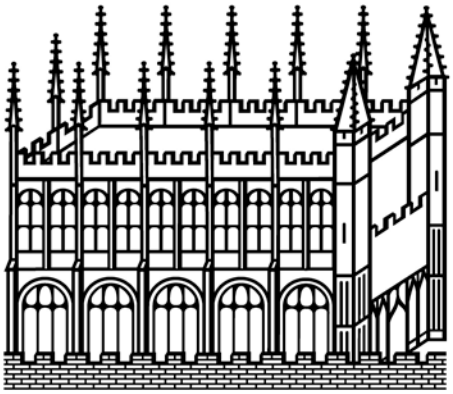
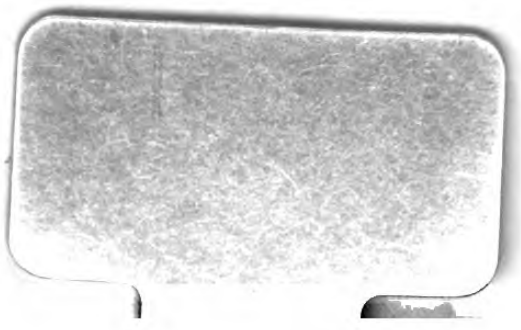


AWAY FROM HOME



"RICHARD! MARY! UNCLE HAS COME! HE HAS INDEED!"

Page 1.

AWAY FROM HOME;

OR,

SIGHTS AND SCENES IN OTHER LANDS.

A Book for the Young.

NEW AND REVISED EDITION.

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DESIGN OF THE AUTHOR.

THE purpose of the Author in preparing this work has been to awaken curiosity in the minds of the young in relation to lands, some of them near to our own Island Home, others of them far away. He has sought also to combine pleasure and profit, by giving, in a homely, chatty style, some interesting information as to the position of those lands on the great map of the world, their different characteristics, and the habits and manners of their inhabitants.

The Author humbly hopes that his design may be so accomplished, that every reader of his book will rise from its perusal with a desire for further information.

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AWAY FROM HOME.

CHAPTER I.

A SHORT STAY WITH OUR NEIGHBOUR.

"RICHARD! Mary! uncle has come! he has indeed—it is he!" cried Percy Mayfield, running into the garden almost out of breath. "Make haste! Make haste!"

Before he left England for the Continent, Mr. Rushton had promised his nephews and nieces that on his return he would pay them a long visit, and give them some account of sights and scenes in other lands. It was with great joy, therefore, that the young people hastened to the gate to give him a hearty welcome.

"How glad I am to see you!" exclaimed Percy; "it seemed as though you would never come again."

"Never is a long time," said his uncle. "However, I am very pleased to see Flowerdale and its happy inmates once more."

And they all went into the house. After tea the young people were eager to hear from Mr. Rushton some of the many things he had to tell them.

"Uncle," said Percy, "you *will* tell us something about the sights you have seen while you have been away from home, won't you?"

"I am sure he will," said Mary; "for he promised to do so when he came back to England again."

"You must give me time to write one or two letters, and then I will narrate to you my visit to France," said Mr. Rushton.

The young people patiently waited their uncle's pleasure; and he did not long detain them from their expected treat, but, after retiring for about half an hour, returned to the youthful circle, and, seating himself in the old arm-chair, thus began:—

"I was not in a hurry to reach Paris, and therefore I took the train at London-bridge for Newhaven, whence I crossed over by steamer to Dieppe. This town is one of the chief fishing-ports of France, and is famous for its carvings in ivory, which I was grieved to find consisted chiefly of images of the Virgin Mary and cru-

cifixes—showing too plainly that the greater part of the French nation are professed Roman Catholics."

"Then they have not got the Bible, as we have," said Mary.

"Or else they do not mind what the Bible says," observed Richard.

"Frequently, during my stay in France," continued Mr. Rushton, "I saw many of the people bowing to crosses and images; and as I looked upon them I pitied them, and sent up a silent prayer to God that they might speedily be brought to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation. On leaving Dieppe, in order to see the country better I took my seat on the highest part of a *diligence*, or coach. The views on the road were very pleasing, varied by fruitful fields, gentle hills, and woods. As we drew near to Rouen, villages, factories, and pretty cottages, scattered among orchards and gardens, gave much interest to my journey.

"We entered Rouen by a long and winding street, and soon saw the Seine below us. It is a noble river, the right bank of which is here formed into a wide quay, lined with ships and covered with goods. A broad way runs along the quay, bordered by stone buildings, hotels, and warehouses, overlooking the river, which a bridge crosses above the shipping. From the quay we turned into a narrow but clean

street, with a fine range of warehouses on either side, and drove to a hotel, where we found the guests taking seats at the *table d'hôte*, and sat down with them to dinner."

"What is a '*table d'hôte*'?" asked Percy.

"The meaning of the words is 'the host's table.' A dinner is prepared at a certain hour, at a given price, when those who wish to dine at that hour may do so."

"I remember," said Richard, "when I went with father to London he took me to a house where we all sat down together at the same table, at one o'clock, and were charged one price, whether we ate little or much; and he called it an 'ordinary.'"

"Then you have an idea of a *table d'hôte*," observed his uncle; "it is something like what in this country is termed an 'ordinary.'

"Rouen," he continued, "is the chief seat of the cotton manufacture of France, and its narrow streets are filled with the busy crowd passing to and fro. This city was the birth-place of William the Conqueror, and here the heart of Richard I. is deposited; for he directed that, at his death, it should be placed in Rouen."

"How strange!" said Mary; "where is he buried?"

"Strange, indeed; but it is said he did so on account of his affection for the Normans.

His body is interred in the abbey of Fontevrault. In the Museum I saw the mark of William the Conqueror,—for he could not write,—and the signatures of Henry I. and Richard I. I just glanced at the Palace of Justice,—a fine old building, once the palace of the dukes of Normandy,—and passed through the square where the celebrated Joan of Arc was buried; and early on the following morning drove across the Seine to the station of the Paris and Rouen Railway."

"I should very much like to see some of these places," said Richard; "for I am very fond of history."

"There are many things more unlikely than that you may see them some day," said his uncle. "During our journey to Paris we had many glimpses of the river Seine, crossing and recrossing it, as we rode along. My mind was kept alive by the various places of interest we either passed or touched at on our way. At Mantes, William the Conqueror received the injury which caused his death; in a church of the village of Neuilly, the Empress Josephine was buried; and in a palace at St. Germain, James II., King of England, found a retreat, and there he died."

"There seems to be a great deal of the history of England to be found in France," said Richard.

"The history of the two nations is very closely connected, and when you are all better read in it, you will much enjoy a visit to our neighbours. Arrived at Paris, we first took apartments at a hotel, where we obtained a little refreshment and a good night's rest. On the following day, after visiting the boulevards, we went to the gardens of the Tuileries. Here were persons lounging in chairs and reading, and there were groups holding lively conversation. Some were taking a quiet walk, while others passed along the public road, their great desire being, as it seemed to me, to see and to be seen.

"I saw in the Imperial Library, with its million and more of books, a great room of maps, thousands of volumes of manuscripts, specimens of bookbinding from the earliest dates, the oldest printed Bible, the first printed books of all nations, and various other curious things.

"Next morning, passing through the Place de Carousel, I entered the Louvre. Here I saw relics from Pompeii and Herculaneum, the ancient furniture of palaces, and many other interesting relics. As I walked through the apartments lined with paintings, I remembered that around these very walls once resounded the groans of the murdered Protestants."

"That was in the time of Charles IX.," said Mrs. Mayfield; "was it not?"

"You are quite right. The cruel king sat at one of the windows, crying 'Kill, kill!' and firing at those who attempted to escape. He was prompted to this cruel act by his mother. But he could not destroy the truth, for that is great, and it must prevail. And it will do so too, for there are still some holy and good men in Paris, actively labouring for the spread of true religion in that city.

"I visited Versailles, with its groves, flower-gardens, ponds, canals, statues, and fountains. I likewise went into the Botanical Gardens. Here were various specimens of plants and trees, and a collection of rare birds and beasts, together with minerals, fossils, etc. Then we took a glance at the Hotel des Invalides, the residence of the old soldiers of France, in which is the tomb of Napoleon: thence we made our way to the cemetery of Père la Chaise, from which, being on rising ground, we could see over all Paris and the valley of the Seine. We afterwards crossed the river and drove to the Pantheon. Ascending the dome of this building, now converted into a church, all Paris is beneath, with its gardens, arches, public buildings, and ancient roofs covering long lines of grey stone buildings; while all around are the hospitals and charities of France."

"It must be a splendid city," said Percy; "I should like to see it very much."

"Splendid as it is," observed Mr. Rushton, "I parted from its splendid boulevards, its gay palaces, squares, fountains, and gardens, its arches and columns, its libraries and museums, without regret, and more convinced of the truth of the words of Scripture, that 'Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.' Much as I grieve over Sabbath-breaking in our own country, it is worse in Paris: there the Sabbath, perhaps more than any other day, is devoted to pleasure and vice; the city and its people present almost one scene of gaiety and folly. And, as I saw the little children thus taught to neglect God's holy day, I sincerely pitied them, and resolved that I would never visit Paris again without a good supply of small books for the little ones; for I am certain that, if we would do lasting good to our neighbours, we must begin with the children. Their habits are not so deeply rooted as those of the parents. In their young hearts the seed that is sown may spring up and bring forth fruit; and, as has often been the case in our own land, they may be the means under God of teaching their parents the way to be saved."

"I am sure, uncle," said Mary, "I will do all I can to collect some money to buy books for the French children."

CHAPTER II.

UNCLE RUSHTON'S TRIP TO STRASBOURG, AND WHAT HE SAW THERE.

ON the following morning the rain fell heavily, and the young people were obliged to remain in-doors, instead of going for a walk as had been intended. Percy stood looking out of the window, while Richard and Mary were with their mother reading outlines of history, which they were in the habit of doing every morning during the holidays.

"Percy," said Mr. Rushton, "as there is no likelihood of your getting out into the fields this morning, I will give you some account of my trip to Strasbourg. Go, call your mother and sister."

Percy ran up the stairs, and, knocking at the door, said, "Richard, Richard! uncle wants to tell us about some places he saw in France. Oh, do come directly; and you, too, Mary;" and he hurried back, as though he feared his uncle might in the meantime have made his escape.

Richard and Mary looked inquiringly at their mother.

"We will all go, my dears," said she; for

she felt that it would not be lost time; and that probably she might herself gain some information.

"Now, uncle," said Mrs. Mayfield, on entering the room where Mr. Rushton and Percy were already seated; "we are ready to hear the account of your excursion."

"*We!*" said he, playfully; "not too old to learn, then? Well, well, that is as it should be. Let us see, then, if we cannot now learn something useful.

"It was a bright morning, and very favourable for my journey. I passed through a country which seemed to me to be divided into a number of small farms, with a few trees here and there, and enjoyed the scene much more than I did the gay city life of Paris, although the people were not so polished as in that city. They were busily at work on their farms and gardens, providing for the wants of the great city, which would be sadly off for many useful and needful articles were it not for these poor people. You know, my dear children, we are too apt to value persons according to the show they make, and not for their real worth and usefulness."

"Indeed we are," said Mrs. Mayfield; "the citizen, amid all the bustle and gaiety he witnesses, too often forgets his dependence on the poor rustic for some of his many comforts."

"Quite true," observed Mr. Rushton; "the head cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of thee.'"

"Did you see any sheep?" asked Percy.

"I saw some on my journey; they were feeding by the wayside, under the care of a shepherd, who had in his hand a staff, with a crooked iron at the end."

"Are the French sheep like ours?" asked Percy.

"Those that I saw were merinos, and their wool is used for making the stuff called merino. At the town of Meaux we saw a number of flour-mills, which help to supply Paris with flour. So that you see, Mary, the small places help the larger ones."

"Yes, uncle," said Mary; "I hope I shall always think of that, now."

"The country on the banks of the river Marne is very pretty. As we rode along, we saw fields of corn, and quite a region of vines, and gardens of roses, and orchards, with nice-looking villas just peeping out from beautiful shrubberies."

"Delightful!" said Mary; "I am sure I should have enjoyed the ride, and a sight of the flowers."

"And I should try and remember all I saw," said Percy.

"And not forget that country people help city people," added Richard.

"Well," continued Uncle Rushton, "I shall not soon forget the French peasants, nor their gardens and orchards; and it is my sincere prayer that both they and ourselves may have the Rose of Sharon planted in our hearts, and that we may all become branches of the true vine, Jesus Christ, and grow up in Him in all things.

"After leaving Meaux, the next place at which we stopped was Epernay. I should have told you that we were now in the old province of Champagne."

"I suppose they make champagne wine there," remarked Percy.

"You are quite right, my boy," said his uncle; "it is made in this province in large quantities. At Epernay, and at Chalons-sur-Marne, I saw cellars cut in chalk rocks, which hold some two or three millions of bottles. The owner of the manufactory at Chalons spends no less a sum than £6,000 a year in corks alone!"

"O uncle! But what is champagne made of?"

"Of small ripe and sweet grapes, which grow plentifully in those parts. Passing through Void, the birthplace of Joan of Arc, and other villages and towns, we reached the province of Lorraine. Most of the houses we saw appeared to be built of stone, two or three stories high, with red roofs. Nearly all the workmen seemed

to wear a dark blue cotton frock, or blouse, and trousers; and the women had on cotton dresses and caps without bonnets. Many of them were often at work in the fields, and sometimes were riding on donkeys and carrying baskets. I had now reached Nancy, the capital of the department of Meurthe, and a charming place it is: well may it boast of its public square, its hotels and cafés, its monuments and beautiful fountains, and its fine houses, colleges, and schools.

"Outside the St. Jean gate, I saw the spot, marked by a cross, where Charles the Bold, of Burgundy, was found frozen in a pond two days after the battle of 1477."

"Mother once read about that to us in the History of France, which she bought me," said Richard.

"I am glad you remember what you hear read," said his uncle. "Nancy," he continued, "has a cotton manufacture, but is chiefly noted for its embroidery, at which some 6,000 or 7,000 persons are constantly employed—sometimes as many as 20,000.

"Leaving Nancy, as we passed through Luneville I noticed the ancient palace of Stanislaus, the last King of Poland. It was at that time the quarters of some French cavalry: its gardens have been turned into a public walk. We dined at Sarrebourg, a

village on the river Sarre, and were fast approaching the frontier. I now observed German signs and names, and the people we met with seemed to speak a mixture of French and German. At Phalsbourg—one of Louis XIV.'s fortresses—a grim-looking officer demanded our passports, which he pored over, but soon returned to us.

"As we proceeded we saw many fruit trees, chiefly apple and plum—the latter blue with fruit, and borne down by their weight—growing in the gardens of the cottages. From the hill of Sauvergne we had a beautiful view of the valley of the Rhine—villages and church spires—and, beyond the river, a range of blue mountains in the distance. On our right were the spurs of the Alps on the borders of Switzerland. The large town of Sauvergne lay below us, and a little beyond it was a range of wooded eminences, overlooking the valley, crowned by castles and convents."

"O uncle!" said Percy, "that would just have suited me. I could have run down the hill at a fine rate."

"And so lost the beautiful view from the top," added Mrs. Mayfield.

"I did not think of that," said Percy.

"We should always think before we speak," observed Uncle Rushton. "The hill of which I am telling you was four hundred feet above

Sauvergne; and then, you know, it might not be so easy to run down as you imagine.

"We now crossed the plain of Alsace, which is inhabited by people of German origin. The way to Strasbourg is considered the finest part of France. Passing Wasselonne, a manufacturing town with numerous cotton mills, we entered Strasbourg * through a triple line of fortifications, giving up our passports at the gates.

"This city was the capital of the ancient province of Alsace, and the chief town of the department of the Lower Rhine. It is situated on the Ille, about a mile and a half from the Rhine. The streets, houses, and dress of the people are all German in appearance.

"The most interesting building in the town is the cathedral, which has a spire twenty-four feet higher than the great pyramid of Egypt, and 140 feet higher than St. Paul's."

"Then it is 470 feet high," said Richard.

"And four feet to that," observed Uncle Rushton. "The building looks as though it were in a case of woven stone, and its windows are finely painted."

"And did you see the clock?" asked Percy; for he had often heard of it.

"Yes," said his uncle; "like most others,

* Strasbourg was finally captured by the Germans in Sept., 1870, after a short siege.

I had a peep at the clock, with its puppets and images. The solar system was set in motion—a little cock flapped his wings, and crowed—time turned his hour-glass—youth struck the quarters—middle age the half-hours—growing age the third quarter—and death sounded the knell after the cock had crowed."

"How very curious!" said Mary; "I should like to see it."

"In a corner of the gallery," continued Uncle Rushton, "is a figure of the artist, watching the great labour of his life.

"At Strasbourg I saw monuments of two of Napoleon's generals, and a statue of John Gutenberg, who made his first attempt at printing in that city. I also visited the library, and examined a Bible which was printed in 1466; and shortly after left the city.

"And here I must leave you, children, as I have a few letters to write. To-morrow I will give you some account of my visit to Belgium. Meanwhile, do not forget that while there is much in a tour in France to please, there is much in the condition of the people to call for the prayers of all who love God. I could not but feel that the larger number of the people seem to be 'lovers of pleasure more than of God.' Let us do all we can to assist good men in teaching them how they may obtain pleasures which endure for evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

CHAPTER III.

THE GARDEN AND BATTLE-FIELD OF EUROPE.

"NOW for the garden and battle-field of Europe," said Uncle Rushton, the following evening; "for so Belgium has been named: first, because it is very highly cultivated; and then because some of its provinces have been the scenes of the most terrible wars of Europe."

"It was in Belgium, was it not, uncle," asked Richard, "that the Battle of Waterloo was fought?"

"It was; and during my stay at Brussels I visited the spot, which is about ten miles from the city. The little church and churchyard of the village of Waterloo are crowded with memorials of British officers. Many a wounded Briton was laid there, and nearly thirty tablets and monuments tell the names of those who fell in that terrible struggle. I stood upon the Mound of the Belgic Lion, and surveyed the field, and my thoughts carried me back to the day of the battle; and I returned from that memorable plain, firmly resolved to do

something towards the prevention of war, by promoting peace and goodwill among men.

"Belgium is so full of villages and towns, that Philip II. of Spain, in passing through it, said it was only one town. It is a level country, with occasional hills, and the part towards Holland is below high-water mark."

"Then they have floods there," said Richard; "don't they, uncle?"

"The water is kept out by artificial mounds, and towards the sea there are many natural sandbanks. The people are chiefly descended from the Germans. The lower classes speak Flemish and Walloon, while the middle and upper classes generally adopt the French language. The prevailing religion is the Roman Catholic, and the people are very fond of shows and ceremonies.

"While at Brussels, I saw the preparations which were made for what is called the Feast of the Madonna. There was the figure of the Virgin Mary, with a blue silk gown on, trimmed with Brussels lace, and flowers in her hands, ready to be carried in procession round the city, in presence of a crowd of people from all parts, who worshipped, and bowed, and knelt before the image as it passed."

"If that isn't worshipping idols," said Percy, "I don't know what is."

"The cathedral was set out with lemon and

orange trees in tubs, and with numbers of candles, flags, candlestands, rostrums, paintings, etc."

"How foolish it does seem," said Mary, "to make such a fuss about an image!"

"It is not only foolish," said Uncle Rushton, "but sinful; because by the very act they are giving the honour and worship to another which is due only to God. I turned away from it all with painful feelings, deeply grieved that there were so many thousands of my fellow-creatures who could be so grossly deluded as to believe a lie. And I felt sure that they were enemies *in heart*, to the truth, as are all by nature, otherwise they would never take such pleasure in unrighteousness. Let us be thankful for the Book of Truth, and pray that by it we may be kept free from all error. 'Thy Word have I hid in my heart,' said the Psalmist, 'that I might not sin against Thee.' Let us do all we can, that everybody may read the Book for themselves.

"But to proceed. I must just tell you that Brussels has been called 'Paris in miniature,' and so it is, but cleaner. From Brussels I made my way to Antwerp by railway in two hours. It was formerly noted for its commerce. The cruel Duke of Alva, by establishing the inquisition, and other wicked acts, drove the Flemish artificers to England, who introduced the silk

manufacture into this country in the days of Queen Elizabeth, as did the refugees from Liege the woollen at a later day. Antwerp is noted for its paintings, and its Exchange, built more than 500 years ago. It was the pet city of the Emperor Napoleon, who fortified it at a great cost.

"There is one curious thing I noticed in Belgium, and that was that the public clocks all struck at the half-hour; that is, they would strike twelve o'clock at half-past eleven. Clock chimes are almost incessant day and night.

"And now I set out for England, by taking the train for Ostend. Passing through Ghent, famous for its cotton manufacture, and also as being the place where the treaty of peace between America and Great Britain was signed in 1814, we reached Bruges, the place where oil painting and decimal arithmetic originated."

"Indeed, uncle!" said Richard.

"Yes," continued Uncle Rushton; "and it was once one of the greatest marts of Europe. It has been called the Liverpool of the middle ages, of which period it has some very interesting buildings. It has now an appearance of desolation, compared with former times.

'Yet everywhere its monuments remain:
Temples, which rear their stately heads on high;
Canals, that intersect the fertile plain;
Wide streets and squares, with many a court and hall,
Spacious and undefaced, but ancient all.'

"Fourteen miles more and we reach Ostend, which is celebrated for its obstinate defence of three years against the Spaniards who besieged it. It is a favourite watering-place, and much resorted to in summer time. Outside the Bruges gate is a salt-water reservoir, where oysters, brought from Harwich and Colchester, are fattened.

"And now I took the packet for England. Thankful and rejoiced am I once more to see its shores, and to praise the name of Him who has so kindly protected me in going out and coming in."

"Before we separate," said Mrs. Mayfield, "I should like to see if the children know exactly the position of Belgium. Richard, dear, do you know?"

"Yes, mother, there is the German Ocean at Ostend; there is France at the other end and on one side; and Holland and Germany on the other."

"Then we are to understand," said Uncle Rushton, "that Belgium lies between France, Germany, Holland, and the German Ocean?"

"Yes, uncle."

"And we have now travelled through a part of France, of Germany, Prussia, and Belgium," said Mary.

"Exactly so," said Mr. Rushton. "I shall next give you an account of my visit to the country rescued from the waters."

CHAPTER IV.

THE COUNTRY RESCUED FROM THE WATERS.

"UNCLE," said Percy, "you promised us yesterday that you would tell us about your visit to the country rescued from the waters—what did you mean?"

"Mean? why, that there is a place called Holland (Hollow Land), and that I have seen it, and that a large portion of it was at one time under the water. If you wish me to describe it, I should say that it is a large flat plain without a hill in it, and the greater part of it below the level of the sea. And of this I am very sure—that if the Dutch were not a very industrious people, the sea would soon take away what seems very like its own."

"How do they keep the sea away, then?" asked Percy.

"By means of large mounds or banks of earth called dykes. These are generally about thirty feet high, and wide enough at the top for two carriages to pass. The great dyke of the Helder, which guards the north province, is made of blocks of granite. On the west

coast a triple row of sand-mounds, which the winds and waves have thrown up, forms a barrier towards the sea."

"I should be always afraid," said Mary, "that the water would wash away the earth and sand; for how the sea gains ground in some parts of England!"

"The keels of the ships," continued Uncle Rushton, "float above the chimneys, and frogs croaking among the bulrushes look down upon the swallow on the housetop.

"The rivers, too, whose bottoms are above the level of the country, are kept in their channels by bulwarks of earth. I never before saw so many windmills as there are in Holland —they can scarcely be said to be ever out of sight. In the suburbs of the cities and towns, they look like an army of giants swinging about their great arms—sawing timber, crushing rape-seed, grinding snuff, beating hemp, and pumping the water up from the hollows into the canals, and thus making the soil fit for cultivation, and the houses for residence."

"But has the water ever overflowed the country, uncle?" asked Percy.

"Yes, my boy; in the time of the Romans the north boundary of Holland was a tract of land with a lake in the interior, called Flevo; from this lake a river ran 50 miles before it reached the ocean. But you may read in

Milner's Geography, that in consequence of the sea bursting upon it, before the close of the thirteenth century the lake had disappeared and was converted into the Zuyder Zee (south sea). In 1421 the water burst through a dam in the district of Dort, and 72 villages were overflowed, and of 35 of them not a vestige was seen any more. The lake of Haarlem was formed by the ocean bursting over the land; and in 1836 the wind drove its waters over 10,000 acres of land in the vicinity of Amsterdam, and it has increased from time to time. The Government therefore determined to drain the lake by steam pumps, and by this means have rescued at least 50,000 acres from water and fitted them for cultivation."

"Are there any trees in Holland?" asked Percy.

"There are some planted on the borders of the quays at Amsterdam, and on some of the dykes. But if you mean to inquire whether there are any forests, I answer, none. The greater part of the land, being reclaimed from the sea, never grew any—there may have been some forests in the interior some thousands of years ago, but they have long since disappeared."

"Then, what do they do for timber?" said Richard; "And for firewood?" added Mary.

"They must import it for building purposes;

and for fuel they use turf, which, I am told, is dug up to the value of £1,500,000 a year. But it is time I told you a little about Amsterdam.

"In the thirteenth century it was a collection of fishermen's huts. It stands where the river Amstel joins the Zuyder Zee—and was for that reason called Amstelridam. The city is so crossed with canals that it may be said to consist of ninety-five islands, which are connected with each other by 290 bridges."

"Are the houses built like ours?" asked Percy; "because I should think they ought to be very strong."

"They are generally of brick, four or five stories high. The foundations are made by driving piles fifty or sixty feet long through the swampy ground till they reach the bank of sand below. The tops of the piles are then sawn to a level, and thick planks are nailed to them, on which the masonry is laid. Instead, however, of building upwards, as we do, they build from the top to the bottom."

"How strange!" said Percy; "but I can't see how they manage that."

"I will tell you. The beams which support the roof and attics are fastened into the party walls of the adjoining houses, and on these a wooden frame is erected to sustain the roof and flooring. Attics may thus often be seen

hanging for a long time before the other parts of the houses are finished."

"I wonder they don't fall over," said Percy.

"They often do lean and get out of the square. A framework is also made for the lower part; and all the houses are smaller as they reach the foundation. I cannot say that I admire the Dutch houses. The rooms of many, however, have their sides prettily decorated with landscapes in oil colours. Most of the houses have mirrors projecting from the sides of the windows into the street."

"What are they for, uncle?" said Percy.

"That the inmates may see what is going on without being seen. In some cases there is a mirror placed so as to show who is coming to the house."

"A very good plan too," said Richard. "I wish we had one, and then we should be able to get out of the way when that Mrs. C—— is coming."

"Hush, my dear," said Mrs. Mayfield; "Mrs. C—— is very kind. Perhaps Richard remembers her reproving him on one occasion."

"Indeed I do," said he.

"Not undeservedly, either," said Uncle Rushton, "from what I have heard. It is best to be thankful for a wise reproof; and to think evil of no one.

"Amsterdam," he continued, "has no

squares, but some avenues of walnut, elm, and linden trees, which are very beautiful. The streets are very narrow, but are all paved with brick. I saw the palace, formerly the Stadt House: it has no grand entrance, but the door is behind."

"That is strange," said Percy; "why is that, uncle?"

"It is said, that the person who superintended the building ordered it to be so, to prevent the mob from rushing in, in case of a tumult. It has some very fine apartments; some of them are truly magnificent. The chief room is 150 feet long, 100 feet high, and 60 broad; and the walls are of white Italian marble. There are also a great many sculptured bas-reliefs; and the tablets over the doors of some of the rooms have on them figures emblematical of the business done in the rooms. Over the door of that room which was formerly the Secretary's, is a dog watching his dead master, and a figure of Silence with her finger on her lips, signifying fidelity and secrecy. Over the Bankruptcy Court is the figure of a fallen angel, and of rats escaping from a sinking ship, in allusion to rash speculations and their ruinous consequences."

"Very good, indeed," said Mrs. Mayfield; "and perhaps the rats gnawed the holes in the ship, and caused the leaks."

"Good again," said Uncle Rushton: "no doubt bankruptcy is generally the result of a man's own rashness. At the top of the palace is a tower, containing at least 500 bells, on which is played an agreeable air every quarter of an hour; and it is such hard work for the man who plays them, that he sometimes is obliged to lie down when he has performed his task.

"But I must say a little about the Dutch. They are very clean, charitable, and kind to the afflicted and poor; and as a whole, I must add, an orderly people. The workhouse at Amsterdam is used for two purposes: as a refuge for the poor, and a reformatory for offenders. Men and women are there punished for drunkenness. Most of the female convicts are engaged in lace-making; other females occupy their time in sewing, washing, spinning, etc.; and there is also a part of the building devoted to young ladies who have been undutiful, or have committed some other domestic offence. They are obliged to work so many hours a day, and wear a particular dress as a mark of disgrace."

"I am sure I shouldn't like to live in Holland, then," said Mary.

"If you did," said Mr. Rushton, "I hope you would not require to be sent to the workhouse. There is one thing in Holland which you need not fear, Mary, and that is, when

you are out for a walk, being annoyed by beggars; for the Dutch take care that all rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, have some work to do. They seem thorough enemies to idleness. Even cats and dogs must draw about carts with fish and other wares, although, to their honour be it said, the people treat them very kindly. Holland, in fact, is a perfect bee-hive.

"The cleanliness too of a Dutch kitchen would please both you and your mother. Its fire-place looks as if it had never been used for cooking, and the saucepans (of copper) are polished like mirrors. As for the servants, they would wash your bedroom every morning if you would let them. And they would much rather carry you over the doorstep, when cleaned, than have you tread upon it."

"They are as bad as Sally," said Percy; "for she always makes a great fuss about dirty shoes."

"Cleanliness is to be admired," said Uncle Rushton; "and we should do all in our power that the servant's labour may not be thrown away. The Dutch servants, however, like too many I have seen in England, are very fond of ornaments. But there is this difference: the Dutch servant purchases necklaces, etc., so that in case of marriage she may, if needed, sell them to buy furniture; or that, in event

of her death, they may be sold to pay the expenses of her funeral."

"Come, come," said Mrs. Mayfield; "that is better than many English servants do: although I think the savings bank the best way of disposing of spare money."

"Precisely so. The Dutch are very fond of coffee, hard eggs, and pickles. Mr. Chambers has seen a person eat eight or ten eggs in a very short time. The food of the poor consists chiefly of vegetables, sour milk, herbs, and butter. The chief manufactures are linens, woollen cloth, painted tiles, and pottery; starch, wax, paper, snuff, etc. The Dutch are also famous for curing herrings. Here, Percy, is something that I bought at a Dutch shop."

Percy untied the string, and unfolded the piece of paper, and behold! a large cake of gingerbread, on which, in white sugar letters, were the words, "Forget-me-not." Percy said, "Well, if I forget everything else, I shall not forget the gingerbread forget-me-not."

"And, perhaps," said Mrs. Mayfield, "the gingerbread may help you to remember something about Holland."

"But," said Uncle Rushton, "it is time I had done; "I must, however, tell you that most of the Dutch are Protestants in name; although it seems to me that a large portion, like too many in our own land, profess, but do

THE GINGERBREAD FORGET-ME-NOT.

not possess, real piety. May the time soon come when the Dutch shall all be less regardful of the wealth of this world, and seek those riches which endure for ever!

"I meant to have given you an account of my journey from Amsterdam to Cologne, and to Berlin; but find I shall not be able. You will, however, from what I have told you, already have formed an idea of Germany."

"O yes," said Mrs. Mayfield; "and I am sure we feel very much indebted for your kindness in what you have related."

"But uncle will tell us more about foreign lands," said Percy.

"It is my intention," said Uncle Rushton, "during my stay at Flowerdale, to give you, as often as I am able, some accounts of sights and scenes that I have witnessed, when in other lands and far away from home."

CHAPTER V.

THE KING MOUNTAIN.

"UNCLE," said Percy, who for the last quarter of an hour had been looking with much interest on the drawing of a mountain, which Mr. Rushton had given him, "I should like to climb up Mont Blanc: it looks easy enough. Did you get up it?"

"Yes," he replied; "like many others who have visited Switzerland, I was venturesome enough to do so; but I can assure you that it is not at all an easy thing to climb the mountain. Shall I tell you what you would have to do if you were to ascend the King Mountain?"

"If you please, uncle," said Percy; "but why is it called the King Mountain?"

"Because it is the highest mountain in Europe. Mont Blanc lifts his head very high, nearly three miles above the sea; and he wears a robe of white, for the snow never leaves his shoulders."

"What a fine sight it must be, uncle!"

"A fine sight, indeed," replied Mr. Rushton. "I went by railway to Folkestone, thence by

steamer to Boulogne; I then started by rail for Paris and Geneva, and made the best of my way to Chamouni."

"But how long would it take me if I were going," asked Percy; "and what would it cost?"

"That would depend much on your mode of travelling; but as you would like to do things handsomely, perhaps you would travel by first class, and lose no time, in which case you might get to the foot of Mont Blanc in about three days. Your travelling expenses would be about seven pounds. If you travelled by second class, of course they would be less."

"Seven pounds! That is a deal of money."

"But, then, remember the distance. As I suppose you would not always stop at Mont Blanc, it would cost you just as much to come back again."

"Oh, I forgot that," said Percy.

"But is Mont Blanc in Switzerland?" asked Mary; "Miss Grove said it was in Italy."

"Miss Grove is quite right; although tourists visit it from Switzerland, it stands in Savoy, which did belong to Italy, but was lately ceded to France. It is a range of mountains, the highest point being called Mont Blanc."

"To go from here to the top of the mountain, then," said Percy, "and come back again, would cost me fourteen pounds."

"Every penny, and a trifle more, as you will soon see, for I have only told you the travelling expenses. Your eating, drinking, and lodgings are yet to be paid for, unless you mean to do without them."

"Oh, I cannot do without them, that is certain."

"Then it is usual, when a party of people ascend the mountain, to engage six or eight guides, besides three or four carriers, who take with them provisions, utensils, ropes, a tent, a ladder, and other things. Perhaps your share of the expenses for these might be from twenty to thirty pounds."

"Twenty to thirty pounds!"

"Yes, and I think that I am letting you off tolerably easy. You cannot expect the guides to risk their lives without good wages."

"Please to say nothing more about the money," said Percy; "for I see that it will not do at all."

"You would have been amused to see how I was dressed for my ascent," continued Mr. Rushton. "I put on hob-nailed, double-soled shoes, worsted stockings, gaiters, a frock coat, and a cloth cap. I also put a crape veil into my pocket, ready for use when needed, and a small telescope, that I might look at things at a distance. Besides these, I had a small knapsack with a change of linen, and a great coat;

also a writing-case, paper, pens and ink, and soap."

"Did you carry your knapsack?" asked Percy.

"And what did you want a veil for? and why did you carry soap?" added Mary.

"Plenty of questions to answer!" said Mr. Rushton. "Well, well, you will be learning something if I answer them. The veil is needed to prevent your being blinded by the sun and the snow. Soap is not easily obtained in some places; and as for my knapsack, my guide took care of that. I bought an alpenstock, too, for a franc, which I found very useful indeed."

"What is an alpenstock, uncle?"

"An alpenstock is a stout pole of fir or ash, about six feet long, with an iron spike at one end. It serves as a staff and leaping-pole, and is a great support in descending the mountains.

"Well, then, being provided with guides, carriers, provisions, and warm clothing, with stout shoes on your feet, and a crape veil in your pocket ready to put on when you require it, and having a stout heart, I will suppose that you are beginning the ascent at about eight o'clock in the morning.

"On you proceed, taking the road of the Cascade of the Pilgrims, right through a forest of firs, to the Châlet of the Para, and onwards to the Pierre Pointue, a huge sharp-pointed

rock. Ravines and blocks of stone now render your path a rough one, and when you come to the Pierre à l'Echélle you must take care of yourself, as it will be necessary to use a ladder to cross the deep crevices. You may as well, too, bid farewell to the wild flowers which grow there, for you are not likely to see any others till you come down again."

"How high shall I be then?" asked Percy.

"About 4,000 feet above the town of Chamouni, and a glorious prospect you will have if the weather be fine. The Glaciers de Taconay, des Bossons, and others will be seen. The glaciers are mighty mountains of ice. Now it will be nothing all the rest of the way but ice or snow. As you proceed you will encounter icebergs without number, and yawning crevices: many of them so wide that the only way to pass them is to descend, when you come to one of them, to the bottom, and then cut steps on the other side."

"That will be hard work," said Richard.

"Oh, if you are at all afraid of hard work, you had better not attempt Mont Blanc. There are various crevices concealed under the snow, or by slippery arches of ice hanging over them; so have a care, for it is much easier to fall into one of them than to get out again.

"It takes full three hours to cross the Glacier des Bossons, though no more than half a mile wide. There is a dangerous crevice in the

Glacier de Taconay, which is very deep, though not very wide. A ladder is placed across it up against the opposite side, but it does not reach the top, so you must have a rope tied round you, and when the guides have got up by cutting steps for themselves, they will pull you up by the rope. You will next approach the foot of two rocks, called the Grand Mulets, and you will then be more than 10,000 feet high. On the border of one of these is a narrow platform, and here you must pitch your tent and pass the night. The sunset will be worth looking at. Snow-birds will now and then be heard to twitter, and white mice are sometimes seen in the crevices. Mind, when you go to sleep, that you do not fall off the narrow platform, or shelf, for you might hurt yourself."

"Might hurt yourself! I should be sure to be dashed to pieces," exclaimed Percy.

"Well, then, it will be better to be careful. The place at night will be still enough, except when the avalanches fall. These are mighty masses of snow and ice, and are fearful things. In the morning you must be on the march long before peep of day, for you have something to go through, I promise you, so put on your crape veil. First comes a valley of snow—the upper part of the Glacier de Taconay, and then, after three or four hours' toil, you will perhaps reach the Grand Plateau. By this time you will be

weary, and very thirsty, and breathe with difficulty, and feel inclined to be sick, and hardly be able to keep your eyes open through drowsiness."

"O uncle, uncle! weary, and thirsty, and short-breathed, and sick, and sleepy, all at once! How shall we get on any farther?"

"Let us hope that the guides will waken you up, in one way or another. It is the danger, the feverish excitement, and the lightness of the air at such a height, as well as the toil, that occasion such great thirst; a dried plum in the mouth is often a great relief. The Grand Plateau can only be crossed slowly, and in a zig-zag direction, on account of its steepness; nor can you take more than a dozen or fifteen steps without stopping for breath."

"I think I should want to go back again," said Mary.

"Very likely. The brilliant white snow, and the dark colour of the sky, will appear to you very striking; and then you must travel across many valleys in perfect silence, for the sound of a single voice might bring down a thundering avalanche on your head."

"Perhaps the Mur de la Côte, a very, very steep hill, about as high as St. Paul's Cathedral, is the most dangerous part of the whole ascent, for the guides are obliged to cut steps all the way, and one slip would be fatal. I should have told you that in some parts it is necessary

for the party to be tied with ropes one to another, travelling in a line like horses in a team. This is done, lest any one should fall into a crevice and be lost beyond recovery. The Grand Plateau is crossed in this way, so that the scene by moonlight is very singular. But now you must take courage, for, having got over the Mur de la Côte, you are within a thousand feet of the summit."

"That is right; I should be glad to stand once more on firm ground without fear of falling."

"Another hour of hard toil must be endured, and then you will set your foot on the very top of the King Mountain.

'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.'

"Now, then, having climbed the last snowy slope, you are at the top of Mont Blanc. Every one who ascends the King Mountain should bear in mind His great goodness who gave him strength to perform the labour. Come, you have time now to look about you. It happens to be a fine day, and the prospect is glorious to behold: vast, silent, and solemn, as well as beautiful, magnificent, and sublime. The plains of France and Lombardy, the mountains bordering the Lake of Geneva, the gloomy forests of lofty pine and larch, the snowy valleys, the

glittering glaciers, the slender needle-like spires, the sun-gilt peaks and cupolas, the foaming torrents, and pyramids of sea-green ice, altogether bewilder the eye and the brain of the spectator.

"I have no wish, however, that you should really ascend Mont Blanc; but I have a great wish that you should be climbers. Set your affections, then, on things which are above, and through His mercy and goodness, who is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life,' you will attain it, mounting up as with wings of eagles.'"

CHAPTER VI.

THE MOUNTAIN-LAND OF EUROPE.

"NOW for Switzerland!" exclaimed Richard, on the following evening, when the tea-things were removed and his uncle drew his chair towards the fire. "How did you get into Switzerland, when you went there?"

"Think a little," Mr. Rushton replied, "and you will see that I have already answered that question."

"O yes, uncle, I remember now; when you were showing Percy what he would have to do in order to climb Mont Blanc, you told him the quickest way to Geneva."

"Never ask any question without thinking first, Richard," said Mrs. Mayfield; "it will save you much trouble, and others much annoyance, if you endeavour always to think twice before you speak once."

"Well, well, my boy," said his uncle, "we will forgive you this time; we learn by experience. When you begin Cæsar's Commentaries, Richard, you will find that Geneva is called the

last fortress of the Allobroges, and nearest to the Helvetian (Swiss) frontier. I went from end to end of the city in a morning's ride, although it is the largest in Switzerland. The Emperor Paul ridiculed its smallness by saying that the disputes of its citizens were like 'a tempest in a tumbler of water.'"

"That was a good idea," said Richard.

"Geneva is noted for its jewellery, watches, and musical boxes, which are made by the French Swiss. Thither John Knox and other reformers fled in former times, and found a refuge from their persecutors; and there the great and good John Calvin lived and died. He was buried in the cemetery of the Plain Palais. But he forbade the Genevese to erect any tombstone. His grave is marked by the letters J. C. In the cathedral I saw the very canopy under which he used to preach."

"Are they not all Swiss who live in Switzerland?" asked Mary; "for you said the French Swiss made watches."

"Although the country is occupied by descendants of the Germans in the north, east, and centre, the French in the west, and Italians on the south, yet they are all called Swiss. But I must tell you that, in order to see as much of the country as possible, I set out for Italy by way of the Splugen Pass.

"Before leaving Geneva, I took a trip to

Lausanne, where Gibbon wrote his History of the Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire. I went into the hotel which stands on the very spot, and which the proprietor allows to be used as a Bible depository."

"Oh, that is nice," said Mary.

"Setting out for Italy, I proceeded by the lake, in a steam-boat, to Villeneuve, at the other end; thence up the valley of the Rhone to St. Maurice. From this place I took a char-a-banc for Martigny, and thence to Sion and Sierre."

"What is a char-a-banc, uncle?"

"It looks like a short omnibus, cut in two lengthways,—in fact, it is a kind of leather sofa, trundled along upon wheels. A little beyond Sierre I made for the pass of the Gemmi, and here my walking began in good earnest. At the foot of the pass are the baths of Leuk, which are higher than the highest mountains in Great Britain; and yet, high as we were, vast heights were above us and vast depths below us, deep ravines and torrents thundering down them, villages hanging to the mountain sides, green pasturages and winding paths, and, amid all, delicate and beautiful Alpine flowers."

"I should not have thought there were any flowers up so high," said Mary; "are they pretty ones?"

"Yes, my dear: they grow beneath the snow-bed; and, on the very edge of the glacier, gentians and lilies, hyacinths and blue-bells, mingle with the red rhododendron. In climbing the Alps tourists pass through all seasons. As Mr. Murray observes in his handbook:—'Leaving behind you fields where the corn has been cut, you come to some where it is still yellow and waving in the ear,—a few miles further on and you find it green, and then you come to spots where it will not grow at all. Then, again, you enter forests of pine, clothing the mountain side: and probably, above that, you may find haymakers at their work. Winged insects, too, are to be seen hovering over the flowers by the glaciers.'"

"O uncle!" said Mary; "how can they live there?"

"They last only for a short time, and then die away. Above these you get into the climate of Lapland and Siberia, and I can assure you that woollen stockings and gaiters, and a good great coat, are not to be despised then."

"I should think not," said Percy; "I should want to sit by a good fire, instead of climbing about among frost and snow."

"I can assure you," said Mr. Rushton, "that at the top of a pass over the Alps it is necessary to be very active, to keep the blood in

circulation at all. As we proceeded, we rose from point to point, gaining a wider view at every turn, scaling the face of crags where narrow galleries have been made like grooves in the sides of the mountain, with no barrier between us and the gulf below."

"Oh!" said Mary; "that would turn me giddy."

"It tried my nerves," her uncle replied. "So far were we now above the village and the baths of Leuk, that they looked no larger than children's toys. At length we reached the highest point of the pass, about 7,200 feet above the level of the sea.

"I should have told you that on our way we saw the watch-tower of a chamois-hunter. It was made to imitate a dead pine; and the hunter climbed into it by the stump. There he sat waiting till some poor chamois came within reach of his gun. I saw also the condor of the Alps, sailing above the highest peak, and a ptarmigan started from among the snows. Bears, too, are to be found in this country."

"I should be afraid to live there, then," said Mary. "Are there any places on the mountains where you can get anything to eat?" asked Percy.

"Yes, on some; for as we descended from the Gemmi Pass, we stayed for refreshment at

an inn built on the ruins of an avalanche; but it is necessary to take some provisions with you. We then passed down into the village of Kandersteg, and thence to Frutigen, where we remained for the night."

"What kind of houses are the Swiss?" asked Mary.

"The Swiss cottages are very pretty, especially as seen on the sides of the mountains peeping from among the trees. They have galleries round them, and projecting roofs, and green windows. Many of them have large stones placed on the roofs to preserve them from being blown away by the wind.

"The next place at which I stayed was Thun, on the river Aar, about a mile from the lake of that name. The Aar passes through this lake, as the Rhone does through that of Geneva.

"The view from the churchyard terrace of Thun is lovely indeed. Before you stretches the lake, about ten miles long, fringed with green gardens and mountain ranges, with the snowy summits and glaciers of the Jungfrau, Finster-aar-horn, Eigher, and Mönch filling the view at the extremity. I spent the Sabbath at Thun."

"Are the Swiss Protestants?" asked Richard.

"The majority are professedly so; but many

of the people have gone sadly away from the religion which Calvin, Zwingle, and others taught them.

"I crossed the lake of Thun in a steam-boat to Neuhaus—passed the Lutschine torrent—peeped at Lauterbrunnen, sunk between steep precipices—admired the fall of Staubbach, which in winter hangs in icicles half way down the precipice,—and, after a good night's rest, set out to cross the Wengern Alp.

"As we ascended we could look over vales and mountains. Before us rose the Jungfrau and other giants of the Bernese chain of mountains, and we could see and hear the avalanches roaring and thundering, and sending up their columns of dry, dusty snow."

"How high is the Jungfrau, uncle?" asked Mary.

"More than 13,000 feet above the sea. As I gazed on this mountain, the idea of a mass of ice, large enough to bury a whole village, being shot down from such a height into the valley below, with only one or two interruptions, filled me with awe; and I thought of the power of Him who weigheth the mountains in scales, and at whose presence they shall flee away. The tourist, however, does not see this kind of avalanche. He only sees glaciers, which, every day in summer, may be heard breaking with the noise of thunder, and appearing, when they

meet the traveller's eye, like a stream of snow winding down a mountain side, till at the bottom it curls into folds like the twisting of a silver snake!"

"What are glaciers, then?" asked Percy.

"They are masses or fields of ice, formed by the partial melting and freezing again of the snow. The warmth of the sun or wind loosens them, and away they slide and roll down the mountains.

"On the highest part of the pass we had some strawberries and cream; and the boy of whom we purchased them had a small cannon, which he fired, to bring down the avalanches for his patrons.

"On our way down we visited the glaciers of Grindelwald, where we saw a small lake of water, which, like a looking-glass, reflects the mountains above it. But I shall tire you."

"O no, uncle," said Percy; "I am not tired."

"Nor I," said Mary; "I am not tired;" while Richard said he could "sit all night and hear his uncle's account of Switzerland."

"Well," continued Mr. Rushton, "I ascended the Grand Scheideck, with the Peak of Tempests (Wetterhorn) overhanging my path. On the slope in front of the Wetterhorn was a person who blew the Alpine horn,

and its few simple notes echoed and re-echoed as if there had been a concert among the crags."

"What sort of a horn is it?" asked Percy.

"It is a simple tube of wood, five or six feet in length, wound round with bark—the vesper call of the Alpine cowherd. As soon as the sun has set, the cowherd, posted on the highest peak, pours forth the first four or five notes of the psalm, 'Praise God the Lord,' and these notes are echoed and repeated from Alp to Alp, while all within hearing uncover their heads and bend their knees, and say their evening prayer; after which they pen their cattle in stalls, and the shepherds go to rest."

"That seems very good of them, uncle," said Mary.

"If it be done in sincerity," said Mr. Rushton, "and the prayer be the prayer of faith, offered through Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and men."

"I peeped at the baths of Rosenlaui, a few yards behind which the torrent of the Reichenbach issues out of a cleft in the rock. So down we went, by the side of this plunging, foaming torrent, and came suddenly upon a shelving precipice, far beneath which is the vale of Meyringen, with its village and meadows, church steeples and clumps of trees, and the Alpnach Cascade pouring over the crags on the other

side. But even here we were 2,000 feet above the vale.

"It is near this spot that the stream of the Reichenbach takes its grand leap, forming the celebrated falls, looking like so many rockets fired off downwards; then it races onward, foaming and thundering over precipices and their dark ravines to join the river Aar."

"I should like to see the Reichenbach Falls," said Percy.

"I have no doubt you would, my boy; but you must be content for the present to hear of them.

"Passing through the valley of the Upper Hasli, we wandered among rough, broken mountains, with craggy gorges, through which the river Aar runs furiously, and in four or five hours came upon the falls of the Aar, tumbling down some 200 feet."

"How grand they must look, uncle!"

"I saw the Hospice of the Grimsel, and paid a hasty visit to the Aar glacier, out of which rises the peak of Finster-aar-horn. Some distance farther on, far below me, I had a view of the glacier of the Rhone, with the Rhone itself issuing from the ice—leaping, dashing, thundering, foaming; and I imagined I could see it sometimes flooding valleys like a sea, then joined by numerous rivers, and pouring its dark muddy waters into the Lake of Geneva, coming

out at the other end into France as clear as crystal, then flowing onward till it reaches the Mediterranean Sea."

"Oh, now," said Percy, "I see how the Rhone begins."

"Yes, my boy; and a great many well-known rivers begin in the same way. By a climb we reached the top of the Furca Pass, where is what may be called the upper glacier of the Rhone, the water from which flows onward till it joins the lower one.

"We now rapidly descended over fields of ice and snow into the valley of the Sidli Alp, and I went sliding away, sitting on my alpenstock like a schoolboy."

"How we should have enjoyed seeing you, uncle!" exclaimed the young people, laughing heartily. "But were you not afraid of going too fast?"

"If I felt myself going too fast, I leaned back upon it and stuck it into the ice. On this pass we were not far from the sources of the Rhine, the Rhone, the Reuss, the Ticino, and the Aar. Up to this time we had been following the course of the Rhone and the Aar. We now went by that of the Reuss, and descended into the valley of Urseren, where there were no trees, but which was covered with green pastures. Urseren is a dairy-keeping, cattle-rearing, cheese-making village.

"We passed through the tunnel of Urnelock, 180 feet long, hewn out of the solid rock; and over what is called the Devil's Bridge, which spans the torrent of the Reuss at the height of 125 feet.

"At length we reached Altdorf, renowned as the place where William Tell shot the apple from his child's head; and there we saw the stone fountain which marks the spot. A short walk brought us to Fluellen, at which place we embarked on the lake for Lucerne, where the Reuss issues from the lake.

"Before leaving for Italy, we ascended to the top of Righi, and saw the clear sunrise tinging the mountain tops (a treat which few enjoy), with a panorama of lands and lakes,—but you must read an account of it, written by some tourist, to be able to form an idea of what it is."

"I shall get mamma to let us have a book from the library," said Richard.

"After this we left Lucerne for Italy, passing through Schwytz, whose inhabitants' bravery, at the Battle of Morgarten, has given the name of Schwytzerland, or Switzerland, to the country."

"Thank you, uncle," said Percy; "I did not know that before."

"Thence we went through Einsiedeln, where large numbers of images of the Virgin Mary

were offered for sale; and to Zurich, where Coverdale's old Bible was first printed, in 1535. I wished that the people of the former place might soon be led to give up their superstitions, and worship and serve God alone, and that the Bible might be read by them all. Zurich had many things which pleased me, but the most interesting was Zwingle's own old Bible, with his notes in the margin, and two or three letters from Lady Jane Grey, in her own handwriting."

"I should have been pleased with them," said Percy.

"We left Zurich for the Splugen Pass," continued Uncle Rushton; "and, stopping at Ragatz on the way, peeped at the baths of Pfeffers, in a narrow ravine where the light of day is almost shut out, and a wild mountain stream boils along at the bottom. On reaching Thusis we entered the pass of the Splugen, four or five miles of which is called Via Mala. Here begins some of the most gloomy and sublime scenery in all Switzerland, formed by rocks hanging overhead, while the Rhine rolls in the deep ravine at the bottom. Wonderful views are obtained from the bridges which cross the gulf. The middle bridge is 400 feet above the stream, yet in the year 1834 the river rose to within a few feet of the spring of the arch. The road is a shelf cut along the side of the

rock, and what I saw and felt I cannot well describe.

"Having breakfasted at Splugen, we reached the top of the pass, 6,814 feet high, near the boundary of the Austrian territory.

"As we descended to Italy, we had many noble views, and after crossing the magnificent waterfall of Madesimo we reached Campo Dolcino, a dirty hamlet with a beautiful name; from thence we hastened to Chiavenna, passing large fragments of rock over which majestic chestnuts have grown, the green foliage and brown rock forming a delightful harmony of colours.

"From Chiavenna we went by a diligence to Colico, on the Lake of Como; but I will tell you of my trip on the lake the next time we meet.

"I think now I have proved Switzerland to be a land of mountains, torrents, rivers, and valleys. I have climbed the wondrous Gemmi, and in face of the Jungfrau marched across the sublime pass of the Wengern Alp, by the thunder of the avalanches; I have gone over the Grand Scheideck, the gloomy, terrible Grimsel, the pass of the Furca, the sky-gazing Righi, the Wallenstadt passes, and last of all, though not least, the pass of the Splugen. I have also been upon the Lakes of Geneva, Thun, Lucerne, Wallenstadt, and Zurich. I

have seen the Rhone, the Aar, and the Rhine in their infancy, and followed them to their full growth."

"Yes, uncle; and I think I now could find my way from Geneva to Italy."

"I am glad to hear it."

CHAPTER VII.

THE LAKE OF COMO.

IT was Mary's birthday. There was therefore a party at Flowerdale. After tea, and when the young people were gathered together for the evening's amusement, Percy drew from the table drawer a small packet, and, untying it, showed a little book in a bright red cover. It was his own present, bought at a great price, if we think of the extent of his purse, for his dear sister. The book was called "A Comparative View of the Lakes of the World." It was a map of the lakes, painted in the brightest tints, with a short printed account of their position, shape, and size.

The children crowded round to look and admire. It was agreed on all hands that it was a beautiful book; and Mary was very much pleased, and said she loved her brother more than ever. "Look," said she, pointing to the spot; "there is the Lake of Como, which uncle told us he went to see last summer;" and then, looking up, she caught her uncle's eye.

"Oh, do tell us about your visit to Como, uncle!"

Mr. Rushton cheerfully agreed to her request; and soon every eye was fixed upon him. "I am sure," said he, "you will all first join with me in wishing that Mary may see many happy returns of the day, and that she may grow wiser and better every year of her life."

This having been done with a hearty good will by all present, Mr. Rushton proceeded: "Now for the Lake of Como.

"It was, I assure you, very agreeable—after wandering among steep rocks, high hills, chasms, and roaring cascades—to see once more hills and woods, villages, and calm flowing waters. Having a day or two to spare, we determined to make a few sailing trips upon the waters of the lake, rather than cross it in the steamers which run to and fro."

"But was not that rather dangerous, uncle?" inquired Mary, who could not help peeping into her little book. "It says here that the 'Lake of Como is subject to sudden squalls, and sometimes to swells sudden and unexpected.'"

"I believe that this is true as regards that part of the lake which is near the city of Como. However, we met with no accident, but spent some pleasant days in running into various bays, and landing at different beautiful

spots. One day, in order to take a general view of the scenery, we hired a boatman to row us about for a few hours. The mountains that border the lake are from 2,000 to 3,000 feet high; the lake is forty miles long, and in some places four miles broad; the lower parts of the mountains are covered with olives, vines, and orchards; around the middle of them were chestnut groves, and the upper parts were covered with green grass or forests of pine and fir, except the very high peaks, which were naked or covered with snow. Then there were towns, fields, and villages on their sides, and in the valleys; and in the openings, as we went along, we saw the mountains of Switzerland covered with snow. In fact, the scenery was altogether charming: the clouds, rocks, and trees were reflected on the bosom of the lake, and nothing broke the deep silence but the splashing of the oar.

"It was the time of grape-gathering when we were there. Children and their parents were—

'among the vines;
Some on the ladder, and some underneath,
Filling their baskets of green wickerwork.'

"Sometimes the gatherer, out of pity to the weary traveller, will present him with a bunch. A gentleman says, that once, when he was wearied with rambling through one of the vineyards, a woman sent her little boy to him

with a bunch of grapes larger than he had ever seen before—and you need not be told that the present proved very acceptable and refreshing."

"I should like to have had such a treat, uncle," said Percy: "the grapes must be delicious, especially in hot weather."

"Now for a description of our sailings. There are numbers of villas or mansions of noble and wealthy families on the banks of the lake. Having peeped in at one pretty village, we sailed on to another, where there is a fine mansion, built nearly three hundred years ago. At this place is a curious spring, which is described by Pliny in his Natural History, written hundreds of years ago. This spring ebbs and flows three times in every twenty-four hours: and Pliny says, that if you were to sit down and take a little repast by it, you might see it gradually rise and fall."

"Who was Pliny, uncle?" inquired Mary.

"A Roman naturalist, who perished by going too near Vesuvius, during the eruption in A.D. 79. When Percy begins to read Latin, he will be able to tell you something about him."

"That I will," exclaimed Percy; "and I will read about this spring to Mary."

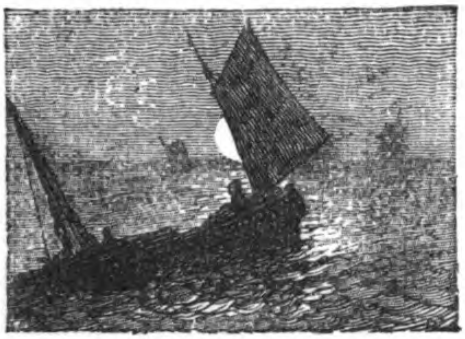
"We passed some fine waterfalls, villas, and groves, and at length came to a spot where we had the most beautiful view of all: the waters

seemed to wind up to the very foot of the Alps.

Not far from this we came to a beautiful villa, with terraces, gardens, and statues, supposed to be the site of one of Pliny's favourite mansions. Close by is an island which is said to have been the refuge of some early Christians who were driven from their homes by persecution. They were so many that they formed a town, and called it *Christopolis* (the Christian city). Often did the voice of prayer and praise ascend from the midst of those green hills and glittering waterfalls, to Him who is a present help in every time of need; and the book of God was frequently read in those shady groves. May the time soon come when the present inhabitants shall each have the precious volume, and read it for himself!

"We now returned towards Como, visiting Varena, and rambling awhile among its vines, olives, lemon, and orange trees, and peeping at the marble palace of the dukes of Alvito; we at length reached Como, the city where Pliny the younger was born; he is said to have founded a school there. We saw the cathedral, in front of which is an inscription referring to his writings. The outside of this cathedral is cased with white marble. We also visited the silk and woollen manufactories, and left the city with the prayer that the people, who now bow

before images of the Virgin Mary, and seek pardon and peace through their own good works, may worship God in spirit and in truth, and seek to be justified by faith, and thus have peace with God through Jesus Christ alone. 'For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.'"



CHAPTER VIII.

AN EXCURSION THROUGH ITALY.

"I HAVE a pleasure in store for you, children," said Miss Grove, the next morning, when lessons were finished. "Your uncle proposes that we should all go and spend a day in the park; and see the gardens, the lake, and many other things."

"Oh, delightful!" said Percy. "But when are we to go, Miss Grove?"

"To-morrow is the day fixed."

A group of happy faces gathered round the breakfast table at Flowerdale on the following morning. The carriage came to the door, various little packages of refreshments were put in, and the cheerful party were soon on their way to the park. The ride lay through a very pleasant part of the country, and the scenery was truly delightful.

"Now, children," said their uncle, when they had entered the park grounds; "with this warm sun, the beautiful blue sky, the lake, the gardens, fruit trees, flowers, and forest, the hills and the valleys, and with the white house

peeping from the midst of them, we have a miniature Italy."

"Yes, sir," said Miss Grove; "but not the reality."

"No, indeed, Miss Grove; this scene, delightful as it is, falls far short of that which Italy presents."

"I do not know what Italy must be, then," said Percy, "if this is not as good." "Nor I," added Mary; "I thought there could be nothing so beautiful as this park and grounds."

"Italy, my child, has been called the home of beauty; and so it is. It is girded by the blue waves of the Mediterranean and Adriatic seas, and screened from the cold of the north by the lofty Alps, with their dark forests and icy peaks. Added to this, there are the ever-soft blue sky, the clear and mild atmosphere, and limpid streams brawling among the hills or lying in pools and crystal lakes in the valleys. Then there are vines, olive trees, myrtles, and aloes, from which the white villa, the trellised cottage, the ancient palace or old tower, and the ruins of bygone days, peep out."

The young people clapped their hands at this general description of Italy, and Mary declared that it was "positively charming;" while Richard hoped that, another summer, he should go with his uncle and walk beneath its s unny skies and gaze upon its scenery.

"I have often wished," continued Mr. Rushton, "that I could say as much for the religion of Italy. But, alas! in this respect it has been a land of darkness; the sunshine of true religion and the beauty of holiness are seldom to be seen there; I am happy to say, however, that the Bible is now finding its way among the people, and that a great and delightful change is taking place. May the Sun of righteousness bless every part of that land with heavenly light! But I must take you on a rapid excursion through Italy.

"Descending from the Alps, we have before us one of the largest and most beautiful lakes of Italy—the Lago Maggiore; it is everywhere fringed with trees and shrubs, with here and there crags, cottages, grey towers, villages, and churches, peeping from their midst. We pass a group of lovely isles, with their palaces and statues; and, at the upper end of the lake, behold the small town of Locarno, celebrated only for the persecution of the Protestants who dwelt there some three hundred years ago. Thence we proceed to the village of Arona, where we spend the night.

"In the morning, we find ourselves travelling the plains of Lombardy. On every side are farms and villages—the scenery is agreeable, not grand nor beautiful. But yonder is the almost circular city of Milan, standing 'in a

sea of green trees.' We pass under its lofty arches, saunter about the city, and look at its splendid cathedral. In an underground chapel is burning a light, and in a silver coffin adorned with gems and gold are the remains of Cardinal Borromeo. Here, morning, noon, and night, you may see some poor devotee kneeling, imploring in vain the intercession of the saint."

"Do they pray to saints in Italy, uncle?" inquired Percy.

"Yes, my boy: sad to say, they do. May the time soon come when the people shall seek peace and salvation through Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and men.

"But we must get on to Venice. On our way we pass through many interesting places—Brescia, Mantua, Cremona, etc.—and arriving at the river Adige, take the boat, and speedily find ourselves among the strange buildings and gay boats of that singular city. We have but time to glance at the old palaces, towers, and churches, and at the long ranges of streets,—threaded by canals, on which the dark gondolas, laden with provisions, fruits, and flowers from the country, are seen gliding to and fro. Yonder are the Palace of the Doge, the Giant's Stairs, and the Bridge of Sighs, over which criminals pass to death. I should like to have told you something about the great men who dwelt here, but we must pass on.

"Ferrara is a place of much interest to the lovers of old ruins; but we cannot stay, and must hasten on to Florence, merely glancing at Bologna, famous for its leaning towers, its ancient university, rich paintings, and learned professors. Still onward we go. Scattered cottages richly adorned with trees and vines, groups of peasants in their curious dresses, orchards and gardens on the hill-sides, and in their plains; flowers and clumps of trees hanging over fountains, or dipping in the streams of the valleys; goats clambering the rough heights; the shout of shepherds, and the glad children at play in the villages, with the bright sun overhead, all add a charm to the journey.

"Now we reach the top of the mountain ridge which encircles the city of Florence. This 'City of Flowers,' as its name imports, has always been a favourite with travellers; but we must not stay here, but enter the 'States of the Church,' as they were once called. The appearance of the country is very different from the plains of Lombardy. Before us is the Campagna, the dreariest and sickliest region in Europe. It encircles Rome, and is a sad emblem of the fruitless and withered condition of the Romish church.

"Passing the Porto del Popolo, and thence into the Piazza del Popolo, we find ourselves in the centre of Rome—once the mistress of the world.

'Ah, little thought I, when in school I sat,
A schoolboy on his bench, at early dawn,
Glowing with Roman story, I should live'

to tread the Appian Way, or climb the Palatine Hill, gaze upon the Pantheon, and catch a glimpse of the Tiber, the Castle of St. Angelo, and the dome of St. Peter's; but I have seen them all.

"Gliding along the coast of the Mediterranean, after a pleasant sail from Civita Vecchia, we enter the Bay of Naples, alive with boats, barges, and steamers. Upon its margin lies the city of Naples, with its palaces and castles, its stuccoed houses and magnificent churches.

"We took a drive to Sorrento. Every turn in the road revealed some fresh beauty. There was Vesuvius, with the white houses of Torre del Greco at its base: below us was the blue sea; opposite, Naples: and in the distance the island of Ischia. Before us were the straggling houses of Vico and Sorrento, peeping from amidst the richest vegetation. Every rock and cranny gleam with fruits and flowers. Vines, olives, figs, and orange trees, with golden fruit and silver blossoms, adorn our path; and the view from Sorrento is truly delightful. But we must return to Naples."

"Thank you, uncle! thank you!" exclaimed the young folks. "We have had two pleasant excursions to-day: one to the park; and one through Italy."

CHAPTER IX.

THE TWO LETTERS ABOUT NAPLES, VESUVIUS, AND THE LONG-BURIED CITIES.

A DAY or two after, the postman brought an envelope directed to Mrs. Mayfield. "A letter from father! a letter from dear father!" cried Percy.

My readers may think it strange that I have not mentioned Mr., or Captain, Mayfield before; but, as he was on the Continent, I thought it better that the postman's knock should be the means of his introduction.

"There are three letters," said Mrs. Mayfield; "'two for the children,' and one for myself. But as your lessons cannot be put aside, even for a letter from father, I will just read mine, and the other two we will have for a treat this evening."

"That will be very nice," said Mary, "because uncle said he should not be able to tell us much more for perhaps a week, as he was going to spend a day or two with grandmother."

As Mrs. Mayfield sat reading her letter the young people closely watched her countenance. Presently they observed a smile, and how pleased she looked. At last, Percy, who could

not keep silent any longer, exclaimed, "Mother, it is good news, I am sure: is it not?"

"Yes, my children, it is indeed. Your father is very well, and, best of all, he returns home next week."

"That *is* good news," said Richard.

"Indeed it is," said Mary; "for although I like to *hear* father's letters about what he has seen, I like much better to have him here to talk to us about his travels."

"I have no doubt of that, at all," observed Mrs. Mayfield; "meanwhile it is very gratifying to be able to read letters from your kind father. Now to your lessons. By-and-by we will hear what dear father has to say to you."

* * * * *

After tea, all studies having been finished, Mrs. Mayfield produced the two letters, handing one of them to Mary, and the other to Richard. Richard read the first, as follows:—

"My dear children,—This letter will reach you from the far-famed city of Naples. Since I saw you last, I have once more passed through a considerable part of Italy—the land of the vine, the orange, and the olive. The sunshine has been on my path, and the sight of hill and valley, lake and rivulet, has cheered me on the way. What glorious scenes I have beheld!

'The lofty crags, by toppling convent crowned,
The cork-trees hoar that clothe the shaggy steep,
The mountain moss by scorching skies embrowned,
The sunken glen, where sunless shrubs must weep,
The tender azure of the unruffled deep,
The orange tints that gild the greenest bough,
The torrents that from hill to valley leap,
The vine on high, the willow branch below,
Mixed in one mighty scene, with varied beauty glow.'

"From the window of my hotel I look upon a noble bay. On a gentle slope stands the city of Naples, and around is a range of hills, with the great burning mountain in the distance. There are the old and the new city; the first has its walls, ditches, and towers; while the latter is an open town. The streets are crowded with people; and carriages, from early morning till the dawn of the next day, are seen passing to and fro. Noisy as London is known to be, Naples is said to be the noisiest city in Europe. The sellers of goods in the streets shout at the top of their voices, and those who buy and wish to be heard must call aloud too.

"Naples—or Neapolis, in the Greek language—means 'new city,' though the time when it was built is so far back as to be unknown. Its mansions and palaces are very fine. They are mostly adorned with valuable paintings. A palace faces the sea, and has a handsome terrace, paved with marble, and shaded with orange and other trees. A pier runs into the sea, from which we get a

delightful view. When walking along this place in the evening, I saw 'Punch' exhibited; only, as you might suppose, he here spoke in the Italian tongue.

"Just before I visited this city on a former occasion, Mount Vesuvius had broken out, and a great eruption had taken place. As I was longing to see this famous volcano, I hired a coach, and was driven on the road which leads to it. On the way there, I saw crowds of people, some in carriages, and others on foot, all hastening to the spot. For a long distance stalls lined the road, where you might buy, if you had a taste for such things, dried peas and beans, melon seeds and black dried olives, and cheap pastry. Then you were saluted with the cries, in Italian, 'Fresh water, signore;' 'Fine oranges;' 'Who wants a guide?' 'Who needs a torch-bearer for the night?' and other sounds from the boys and men who get their living chiefly on this road.

"As I got nigh the great crater, I had to leave the carriage and slowly move up the steep. Soon the ground on which I trod became so hot that I could not stand long on one spot. I pushed my stick an inch below the surface, and it took fire. A few pieces of paper which I pushed into the cracked ground were soon lighted and burnt.

"As there had been no flame for two days,

it was thought the eruption was at an end. The air was balmy as the night drew on, and as I climbed higher all was calm and quiet around me; but on a sudden the earth shook and trembled. Shock came upon shock—there was a rumbling noise like as of distant thunder; then it seemed as if cannon were roaring at my feet. Black clouds of smoke rose aloft, followed by a discharge of ashes; and then the lava, or burning stones and other matter, flowed like a golden river down the sides of the mountain. And still it rose and rolled, as the rising tide rolls over the sands on the sea-shore. The air was almost too hot to breathe, and the strong smell of sulphur seemed as if it would choke me.

"I mounted a ridge of cinders, that I might look over the mouth of the volcano and see more fully the river of fire as it rushed down the sides. But in a short time I felt the ground to be so hot, and my feet were so sore, that I could scarcely stand. The soles of my boots were nearly burnt off, and the leather was shrivelled and cracked. I felt almost overcome with the heat, and had not the arm of my guide upheld me I should have fallen to the earth. I then tried to get to another and a safer point, when I sunk almost to my knees in loose, small cinders; but here I saw several smaller craters, or mouths.

Some fizzed and smoked, others threw out stones with great force and to a lofty height, while the chief one cast forth a long, fiery stream. The noise was like many mighty forges at work, or like the sounds of the cannon as they are heard on the battle-field.

"But you are ready to ask, Were you not in great danger? Why, yes; I was, perhaps, rather too bold. I have been since told of a party of gentlemen and ladies who, while standing looking at the scene, were startled by the cracking noise of the earth opening at their feet, giving them scarcely time to escape, before clouds of smoke and bursts of flame were seen on the spot.

"It was about one o'clock in the morning when I began to descend. The voice of my guide was heard, and he was soon by my side with the torch, which I did not however much need, as the moon had risen in all its brightness, adding to the grandeur of the scene. When I got farther down I mounted a mule, which was left to its own guidance, and in due time I reached the foot of the mountain, when I again entered the carriage and returned to the city.

"This volcano has been famous for many ages. The first eruption of which we have any record occurred in the year of our Lord 79, when the two noble cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum were destroyed, of which I shall

tell you something in another letter. Since then there have been many outbreaks from this burning mountain, attended with great loss of life and property.

"After my bold journey, I have to thank my gracious God that I am still in safety. But, as I call to mind what I have seen, I am led to think of that great day when the heavens themselves shall be dissolved with a great heat, and the world shall be burned with fire. 'Day of judgment! day of wonders!' We are told, that when Vesuvius has at times cast out its flames the people in the villages have fled into the city of Naples; but in *that day* there will be no refuge to which the wicked can flee. They will in vain call on the rocks to be a refuge for them. If, then, we would die safe, let us now flee to Christ, and through faith in Him as our Saviour, and living to His glory on earth, we shall not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

"I do like to hear father's letters," said Percy; "they are so interesting. Now, Mary, for the other."

"One moment," interposed Mrs. Mayfield; "let us not forget how your father closes his letter: 'if we would die safe, let us now flee to Christ.' I know he is very anxious that at the great day his children may be found on

the right hand of the Judge. Do not disappoint his hopes, but look to Jesus now; love and serve Him, and He will bless you."

As their mother made these remarks, the young people looked very serious, and tears stood in Mary's eyes.

"I hope I shall be with father in heaven," said she.

"Let us, then," said Mrs. Mayfield, "ask God for His Holy Spirit to fit us for that happy place. Now, Mary, proceed."

Mary wiped her eyes, and read—

"My dear children,—As before, so now, my letter is dated from Naples. Yesterday I made an excursion hence to the buried cities (or perhaps I ought now to call them unburied cities) of Herculaneum and Pompeii. I told you in my last, that, in the year 79, an eruption of Mount Vesuvius destroyed these places; and I remember, when a boy, how interested I was in reading Pliny's account of that dreadful event, and of his uncle's death on the occasion. Little, however, did I then think that I should ever wander about the silent and deserted streets of those buried cities, or view the works of art which have been so many hundred years hidden beneath ashes and lava. Yet so it is: and I can scarcely tell how I felt yesterday as I trod the pavements of those cities of the dead. They seemed, however, to warn

me, 'Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.' But to tell you of my excursion.

"The sun shone out very brightly upon peaceful-looking, but treacherous Vesuvius, as we rode along at its base; but the smoke of its fires, which have been burning for hundreds of years, were curling round its top, as a warning of what it was ready at any time to do. An exciting ride of five miles brought us to the bustling towns of Portici and Resina, which are built on the lava which covers Herculaneum. An entrance was formed from the road at Resina in 1750; so that, stepping out from a dirty, thronged, and busy street, we descended by a narrow passage cut through the solid lava, into the solitude and silence of Herculaneum, some seventy feet below. Our guide, with a torch, led the way, while we followed, each with a torch in hand, and presently found ourselves standing in a large amphitheatre. This was a place where Roman games were held, and where gladiators fought with wild beasts for their lives. All the parts of this building remained just as they were when the city was buried. It was easy to see where the lava, or the flood of ashes, converted into mud by the steam and heated water from the mountain, had poured into the windows, filling the entire building. A few hundred

yards nearer the mountain, a small portion of the ancient town has been opened to the light of day. Here we saw an ancient villa, and walked upon its terrace, which once stood on the sea shore, but is now some distance from it, in consequence of the changes which the repeated eruptions of Vesuvius have brought about. The villa was surrounded by a garden, the floors were ornamented with beautiful mosaics, and the halls contained a variety of busts and statues. There was also an apartment which had been used as a library, and fitted up with wooden presses around the walls and a double row in the middle. The wood was all burned to a cinder, and gave way at the first touch; and the books were like charcoal. Very little, however, of Herculaneum has been restored, on account of the ground above being crowded with houses, so that only a short time was required to see it; and we spent the remainder of the day at Pompeii, a few miles further on.

"Pompeii was only buried under loose ashes and stone; and hence it was not so difficult to dig out as Herculaneum was. Here we first visited the amphitheatre, which seemed almost as perfect as when it was thronged by a multitude eager to witness those cruel sights which had called them together. From this extreme corner of the city we entered that portion of it

which has been completely dug out, and spent several hours in wandering through the streets, looking into its houses, walking about its temples, and examining its frescoes and mosaics.

"What interested me most in Pompeii was the insight it gave me into what may be called the home life of the Romans. Almost everything connected with that life was found exactly as it was left while the city was in a state of high prosperity. In the Museo Borbonico at Naples, whither the various treasures found in the buried cities were taken for safe keeping, may be seen the cooking department of a Pompeian house, with the eatables as they stood upon the table; the loaves of bread as they were taken from the oven, with the baker's name upon them; the olives, still preserved fresh and eatable; fruits and nuts for dessert, still untouched; and a large variety of preparations for a feast. Here also may be seen linen and fishing nets; bracelets and jewels of various kinds; surgical instruments, many exactly such as are now in use; writing materials, lamps as they were put out when Pompeii was buried, thimbles, distaffs, and spinning-wheels —in short, the whole catalogue of household life. As I looked upon all these things I could have wished that it had been safe to have left some of the houses with the various articles in them as they were found.

I was told that in the temple of Isis there was found in 1765 the skeleton of a priest with a bag of money in his hand: either his covetousness, or carefulness in remaining to secure the treasures of the temple, had caused his destruction.

"After walking through many streets, some of which retained their ancient names, the shops of which were marked by signs, containing, when found, the names of the owners, and figures showing their business; and having wearied ourselves out, without in any measure wearing out the interest of the place, we passed out by the street of the tombs and the villa of Diomede, the most ornamental building in the city. This villa had very large cellars, in which the skeletons of seventeen persons were discovered; probably they had fled hither for protection from the storm of falling stones and ashes. Gold necklaces, bracelets, and other ornaments were found upon them. Two of these were skeletons of children. We saw the spot where they were found leaning against the wall. The probable owner of the villa was discovered near his garden-gate with a purse of gold and silver coin in his hand and other valuables, with an attendant grasping a key by his side.

"I was informed that a sentinel was found at the city gate—a skeleton with his armour

on, malefactors in the public stocks, and prisoners in their dungeons. One individual, too, perished on this occasion, the mention of whose name excites in the Christian's heart feelings of the deepest interest—the Jewess Drusilla, who sat with Felix and heard Paul as he spake 'concerning the faith in Christ,' and 'reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.' She saw Felix tremble, and she joined with him in putting off the things of eternity to a 'convenient season;' but I fear the eruption which buried her with the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii found her unprepared.

"I left the buried cities with many serious thoughts. I thought of the sentinel on the watch, and the malefactor in prison; the families which were feasting, and Drusilla unprepared. Many escaped with their lives; but an hour will arrive when sudden destruction will come, and none will escape; and I thought I should like to raise a monument in the streets of the unburied cities, with this inscription—'Flee from the wrath to come.'

"My dear children, pray to God to assist you by His Holy Spirit to prepare for the judgment to come. 'Behold, now is the day of salvation.' May you be found in that day like the sentinel—on the watch."

In the course of the following week Captain

Mayfield returned from the Continent, to the great joy of the inmates of the cottage at Flowerdale. Many a pleasant hour was afterwards spent by the father and uncle, in describing to the young people some of the sights and scenes they had seen in other lands.

CHAPTER X.

THE ROCK IN THE SEA.

"IT is your turn to tell us something this evening," said Percy, fixing his eyes on his uncle as he entered the room.

"My turn!" said Mr. Rushton, playfully. "Well, I suppose we must give your father time to rest. But he must promise to tell us something about Iceland to-morrow evening." Captain Mayfield agreed to do so.

"I was much gratified by my visit to the Rock in the Sea," said Mr. Rushton; "especially since, on my way thither, I had been reading about Mr. Cranfield, or, as he was called, Corporal Cranfield.

"I thought much about the wicked corporal when I was at Gibraltar. I imagined that I could see that daring man seated on the edge of a rock, fishing within reach of the enemy's artillery. And I could not refrain from silently adoring the providence of God in shielding his head from the shot of the Spaniards who fired at him, and thus preserving the life of

one who afterwards became 'The Useful Christian.'" *

"I will save my money to buy one," said Mary; "for I am sure I shall like it after what uncle has told us."

"I shall be very glad to give you a short account of my visit. The first view I had of the rock of Gibraltar was from the sea; and it was very imposing, as the restless waters dashed against its base, and rolled into its gaping caverns. As I looked up at this rocky pyramid, I thought, 'Here is a natural monument of former events;' and, as the foaming waves rushed into the dark caverns, I seemed to hear the echo of the guns which roared around it so many years ago."

"It must be a very strong place, to have stood such a siege as Mary read about in her history the other day," said Percy.

"It is well defended. The whole rock is lined with batteries, from the land side to Europa Point; and here vessels are able to unload and cast their anchors in security. You will understand that the rock is surrounded on three sides by the sea, and is connected with the mainland of Spain by a narrow isthmus of low sand, several miles in length. It

* We advise those of our young friends who have not read the "Life of Cranfield" to buy it, if they are able, or if not, to borrow it from the Sunday School Library.

is about seven miles round, and forms a promontory of about three miles in length; but it is nowhere more than three-quarters of a mile broad. The most elevated point is called the Sugar Loaf. On the steep eastern side several winding passages, defended by batteries, are constructed along the face of the mountain leading to the Mediterranean Stairs —a long flight of steps cut in the rock, by which you may reach the top. The view from the top is very fine. The eye wanders over the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, Seville and Granada in Spain, and the coast of Africa."

"Why, uncle," exclaimed Mary, "I did not think you could see Africa from Europe."

"So it is, however; and, when you have studied your geography a little more, you will find that there is another promontory opposite this rock, on the African coast, called Ceuta, and that these two promontories the ancients knew by the name of 'the Pillars of Hercules.'

"The waters that flow between these two promontories are called 'the Straits of Gibraltar.' While there, I saw the ruins of a castle which the Saracens erected in the eighth century. They came, under their leader Tarif, with the intention of dethroning the King of Spain. They called the rock Gebel-al-Tarif, whence it is said to derive its present name. In 1704 the rock was taken by the British.

Several times the Spaniards attempted to retake it, but in vain. The most memorable siege was that in which Corporal Cranfield was engaged in its defence."

"Then Gibraltar has belonged to the British more than 150 years," said Percy.

"Exactly so. The rock consists chiefly of a grey compact marble; it abounds in caves, the most remarkable of which is the cave of St. Michael. The entrance to it is 1,000 feet above the level of the sea. From hence you can see the magazines, and batteries, and the new town, and a number of country houses with beautiful gardens."

"Did you go into the cavern, uncle?"

"I did; and having advanced about 100 yards, I found myself in a spacious hall, supported, apparently, by pillars of stalactites.* There is a succession of caverns, one below another, but the unhealthy state of the atmosphere prevented me from going lower than 500 feet. In the second cavern I lighted a flambeau, and there was pillar upon pillar, and arch upon arch, sparkling with crystal and stalactite. Besides the natural excavations, others have been made in the centre of the mountain by gunpowder, and form vaults of such height

* From the Greek *stalasso*, I drop. They are formed by the continual dropping of water containing carbonate of lime, which hardens on coming into contact with the air.

that during a siege they could contain a whole garrison.

"One day, as I was walking along, a large piece of rock came rolling down at my feet. I looked up, and there was a mischievous ape, peeping from a crevice above, apparently amused at my narrow escape."

"Uncle, what animals live in Gibraltar?" inquired Richard.

"Besides the African apes, which inhabit the crevices of the rocks, there are numbers of wild rabbits, teal, woodcocks, and partridges. Although from the ship no verdure can be seen, yet there is a good deal of vegetation; besides acacias, fig-trees, and orange-trees, there is a variety of sweet-smelling plants: and, with Laborde, I much admire the taste which the English have displayed in embellishing the rock. 'They have spared nothing to cover it with trees and flowers, to support the earth with walls and other props, to cut a number of roads through the solid rock, and make them passable on horseback and in carriages to the very top.'

"There are two excavations cut in the solid rock, called galleries, extending two or three miles, sufficiently wide for carriages. Along these, at intervals of about twelve yards, are port-holes, bearing upon the neutral ground. This ground is the space between the Spanish lines, as they are called, and the foot of the rock.

"But I must just sum up my description of Gibraltar. The north front is almost perpendicular, the east is full of frightful precipices, the south is narrow and abrupt, and on the west the rock declines somewhat more gradually to a beautiful bay, which, being sheltered from the more dangerous winds, is an important naval station. The town of Gibraltar stands at the foot of the promontory on the north-west side; it is paved and lighted, and consists chiefly of one street. The principal buildings are the governor's and lieutenant-governor's houses, the admiralty, barracks, victualling office, and storehouse, etc. The inhabitants consist of British merchants, Moors, Italians, Spaniards, and Jews; the latter are the most numerous. The houses are built after the English style; and though, to any one going direct from England, it will not appear a very pleasing place of residence, yet it is a paradise compared with some of the best cities of Spain.

"Thank you, uncle; thank you, uncle," said the young people. "And though we should like to see Gibraltar," added Richard, "and the other countries you have told us about, there is no country for living in like our own, after all."

"And so I found. May we all make a good use of the benefits and privileges which we so richly enjoy above most of our fellow-creatures."

CHAPTER XI.

ICELAND AND THE ICELANDERS.

THE children had a holiday. The weather was lovely; the lambs were frisking about in the green fields, the bees were humming among the flowers, and the birds made the woods like a concert-room with their cheerful songs. It was proposed that they should dine early, and then walk out upon the hills in company with Captain Mayfield.

Percy shouted for joy when he saw the fields covered with cowslips; and Mary gathered from the copse a nosegay of wild violets for mother; while Richard stood gazing upon the blue hills and silvery streams, stretching far away in the distance. "Father," said he, "there are no sights like this in Iceland, are there?"

"Not exactly like it. Iceland is a very different-looking country to England; it has no cowslips and violets—no corn-fields nor trees, but only some low bushes, with here and there a stunted pine. Its shores are mostly beset with icebergs, to which bears often resort. Yet there are sights, and scenes, and sounds in Iceland, such as, if you once witnessed them,

you would never forget. One day, as I was rambling among the rocks, admiring the wild scenery before me, I heard some children singing; I turned, and I saw, on my right, a little party with baskets on their arms. They were gathering the moss which grows among the rocks and hardened lava. These were the words they sung:—

'Over slippery rocks we climb,
Or through lonely valleys go:
These have beds of flowery thyme,
Those of chill and frozen snow;
Both alike with joy we tread,
While bright the sky is overhead.

No lonely bird need guard her nest,
When our hasty step she hears;
Be still the rabbit's panting breast,
For search like ours ye need not fear;
The mossy rock can well supply,
The guiltless feast we fain would try.

Steep the rock and strait the path;
Sure the death that waits below!
Yet we climb with cheerful step,
For the power of God we know!
Naught can harm a single hair,
While He keeps us in His care.'"

"What a very nice song, father!" said Mary; "I should think they must have been good children."

"In Iceland the children are taught to pray to God to keep them safely wherever they may be. In almost every family the day is commenced and closed with a prayer, in which they

all join. A fishing-boat is not launched till a prayer has been offered to God for the protection of the crew while at sea; nor will an Icelander set out on a journey till he has first prayed that he may accomplish it in safety. And we should do well to imitate their example. 'In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.'"

"Have the Icelanders got the Bible, then, father?" inquired Richard.

"O yes, and they prize it very much. I saw, while there, a printing-press. It was established by a priest who wished to check the progress of true religion in the island; but it proved his overthrow, for among the first books which were printed was an Icelandic version of the Bible."

"Father," said Percy, "did you not say there were no corn-fields in Iceland? How do the people get bread, then?"

"They do not eat much bread; and what they do eat is made of rye, the greater part of which is brought from Denmark. Corn will not ripen in Iceland. The people live chiefly on butter, milk, fish, and porridge made of Iceland moss, with a little fresh meat occasionally; but the latter and rye-bread are considered holiday fare."

"I am sure I should not like to live there," said Percy.

"I think," added Mary, "that the people are very much to be pitied, because they cannot get the comforts that we have."

"The Icelander is very happy and contented; and he will tell you that 'Iceland is the best country that the sun shines on,' and that he would not exchange his home for yours, although you have a bright fire to sit by, and he has none."

"Worse than ever!" said Percy; "no fire in Iceland! How do they keep themselves warm?"

"Their clothing is very warm; and they sit a great number in one room without a chimney to it, and a smoky oil-lamp is kept burning for the greater part of twenty-four hours, during eight months of the year. Occasionally they may have a fire to cook by in the kitchen, but then the smoke finds its way out as best it may."

"I should think it must be very unhealthy," said Richard, "to live as they do."

"The people endure much privation and suffering. From the nature of their food, exposure to cold, and being often obliged to sit long in their wet woollen clothes, they are liable to diseases which carry off many every year."

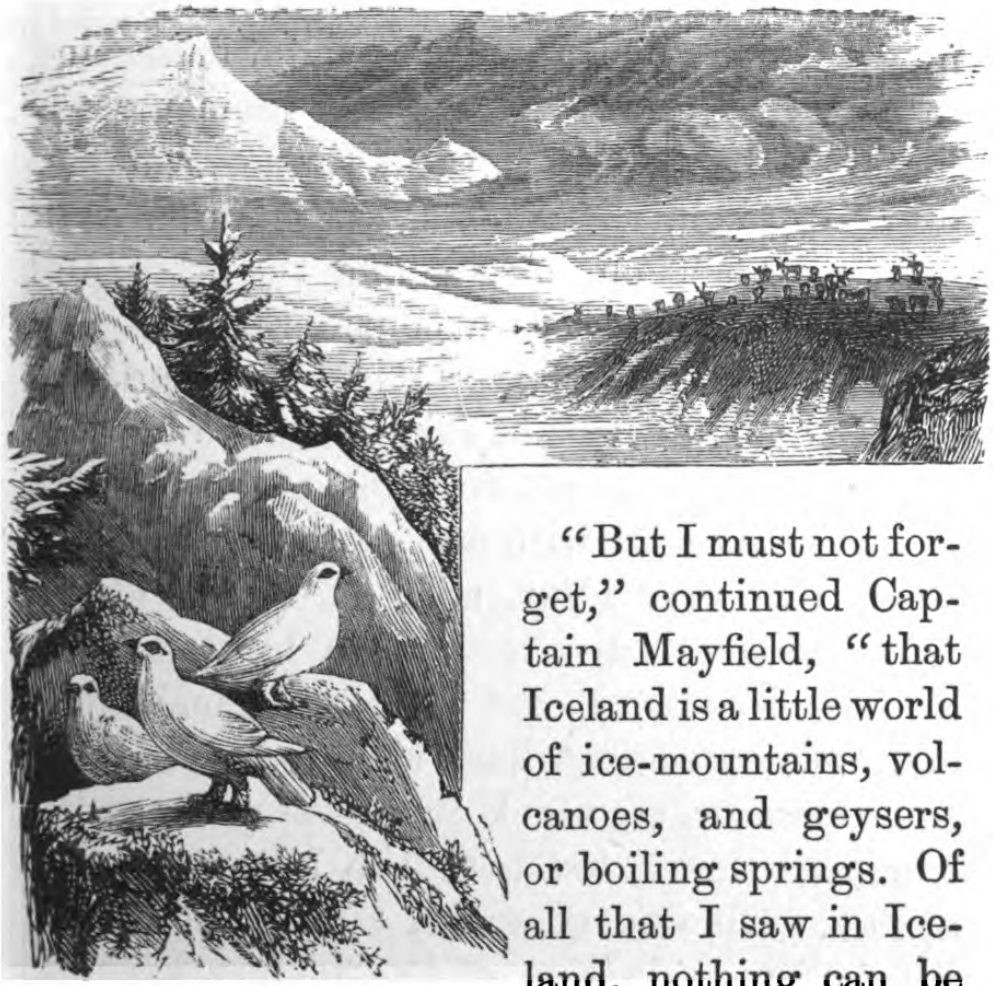
"But," inquired Percy, "what do they do for a living?"

"They pass their days very contentedly. Those who dwell on the coast are employed in fishing; the country people, in summer, tend their flocks, and range over the hills in search of moss, repair their little huts, get in turf for fuel, pull the wool from the sheep, dry meat and fish for winter food, gather down from the nests of the eider-ducks, and prepare articles for export to Denmark. In July the fishermen and the country folks flock to the capital of the island to sell dried fish, oil, tallow, skins, and eider-down, to the traders who arrive there from Denmark, Norway, and Great Britain; in exchange for these articles they receive rye-meal, salt, linen, and other necessaries, but few of the luxuries of life. The country people then hasten home to get in their hay-harvest; for the summer is very short, and they must 'make hay while the sun shines,' otherwise there would be no cheese, nor milk, nor butter for them in winter. As it is, there is only enough hay for the cows; the sheep and goats scrape away the snow, and find the moss fresh beneath, and thus provide their own food; while the poor horses are turned adrift to do the best they can."

"How cruel! I thought the people had been kinder than that," said Mary.

"No, no, Mary; you must not accuse the Icelander of cruelty. You must remember that

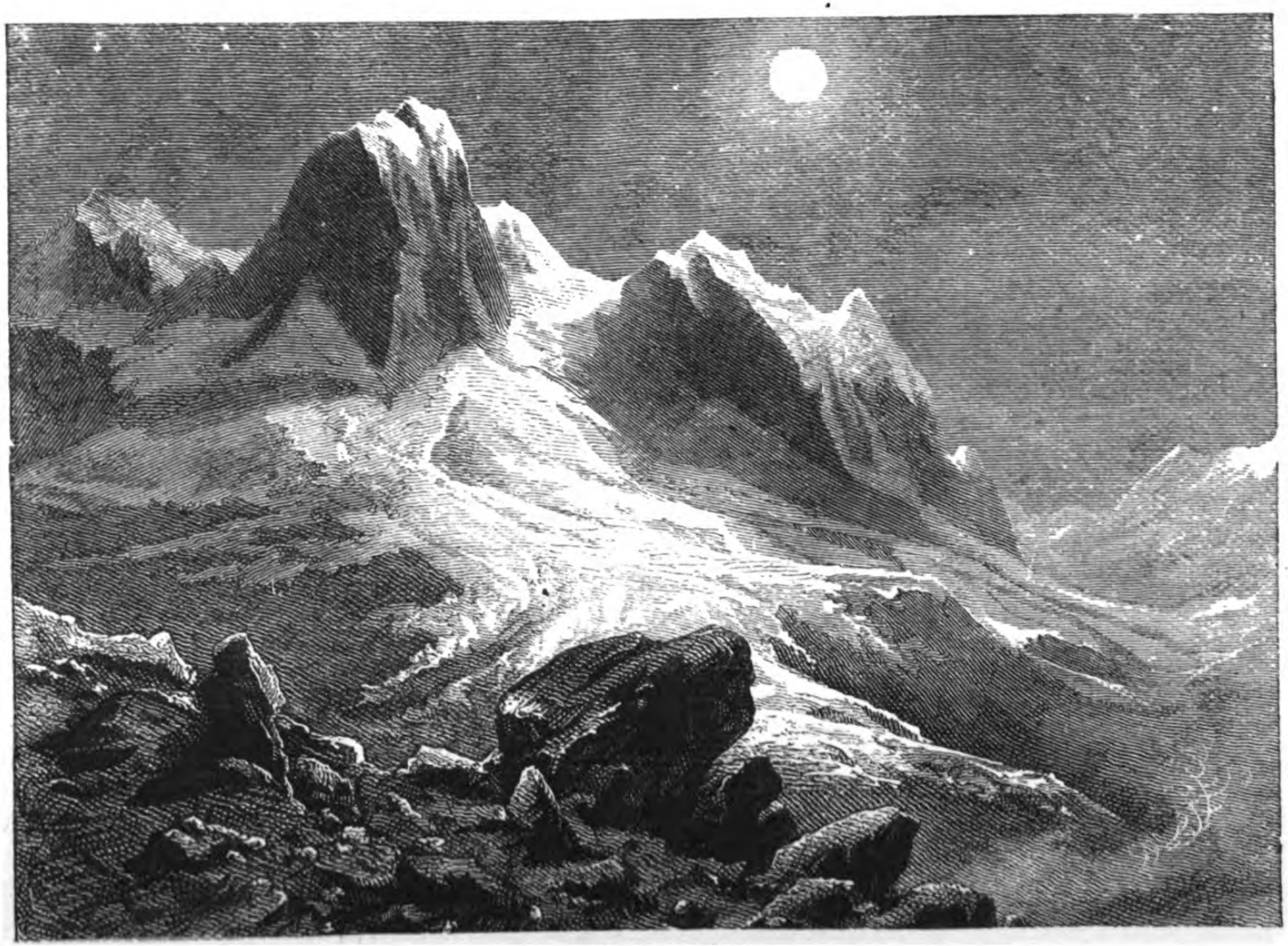
the ground, rocky and covered with masses of hardened lava, scarcely yields sufficient food for himself and children, and that the cows and sheep are more necessary to him in winter than the horses. It would be more cruel if he kept them at home to starve to death. Among the mountains the horse generally finds enough to live upon, and he is provided with a shaggy coat, which keeps him nicely warm.



"But I must not forget," continued Captain Mayfield, "that Iceland is a little world of ice-mountains, volcanoes, and geysers, or boiling springs. Of all that I saw in Iceland, nothing can be compared with these geysers. The Great Geyser is a mound of stones, at the top of

which is a basin formed by the action of the water. In the centre of the basin is a kind of deep pit, like a pipe, through which the water is forced up. We stood there and watched the basin as it gradually filled. There was a noise like distant artillery, and the ground trembled under our feet. In a short time there was another shock, when the earth around the basin began to heave and sink, and the water boiled violently and overflowed. Loud reports now followed one another rapidly, increasing to a perfect roar, and in a few moments the boiling water rushed upwards through volumes of steam, column rising above column, as if each were bent on outstripping the other, and throwing up stones to a considerable height. This continued for several minutes, and was repeated at intervals of some hours; and when the water was spent, columns of steam continued to rush up with a deafening roar. The water was very clear, and, as it ran along, made leaves and other things hard, like to stone. I could not but imitate the Icelander; and, taking off my hat, silently adored the great Creator, who looketh on the earth and it trembleth, who toucheth the hills and they smoke. On one occasion, our guide boiled a fish for us in one of the boiling springs, which he had caught in a lake close by."

"Is not Hecla in Iceland?" inquired Mary.



A SNOW SCENE.

"Yes, Mary. It is most celebrated on account of its frequent eruptions; but another mount, Skaptar Jokul, is more fearful and destructive. In 1783 three fire-spouts broke out on this mountain, which rose to a considerable height, and sent forth a torrent of red-hot lava, which flowed for six weeks, and dried up rivers, destroyed valleys, villages, cattle, and more than 200 people. This terrible eruption was followed by a famine and pestilence, which lasted for two years."

"How dreadful!" said Percy. "I am very glad I do not live in Iceland."

"Well may the Icelander pray to an Almighty Protector. Though the ice-mountains lift their glittering points one above another, he knows that beneath many of them secret fires are burning, and that they may some day pour forth red-hot lava, and destroy his fields and villages, and bury him beneath. Glad am I that he has the Bible, which teaches him that the winds are God's messengers, and the flames of fire His servants; that it is only when He touches the mountain tops that they smoke, and that he that trusteth in the Lord shall be safe. The Bible warns the Icelander to 'flee from the wrath to come,' and it warns us all to be prepared for that day when 'the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.'"

CHAPTER XII.

ST. PETERSBURGH AND MOSCOW.

"I WONDER whether uncle will come home in time this evening," said Mary, drawing the curtain aside, and looking out of the window.

"I should think he would," said Percy; "for it is such a beautiful evening."

"But it is so cold," observed Mary; "and then you know he said, if he was not at home by six, we were not to expect him." The ground was covered with snow, which sparkled in the moonlight, while the stars twinkled in the clear blue sky.

"Uncle does not mind that, Mary," rejoined Richard; "he has been in Russia, where it is much colder in winter time than ever it is here."

"Oh, here he is," exclaimed Richard, as the gate opened, and a gentleman entered the grounds, muffled up in a thick blue cloak and furs. But Mary was not quite so sure it was her uncle, he looked so strangely altered. Richard, however, was certain, because he had seen him before in the things which he used to wear

when travelling in Russia. But soon all doubt was at an end; Mr. Rushton entered the room.

"I am so glad you are come, uncle," said Mary; "I was afraid the cold might keep you away. Doesn't this weather put you in mind of Russia?"

"A *very little*, my girl. It is nothing like so cold as it was when I was at St. Petersburgh. When I was there, the houses all looked as though they were packed in snow; the streets were covered with ice and snow; and the sledges were gliding about like ducks in a pond. The river Neva, upon the banks of which St. Petersburgh is built, was covered with pure white ice, like so much baked sugar."

"I wonder the Russians can bear it," said Richard.

"I was surprised at first, especially when I saw washerwomen standing rinsing their clothes in holes cut through the ice in the canals, with icicles hanging upon them; and the common Russian bustling about, and caring for little else than to keep his legs and feet warm. I soon found, however, that the people well understand how to defend themselves from the cold. They make the windows and doors of their houses and huts double, and they line the outer doors, and sometimes even the floor under the carpet, with felt, to prevent the cold coming between

the crevices. When they go out they wear warm caps and furs, and boots lined with flannel, and some even carry muffs."

"What, the men, uncle?" exclaimed Mary.

"Yes; and very comfortable they are. The poor do not suffer from the cold so much as they do in some other countries; for warm public rooms are provided in various parts of the city, where they may have shelter from the cold all day for nothing.

"The sentries of St. Petersburgh, when it is very cold, are supplied with pelisses; and it is curious to see them marching up and down, before the palaces, muffled up in thick furs."

"I should think the Russians have good fires to sit by in winter," said Percy.

"Russian stoves are very different things to ours. They are built of earthenware, and the flues wind to and fro in such a manner that the heat often travels 100 feet before it reaches the chimney. In the houses of the rich a person is kept to attend to the stoves, and he has to begin his work in the night, so that his master may find the room nicely warm by breakfast-time. The poor use their stoves for cooking, heating, and baking; they dry their things by them, and on the platform of the stove there are beds, on which they sleep wrapped in sheepskins."

"Will you tell us more about St. Petersburgh, uncle?" said Mary.

"I should have been pleased to tell you a great deal more, my girl, but have not time just now. I may just say, however, that to any one arriving in that city from Finland, its first appearance is very striking. There are the marble palace, the imperial winter palace, the admiralty; the Isaac Place, one of the finest squares in Europe, with the statue of Peter the Great on horseback; the academy, the fortress, the gilded domes and spires of the various churches, and, in the midst of all, the white surface of the Neva, dotted with a thousand moving figures. Besides this, the variety and gay costume of the Russians, and the strange appearance and diversified dress of the Asiatic tribes, all tend to heighten the wonder of the stranger.

"The streets are very wide and long, and there is a great deal of life and bustle. The hackney-carriage drivers seem to guess the thoughts of foot-passengers as they eye them at a distance. If one of them looks about, there will be as many as ten instantly calling, 'Shall I come, sir?' If you hesitate, they will begin to tell you how uncomfortable it is to walk; that the heat is enough to make you faint; or that you had better get into their clean droska than wade through the mud; for when the thaw begins the streets are in a sad state. In the cold weather you are glad to wrap yourself up

warmly, and get into one of the sledges. The Russian is the most eloquent of drivers. He is continually talking to his horse, driving very fast, and warning pedestrians, 'Way, way!' 'Take care!' and telling the passengers he meets to keep 'to the left,' or 'to the right,' as the case may be. If an accident happen, the whole blame is thrown on the coachman, who frequently is banished to Siberia. But I must give you a short account of my trip to Moscow."

"Oh! I should like to hear about Moscow. How did you get there, uncle?" said Percy.

"I travelled by the great road of which you have so often heard, which is made of trunks of trees, fastened together in the middle and at each end, and macadamized. There must be nearly nine millions of trees used in the formation of this road."

"Is it a very long road, uncle?" inquired Richard.

"The distance between the two capitals is about 487 miles. The sides of the road are lined with trees, and soldiers are stationed at intervals, whose duty it is to keep it in repair. On the sides are also plats of grass for the cattle, which are driven along the road, to feed on. There is a railway from St. Petersburgh to Moscow; but I preferred taking a kibitka, which is something like a large wooden cradle.

The driver sits on one end, near the horse's tail, and the hinder part is covered with a tilt. It has no springs; and, in order to prevent the inconvenience which would arise from jolting in such roads as the Russians have, a feather bed is placed at the bottom, making the vehicle very snug and comfortable. It is as well to carry with you some provisions, as you must not expect much from the inns.

"The first place of any interest I met with on my journey was Tsarsko-selo. After that, till I arrived at Itchora, I passed through a very inhospitable district, which somewhat prepared me for what I had to put up with during the greater part of my journey.

"The peasants' houses in the villages are made of trees, and their furniture seldom consists of more than a wooden table, benches fastened to the sides of the room, and wooden platters, bowls, and spoons, and perhaps an earthen pan to cook their food in. They eat rye-bread, eggs, salt fish, mushrooms, and bacon: their favourite dish is a hotch-potch of salt or fresh meat, groats, and rye-flour, seasoned with onions and garlic."

"*They* may enjoy it," said Richard; "but the roast beef of old England for me."

"By far the most interesting place between St. Petersburgh and Moscow is Novgorod. It was formerly famous for its commerce; but

now, like Venice and other cities, it has become a place of little importance. As we journeyed, we saw many carts, etc., on their way to or from St. Petersburgh: those going there had tallow, leather, bristles, hides, etc.; those returning carried sugar, coffee, logwood, etc.

"We next came to Torjok, a pretty town, famous for the manufacture of leather, and for its holy spring, to which pilgrims flock from all parts. Then we came to Tver, on the banks of the Wolga, whence great quantities of grain are exported for the capital; the vessels in which the grain is conveyed are built only for one voyage; on their arrival at St. Petersburgh, they are taken to pieces and sold for firewood.

"The country in the neighbourhood seemed very fruitful in grain and flax, etc.; and I saw, as I journeyed, some elks, bears, wolves, badgers, and eagles. As I got nearer to Moscow, the country improved in appearance, immense herds and flocks, with well-peopled villages, meeting the eye in every direction. I saw no other place of any importance till the towers and spires of Moscow rose before me in the distance.

"Moscow is situated on the river Moskva, and was the ancient capital of Russia. It has passed through many changes, having been seven times destroyed by fire before the French invasion; when, as you may remember, the

governor, by setting fire to it (in 1812), deprived the French of their winter quarters, and occasioned their disastrous retreat. There is only one stone bridge over the Moskva; the others are called living bridges. They are so called, because, being made of planks and floated on trees, they spring or move as the equipages pass over them. The Kremlin, or fort, never fails to excite astonishment and delight. Its white walls, numerous battlements, different coloured towers and steeples, painted roofs, churches, monasteries, belfries, and the palace of the czars, present a singular and yet agreeable picture. Here I obtained a good view of the city.

"The great bell of Moscow, the wonder of the world, is twenty-one feet high, its greatest diameter twenty-two feet, and it is nearly two feet thick at the lowest edge. It is, however, cracked and useless. There are other wonders in the Kremlin, but I have not time to tell you about them now.

"The second division of Moscow is called the Chinese Town, and contains the university, several public buildings, and tradesmen's shops. The third division is called the White Town, in consequence of a white wall by which it was formerly inclosed. It contains many fine palaces, a foundling hospital, the great provision and fruit markets. The Earthen Town,

so called from having been once surrounded with a rampart of earth, is the fourth division of Moscow. The fifth division consists of the suburbs, in which is a market for the sale of houses. There are a very large number of watch-houses, in which the watchmen reside. The city is more than twenty-six miles in circumference, and you walk from five to eight miles to go through it. There are more than sixty streets and five hundred cross streets; they are generally wide, but many are unpaved, and some paved only on one side. There are a great number of vehicles for the accommodation of passengers. Coachmen drive full trot, at the rate of eight or nine miles an hour, and the manner in which they drive is very similar to that at St. Petersburgh."

"Are the Russians Christians?" asked Richard.

"They call themselves such, but the majority are so only in name. So long as the people observe the rites and ceremonies of the Greek Church, it seems to be thought of no consequence what sort of lives they lead. Prayers to the saints, the worship of the virgin Mary, and such wicked devices, are put by them in the place of faith in Christ. Let us be thankful that we have been taught the only true way of having peace with God, by trusting alone in what Jesus has done and suffered for us."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CITY OF THE SULTAN.

"FATHER," said Percy, as the family was gathering around the fireside for the evening; "father, when we were at breakfast this morning, you promised to tell us something about Constantinople."

"I did, my boy; and I am now quite prepared to fulfil that promise. Let us imagine, then, that instead of forming a circle around the hearth, we are at this moment seated in a boat on the Bosphorus. Before us is the city of Constantinople, with its high and beautiful mosques and pointed minarets; its walls, towers, and houses; some stretching along the shores, and reflecting their shapes on the glassy bosom of the deep; others creeping up the hills upon which the city is built, rising higher and higher from the silvery waters till they seem almost to reach the sky. On both sides of us we have the green and fruitful shores of Europe and Asia. On our right is the harbour of the Golden Horn, full of large ships at anchor, and swarming with small vessels sailing about in all directions; and behind us the porpoises are playing the part of tumblers in the water."

"Oh, father!" cried Mary. "I should not like to be in a boat with those great things tumbling about near me."

"I should not mind them," added Richard; "I should have my portfolio, and try to sketch all I saw;" and, taking a piece of paper, he began to make a number of lines. "I should put the Bosphorus here, and the hills of Europe and Asia on each side; the Golden Horn on that side of the city, and the sea on this; and" —Richard hesitated, and then asked: "but what shall I put on the other two sides, father?"

"Constantinople has only three sides. The city comes to a point opposite the Bosphorus. On the side which joins the continent of Europe it is bounded by three walls, with towers for its defence. There are also some towers towards the harbour. But, before we enter the city, I must tell you, or perhaps you can tell me, what was its name before it was called Constantinople?"

Mary shook her head; and Percy doubted whether even Richard, who was now reading ancient history, could answer the question. Richard, however, after thinking a moment or two, remembered he had been told that some Greek emigrants formed a settlement there, and called it Byzantium; but that it was taken from them by the Romans, who destroyed it some hundreds of years afterwards.

"Very true," observed Captain Mayfield: "it was rebuilt, however, by Constantine the Great, who gave it the name of New Rome; but it was afterwards called Constantinople, or the city of Constantine, in honour of its founder."

"But," inquired Mary, "how came the Turks to live there?"

"About the middle of the fifteenth century they besieged it, under their leader, Mohammed the Second, and took it. The gap in the wall through which the Turks entered has never been repaired, and is now full of trees and shrubs.

"Let us leave our boat, and enter the city. Oh, how badly the streets are paved! see how narrow they are, and dark, and steep: there are no names to them, and no lamps."

"Why is that, father?" asked Mary.

"Because the people are generally in-doors after sunset; and those who want to go anywhere at night must take a lantern with them, to prevent their stumbling over the dogs, which prowl about the city without masters."

"Then Constantinople, after all, is not such a fine place inside as it looks outside," said Percy, who had been hoping to hear of beautiful houses, and splendid streets, and fine squares.

"Most persons are a little disappointed on entering the city; although the houses are chiefly of wood, yet there are in all parts handsome, and even splendid buildings; the houses of the

rich, though there is nothing very attractive about them outside, are, nevertheless, very tastefully and comfortably fitted up within. They do not have fire-places like ours, but they are warmed in winter by hot pans placed under a kind of table. These are sometimes upset, and the house set on fire; and, if a high wind be blowing at the time, the flames will spread very rapidly."

"I am sure I should not like to live there," said Richard; "for I like to have a good blazing fire to warm myself by. There seems no comfort in the way the Turks warm their rooms."

"In no country," observed their father, "are there so many comforts as are enjoyed in our native land: and we should be thankful for them to the Giver of every good gift. But we must peep at the Sultan's palace. It is a city in itself, and is said to contain more than 6,000 inhabitants. The walls inclose a space of about nine miles, and include a cluster of houses, mosques, baths, fountains, palaces, and gardens. In the middle of the palace is the hall of the divan, or court of justice, where the grand vizier, or governor of Constantinople, presides as a judge, assisted by his counsellors, seated on a beautiful carpet. There, likewise, is the hall in which the throne stands; no one is allowed to go into the presence-chamber who has not been invited by the Sultan. In the outer court are the arsenal, the mint, and the palace of the grand vizier."

"Does it not cost a great deal," inquired Richard, "to keep all the people that live here?"

"The expenses are very great; and I am told that, besides a very large number of oxen yearly, the person who buys its provisions has to procure daily 200 sheep, 100 lambs or goats, according to the season, 10 calves, 200 hens, 200 pairs of pullets, 100 pairs of pigeons, and 50 green geese. The fuel burned every year is said to amount to 40,000 cart-loads, each cart-load being as much as two buffaloes can draw.

"The appearance of the palace from the sea is very beautiful. The walls have at intervals watch-towers, and several gates opening towards the sea, or towards the city. The chief entrance is called the Sublime Porte, and is guarded by about fifty of the Sultan's body-guard. This name is the common title of the Turkish court, but is now frequently used to denote the whole empire.

"When I was at Constantinople, a new palace had been recently built for the Sultan, painted brown outside, ornamented with white and gilding. I am told that it contains mirrors, carpets, hangings, and all that is rich and rare from east to west."

"Father, will you tell us about the mosques?"

"Cheerfully; and, since the Mosque of St. Sophia is so celebrated, we shall take a peep into that. It is a very fine-looking building.

It was built by the Emperor Justinian, in the sixth century, who was so highly pleased with it when finished, that he exclaimed, 'O Solomon, I have outdone thee!' His vanity, however, would be a little humbled could he now see the alterations made, and the use to which it is put. The walls, pillars, arches, and floor are lined with porphyry and precious marbles. There are upwards of a hundred columns of different marbles in the mosque. During their Ramazan, or fasting month, these are hung with thousands of coloured lamps, together with flowers, coloured ostrich eggs and ostrich feathers, and the floor is covered with the richest carpet. The Sultan's pew is surrounded by gilt railings, and beautifully carpeted; while, on the spot where the altar stood when this mosque was a Christian church, is a niche ornamented with gold, and a large chandelier on each side, called the Mihrabe, or repository of the Koran."

"What is the Koran?" inquired Mary.

"A book which contains the laws of the Mohammedan religion, and which those who profess this religion value as much as we do our Bible; though it is not to be compared with it. The Bible is God's book: the Koran is false.

"The Sultan," continued Captain Mayfield, "goes to mosque every Friday, which is the Mohammedan Sabbath. Sometimes he goes by

water; at others by land. When he goes by water, there are two boats, neatly covered outside with rich gilding, and having golden figures of eagles sitting on their bows. Each is rowed by a large number of men, neatly dressed in white silk shirts, who ply their oars so quickly and uniformly, that it is quite a pleasure to look at them. At the stern of one of the boats sits the Sultan. His seat is very handsome. It consists of cushions covered with damask, and ornamented with gold trimmings and precious stones. Over his head is a scarlet canopy, supported by gilded pillars, and covered with gold ornaments, the largest of which, in the middle of the canopy, represents the sun, with golden beams shooting out in every direction, emblematic of the glory of the Sultan. When he lands, a horse is waiting to carry him to the mosque. It has a saddle-cloth of rich velvet, a gold bit, a bridle set with pearls, and stirrups of solid gold. The Sultan's turban is adorned with diamonds, his collar with flowers composed of rubies, emeralds, etc., and his robes are of velvet and satin."

"But may we not see the shops?" said Mary; adding, with a smile, "Now that we are in Constantinople, we ought to go shopping."

"Let us go, then; but you must make up your mind to have a little difficulty in passing through the crowd, especially of ladies, which you will find at the bazaars. All the life and activity of

the city seems to be centred here. The covered bazaars look more like a row of booths in a fair than a street of shops. One alley glitters on each side, for a hundred yards, with yellow morocco; you turn into another fringed with Indian shawls; or you look down a long vista lined with muslin draperies, or robes of ermine and fur. Not only these bazaars, but those which resemble open streets, are allotted to different trades. Here we have jewellers' shops, there we have goldsmiths'; here we have curriers and leather-workers as well as horse-dealers, and there is a long line of drug repositories; here Mocha coffee is ground by hand, and there we have sellers of papers and copiers of manuscripts.

"But evening draws on, and the numerous coffee-houses are thronged by Turks, Armenians, Greeks, and Jews, all smoking, and indulging in tiny cups of coffee, which the poorer classes generally drink without milk or sugar. Another time, we will look at the imperial cistern of Constantine, called the Palace of the Thousand-and-one Pillars, but now converted into an under-ground silk-twist manufactory; and at the large cistern, which forms a lake, extending under several streets; we will also peep at the Valley of Sweet Waters, a pleasant summer retreat; and take a walk into some of the cemeteries. It is too late to do so now."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BANKS OF THE BOSPHORUS.

"DO look! how the figures change every time I move it!" said Mary, soon after breakfast on the following day, at the same time holding out her kaleidoscope to her father. "Are they not beautiful?"

"The variations are very pretty," replied her father; "but when I was at Constantinople, I saw a more wonderful kaleidoscope."

"It must have been a beauty, then," observed Percy; "for mother says Mary's cost a great deal."

"It cost *me* a large sum," said his father, "to *see* the one I speak of; and as to purchasing it, that was quite out of the question; it was called the Bosphorus."

"You do not, then, mean a *real* kaleidoscope, father?" said Mary.

"I do not mean such a one as yours; but if you had been with me on my excursion up the Bosphorus, you would have seen such changes of scenery at almost every glance, and so many varieties of form and colour, that you would

have said that I could not give the channel of Constantinople a better name."

"Perhaps she would, father," said Richard, "if she had known what the word kaleidoscope meant." Richard did not say this rudely, and his father was much pleased with the gentle hint. "I was forgetting," said he, "that Mary was so much younger than I, and might not understand such long words. The name kaleidoscope consists of three Greek words, meaning, 'I view a pretty form.' And as this curious toy is that by means of which we may see a variety of forms and colours, I think I may very properly call the Bosphorus a kaleidoscope; for by means of that channel I was enabled to behold a variety of scenes, and shapes, and colours."

"But what is the Bosphorus?" inquired Percy.

"There were once two straits so called; but the one which has retained the name, is the channel leading from Constantinople into the Black Sea."

"Why is it called the Bosphorus?" inquired Mary, "it seems such a curious name."

"I can tell you, Mary," said Richard. "Our schoolmaster told us one day that it should be called Bosporus, because it was a Greek word, meaning 'the passage of the ox;' and that it was supposed to have derived its name from its being so narrow that an ox might swim across."

"A very good answer. But I must now tell you some of the sights I saw from the Bosphorus. I took a caïque, or boat, at Topana.* There were four rowers, and I had an interpreter with me to tell me the names of the places and things which I might see. As we rowed in front of this place, we saw tiers of painted houses, white marble mosques, and dark cypress trees grouped together very beautifully, and looking far better than the groups of coloured figures in Mary's kaleidoscope. Numbers of caïques were skimming about in every direction, like so many water-fowls. Many of them carried Armenian merchants, on their way to business from their country houses. They wore black turbans and blue robes, bound round with white cashmere shawls. On the prows of some of the boats, were hung bunches of flowers, which they were taking with them to the city. A little farther on was the Turkish fleet at anchor. The men were dressed in red or blue; some were lounging about, smoking, while others were bathing around the sides of the vessels. The admiral and his officers were dressed in loose brown coats, and had on their heads large red woollen caps.

"Rowing by several pretty villages, we came to a beautiful palace of the sultan. When the

* So called from the arsenal or foundry for cannon here, which is called *topana* in Turkish.

Bosphorus is very rough, the waves touch its windows; the water washes its steps, and the sea finds its way through the iron gates into the court-yards and gardens, which are ornamented with shrubs and flowers, and terraces rising one above another; thick woods of beautiful trees cover the sides of the hills.

"Beyond this, there is a series of gardens and prettily painted wooden houses and palaces, on the margin of the sea. Their windows are open. There Turks recline on divans or cushions, in spacious rooms bright with gold and silken draperies; they smoke, chat, and sip sherbet, and look at the passers by. These windows open upon terraces thickly planted with vines, shrubs, and flowers. Numerous slaves, richly dressed, are to be seen seated on the flight of steps leading down to the sea; and caïques, manned with rowers, wait to receive the masters of these lovely dwellings. These palaces and houses are all shaded by large trees, creeping plants, and groves of jasmines and roses."

"How delightful it must be to live on the banks of the Bosphorus!" said Mary. "I should very much like to spend the summer there."

"I have no doubt you would be much gratified, and you would enjoy a trip such as I had. The water is so deep that we could row

close to the shore, beneath the shade of the trees, and drink in the sweet perfume of the flowers. Large ships can go as close to the shore as we did; and some vessels have been known to become entangled in the branches of a tree, the trellis of a vine, or even the blind of a window, carrying away a fragment of the foliage or of the house.

"Almost every five minutes, on the European side of the Bosphorus, we come to some pretty little village, situated upon one of the small gulfs or bays. At the narrowest part of the strait is a small bay, called Balta Liman, where Mohammed crossed by a bridge of boats when he besieged Constantinople. Darius the Mede is also supposed to have crossed here, in the same manner, in pursuit of his foes.

"The scenery now becomes of a wilder character, and the Bosphorus rapidly flows between two rocky heights clothed with pines and cypresses. Here are the whitewashed castles of Europe and Asia, of which you have heard a great deal. The Bosphorus here turns round behind the European castle, and widens into a kind of lake, on which stand two beautiful villages, with their prettily painted houses extending along the water's edge, overhung by green hills, flower gardens, and shady walks. The palaces of the French and English

ambassadors were at one of these villages, and those of the Austrian and Russian ambassadors at the other. Not far from these spots are beautiful plane trees, one of which is large enough to shade a whole regiment of soldiers. Here I saw the frigates of the embassies, waiting to carry messages of war or peace; Armenians, with their children, rowing to and fro in their caïques filled with foliage and flowers; and vessels sailing by, or lying at anchor; before us were chains of dark mountains, towering high, and seeming to form boundaries between the storms of the Black Sea and the quiet scenery of Constantinople.

"I have now shown you the banks of the Bosphorus on the European side. We must turn round and peep on the Asiatic side. As far as the castles which I have just described, the scenery consists of mountains, valleys, torrents, forests, and rivers, and presents such a variety of colour, form, foliage, and verdure, that I have no language to describe it. Here and there, along the shore, are a few houses belonging to Turkish sailors or gardeners; a few fishing boats in the creeks; flocks of white birds in the meadows, and eagles perched on the tops of the mountains.

"The scenery now changes. Asiatic villages, lovely plains, shaded by trees and studded with

Moorish fountains, are seen lying along the margin of the water. Numbers of Constantinople carriages may be seen on the greensward. Oxen and buffaloes graze in the meadows; Arabian horses, richly adorned, are prancing about; and Armenian and Jewish women and children, in different dresses, are sitting on the grass. A little farther on, at Beglerberg, is a palace of the grand seignior, separated from the sea by a quay of granite. It has beautiful gardens, and plots of ground full of roses and watered by fountains. Two handsome gilt boats float at the palace gate. It is, indeed, altogether a splendid place.

"Hence, the scenery is woody till we reach Scutari, opposite to Constantinople. It is a lovely spot, and forms a fine picture with its white barracks, mosques, and glittering minarets. Its quays and creeks are bordered with houses, bazaars, and boats floating beneath the shade of trellises or palm trees. In the background is a forest of cypress trees and another Turkish graveyard, with its white monuments glimmering between the dark foliage. When a body is buried there, the friends of the deceased plant a cypress tree on the grave: they will not permit Jews or Christians to have any cypresses in their burial grounds."

"Is there always a burial ground where there are cypresses?" asked Percy.

"The cypress," said Captain Mayfield, "is rarely found anywhere else. There are a great number of such places around Constantinople; the largest is at Scutari. Immediately adjoining the Barracks of the Sultan Selim, which was used as a hospital under the superintendence of Miss Nightingale during the Crimean War, is the English Military Cemetery, where upwards of 8000 of our countrymen are interred, and where the memorial column by Baron Marochetti stands. But we must now bid farewell to the banks of the Bosphorus, with the prayer that Turks, and Greeks, and Jews may be brought speedily to acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and at the last be found among the inhabitants of the land of pure delights, so beautifully described in the Revelation (xxii.), where there is no difference made; but where all who have believed in the Saviour, whether Jew, or Greek, or Turk, or bond or free, will be only known by one name —the children of God—and will for ever live together as brethren."

CHAPTER XV.

MALTA AND GREECE.

"WHAT history are you reading now, Richard?" asked Mr. Rushton, as he observed him gathering his school books together at the close of the Christmas holidays.

"The History of Greece, uncle; and I wish you would tell me a little about that country, for I should like to know if it looks as it used to."

"At school," said Uncle Rushton, "you may learn something about Greece as it was. You may mark out its boundaries, cover it with people, read its language, and acquaint yourselves with its great men. But the Greece of the present day is altogether different from that of the past."

"I know it is," said Richard; "and that is why I want you to tell us something about it."

"I yield most cheerfully to your request," said Mr. Rushton. "Having steamed across the Bay of Biscay, passed Cape Finisterre and the Isle of Sicily, after a little tossing in the boisterous, choppy channel of Malta, we landed at Valetta, the capital of the island.

"Malta may be compared to a large limestone rock, lying in the Mediterranean Sea, between Europe and Africa; for most of the soil which covers the rock is said to have been brought from Sicily. If there were railways there, the island might be crossed in about an hour, and you might travel round it in three."

"Then it is not a very large place," said Mary. "I should think not," added Percy; "for the trains go twenty miles an hour."

"There is much in conection with the island," continued Mr. Rushton, "that is very interesting, especially to those who are fond of reading ancient history. It has been called the plaything of princes. And such a name is not at all out of place, for it has been in many hands. The Phœnicians, who have been called the English of the East, the Greeks, the Carthaginians, and the Romans, the Vandals, the Goths, and the Saracens, all held the island in turn. After these, the Germans, then the French, who handed it over to the soldier-monks, called knights of St. John. Napoleon, however, took it from them in 1798, and in 1804 the English became masters of the island, and have retained possession ever since."

"Thank you, uncle," said Richard; "I am glad you have given us a little history of Malta. I shall try to find out more about it."

"The stone houses of Malta, with their flat and terraced roofs, together with the streets rising one above another, crowned with castles, convents, and churches, are very striking; while the high walls, the great harbour, forts, fortifications, and creeks, with ships of war and merchant vessels lying at anchor, present a very imposing appearance.

"The waters are covered with hundreds of little boats, filled with hardy, swarthy Maltese, jabbering in a dialect half Italian and half Arabic; while tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, and others, carry on their trades in the open streets. Roman Catholic priests walk about in great numbers, in fanciful dresses: and beggars, looking like real bundles of rags, and very impudent too, assail the stranger."

"I should not like to have them teasing me," said Percy.

"I did not know," added Mary, "there were Roman Catholics in Malta."

"Yes, my dear, I am sorry to say the greater portion of the people are. There are, however, some good Protestants in the island, who are doing what they can to bring the people to trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

"But I was going to say that no sooner is one beggar relieved, than a crowd of others press onward, almost ready to tear the clothes off your back, in order to get an alms."

"Oh!" said Mary, "how unpleasant."

"In the square, military music is performed morning and afternoon, and then the place looks all alive, glittering and dazzling with the differently-coloured dresses of the Persians, Arabs, Turks, Greeks, Bedouins, Russians, Germans, Poles, Italians, Spaniards, English, and Maltese."

"That must be a very pretty sight," said Mary. "Is Malta a hot country, uncle?"

"Yes, very, from April to October. During the months of June to September, many of the Maltese sleep in the open air; and children may be seen lying upon door-steps, and older persons just inside their doors."

"Uncle," said Richard, who had been thinking of what had been said about Malta being a limestone rock, "what do they grow there? They can't grow much, I should think."

"Yes, they do; for I saw cotton, oranges, lemons, wheat, clover, figs, and pomegranates. The celebrated blood orange, too, is brought from thence. There are also various kinds of the cactus. I saw a curious specimen, which consisted of nothing but stems, and again others which seemed all leaf—especially the Cactus Indianus (Indian fig). The figs, or prickly pears, as the Maltese call them, which these produce, grow out from the edges of the leaves. The flower is generally of a rich crimson colour,

and the fruit about the size of an egg. It is eaten very largely in Malta.

"The skins of the figs," continued Mr. Rushton, "are used by the Maltese for dyeing, and the leaves as food for the cochineal insect, which, when dead, is used for dye of a carmine colour."

"What else did you see in Malta?" asked Percy, observing that his uncle paused a moment.

"I saw sheep with long silky hair—it could not be called wool, wiry-haired pigs with stiff manes, and cows, thin, ragged, and red, with long spreading horns, which seemed to feed chiefly on beans, water-melons, and cactus leaves. I also saw a ploughman carrying his plough home upon his back."

"It could not have been an English plough, uncle."

"It was certainly not such a plough as you see in this country. The soil only requires to be scratched with a few crooked sticks fastened together, to produce a harvest."

"It was at Malta," said Richard, "that St. Paul was shipwrecked, was it not, uncle?"

"It is not certain. In the Acts the place, you know, is called Melita, and it is now generally considered that it was Malta. I went to St. Paul's Bay, as it is called; and as I stood there, I thought of the shipwrecked apostle getting

'safe to land,' of the fire being lighted, and of the viper coming out of it and fastening on his hand. I imagined I could see him shaking it off and feeling no harm, while the barbarians wondered, and said he was a god; and then how kindly they behaved to him, and how he healed the father of Publius, the chief man of the island. As I thought of all this I sincerely prayed that the Gospel, for which the apostle was a prisoner, might soon be embraced in all its purity by the deluded Maltese.

"The cathedral is said to be built on the very spot where Publius' house stood. But we must say farewell to Malta, or I shall not have time to tell you of what I saw in Greece."

"Oh, that is right, uncle," said Percy; "I want to know something about Greece, for Richard and Mary seem to be always talking about it."

"We took a steam-boat at Malta, which in three or four days, after passing several Greek islands, anchored in the Piræus. As we entered the harbour, a number of caïques crowded around us, and some of the men who rowed them wore scarlet jackets striped with gold, and long red caps with blue tassels."

"What is the Piræus, uncle?" asked Percy, who seldom allowed a word to pass of which he did not know the meaning.

"When I say the Piræus, I mean the port of Athens called by that name. As we left the

Piræus, we crossed a marshy plain, and saw the remains of the long walls, which connected the city with the port in ancient times. So that Athens was once, as Dr. Wordsworth observes, 'like a vessel moored by two cables, each of which dropped its anchor in the Piræus.' There was a third wall, however, which connected it with Port Phalerum."

"How curious, uncle," said Mary.

"On my way to Athens," continued Mr. Rushton, "I saw buzzards, and lapwings, and olive fields, with swarms of wild blue pigeons flying about them. And here I may tell you what kind of country Greece is."

"Oh! do, if you please, uncle."

"The interior consists of large valleys and plains, enclosed by very lofty mountains. On the coast are many gulfs and bays, and the shores are covered with the brightest verdure, while vineyards, loaded with grapes or currants, adorn the sloping hills. Laurels, roses and myrtles, cover the plains; and citrons, oranges, almonds, raisins, figs, and other fruits, are yielded by its soil."

"That would be just the place for me, then," said Percy.

"The mulberry-tree, too, is cultivated for the silkworm, from which there is obtained a considerable quantity of silk."

"What kind of animals are there in Greece?" asked Percy; "for Miss Grove told us one day

that she saw some jackals when she was staying there with her father."

"As I crossed one of the plains I saw sheep in large flocks, guarded by shepherds with very fierce dogs. I also saw some jackals, and heard them howling as they prowled about at night. They lie in caves during the day, and at night make their way into houses to steal what they can find. But they soon betray themselves. For if a jackal be heard outside howling, the one within is sure to answer him, and so the thief is detected, and is quickly driven off with a cane."

The young people laughed, and said it served Mr. Jackal just right.

"Besides jackals, there are in the forests, stags, wolves, lynxes, and foxes; hares, wild cats, and chamois."

"I should be very sorry to meet a wild cat," said Percy.

"There are also to be seen on the mountains and in the plains, finches, eagles, nightingales, owls, and falcons."

"Is Greece a warm country like Malta?" asked Percy.

"Not unlike it," observed Mr. Rushton. "Towards the end of the summer the heat dries up the streams, and the hills and fields appear parched. But even then, in many parts of the country, springs may be seen gushing out of the

rocks. While we are shivering round our fires, in the southern part of Greece the people are enjoying themselves, under the trees, in the open air. As a rule, at all seasons of the year you might walk about with your hat off."

"Oh, that would be just the thing for Percy," said Mary.

"That it would," rejoined her brother; "but it would not suit me if there is no snow."

"You would never see any except on the tops of the mountains. While in the country, I paid a visit to Mount Hymettus, with its flower-decked slopes and rocky cavities, rich with the pure honey of its bees; and Pentelicus, famed for its marble; the lofty Olympus, with its pine-covered sides; Parnassus, the seat of the Muses of the ancients; and the picturesque and graceful Helicon, with its woods and slopes. So much for a general idea of Greece."

"Thank you, uncle," said Richard; "but what kind of people are the Greeks?"

"Then you are not satisfied yet, Richard. Well, well; if I give you my candid opinion, the Greeks are, many of them, active and industrious—others are wild and lawless—while of a large number, it may be said, as Saint Paul said of the Cretans, 'They are always liars.'"

"Uncle, that is a bad name."

"I grieve to give it to them; but in their commercial pursuits, very many of them practise

great cunning and deception. Numbers of the people are sailors; and you may see young Greeks at a very early age practising on the water, and gliding in boats over the bay before their fathers' cottage doors. The people live in low mud cabins; but the more wealthy have generally houses of wood or stone. The Greek natives are considered handsome, being swarthy, and having usually black hair and eyes."

"And what is their religion?" asked Richard.

"That of the Greek Church, of which I may give you an account some day; like the Roman Catholic religion, it is a superstitious perversion of Christianity. Let us hope, however, since the Bible is free in Greece, that the Gospel, which was, in the time of the apostles, foolishness to the Greek, may prove ere long the power of God to their salvation."

"I am sure I hope so," said Mrs. Mayfield. "I feel deeply interested in that people, and daily pray that they may, by the Spirit of God, be brought to love the truth as it is in Jesus."

"Amen," added Uncle Rushton. "And now, my dear children, I need scarcely tell you that Athens as it is, is very different from Athens as it was. The city was originally built on a rocky hill in the midst of a large and fertile plain. As the people increased, the houses gradually extended into the plain, until Athens became a city little short of twenty-two miles

round. The hill, or oldest part of the city, was called the Acropolis, or upper city.

"From the Acropolis I looked round upon some of the remains of former greatness. I saw the ruins of the splendid Parthenon: sixteen marble columns, rising sixty feet in the air, which are all that are left of the 144-columned temple of Jupiter Olympus. I saw also the temple of Theseus, which seems only to have received slight injury by lightning. It was built of Pentelic marble, 450 B.C."

"But didn't you see Mars' Hill?" asked Richard.

"I did. It is an eminence near the middle of the city, on which the famous court of the Areopagus used to assemble; near it is the Pnyx —a platform hewn out in the rock, where the public assemblies of the Athenians were held: the Bema for the orator may still be seen looking towards the Agora, or public place.

"As I stood there, I thought of what took place on the spot more than 1,800 years ago, while Paul waited at Athens for Silas and Timotheus, whom he had left behind him at Berea. He saw the city full of idols; he felt stirred, and pitied the people; and so he began to reason in the synagogue with the Jews. He also met some devout Greeks in his walks, and spoke to them; and so it soon became known that there was such a man as Paul in the city.

He met some in the market-place, and discussed with them daily, for the people were famous for crowding into the public places to catch passing news. At length he was brought before the Areopagus, the highest court in Athens, which, among other things, paid special attention to what was called impiety, or blaspheming against the gods. The accusation was, 'he seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods.' Paul had preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection; and the consequence was, that Dionysius, one of the Areopagus, a woman named Damaris, and others were converted.

"But I must bid you good night, just telling you that now, upon the ruins of the celebrated Athens of old, a new city is rising, and a splendid palace of white marble. Let us hope that it may become ere long a city of which it may be said, The Lord is there."

"Now, dear children," said Mrs. Mayfield, "your father has put into my hands a book which he wishes us to read to-morrow; for he intends to tell us a little about Arabia and the Bedouins in the evening. Are you prepared to meet me in the morning, at nine o'clock, that we may read it through? It is not large; and is called 'The Arab.'"

The young people cheerfully agreed to do as requested, and, shortly after family prayer had been conducted, retired to rest.

CHAPTER XVI.

A LITTLE ABOUT ARABIA AND THE BEDOUINS.

"WELL, children," inquired Captain Mayfield, who was anxious to discover how much the young people remembered of what they read, "what are some of the worst things the Arabs have to endure?"

"Heat, thirst, and wind," said Richard.

"And what are some of the most pleasant things they enjoy?"

"Water and beautiful green grass," replied Percy.

"And," added Mary, "a shade from the hot sun."

"Very well; then I suppose Arabia is a country where there are at different times, and in different places, scorching heat, suffocating winds, and green valleys, with some wells and rills of water?"

"Yes, father: but there is not *much* water," said Richard; "for the book says that the greater part of Arabia consists of barren rock and sandy desert."

"Quite right. I dare say, however, you also

read, that though there is seldom any rain in the low parts of the country, yet that dews are abundant in the mountainous parts, and springs too. At a certain season rain falls in these parts, which flows down in little torrents through the valleys, forming oases, or green spots in the desert."

"I often wondered what oases were, father," said Mary; "but I shall know now."

"Are there any trees in Arabia?" inquired Percy.

"The fields around Minna are crowded with almond, citron, walnut, and orange trees, which yield a very delicious scent. The coffee plant, with its evergreen leaves, white flowers, and red berries, grows to the greatest perfection on the mountains of Hadje. But the date palm is to the Arab, in the vegetable world, what the camel is in the animal world. Rearing its stem and expanding its broad and beautiful shade in the valleys among the mountains, where there is nothing else to shelter man from the burning rays of the sun, this tree is hailed by the wanderer with more pleasure than any other tree in any other situation. Nor is it for its shade, or even for its fruit alone, that this palm is so valuable in Arabia: wherever a little group of palms contrast their bright green with the red wilderness around, there may the traveller be sure to find some cooling spring or stream of water.

And while the fruit affords the chief support for the Arab, its wood serves for rafters or firewood, its fibres for ropes, and its leaves for cages, baskets, boxes, cradles, and even bedsteads. The kernels are soaked in water, and given to the camels, cows, and sheep, instead of barley. Other useful shrubs and plants grow in Arabia: the acacia, which produces gum arabic; the castor-oil and senna-plants; and the opobalsam, which yields the balm of Gilead, mentioned in Scripture; there are besides various shrubs from which dyes are made."

"Have not the Arabs beautiful horses too?" inquired Percy.

"Yes; and they are famed for their swiftness, sagacity, and attachment to their masters. Their masters are also very fond of them: they treat them like children; give them some of their own food to eat; they let them drink milk out of their own bowls, and sleep beside their own children. The camel also is of great service to the Arabs. It has been called the living ship of the desert. There are two kinds — the Arabian camel is called a dromedary, and usually carries only one person, but is as swift as the horse, and will travel day after day with little rest: another kind is larger and stronger, and carries all the things which are needed in journeying through the desert."

"Father," interrupted Percy, "the book we

have been reading says that Job lived in Arabia; do you think he did?"

"It is generally considered that he did; and his description of the wild ass so exactly agrees with its character, and with that of the country, that it seems to be almost certain. By the bye, Richard, can you tell me what great person went through a part of this country, at the head of a whole nation, and wrote an account of his journeys?"

"Do you mean Moses, father?"

"Yes; it was in this land that Moses saw the bush burning, yet not consumed; here, the prophet Elijah sought a refuge from his persecutors: and in the district of Sinai, as it is called, the Israelites wandered forty years. You see, therefore, that the more you know about Arabia and the Arabians, the better you will understand some parts of the Scriptures; for portions of the Bible were written by men who lived in this and a similar country.

"But I must tell you something about the Arabs. There are two classes of people who inhabit Arabia—the Hooderee, or dwellers in towns; and the Bedawee (Bedouin), or dwellers in tents. I shall tell you a little about the latter. It is said in the Bible that Ishmael would be a wild man: that his descendants would be numerous; that his hand should be

against every man, and every man's hand against him: and all this has been fulfilled. The Bedouin is an inhabitant of the desert, and prides himself in being as free as the wind in all his movements. He will not submit to the rule of any other people. He carries his tent and property about with him. It is a pretty sight to behold an Arab encampment. In the evening, the valley is sprinkled over with black tents, near a well or a spring; the servants are watering the flocks, the aged men are seated in dignity, and the aged women are preparing their evening meal, amid a chorus of noises—the bellowing of the camels, the braying of the asses, the bleating of the sheep and goats, and the barking of the shepherd dogs. But if you look for this cheerful busy scene in the morning, it will not be found: all will have removed in search of fresh pasture, putting us in mind of the words of Hezekiah—'Mine age is departed, and removed from me as a shepherd's tent;' that is, my health, which was so fair and promising, has vanished, and I am about to die."

"What do the Arabs eat?" inquired Percy; "and how do they dress?" added Mary.

"The dress of the Bedouins consists of a coarse cotton shirt, over which is worn a woollen cloak. The more wealthy wear a long gown of silk or cotton stuff. A turban is

worn on the head, but they seldom have anything on their feet. The women wear cotton gowns of blue, brown, or black, and a kerchief on their head. Their food consists of rice, milk, dates, butter, and flour. The locust, too, is prepared for food, and is eaten in almost all parts of the country. You know that John the Baptist, when in the wilderness, fed upon 'locusts and wild honey.'

"The Arabs are very hospitable and courteous. A stranger is saluted with 'Peace be with you!' and they pronounce on his departure a simple 'Farewell.' And they can speak of no one in higher terms than to say, 'The fire never goes out on his kitchen hearth, but is always burning to cook for the stranger, his guest.' And if you want to go through the desert safely alone, the tribe with which you have made friends will pass you to another at peace with them, and you may thus go on in safety. To say, 'I have eaten bread with such a tribe,' is quite enough to secure their friendship."

"I thought you said their hand was against every man," said Mary.

"This is true of the Arabs. They are almost always at war with each other—frequently fighting about wells or watering places: and, as I once told you, on the great caravan routes, many arm themselves and rob the

passers-by. Even the pilgrims on their way to Mecca are often robbed."

"Why do people go to Mecca?" inquired Richard.

"The religion of the Mohammedans requires it. The founder of their system was born there; and those who have never visited Mecca are considered to be as bad as heathens. The temple of Mecca is nearly in the middle of the city. At Medina is another mosque, not so large as that at Mecca. Here is the tomb of Mohammed, at which the Mohammedans vainly offer their petitions to him.

"But I must close my account now, with the prayer that the Arabs, instead of performing pilgrimages to Mecca, may soon be gathered into the fold of Christ."

CHAPTER XVII.

PERSIA.

THE next day, Percy and Richard and their sister were amusing themselves by looking out upon the fields through pieces of coloured glass. "The ground and trees all seemed covered with snow," said Percy. "My glass," added Richard, "makes everything look beautifully green like spring." "And it is like summer in mine," said Mary; while Rose, who was spending the holidays with her cousin, declared that everything looked "like autumn."

"And I," said Mr. Rushton, who overheard their conversation, "I have 'seen through *my* glass all the four seasons at once."

"Where, uncle?" inquired the little group, eagerly.

"In Persia. The highest mountains, with their snow-covered tops, appeared like winter; while the mountains which were not quite so high, clad in light evergreens, wore all the freshness of spring. The hills lower still looked as if all the shrubs and plants had been burned

up by a hot summer sun; and some of the valleys, with their ripe wheat and beautiful orchards, reminded me of autumn."

"What kind of a country is Persia?" said Richard. "I should call it a very singular country."

"It consists chiefly of rocky mountains, salt lakes, and sandy deserts. But there are to be found spots where all kinds of fruit grow in abundance, and gardens and fields where there are quantities of roses, and most delicious fruits with the loveliest flowers."

"It is just the country for Mary and cousin Rose then," said Captain Mayfield; "for they are both very fond of flowers."

"I think they would all enjoy a visit to some of the Persian gardens, which are generally plantations of shady trees and flowering shrubs, especially roses, of which the people are very fond. These gardens are refreshed by pools and fountains of water, and remind one of the gardens of Solomon, mentioned in the book of Ecclesiastes (ii. 5, 6). The humblest of the Persians has his patch for a flower-garden: and the vegetables and fruits cultivated by them are very good. The country around the city of Ispahan is adorned with large and handsome pigeon-houses, which are kept up at a great expense, for the sake of the manure, which is considered best for the growth of

melons. These houses are large round towers, in the form of a sugar-loaf, painted and ornamented on the outside. Inside, they are like honeycombs, each of the cells forming a snug retreat for the pigeons. At the top of the towers are holes, down which, as down a chimney, the birds descend to their little homes. The great numbers of pigeons which sometimes may be seen alighting on one of these towers look at a distance like a cloud, and bring to mind the words of Isaiah, when he is prophesying of the numbers who shall at last join the Church of God: 'Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?'" *

"I like to hear about any country," said Richard, "that explains some of the verses of the Bible."

"There are many things connected with Persia, and the customs of its inhabitants, which illustrate the sacred Scriptures; and I am glad you feel interested in them. As you walk through the streets of a Persian city, you seem to be going between nothing but dreary mud walls, with here and there a gate or doorway in them. These gates are an evidence of a man's standing in society, or his prudence. The high gate is a token of wealth. A man having a large gateway or door will be envied by many below him, and some who are better

* Isaiah lx. 8.

off will try to find an excuse for robbing him. The wise man says, 'He that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction'" (Prov. xvii. 19).

"Is Persia a hot country, uncle?" inquired Mary; "because cousin Rose says people sometimes sleep on the tops of their houses."

"In warm weather many do; and, as their roofs are flat, they can do so very comfortably. The climate of Persia varies, being colder in some districts than in others. In some parts of the country, after a very warm day, the nights and mornings are very cool; so that I can well understand the complaint of Jacob to Laban, when he said, 'In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night'" (Gen. xxxi. 40).

"The Persian houses must be very beautiful, I should think," said Richard, "if they are anything like what I have read about."

"The houses of the rich are built of sun-dried bricks, plastered outside with mud; they stand in the midst of flowers, and shrubs, and bubbling fountains, and have ornamental pavements richly carpeted, and walls beautifully white, with ceilings of painted wood. The poor may be said to 'dwell in houses of clay;' for their dwellings are made of mud, and there is only a hole in the top to let in a few streaks of light, and let out the smoke. To such houses, probably, Job alludes in the

fourth chapter of his book and the nineteenth verse.

"But I must tell you about the palace. In the Palace of Teheran are a number of courts, separated from each other by high walls or houses; there are beautiful pools and fountains of water, and paved walks bordered with plane-trees, having flower-beds between them. One of the reception halls stands between two courts; and its sides are open from the ceiling to the floors, with curtains, which may be drawn up or let down at pleasure; while the roof is supported by pillars. Each end of this room is covered with small looking-glasses, so that when a person enters he may see a thousand images of himself. Another hall has a beautiful window of stained glass on one side, and a large glass fountain in the centre. The hall where the king appears on great occasions contains a marble throne, supported by marble figures of human beings, and the open front of the room is adorned with marble pillars. Besides the royal residence, and many other apartments, there is the record chamber—a room always provided in ancient times in the Persian palaces; and the treasure chamber, of which we read in Ezra vi. 1, 2. There are also 'the palace of the sun,' where the king sometimes receives ambassadors; and private chambers, one of which is called 'the palace of the cypress grove,' which

reminds us of the apartment in Solomon's palace called 'the house of the forest of Lebanon' (1 Kings vii. 2). There are also baths, gardens, and a number of other buildings.

"Once a year what is called the festival of Nurooz is held. It lasts three days. Every one, on meeting his friend in the morning, wishes him 'a happy festival,' in the same manner as we wish each other 'a merry Christmas,' or 'a happy new year.' The rich make presents to the poor, and others offer gifts one to another of oranges, flowers, and other trifles. Persons of all ranks assemble within the walls of the court of the palace; some in rags, and some in robes of honour; servants in splendid coats, and soldiers in military dress. In the centre of a large open space, shaded with trees, stands a fine building, where the king receives the homage of his subjects. In front of it are canals and pools of water, adorned with fountains, about which are spread oranges, pears, grapes, and dried fruits, heaped on plates, and set close together like a chain, or with vases of beautiful wax flowers between them. On either side are Persians of rank, in dresses of gold and silver brocade, having shawls of all colours and values bound round their heads. The king, as he is seated on his throne, looks truly majestic. He is one blaze of jewels: his diadem is of precious stones of various colours, his robe of

gold tissue, decorated with jewels. Over each shoulder is a string of pearls, on each arm a jewelled bracelet, and around his waist a jewelled band,—these shine like fire when the rays of the sun fall on them. The king sits upon his heels, in the fashion of his country, on a throne of pure white marble, carpeted with shawls and gold cloth. His back is supported by a cushion encased in a network of pearl. The interior of the apartment in which the throne stands is adorned with carving and gilding, and with a mirror which gleams and glitters from the roof to the floor. As the king approaches his throne, the people continue bowing their heads till he is seated. A dead silence follows: suddenly the astrologers and mollahs, in a loud voice, enumerate the king's titles, dominions, and glorious acts, and praise his courage, liberality, and extended power. This being finished, the heads still bowing, there is a short pause, and then his Majesty addresses the people. There is much in this ceremony to call to our recollection the account which is given of Herod's appearance before his people arrayed in royal apparel; for the Persians ascribe to their king much that can be said of God alone.

"Another occasion on which the king appears in great state is when he gives audience to foreign ambassadors. An English ambassador

says, that having passed through two or three courts, and some long passages in which were soldiers and attendants, whose clothes were spotted over with pieces of gold money, he entered the building in which was the hall of audience, and, having shaken off his slippers, he went bowing at intervals till he saw his Majesty seated on his peacock throne."

"A peacock throne!" exclaimed Mary; "what is it like, uncle?"

"It is a golden throne, studded on the sides with precious stones of every possible tint; at the back there is an imitation of the glory of the sun, in garnets, diamonds, and rubies. At each end of the throne is perched a peacock, composed of the same kind of stones. The king wore a scarlet dress, embroidered with pearls and sparkling jewels. Near to the throne stood the young princes, like statues, serious and grave as judges. There were also secretaries and other ministers of state and officers in attendance, one of whom held a crown of rubies, diamonds, and garnets, like the one worn by the king; another the scimitar of state, a third the royal bow, a fourth the shield, and a fifth a golden tray full of diamonds and precious stones. The ambassador, after introducing his friends, and conversing awhile with the king, retired, bowing towards the throne at intervals, till out of the king's sight, when he put on his

slippers again, and made his way out through a crowd of guards and officers of the palace, some of whom held wands of gold enamelled green, with a figure of a bird as large as a sparrow at the top of them, which was made of emeralds, rubies, and other precious stones."

"Why did the ambassador take off his shoes?" inquired Percy.

"It is a mark of civility and respect among the Persians to remove the shoes on entering any room; and they attach the same meaning to it as we do to taking off our hats. It is also a matter of cleanliness: for they sit on their floors and eat from them; and it would be disagreeable to eat from a floor on which a person had been walking with soiled shoes. In going before the king, it is necessary that the shoes be removed before he is visible to you, as his presence is considered to give a kind of sacredness to the place.

"Persia, my dear children, possesses the gifts of nature in rich abundance, and has many treasures; but wants the richest blessing that can be bestowed on any country—the Christian religion—the religion of the Bible. Let us pray that the people may speedily find that 'wisdom' which 'is more precious than rubies,' and compared with which Solomon esteemed gardens and pools of water, and fountains and orchards, as vanity and vexation of spirit.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

PLACES AND PEOPLE IN INDIA.

MR. RUSHTON, having spent some two years in India, promised his nephews and niece a short account of that country and its people. When, therefore, the tea-things were removed, and the family were gathered around a bright glowing fire, Mary whispered in her uncle's ear, "Will you please to tell us now about your visit to India?"

"Cheerfully," said her uncle. "If you can remember three P.'s—Places, People, Productions."

"We shall be quite able to do that," said Percy, slowly repeating the words.

"If you bear in mind these three words, you will not forget *all* I tell you. The first place I saw in India was Madras, and the first view I had of it was from the ship. You may be sure, that when our vessel had arrived, I was among the foremost to look out. The first thing I saw was a catamaran approaching us, tossing up and down, turning on its side and then righting itself again."

"A catamaran?" exclaimed Percy. "What is that?"

"It is a raft made of three cocoa-nut trees tied together with strong ropes, the middle tree being longer than the others and forming a kind of prow. Three natives were kneeling on it, one of whom had in his hands a short paddle, which he plied first one side and then on the other. As it came along, the men sometimes seemed as though they were walking on the water. They had been sent out by the chief officer of Madras, with the rules to be observed in the roads and the directions for anchorage. We were all very curious to see a native Hindoo, and when the messenger came on board he was very closely observed."

"The Hindoos are black people, are they not, uncle?" inquired Richard.

"Their colour varies from a very light to a very dark brown, almost a black. The beach was covered with people of all shades, and behind it was a long line of public offices and storehouses. At a distance was Fort St. George, where the Europeans live, with its lines and bastions, also the Government house and gardens, backed by St. Thomas's Mount. The flag of Old England was waving in the breeze, reminding me of my own dear country. And here and there in the distance, towers and

pagodas could be seen, a sure sign that I was come to a land of idolatry."

"What are pagodas?" inquired Mary.

"They are idol temples, some of which are very extensive. Arrived on shore, I was congratulated by an English friend on my safe passage from the ship in a boat which was only sewed together."

"*Sewed* together!" exclaimed Mary. "I should not have got into such a boat."

"I was told by this gentleman that the boats are planks strongly sewed together with cocoa-nut fibre, and are the best for that kind of service. Once on shore," continued Mr. Rushton, "I lost no time in jumping into a palankeen, to be conveyed to my new home; for it was very hot, and I was glad to rest—while tea, toast, eggs, and fruits, were being got ready for my breakfast."

"What kind of thing is a palankeen, uncle?" inquired Percy.

"It is like the body of a small omnibus, with sliding doors and blinds. At each end is a pole, so as to enable it to be carried. In one of these carriages I have travelled forty miles in twelve hours, and in the course of my journey was carried on the shoulders of the bearers across a deep and rapid river."

"O uncle!" exclaimed Mary; "how frightened I should have been."

"After my breakfast, which I much enjoyed, I went to that part of Madras which is called Black Town, or the town of the natives. It has tolerably wide streets, and in some places is lined with rows of palm-trees. The houses, like those of the natives in other parts of India, are built of mud with flat roofs. If the owner is poor there are only two rooms; if rich, it forms a square with an opening in the centre. What would you think, Mary, of a house with no boarded floors, no papered walls, no chairs, no tables, no earthen or china ware, no carpet, no bedsteads?"

"I should think it a very sad place, uncle."

"Yet this is the case (except among the great) with the Hindoos."

"Then how do they manage?" inquired Percy.

"Most of the natives sleep on mats made from the leaves of the palmyra-tree. As for chairs, if you gave one to a Hindoo he would be right glad to sit in his own way upon it, cross-legged; but would much rather squat on the floor. His plate generally consists of the leaf of a plantain or a water-lily, from which he eats his rice and curry with his fingers; and, when his meal is finished, he throws his plate away."

"Uncle," said Richard, "will you tell us how the Hindoos look, and how they dress?"

"If you should meet a man of middle size, with a soft black eye, a mild expression, and of a dusky brown complexion, having on his head a turban of bright colours and graceful folds, and a white calico frock-coat with a flowing robe of the same, and red slippers down at the heel on his feet, you might set him down for a respectable Hindoo. If you should invite him to visit you, he will take off his shoes instead of his turban, and leave them at some distance from the door, and you may often see a man bowing down till his head touches the ground."

"How strange," said Percy. "They do almost everything differently from us."

"The Hindoos," continued Mr. Rushton, "used to have no schools for girls, because they are taught by their priests to look upon females as inferior to males. A woman may not go out of doors, nor look out of the windows without leave, nor laugh without a veil over her face. The wife waits upon her husband, nor would she think of eating till he had done; and then she has only what he has left."

"What a shame!" said Mary; "I cannot love the Hindoos for that."

"We ought to be very thankful for the Gospel, which teaches us to be kind and tender-hearted one to another, in honour preferring

each other; and we should pity and pray for the Hindoo, and help to send the Bible to him, by which he may learn a more excellent way."

"Did you go to Calcutta and Bombay while you were in India?" Richard asked.

"Yes, I visited both these places, besides other towns and cities. Bombay is situated on a small rocky island. The name means 'good harbour;' it is one of the finest in the world, and accessible at all seasons, and is the seat of ship-building in India; but to any one who has seen Calcutta there is little that is attractive in Bombay. Calcutta is the capital of all India. It is situated on the river Hooghly, about a hundred miles from the sea. The Hooghly is a branch of the river Ganges.

"The parade is adorned with numerous buildings, among which are the Government house and the town hall. As in Madras, the houses are white; palankeens, coaches, buggies, and hackries fill the streets. The white dresses and various-coloured girdles of the Mussulman servants give a brilliance to the scene, while the snow-white robes of the Brahmin lawyers, clerks, and shopkeepers are a striking contrast to their own dark skins. The houses of the Europeans are built of brick, and there is generally a little furniture and a

bedstead, and the floors are covered with neat matting. There is no ceiling, the reason for which I will tell you another time. Garden Reach, with its spacious and elegant houses, their shrubberies and lawns, is a truly delightful part of Calcutta, and the rides around the city are very pleasant.

"But," said Mr. Rushton, looking at his watch, "my young friends, I must stop my talking, for I have some writing to do before bedtime. As we have had only two of the P.'s to-night—People and Places—I will tell you a little about Productions to-morrow."

"O thank you, uncle," said Richard, "I am sure you must have a very great deal more to tell us yet; and to-morrow will suit us nicely, for it is our half-holiday."

CHAPTER XIX.

SOMETHING MORE ABOUT INDIA.

ON the following afternoon, Mr. Rushton found the young people seated with their mother in the arbour. He listened, and heard the word palm-trees; "Ah!" said he, smiling, "it is all very well for people in Old England to sit in their summer-houses, and talk about the sunny east and shady palm-trees, and wish they were in India. But in India no one will go out of doors in the day-time, unless obliged to do so; and I am quite certain that, if Mary wanted to go out, she would have to take a large umbrella to keep the sun off, or else jump into a palankeen."

"An umbrella to keep the sun off," exclaimed Mary, "then I am sure I would rather stay at home; I should get so hot carrying it. If it is so hot, I wonder the English can live there at all."

"By taking care what food they eat, and by habits of caution, foreigners may get used to the climate. Their houses are large, and in Madras and Bombay are built near the sea-side; mats, kept constantly wet, are hung outside the doors

and windows, to cool the hot air as it passes in. There are also Venetian blinds to the windows; and a punkah, or large fan, is kept in motion overhead by a servant, who sits on the verandah or in the next room."

"Is there no cold weather in India?" asked Percy.

"The climate of India varies from a great summer heat to a winter cold of short duration. But only two seasons—wet and dry—divide the year. India has been called 'an epitome of the world,' on account of its variety of climate, soil, and productions. It includes snowy ridges on some of the mountains; there are sandy deserts, stony wastes, and salt morasses; beautiful meadows, large tracts of jungle and forest, rich pastures, fields of rice and wheat, and valleys adorned with every useful vegetable product."

"I do not think," said Percy, "I should so much mind living in India, after all."

"But," continued Mr. Rushton, "nowhere do hurricanes rage with greater fury; nowhere is the lightning's flash more vivid, or the peal of thunder more dreadful. During the rainy season, too, the floods are at times very fearful. Rivers overflow, lakes burst their banks, and torrents of water rush over the low lands, sweeping everything before them, levelling the poor natives' houses, and burying their flocks beneath the wave."

"O uncle!" said Percy; "first you make us want to go to India, and then you tell us things which would make us rather stay in England."

"It is right that I should inform you of what you may expect if you should at any time visit that country. Indoors there are many things to guard against. 'Beware,' said a Hindoo, 'how you put your hand into that jar—there may be a scorpion in it;' and I found that caution, in this respect, was needful. There must be a brass cup, filled with oil or water, under the feet of the sideboard, to prevent the ants from getting at the food. Great care must be taken with bureaus, bedsteads, sofas, etc., to prevent the white ants from invading them; they are the most destructive of insects: they will get into a box of books, or a chest of clothes, or anything else that may be left exposed, and eating their way like a mole beneath the surface, they will go on destroying till nothing but the shell is left. They have been known so to eat out the inside of a great beam of wood that, when it was trodden on, it crumbled to powder."

"O uncle!" said Percy; "they must be very dangerous things to get into a house."

"Indeed they are. To guard against them, boxes are placed on stone or metal supports, books are bound in Russia leather, or often removed and brushed, and the beams of dwellings are saturated with tar; for there are no

ceilings. In India, too, you must have muslin hanging around you in bed, or your night's rest may be disturbed by the buzz and bite of mosquitoes; and on getting up it is as well to look into your shoe, for a small snake or scorpion may have made it his bed-chamber."

"I should like very well to see these creatures," said Richard; "but I cannot say that I should like to be obliged to live where they abound."

"To see a lizard or two staring down upon you from the roof is not very agreeable; but so long as they keep at a respectful distance they produce but little effect on even the most timid. At night fire-flies glitter among the boughs of the banyan-trees, and the spreading tamarind and other trees are sometimes so completely covered with them as to appear like mountains of light. There are also many other insects, some of which are very curious, especially the creeping leaf."

"Are there any wild beasts in India?" inquired Percy.

"Yes, in the northern provinces. I have seen elephants running wild in droves, and tame ones drawing cannon, or bearing on their broad backs the tent of some nabob reclining on his gilded cushion. I have seen camels and wild asses in the sandy regions of the north-west, and in the jungles the nimble and daring tiger. There,

too, I first had a view of the clumsy rhinoceros, feeding on the coarse grass; besides which, I saw panthers, leopards, hyenas, Cashmere goats, and other animals."

"Cashmere goats!" said Mary; "why, that puts me in mind of Cashmere shawls."

"It is from the wool of these animals that such shawls are made. I saw, too, the large rough-horned buffalo drawing the plough. Near the bazaars may be found the Brahminy bull, which is allowed to do what it pleases; for to strike one of these animals the foolish Hindoo believes would be a sin; so that if one of them steals his grain, the poor fellow only begs and prays of it to desist."

"Why is that, uncle?" asked Mary.

"Because they think it a sacred animal, Monkeys, too, are worshipped by the Hindoos, who bring rice and sweetmeats to them. Many of the cities, towns, and villages abound with these lively chattering creatures. The cobra da capello (of which I saw many) is another creature held sacred by the Hindoos: they call it the 'good serpent.' I also saw peacocks, parroquets, and cockatoos, and many other creatures, of which I cannot now even give you a list."

"I am very fond of natural history," said Richard. "I hope you will tell me more about Indian animals another day."

"With pleasure, Richard. Mary, too, I will help with her lessons in botany. Some of the vales abound with many sorts of roses and flowering jessamines; and on the mountain sides, or in the deep valleys, may be seen the violet, primrose, buttercup, and lily. In India there are forests of teak, which is used for ship-building; there are jungles of bamboo, and also cocoa-nut trees, which supply the natives with food, with oil for their lamps, thatch for their huts, and cloaks for the rainy season. There is also an abundance of palms. The leaf of the great fan-palm furnishes a roof for the native's cottage. The rice-paper plant also abounds in Bengal; and last, but not least, the banyan-tree, or Indian fig—a little grove in itself—is common in India. The Hindoos pay homage to this tree, believing that their god Vishnoo was born beneath its spreading branches: temples are erected near it, and images placed beneath its shade.

"I could tell you much more about the products of India; but I must say a little about Population. I may add, however, that we are indebted to India for sugar, coffee, pepper, and many other articles of daily use; besides diamonds and other precious gems.

"The population of India," continued Mr. Rushton the next evening, "consists of native Hindoos, Afghans, Arabs, Syrian Christians,

Persians, East Indians, and Europeans; among whom no less than eighteen languages are in constant use. But what I am going to tell you about the people of India will not apply to all those I have named."

"I see, uncle," observed Richard, "you are going to tell us a little more about the *real* Indians."

"Exactly so; and I have given you the word population in order to help you to remember that the people who live in India are not all Hindoos. There are 130 millions of people."

"I shall think of population," said Percy; "and then I shall remember how many different people there are in India, and what you say about the Hindoos."

"Now for a little about professions. By this word you are to think of arts and occupations. If you were to enter an Indian village at an early hour in the morning, you might see a farmer going to his work, carrying on his shoulder the yoke and plough, which he keeps steady with one hand, while with the other he holds the rope-reins fastened to his tiny bullocks. The Hindoo's plough consists of two rude sticks, with an iron spike at the end, which the ploughman guides with one hand—thus making a rut or scratch in the ground."

"Why do they not have ploughs like us?" asked Percy.

"The Hindoos consider ancient custom a law which cannot be altered: and are opposed to all improvements. A Hindoo farmer was once prevailed upon to use a plough which had been sent from England, but he soon gave it up and used his own again. Their prejudices, as railways and telegraphs are formed, will no doubt be got rid of. You have heard, Mary, of Dacca muslins, Malabar checks, Delhi embroideries, and Indian shawls, etc.?"

"O yes, uncle; aunt told me about them."

"These are made in a most simple manner. The weavers reside in villages, and when there is a demand for the articles they make, a busy scene arrests the attention. Men, women, and children, are all at work in the open air, except in silk-weaving, which is done in a cellar or lower floor. The loom consists of four forked sticks set in the ground, and two pieces across these sticks, to which the ends of the web are fastened. The treadles are but sticks and strings, which are tied to the tree which shelters the weaver, and he gets a foot into each of the two loops at the bottom, and thus he makes the most delicate and beautiful textures. Colouring, bleaching, etc., are done after a very simple fashion.

"The Hindoo carpenter has only a plane, chisel, wimble, hammer, and hatchet, for tools.

The earth is his shop-board, and his foot his hold-fast. The tools of the blacksmith are also very few: he sets up his shop before the house of any one who calls him, and makes to order spades, bill-hooks, ploughs, nails, locks, keys, etc. The goldsmith also carries about his shop with him. His furnace is an earthen pot, an iron pipe his bellows, while his crucible is made on the spot and thrown away when no longer needed. Shoemakers are esteemed the lowest in the community: a knife and an awl are their tools; and the leather is made after the shoes are ordered."

"How strange," said Mary; "I should think they are not good for much."

"Shoes are cheap, but very inferior. There are various other professions, some of which I have told you about before. But I must now tell you a little about Practices.

"The Hindoo does not think labour a pleasure. And yet, because to be idle is to be wretched, he relieves his weary hours, or gratifies his taste for the marvellous, by taking part in, or witnessing marriage ceremonies, amusements, sports, and religious festivals, hearing or telling stories, jugglery, etc."

"When we were learning the geography of India," interrupted Percy, "Miss Grove told us the river Ganges was worshipped by the Hindoos."

"Quite right; and the land of the Ganges may be called the *Holy Land* of the Hindoos. The touch, and even the sight of it, say the Shasters, removes all sin. Drowning in it is considered a sure passport to heaven. Thousands come here, or are brought, to die on its banks, or in its stream. One day in the year, even the fishes, tortoises, frogs, snakes, leeches, and snails in it are worshipped. Multitudes of little girls have been offered to the Ganges, and been devoured by crocodiles. The aged and the sick are laid on the shores, or placed on hurdles on its surface, and are left to perish. The mud and water are taken hundreds of miles on the shoulders of men, in sealed vessels, and sold at a high price, or presented to their chiefs, who pay them liberally. The people sprinkle themselves with the water, and daub themselves with the mud, in order, as they vainly suppose, to be cleansed from sin. At the mouth of the Ganges, where what they call the holiest branch enters the Indian Ocean, is Saugar Island. Twice in a year, in November and January, vast crowds throng here to perform ceremonies for their deceased friends, and practise their washings. In 1837 there were 60,000 boats, with 300,000 pilgrims, many from the remotest parts of India.

"But here my account of India and the Hindoos must end. May the time soon come

when they shall be cleansed by that which is holier than the waters of the Ganges, even by the blood of Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. Some have been converted to Christianity. Many children, too, have given up their family and caste for the Word of God. An intelligent Hindoo, writing of this fact, adds—'*Last week another boy lifted his wings and flew to the tree of the love of Christ.*' May you all soar away from things that are sinful, and find in Jesus Christ happiness and joy everlasting."

The young people separated for the night, after singing—

"What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile,
In vain with lavish kindness
The gifts of God are strown,
The heathen in his blindness
Bows down to wood and stone.

"Shall we whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation! oh salvation!
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till earth's remotest nation
Has learnt Messiah's name."

CHAPTER XX.

THE LONG-SEALED COUNTRY.

"UNCLE, have you been to Japan?" asked Richard, who had been amusing himself by trying to copy a picture of two Japanese dogs which hung up in the sitting-room.

"I have been to China, and some day may tell you something of that country. Your father has been both to Hong-Kong and to Jeddo, I believe; we must get him to tell us what he knows about Japan to-day."

"I shall be very pleased to tell you what I have seen and heard," said Captain Mayfield.

"Is it true, then," asked Percy, "that the people do not like foreigners?"

"The laws of their country forbid their writing or speaking to strangers; and, to prevent the people going abroad, their junks are made so slight that it would be dangerous to sail far away from their own shores."

"But," said Richard, "don't the English and Americans go there now?"

"A treaty of friendship has recently been

entered into by which the ports of Nangasaki and Hakodadi are open to the English, and those of Simoda and Hakodadi to the Americans. But still the seal is but half broken; for they may not go beyond a certain distance* from the place at which they are allowed to land, and whatever they buy must be delivered to them through the gayoshio, or government officer, who also receives the money paid for such goods, in the same way as the Dutch and Chinese have done for years."

"Why," asked Richard, "were the Dutch allowed to go there before the English and Americans?"

"Soon after the discovery of Japan by the Portuguese, the Jesuits went on a mission to the country, and many of the Japanese became Roman Catholics. At length, however, for some cause or other, they took offence at the Jesuits, and thousands of those who had embraced their religion were put to death: churches were pulled down; crosses were trampled on, and all that the Jesuits had introduced was destroyed; while the Portuguese were expelled. The Dutch are said to have assisted in putting many to death, and on this account they were considered not to be Christians, and were therefore allowed to visit the port of Nangasaki. However, they were only permitted

* Most of these restrictions are being gradually removed.

to land on a small island, called Desima, where they were shut in by palisades, and thus prevented going into the town,—the Japanese officers managing their business for them.

"The English are not now confined in so small a space; but still they must not go beyond a certain number of miles. Great care is taken to hinder foreigners from going into the inner land, as it is called, and all their movements are closely watched.

"Over the spot where a great number perished at the time of the persecution the Emperor set up this inscription: 'So long as the sun shall warm the earth, let no Christian be so bold as to come to Japan; and let all know that the King of Spain himself, or the Christian's God, or the great God of the universe, if He violate this command, shall pay for it with his head.'"

"Oh, how shocking!" exclaimed Mary.

"Indeed it was: but let us pray God to show mercy to the deluded Japanese. At present there is great prejudice against Christianity, whether it be real or false—they do not know any difference. Every Japanese is obliged to show his hatred to the Christian religion by trampling upon a cross. May they soon be taught to distinguish between true and false Christianity, and embrace that which teaches salvation through faith in Christ alone.

"But let us take a peep at the country. Here is a map of Asia. See if you can find Kamtchatka?"

"Oh, here it is!" cried Richard, "in the North Pacific Ocean."

"Well, you see a string of small islands leading from thence to some larger ones."

"Yes, father: the Kurile Islands, they are called."

"The northern portion of those islands belong to Russia, and the southern to Japan. The four large islands that these lead you to are what is called Japan Proper. What are their names?"

Percy reads—"Yeso, Niphon, Sikoke, and Kioosioo."

"Very well; but the empire of Japan consists of nearly four thousand more,—some of which, however, are little more than bare rocks. These islands have on them a number of hills and mountains, many of which are volcanoes."

"Then, I suppose, there are eruptions in Japan," said Percy.

"Yes, my dear; and earthquakes often happen, which are very destructive. The island of Niphon has frequently been visited by earthquakes. In 1854 the towns of Ohosaca and Simoda were destroyed; and Jeddo nearly so in 1856; while thousands of people have perished."

"How dreadful!" exclaimed Mary: "it would be as bad to live there as at the foot of Mount Vesuvius."

"And yet," said Captain Mayfield, "I do not feel sure that Mary would not like a peep at Niphon; for, approached from the sea, every acre of hill and dale seems well cultivated. The steepest eminences, being formed into terraces, look like hanging gardens. Some of them are so delightfully situated on the sloping hill-sides, amid the green foliage, that I think you would be almost tempted to wish you had your home among the Japanese hills."

"Japan must look pretty, indeed," said Mary: "I think I should like to spend just a week there."

"I have no doubt of that. In Japan the camphor-tree grows to an enormous size. There is one, the hollow trunk of which will hold fifteen persons. Then there are the varnish-tree and pepper shrub, the tea plant and cotton plant. Indeed, the tea plant, like the hawthorn in England, separates field from field. Rice and ginger, too, grow plentifully in that country."

"Father," said Percy, "do the Japanese make varnish of the varnish-tree?"

"The varnish-tree yields the gum which is used for lacquering, as it is called. And we

have derived the term japanning from the application of that gum by the Japanese."

"Japan is black, is it not, father?" asked Percy.

"Not necessarily so: the specimens of japanned articles to be seen, such as bowls, cups, trays, cabinets, and despatch boxes, are of different colours, and very beautiful. The process of lacquering is very tedious. The colour has to be mixed with varnish by rubbing on a copper plate. Five different coats, and even more, are put on the article, and suffered to dry, then finely pumiced until the lacquer is soft and brilliant as required. Mother-of-pearl shells are inlaid and polished in the same manner. Boiling water may be poured on Japan lacquer without hurting it, and the Japanese take hot soups and other dishes from vessels thus made."

"Are they a clever people?" asked Percy.

"They appear to be industrious, frugal, ingenious, and honest, and are far more dignified than the Chinese. As far as education goes, they are better informed than any people in Asia. Children are brought up in habits of implicit obedience, and all of every rank are sent to school, where they learn to read and write.

"At the age of fifteen years," continued Captain Mayfield, "the boys have their heads

shaved, and they then become members of society. They also receive a new name at this time, and whenever they advance in rank the old name is changed for a new one. Nor are these the only occasions when this change takes place; no subaltern is allowed to bear the same name with his chief; and, therefore, when an individual is appointed to a high station, every one under him who chances to be his namesake must immediately find and adopt a new name."

"Oh!" said Percy; "what a deal of trouble it must cause! But I should not like to have my head shaved."

"If you were in Japan, probably you would do as they do. The men in that country have a singular appearance. Their heads are shaven on the top in an oval, round which their hair is brushed up straight; it is pomatumed, and a tuft of hair, like a cigar in shape, is tied up from the back and lies on the bald place."

"They are a curious people," said Richard. "What do they eat?"

"Rice, vegetables, and fish, are their chief articles of food, and tea their principal drink. But now let me tell you something about their towns and villages."

"Do, if you please, father," said Mary; "but I should like to know first how the ladies are treated."

"I believe that they have nothing to complain of, and are treated as they should be. Among other things, one part of their education is to learn the rules laid down in a great book for arranging a nosegay, which varies in style according to the use to which the room is put."

"I should like that," said Mary; "for I do love flowers."

"But, then, you like to arrange them in your own way," said Richard.

"Why, yes," said Mary; "I certainly should like to do as I pleased with them."

"In some of the streets of Japan," Captain Mayfield continued, "old women, may be seen arranging their warps for weaving, with black teeth and no eyebrows."

"No eyebrows, father!" exclaimed Mary; "and black teeth!"

"Yes, for they pull out their eyebrows on marriage. Indeed, when a young lady accepts the offer of marriage from a young man, to assure him of her consent she blackens her teeth. Presents, according to Eastern custom, are then exchanged; and after, with great ceremony, burning her toys, to show that she is to be no longer childish, her parents give her a marriage dress and some articles of household furniture, among which are always a spinning-wheel, a loom, and the culinary implements

required in a Japanese kitchen—a gentle hint that she is expected to be industrious."

"And a very good hint, too," said Mrs. Mayfield; "perhaps it would be well if such were frequently the kind of presents, under such circumstances, at home."

"Maybe it would," said the Captain, and continued—"Let me tell you, too, that when a bride puts on her veil, she also puts on her shroud."

"How do you explain that?"

"The veil is preserved till her death, when it is made to serve for a shroud."

"The Japanese have some curious customs, then," said Richard.

"They have, indeed: they sit upon their heels, and bury their dead in a similar posture. No one wears a hat or a bonnet; but all, even the poorest, carry a large fan; and in wet weather many wear a rain cloak, called meno."

"A rain cloak!" cried Mary; "how is that made?"

"It consists of a number of tassels of a kind of mountain fern, hanging from the join of the meshes knit from the same material, and covered outside with green silk network.

"Another curious Japanese custom is, when two gentlemen meet each other, they bow, and continue bowing till out of each other's sight. Each wears a scarf, in length according to his

rank—the higher his rank the longer his scarf. Each bows till the end of the scarf touches the ground, so that a man of low rank has to bow much lower than the one of high rank."

"What sort of shops have they in Japan?" asked Mary.

"The fronts of the shops are closed with sliding screens of paper, oiled to admit the light, and the floors, raised about two feet from the ground, are covered with mat cushions, upon which the shopkeeper sits after the fashion of a Turk, having left his straw sandals at the door."

"Straw sandals!" exclaimed Percy.

"Yes; the Japanese only wear sandals; on entering a house they put them away as you would your umbrella or parasol; they wear only socks within doors."

"But I should not like to take off my shoes, if I went to a shop to buy anything," said Mary.

"You would scarcely be expected to do so at every shop you entered,—but if you stepped up on the platform, the shopkeeper would be sure to tell you that your 'leather shoon' would soil his mats; for they consider leather defiling; and all who work on leather are excluded from society, and obliged to live in villages by themselves.

"The streets of Samoda are narrow, and

where they cross there are gates, which may easily be shut in case of a riot. At these points are placed some stone structures, with roofs, protecting the laws, which are there posted so conspicuously that every one may read them."

"That is a very good plan," said Richard. "Do they have them so in all towns?"

"I believe this is the case, and also that the laws are read in the temples, so that all may become acquainted with them. Their laws are very cruel, almost all crimes being punished with death: in some cases the punishment extends to all the relations of the criminal.

"But I must say a little about the Japanese villages: they are all sheltered by tall fruit-trees, among which is the banana, which is like an apricot in taste; the cocoa-nut palm, from all parts of which the Japanese know how to reap benefit; the gigantic tamarind, loaded with pods; and the bamboo, which spreads as a fan over the roofs of the houses, protecting them from the rays of the sun. Near by, a small hedge of coffee-trees and shrubs yields various kinds of spices in sufficient quantities for the wants of the family.

"Now, if you will think of these magnificent woods, enlivened with the songs of thousands of birds, you will have a general idea of the con-

dition of a Japanese village home. The houses are built of rough beams, the intervals of which are filled in with bamboo, split and platted in various ways. The roof is covered with a kind of thatch made of the leaves of a native plant, and fixed along the laths, which are attached close together upon the bamboo which forms the body of the roof. The houses in the towns are generally built of wood and clay and straw, covered with cement, and stuccoed in blue and white diamond shapes. Their windows are of paper.

"If you went to a Japanese house, before you left you would receive some sweetmeats on a sheet of paper, and you would fold up and pocket what you could not eat. I am told that it is no uncommon thing for a servant to take a basket for his master to a dinner party, that he may carry home his master's portion."

"That seems very rude!" said Percy. "But what sort of a place is Hakodadi?"

"Hakodadi would not be unlike the Cape of Good Hope, if the hill at the back of the town were a little more flattened at the top. The view from this hill is very good. All around are grape vines; long trains of pack horses or oxen may be seen crossing the plain loaded with charcoal or other goods,—fishermen busy with their nets,—hundreds of junks in the bay,—the town like a narrow strip of houses on its shore,

while across the Strait of Sangar is the Island of Niphon, and all around the snow may be seen covering the mountain tops.

"The streets and roads are wide, nicely gravelled, and cleanly swept. But they are thronged with police, armed with swords, and there are plenty of miserable-looking dogs."

"Like the dogs in the picture, uncle?"

"Yes; just such pug-nosed and staring creatures. The buildings, like those of Samoda, are one story, the roofs being covered with pine shingles, not much larger than a man's hand, on which are placed rows of cobble stones, thick enough at times to hide everything else. Tubs of water stand on the gable peaks, with a broom or two in each, ready for use in case of fire.

"On the lintels and door-posts are ugly-looking pictures, which are placed there to keep off storms, fire, sickness, losses in trade, and anything else that is dreaded by the people. There is one found on almost every dwelling, *Tsuno Dai-shi Sama,* Lord of the Great Horn. The horns are intended to show his power to protect those who put their trust in him."

"Are the Japanese heathens, then?" asked Percy.

"Yes, my dear. Temples are built all over the country. In front of each temple is a large bell, which is sounded at certain hours of the day—as a signal when the priest goes to prayer. The

priest sits down in front of the altar. With a small taper burning, and with a small mallet in one hand, and a string of beads in the other, he begins to hum or half sing a certain number of words, 'Am Jam Am,' at the same time rapidly striking a wooden bell or tub, and then a copper one, and so alternately for an hour or so. There is no solemnity in this service; for if you go into a temple during prayer, the priest will get up and begin to laugh and ask questions, the same as though you had entered a shop. Sintooism is the religion of the learned Japanese, and a mixture of Buddhism and Sintooism that of the lower classes."

"What is Sintooism?" asked Richard; "I know what Buddhism is, because I have read about it in missionary books."

"The Sintooists do not worship images. But in their temples may be seen an altar, on which incense is burning, and a mirror—an emblem of the soul's perfect purity, or, as it is said by some, 'as plainly as the votary sees his own features in that mirror, so plainly do the spirits to whom he prays see his spiritual and temporal wants.' As the devotee enters the temple, he drops a few 'cash' into a box at the door, he then shakes a number of bells to draw the attention of the spirits to his prayers, and offers a sacrifice of fruit and rice."

"Then, I am sure I pity the poor Japanese," said Mary.

"And let us not forget him in our prayers, that he may be led to put his trust in God, and to seek pardon and peace through Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and men."

CHAPTER XXI.

A LITTLE ABOUT A LARGE COUNTRY.

"NOW," said Mrs. Mayfield, one evening, looking round with a kind smile upon the young people, "as your father and uncle are both out, it is my turn to try and interest you: I am going to tell you a very little about a large country."

Quickly the cheerful group gathered around, delighted at the idea of a peep at the United States, for that was what Mrs. Mayfield meant; she was once in that country.

"You will remember," said she, "that to Christopher Columbus belongs the honour of having discovered the continent of America."

"O yes," said Percy; "I have read all about it in the book you gave me, called 'Columbus and his Times.'"

"This continent has all the climates of the globe, and possesses millions of acres of land, with rivers and natural canals flowing through it—everything to assist trade and commerce. But it is only a portion of this great country that I have to tell you about. And I shall try

to prove, first, that the United States themselves are a very large country; and, then, that the people are using many efforts to improve the advantages which it affords for trade.

"The trees are taller, the mountains are higher, the fields and woods are larger, the rivers are longer, the harbours are more numerous, and the sea-ports are finer than any in this part of the world. And when I tell you that the Mississippi-Missouri river is 4,100 miles long, you will judge that the United States is a large country."

"Indeed it must be," said Percy; "and they want pretty long railways, I should think, to travel about on."

"The country is nearly twenty times larger than the United Kingdom. By means of its railways, rivers, and canals, the inhabitants travel from one end of it to the other, and the productions of one part are exchanged for those of the most distant states. The railways are, some of them, very long, but scarcely any of them have two lines of rails. In travelling by them, we waited at certain points till the train coming in the opposite direction had passed us. If placed in a line, all the canals would reach from London to Calcutta, all the railways from London to Van Diemen's Land, and all the lines of electric telegraph from the North to the South Pole.

"Of my many excursions, one that I took into the vale of Ohio would have delighted Mary. I wandered among mighty oaks, splendid magnolias shooting up to the height of more than 100 feet, walnut-trees, tulip-trees, and sugar maple.

"Nor did I forget the lakes which divide the States from Canada, nor the Falls of Niagara. I was quite deafened by the thunder of the cataracts, and the vast column of smoke and spray which they sent up towards the sky perfectly astonished me."

"Mother," inquired Richard, "are there as many people in the United States as in Great Britain?"

"Nearly; and they are increasing rapidly. There are about 300,000 Indians, but the greater portion of the people are Europeans. In passing through New York, I have seen, in one hour, English, Irish, Germans, Red Indians, Africans, and Chinese; and I think it would not be difficult to find some one there from every nation on the globe. There were no fewer than three millions of slaves before the late civil war; but through that war they were all emancipated, and slavery was abolished."

"What a large number!" said Richard.

"Yes, and a sad disgrace it was to that country. They had no right to keep their fellow-beings in bondage. It was not doing as

the Bible commands, which says that we are to love our neighbours as ourselves."

"Many of the shops in New York," continued Mrs. Mayfield, "are fronted with marble, and so are the hotels. The hotel I slept in was more like a town than a house; and this is the case with most of those buildings in America."

"Oh, do tell us a little about New York," said Percy. "I want to know what sort of a place it is where cousin Arthur lives."

"New York is built on a narrow island called Manhattan; and Staten and Long Islands, with the coast of New Jersey, form a bay or harbour around it. The city begins where the Battery, as it is called, stands. The Battery, however, has no guns; but is, in fact, a small park, covered with soft turf and crossed by gravel walks between rows of trees. These afford pleasant shade to the number of persons who resort thither in summer to enjoy the cool breeze from off the water, and to watch the steamers plying to and from Staten Island and New Jersey, or the tall ships bearing away the productions of the country for other lands, or returning with European manufactures or emigrants. Broadway, the principal street, runs in a direct line from the Battery through the whole length of the city, and reminds one of Oxford Street or the Strand.

"While in New York, I peeped at the Tract Society in Nassau Street, near the Park. The building is 80 feet long and 94 feet high. I also looked in at the Astor Library—a fine building, containing 80,000 volumes. As a whole, I cannot say that I prefer New York to London. I went also to Boston, and I saw the spot where the Pilgrims landed in 1620, and where they knelt down and blessed the God of heaven who had brought them over, and delivered them from many perils and miseries. These good men loved Christ; they were willing to give up the vain world, and live a humble life. I also saw the burial-place of Franklin.

"I went also to Canada, where I saw very many things, about which I have not time to tell you just now. Some day, I will give you a description of that country. Meanwhile, try and get a good general idea of it, and then you will feel much more interested in what I may have to say."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE LARGEST ISLAND IN THE WORLD.

"AND now, young folks," said Mr. Rushton, the next evening, "we come to the largest island in the world."

"Where is that?" asked Percy.

"And what is its name?" added Mary.

"It is called Australia," replied Mr. Rushton. "It lies between Africa and South America. On one side is the Indian Ocean, and on the other the South Pacific, and the great highway from England to Sydney (Bass's Strait) separates it from the former, while Torres Strait and the Arafoura Sea divide it from the latter.

"After a voyage of three months," continued Mr. Rushton, "I beheld, to my great joy, the shores of Australia.* As we drew near to Port Jackson, the cliffs looked not unlike those at Dover, but were not so white. Suddenly we came upon a cleft in this sea-wall, and as soon as we had passed through 'The Heads,' as the cliffs at the entrance are called, we found ourselves in smooth water. The shores were in-

* The name *Terra Australia* was given to the country by early discoverers, the meaning of which is South Land.

dented with coves, or small bays, which were crowded with shipping. Pleasure boats, too, were skimming about, while hill and dale, rock and woodland, neat cottages, substantial homesteads, and villas in the distance, all added to the variety and beauty of the scene.

"We soon landed; and I could have easily imagined myself in England. The streets, the houses, the shops, the carriages, are all thoroughly English. And had it not been for turning down a street occasionally where there were gardens with orange-trees in full bloom or fruit, and for the bullock drays, or for a flight of green parrots which now and then rested on a house-top, I could have fancied myself at Plymouth or Brighton, instead of being 15,000 miles from either."

"Fifteen thousand miles, uncle! that is a long way," said Mary.

"London cries, too, and the omnibus conductor holding up his finger and shouting, 'Paddington,' or 'Surrey Hills,' with the familiar 'Cab, Sir,' brought me several times to a stand, and I fancied myself at the London Bridge station.

"Sydney has its fine public gardens, which are very nicely arranged. Of course I visited the Botanical Gardens, Mary, where I saw flowers from many lands all growing together.

"Now, there are some curious things I wish

you to remember. When the ball falls at Greenwich, the inhabitants of Sydney are all going to bed, and the children are fast asleep: and when the morning sun is high in the heavens, lighting the shores of Port Jackson, it is midnight on the banks of the Thames."

"O uncle," exclaimed Percy, "how can that be?"

"Australia is situated nearly opposite our feet, and therefore the occurrence of times and seasons is nearly opposite to our own. While, therefore, you were enjoying your Christmas pudding by a blazing fire, I was perspiring from the heat. The north wind is hot in Australia, the south wind cold, and the east healthy and bracing. Here our shadows fall to the north when the sun shines—there to the south. The leaves of the greater part of the trees curl upwards, instead of spreading themselves as ours do. The native flowers are generally without scent, the bees without stings, and the birds without song. The owl hoots by day and the cuckoo is heard at night; while swans are black, and eagles white."

"It is a strange country," said Mary.

"Australia has some disagreeables, too," continued Mr. Rushton. "There are hot winds in the central districts, rivalling those of the African deserts, filling the air with red dust, and causing the leaves to drop from the trees.

In all parts the climate varies according to position. The summer days on the coast are relieved by nice breezes, and the mornings and evenings are delightfully cool.

"Winter can scarcely be called winter at Sydney. The only instance of a fall of snow there, was in June, 1836, when the children called it white rain. Of course in higher and mountainous districts there is more cold and snow: but altogether the country is very healthy, though at times very hot."

"Did you see any kangaroos while you were in Australia, uncle?"

"O yes: and flying squirrels of a slate colour, and with a very delicate fur; innocent-looking opossums, which live in hollow trees, and the ostrich-like emu. But the most curious thing I saw was the *ornithorhynchus paradoxus;* its bill and feet are like those of a duck, its fur like that of a mole; its body looks like that of a reptile. I believe it is a sort of water-mole."

"What a strange-looking creature it must be," said Mary. "And did you see many birds, uncle?"

"Indeed I did, and some exceedingly beautiful ones, too. Eagles, vultures, falcons, hawks, and owls of every kind. Parrots, parroquets, and cockatoos; and a small bird called the *blue wren,* which wears a plain dress in

winter; but in summer the male bird puts on an altogether different dress, almost equalling in beauty the humming-bird of America. I saw also the *bee-eater*, and heard the *lyre-bird* mocking almost every sound—the *coachman's* whistle, with a whip-like crack at the end—the bell-like note of the *bell-bird*—and the grating note of the *knife-grinder*—with the extraordinary chant of the *laughing jackass*."

"What sort of a bird is that?" asked Percy.

"It is one of the parrot-tribe; and it would make you laugh heartily to hear a number of them ringing out their ha! ha! ha! ho! ho! ho! hu! hu! hu!"

"Indeed it would," said Mary.

"But really I must finish my story by telling you a little about trees. One I saw, a gum-tree, was large enough to build a house for a family. It was a hundred feet high, and forty feet round."

"That *was* a large tree."

"I saw many more trees, such as rosewood-trees, wattle-trees, and cedars, which are used for household furniture and fittings in Sydney. I saw also a large grassy field of nearly a hundred acres without a tree, but with a border of fan palms."

"And very pretty it must have looked, I should think," said Richard.

"It did, indeed. The district where I saw

this is called the garden of New South Wales. But the time would fail me to tell you of the wild figs, grass-trees, ferns, and nettles, with stems nine or ten feet round, and their sting enough almost to take away the use of your arm."

"Our nettles are bad enough," said Percy; "but that would be a great deal worse."

"Much as I enjoyed myself, I was glad when the time came for me to return to England. I did not do so, however, without a day or two at Cape Town on my way."

"Is Cape Town like our English cities?" inquired Richard.

"The houses are built in the English and Dutch fashion. The city is lighted with gas, and its public buildings, private houses, and its squares, are by no means to be despised. There is no regular pavement, but each house has a brick terrace in front called the *stoep*, which serves as an evening lounge for the inmates; the streets are shaded by fine oak trees."

"That must be very nice in hot weather," said Percy.

"The warehouses and shops exhibited every variety of European and tropical produce. In some of the shop windows were ostrich feathers and eggs, elephants' tusks, wild boars' skulls, and leopard and lion skins. There is a good supply of meat, vegetables, and fruit in the markets, which are sold at moderate prices; and

on Saturdays a weekly fair is held at which almost any kind of goods may be obtained.

"Cape Town has also its mills and manufactories, foundries, tanneries, etc.; its commercial hall, schools, and library. The centre room of the hall is used for public meetings, etc. In the great rooms the merchants assemble to read the news and despatch business. Part of the hall also is devoted to the library, which contains 50,000 volumes.

"I wish we had such a one at Flowerdale," said Richard.

"I always felt quite at home at the Cape," continued Mr. Rushton; "for there seemed to be something about it of which I could not grow tired. I was particularly pleased with the Cape gardens, especially with the sweet scent of the jasmines and fuchsias."

"I should have enjoyed that very much, uncle," said Mary.

"I am sure you would; there are geranium hedges, lilies, too, and flowers of every hue, so that even the cattle trample underfoot blossoms which you would carefully preserve in flowerpots on the parlour window sill."

"I should like to live there!" said Mary.

"I daresay you would, especially when I tell you that out of the 365 days of the year, the colony has 350 when not a cloud is to be seen. Rain, therefore, seldom falls. Some day I will

tell you about my visit to the Cangou caverns. I must, however, before I bid you good night, tell you a little about the people.

"The population consists of the descendants of the old Dutch settlers and British emigrants, native Hottentots and negroes. The children of many of the inhabitants, who during the winter live with their parents in the plains, long for the time when they remove with their flocks and herds from the mountains and live for months together in tents, as Abraham used to do with his family and cattle. When the morning dawns, most of the Dutch settlers gather their children around them, to sing psalms, and read a portion of Scripture, and seek the protection of the King of Israel from the dangers to which they may be exposed. They then breakfast on milk and meal, and go to their work.

"The father, with the help of his servants, looks after his cattle, keeps his wagon and tools in repair, and sometimes goes hunting. The older boys help, learn to cut down wood, and to do smith's or carpenter's work. When they are watching their flocks, they take with them not only a faithful dog, but fire-arms; and many a boy of twelve years old has killed a panther that otherwise would have robbed him of one of the cattle."

"And so would I have done," said Percy.

"Even the least of the boys are set to work; they lead the lambs to the freshest streams of water; they feed them in the greenest pastures. Sometimes they meet with a nest of ostrich's eggs, each of which contains as much meat as a quarter of a hundred hen's eggs. Their mothers mix the egg with butter and flour to make an omelette, of which all the family partake."

"That is all very well," said Richard; "but what do the girls do?" "Yes," added Percy, "we should like to know."

"They are not idle, I assure you. They help to wash and keep things in order; they learn to make the bread (of flour and mutton fat), butter, and cheese, and to milk the cows.

"When the heat increases, and the flowers begin to wither, the grass becomes parched, and the mimosa and acacia blossoms turn to seed, then the families set out on their journey towards the mountains again. On their way, they will stop to visit some of their friends, or, on the Sabbath, to worship God in one of their churches. At last they reach their house, which had been left either shut up entirely, or in the care of a faithful Hottentot servant; and right glad are they once more to be at home."

"Children," said Mr. Rushton, "the more I have seen of other lands, the more grateful have I felt that Britain is my home; and yet, much as I love my native land, I consider

myself only a stranger and sojourner here; for I hope that I am travelling towards my heavenly home.

"Yes, my dear children, I seek another country,—one from which I shall never have any desire to return,—and one which is better than any country upon earth,—where all is beauty, and the very air is love,—where Jesus is the King, and holy men and women the company. No lion or ravenous beast shall enter there, nor anything that is impure.

"If you would reach heaven you must trust in what Christ has done for acceptance with God, and seek the assistance of the Holy Spirit to lead you in the right way. If you thus act, the command will at length be given, as you reach the gates of the Celestial City, 'Let the little travellers in.'"

The following day Mr. Rushton left Flowerdale, much to the regret of its inmates; and many and earnest were the entreaties, "Don't let it be long before you come again, uncle."

Whether he will ever meet them all again is uncertain, as far as this life is concerned; but for this he was most anxious,—that he might meet them all in the "sweet fields beyond the swelling floods,"—in heaven.

May our readers meet him there too.

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