It would take a long time to give to the pictures the study and attention they merit. Among the numerous artists, both men and women, who were engaged in copying (old and young, clever and otherwise), there were some remarkable faces and figures. One gentleman I noticed not more than four feet and a half high, but with one of the finest intellectual countenances and heads I ever saw.

We drive out to the notorious quarter of BELLEVILLE, and are shown the house where the hostages were tried, and close by it the high stone wall against which they were shot. The wall was chipped all over with the marks of the bullets, and near it is a cellar or excavation where the bodies were thrown after death. In a room near by are collected some relics; the basin and spoon of the Archbishop, a will written hastily in pencil, and now framed, of which I annex a translation. :—

"I am in Heaven, waiting for you ! ! I entreat you to work so as to gain it. You will keep the little I had. Say to my brothers and sisters that you had the most need of it. Hoping to see you again in Heaven, with all my family and all my friends,

"EDOUARD.

"Have 25 masses said which I had received.
"Vicarage of ———
"Testament of the Abbé."

Besides these were swords, hats, caps, and black clerical garments, which had appertained to the slain men, all draggled and covered with dust and blood stains. It was by no means a pleasant sight, and one wondered at the taste which seeks to preserve the memory of such horrors.

Against the wall where these men were executed is now erected a plain slab of black marble, inscribed with names and the date, and covered with *immortelles*. They are about to erect another and larger monument. The French have a passion for such things, and perpetuate what any other people would gladly suffer to sink into oblivion.

Belleville is a poor, mean-looking quarter, and the time was, and not long since, when it would have been a dangerous place to visit. We drive on, passing the scene of the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, through the woods, and past the lake, and so, ascending the hill, are at CHAMPIGNY. The traces of destruction in the buildings, &c., are still very apparent, and it will take some time to restore them. There was little to see on these breezy heights except the traces of the lines of the Prussian batteries, now nearly overgrown with grass, and the road on which the French troops advanced in their desperate sortie. There were also numerous large mounds covered with long grass, which waved in the breeze, and in which here and there a bright scarlet flower bloomed—a fit adornment for these huge graves, in which hundreds of gallant men are hushed in their last long sleep. Our guide told us these graves contained from 100 to 800 or 900 bodies; but as low-class Frenchmen, according to my experience, always deal in large numbers, I make considerable deductions. I remember once, in another part of the environs of Paris, a small wood was said to contain the bodies of many thousands of Germans slain by the valorous French. This man estimated the killed and wounded on both sides in the action at 30,000 men—a wild estimate; but no doubt, in the bitter winter weather in which it was fought, the majority of the poor wounded fellows would die before help could reach them. One reflected that many a gallant spirit was quenched that day, and the poor bodies now lie neglected and alone in this comparatively solitary place. One poor *immortelle* and a cross, both weather-stained and rotting to decay, was all except the heaps of earth which marked the graves of these gallant men.

They have made considerable progress with a monument here, in commemoration of this great French victory, as our guide called it. Truly the *grande* nation is like no other; it is easily depressed, and as easily elated; and retains, amid all disasters, a sublime confidence in its invincibility. Frenchmen wept on the boulevards after Sedan, but were not long in finding comfort from the fact that they had been "betrayed." They never mourn long, however: even in 1871 they were rapidly recovering their spirits, and now (two years later) the city seems as gay and lively as ever.

On our way back to Calais we met with a young German, speaking Swiss, going to seek his fortune in England. He could not speak a word of our language, and had little more money than he required for his travelling expenses. He was a kind, good-natured, innocent fellow; and I felt great sympathy for him, and wondered what fortune would befall him in our crowded busy London, where he was going.

There was no Castalia in 1873, and we suffered the usual misery in crossing the Channel at night, in a strong breeze; but if the endurance is great it is not long, and that is all the comfort that the greatest philosopher could extract from the premises.

CHAPTER XVII.

CHAMOUNI.—MONT BLANC.

From Ouchy to Geneva by steamer, amid the sweet and beautiful scenes the lake constantly presents. The mountains, with the morning mists covering their summits and hanging low on their sides, the clear blue water, the cultivated shores, the pretty towns and villages, the constantly-varying panorama, make up a scene on which the memory loves to dwell.

Geneva presents a splendid appearance as we approach it. The long ranges of fine buildings on the shores of the lake, the number and beauty of the private residences, have an imposing effect. The interior, however, of the older part of the city presents narrow crooked streets, steep and difficult to traverse; but in the more modern portion they are broad and the buildings handsome. Here and there they are adorned with trees and fountains, and the city possesses one or two public gardens, pleasant enough, but presenting no striking features. There is an ancient cathedral, not particularly remarkable, and near it the house in which Calvin resided for many years. It is a plain structure in a quiet street. They show you here his chair, and some other things more or less associated with him.

One of the most beautiful sights in Geneva is to see the Rhone issuing from the lake with extraordinary swiftness, and to notice the blue tint and sparkling clearness of the water. Another is the view of the Alps, which is presented from various points either in the city itself or its interesting and romantic suburbs. This, however, is a distant one, and it is comparatively rarely to be seen in

perfection, the conditions of the atmosphere being seldom entirely favourable. It is, of course, a very impressive sight to behold the long range of pure white summits clearly drawn against the blue sky, or standing out in bold relief against the masses of firs which clothe the nearer and intervening mountains. At sunrise and sunset an additional element of grandeur and sublimity is introduced, and the scene reminds you strongly of Berne and the Rigi.

From Geneva, on a fine clear morning, for CHAMOUNI. The diligences were completely filled with passengers of the usual heterogeneous description. For some miles the road traverses a tolerably level country, full of meadows and vineyards, and is lined with fruit trees, at this time in full bearing. The verdant little plain is bounded by mountains steep and barren—some of the peaks of the most fantastic shape—others are completely covered with heavy masses of sombre trees. Here is a large cross by the roadside, decorated with a green garland; now we pass through a little village, amid its singular little houses, and rouse its quiet inhabitants. As we pass on the mountains come nearer, and the scenery begins to assume a wilder aspect. At Bonneville we approach the course of the Arve, which we follow for almost the entire remainder of our journey. Now the road narrows to a gorge in the mountains, and here we meet a considerable number of villagers returning from some *fête*. They are all apparently dressed in their best, and look clean and sunburnt. The hats among the men, and the dresses among the women, are very peculiar. The unsophisticated simple life of the Swiss peasant seemed to have a great charm for Byron, and he thus describes him :—

"A peasant of the Alps.
His humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free ;
His self-respect grafted on innocent thoughts ;
His days of health, and nights of sleep ; his toils
By danger dignified ; yet guiltless hopes
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over the green turf,
And his grandchildren's love for epitaph."

The narrow pass we are traversing is frequently marked on both sides by traces of winter torrents, which have rushed down the mountain slopes. On again, and on our left is a considerable stream, which falls over the verge of a high wall-like rock, and is dissipated into a cloud of spray ere it reaches its base. The scenery grows more romantic as we approach St. Gervais. The mountains are close upon us, and present ever-changing and somewhat wild prospects. We have a dear and wretched dinner at this place, and with it we are supplied with a fluid which is called wine, but whose resemblance thereto is extremely remote.

From this point the new high road constructed by the French is very steep, and for about two hours the horses go at walking pace. The splendid glittering summit of MONT BLANC has been visible before us for some time, a magnificent object.

> "In the sun's face like yonder Alpine snow,
> Imperishably pure beyond all things below."

Now we trace a great glacier extending from the summit of a mountain down far on its sides; from the extreme point a rushing stream makes its way still further down among the dark forests. We are winding up the side of a mountain: above, below, and around us, the scenery is of the most striking character. Here is a great gap in a forest which clothes the mountain side. The trees are broken, rooted up, and covered with masses of *débris;* numbers of them have been hurled in wild confusion into the ravine below us, and the stream which traverses it rushes over them roaring and foaming at the obstacles.

Let me try to sketch another scene a little higher up the pass. We are in a narrow gorge; there is only just room for the road, which, indeed, is scooped out of the mountain. We are on this road, winding up the ascent, and almost shut in from the light of the sun by the close proximity and great height of the mountains about us. Far below descend dark fir-covered precipices down to the bottom of the gorge, along which the foaming river pursues its course. The stream is obstructed by great

masses of rock which have fallen from above. Ever and anon we catch glimpses of its angry boiling waters through the thick trees which half conceal them. In front of us, and apparently blocking the road, absolutely, are great rocky mountains, bare, wild, and of fantastic shapes. On each side and behind us are similar mountains, but covered to a great height with masses of firs and wild undergrowth. Before us, and rising high above the rest, is the snow-clad summit of Mont Blanc, towering majestically to heaven, and glistening a pure, glorious, and stainless white in the declining sun. Add to this the deep stillness—no sound but that of the wild torrent hundreds of feet below—no sign of animal life, no flowers or verdure—only the dark vegetation of the trees, and here and there the ruin a winter torrent has made. As we gaze, almost spell-bound, on the summit of the monarch of mountains, we adopt the words of the poet:—

"The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather round these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven yet leave vain man below."

The scene I have attempted to sketch is doubtless greatly exceeded in grandeur by that of other Alpine gorges, but it is nevertheless a most impressive one. My description, such as it is, is not consciously exaggerated, and I frankly confess that on this and many other occasions I felt a degree of emotion and excitement which it was not easy to conceal under an outwardly cold and impassive demeanour. Soon afterwards we reach the summit, and the long dark valley of Chamouni lies before us. We are not sorry to reach an hotel after our many hours' journey. The valley is fifteen miles long and very narrow. It is closed in by huge mountains, their sides covered with dark masses of trees, above which rise rocky peaks, and over all the vast range of snow-covered mountains. Numerous glaciers descend from these

heights far down into the valley. The river Arve traverses it, a rushing stream of a turbid white, heavily charged with sediment washed down from the neighbouring mountains. The view is inexpressibly imposing, and one never wearies of gazing at the pure white summits of Mont Blanc, and other peaks of the range, in striking contrast to the sombre masses of trees which clothe the lower slopes, or at the great ice cataracts which pour from the heights. Saunter up the valley in the evening time, and, as the shades of night are falling, you see Mont Blanc glistening in the light long after it has forsaken the valley. Later still, the solemn grandeur of the scene, under the light of moon and stars, is impressive beyond the power of words to describe, and, once beheld, can never be effaced from the memory. The address of the "Spirit of the Alps," in *Manfred*, harmonises well with the time—

"Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains;
They crowned him long ago,
On a throne of rocks in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow;
Around his waist are forests braced,
The Avalanche in his hand;
But ere it fall that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The Glaciers' cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay:
I am the spirit of the place—
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to his caverned base—
And what with me wouldst *thou?*"

The masses of ice and snow in this valley render it somewhat cold, in the evening especially, and more than once I vainly longed for the luxury of an English fire.

The conversation here is all about mountaineering—ascents to be made, or descriptions of those accomplished—and guides, mules, and alpenstocks are everywhere.

A young American here informed us, rightly or wrongly, that a Scotchman had recently ascended Mont Blanc alone, as the result of a wager, and had been successful.

I doubted the story exceedingly, but I did not express my opinion.

To enter into a detailed description of the wild scenery of this valley and its vicinity would only involve the repetition of words and terms which I have already used to exhaustion, and I shall therefore here close my note-book of Swiss scenery with an attempt to throw into one brief sketch some of the more striking scenes which it presents.

Imagine, then, that you have crossed the foaming Arve and left the valley, and are slowly travelling the upland meadows beyond, smooth and green, and watered by gentle streams, and dotted here and there with pretty Swiss cottages. The dark woods enclose the scene on one side—on the other, in rugged grandeur, rise precipitous rocks—at a little distance is a glacier which glistens in the morning sun. On again you plunge into the recesses of the gloomy forest, the dark solemn trees rise about you everywhere, and blot out all further view. Anon in the shade a fierce mountain torrent crosses your path, and you reach its further bank by a frail foot-bridge. You emerge from the wood, and are involved in a narrow pass; the wall-like rocks rise to an awful height, and you creep between them, a poor insignificant object. On again and you are on a narrow path overlooking a deep abyss, filled with surging mist, and from whose black depths comes up faintly the sound of the boiling torrent that rushes through it. Here you see the track of a destructive avalanche, and, if you listen may, perhaps, hear the fall of another. As you rise still higher the great mountains define themselves sharply against the sky far as the eye can reach. It is a dreary scene, and the dead silence is broken by no living thing. You have reached the summit, and the view you have sought is before you. Right and left, but below you, are bare rocky mountains and gloomy forests—at your feet tremendous precipices, which go sheer down, and over which you scarcely dare to look. In front of you stretches the great chain of Mont Blanc, with that mountain, with its vast snow-fields and glaciers, visible from base to summit.

Other jagged pinnacles and rugged heights are visible on either hand. The chasms and defiles of the sky-piercing mountains before you are filled with vast streams of ice which flow downwards beyond your vision, and over the whole grand scene is the pure white covering of snow, pierced here and there by the superincumbent rock. It is a sight to be felt but not described. Are you impressionable, you will not have gazed long ere the prospect becomes blurred and indistinct, and you find your eyes are full of tears. You behold that sublime purity, and you hide your face in your hands and are silent—

"Thou, too, hoar Mount, with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the Avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
Into the depths of clouds that veil thy breast—
Thou, too, again, stupendous mountain, thou
That, as I raise my head—awhile bowed low
In adoration—upward from thy base,
Slow travelling, with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest like a vapoury cloud
To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise!
Rise, like a cloud of incense from the earth,
Thou kingly spirit, throned among the hills!
Thou dread Ambassador from Earth to Heaven!
Great Hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising Sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

TINTAGEL CASTLE.—PENZANCE.—LAND'S END.

THE whole line of the west coast of Cornwall is exceedingly interesting and romantic. The rugged rocks, bold headlands, wild creeks and bays, present views of striking and varying beauty. Perhaps the most picturesque of all is the grand height which is crowned by the ruins of TINTAGEL CASTLE. The precipitous rock on which they stand, rises sheer out of the water to the height of three hundred feet. There is little left of what was once a noble building, only a few battlemented and ruined walls—winding here and there up the steeps, and enclosing a carpet of soft green turf. The wild winds howl and rage over the desolate ruin, and the restless waves dash themselves ceaselessly against the rock on which it stands. The days when its floors rang to the tread of armed knights, or its rooms echoed with the sounds of song and laughter, are gone for ever. But still there hangs about it the halo of warlike deeds, and the poetry of old legends, which set forth tales of love or actions of chivalrous enterprise. The general character of the interior scenery of Cornwall varies greatly, but upon the whole presents a strong contrast to that of Devonshire. As you traverse the country from Plymouth to Penzance, and approach the latter place it becomes gradually more barren and waste. The towns and villages are generally poor, and large tracts of land are abandoned to stones and weeds. This is especially the case in the mining districts. The closed mines, ruined engine-houses, and weed-covered shafts, give the vicinity a somewhat desolate appearance. There are

many hills, but none of great height. You see few sheep, cattle, or cornfields, or other evidences of prosperous industry.

PENZANCE stands on the wide shore of Mounts Bay, which opens out before it in a grand expanse. The old town is very poor, a mere collection of hilly, narrow, and badly-paved streets, with houses of the meanest description. The newer portion is better, and there are one or two good hotels and other considerable buildings. The most remarkable object in the bay is the huge conical rock (topped by an old castellated building), called St. Michael's Mount. It is said to have been formerly connected with the mainland, though now at high water separated by a wide gap. This can be crossed at low water by a causeway; at other times the Mount is reached by boats. In winter, however, I understand, communication is often impossible for days, and on rare occasions for weeks at a time.

There is a long history attaching to the place, of course, but its chief interest arises from its singular and picturesque appearance, and the fine view which it commands. The building at its summit, though highly picturesque, contains nothing of much interest. There are numerous excursions of the most interesting character in the vicinity of Penzance, of which the most important, perhaps, is that to the Logan Rock and Land's End. There is nothing on the coach road to these points which calls for special notice. From where the coach stops it is a long and toilsome walk to the Logan, involving much climbing over rocks and rough ground. The place is on the coast, of course, and consists of a series of huge hard masses of rock lying about on the beach in wild confusion. At the summit of one of the largest of these lies the Logan, a mass some sixty-five tons in weight, and about five or six yards long. It is said that it can be moved by very slight exertion, but it is not worth the awkward and steep climb involved to test the phenomenon. The motion, certainly, is imperceptible at a little distance. Anyway, it is a source of standing income to the "guides," for there is

always someone in every party of visitors who is resolved to climb up to it. The outer face of the rocks is exposed to the clear green waves, which break in foaming surf, and the whole scene is wild and desolate enough.

From this a short drive brings us to LAND'S END, three hundred miles from London, and the most westerly extremity of England. The point which goes by that name is merely a projection in the line of rugged cliffs which everywhere here line the coast, and has nothing whatever distinctive or peculiar about it. The height of the cliff is very small, being only some sixty feet above the sea, and in that regard there are very many points on this coast, not to speak of other parts of our coasts, which greatly exceed it. Yet to me the whole scene far surpassed, in wild rugged grandeur and sublimity, anything of the kind I had ever beheld. Let me try to describe it.

As you stand on the point of rock called Land's End, right and left of you rise fantastic rugged cliffs, worked by the furious waves into every imaginable shape. At the foot of these cliffs are other masses of rock, covered, or partially covered, by the rolling water—now black and grim, now crowned with the purest white, as the milky water runs from them at each receding wave. Look in front, and you have the wide waste of the vast Atlantic before you. See how its long heavy green waves slowly and lazily lift themselves, and come majestically rolling to the shore. When they reach the rocks you are surprised to see them rebound with tremendous force, and cast up clouds of brilliant snowy spray twenty to thirty feet in air, while still nearer in shore the water is broken into a vast sheet of white foam, which rolls and surges midst the jagged crags beneath. Look out to sea, and on a low shelf of rock stands a lighthouse. You can see the white clouds of spray dashing around it, as the rocks intercept the roll of the waves. The terrible force and violence of the water has washed away every particle of earth and the softer rock exposed to its action, and has even worked the hard granite cliffs full of holes and caverns. Descend their faces and realise the power required to produce the

results you see. At one particular place the dreadful surf pours and rushes into a narrow cavern with wild speed and thundering sound. The view entrances you. The vast expanse of ocean before you, the rugged cliffs around you, the boiling surf at your feet, the awful booming sound of the waves as they strike the iron-bound coast, and the wild wind-swept moors in your rear, make up a scene which affects you powerfully, and is surely unequalled in its way by any other coast scenery in the kingdom. The thoughts which arise in view of such a prospect, so far as they can be defined, are a powerful feeling of one's own insignificance. You stand here for a brief space, but those great waves had dashed themselves against this rugged barrier long ages before you were, and would continue to do so long after you have ceased to exist! What a poor ephemeral thing is a single human life in presence of the eternal works of Nature and her resistless laws! We can look on, study, and faintly grasp somewhat of their history and operations in the inconceivably lengthened past—we can even turn many of them to our use—but we cannot arrest or alter for a moment their inevitable action.

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JOHN HEYWOOD, Excelsior Printing and Stationery Works, Hulme Hall Road, Manchester.

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