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Hughes

South of France

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"——I informed my friend that I had just received from England a journal of a tour made in the South of France by a young Oxonian friend of mine, a poet, a draughtsman, and a scholar—in which he gives such an animated and interesting description of the Château Grignan, the dwelling of Madame de Sevigné's beloved daughter, and frequently the place of her own residence, that no one who ever read the book would be within forty miles of the same without going a pilgrimage to the spot. The Marquis smiled, seemed very much pleased, and asked the title at length of the work in question; and writing down to my dictation, 'An Itinerary of Provence and the Rhone made during the year 1819, by John Hughes, A.M. of Oriel College, Oxford,'—observed, that he could now purchase no books for the Château, but would recommend that the Itineraire should be commissioned for the Library to which he was abonné in the neighbouring town,"—*Sir Walter Scott's Quentin Durward*.

Thomas White, Printer, Johnson's Court.

ITINERARY

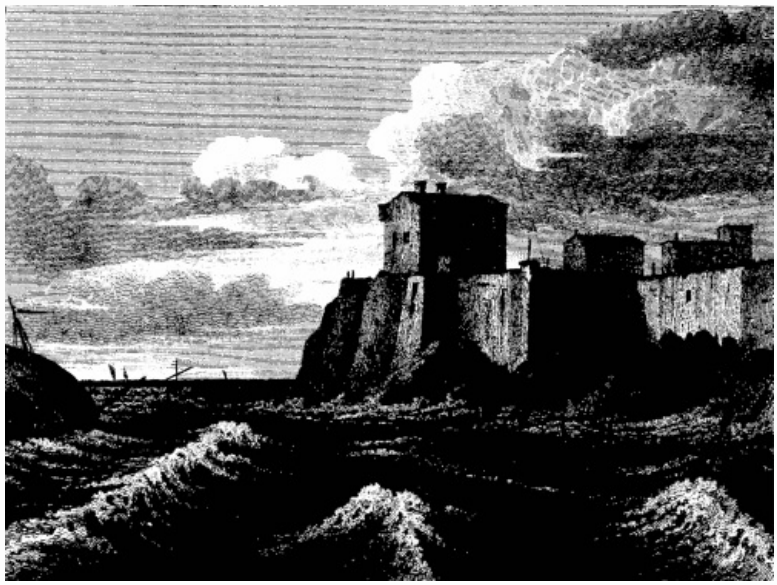
OF

PROVENCE & THE RHONE,

MADE DURING THE YEAR 1819.

BY JOHN HUGHES, M.A.

OF ORIEL COLLEGE OXFORD.



ISLE OF S^{T} MARGUERITE NEAR CANNES AND PRISON OF MASQUE DE FER.

SECOND EDITION.
LONDON:
JAMES CAWTHORN.
MD.CCCXXIX.

PREFACE.

It has been the Author's object to render the following volume a companion to persons visiting the country described. He has therefore not so much studied to compile from known books of historical reference, as to answer those plain and practical questions which suggest themselves during an actual journey, and to enable those whose time is limited, and who wish to employ it actively, to form the necessary calculations as to what is to be seen and done. The best points of view, and the parts which may be passed over rapidly, are therefore specified, as well as the places where good accommodation are to be expected, or imposition to be guarded against.

The subjects of the Illustrations will be mentioned in the course of the Itinerary, for the information of collectors, of whose notice it is trusted they will be rendered worthy by the well-known talents of Mr. Dewint and the Messrs. Cookes.

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AN

ITINERARY,

&c.

CHAP. I

PARIS TO ROCHEPOT.

NO one, I imagine, ever yet left an hotel in a central and bustling part of Paris, without feeling the faculty of observation strained to the utmost, and experiencing a whirl and jumble of recollections as little in unison with each other as the well known signs of that whimsical city, the *Bœuf à-la-mode*, (with his cachemire shawl and his ostrich feathers) and the *Mort d'Henri Quartre*. The contrasts and varieties of the grave and gay, the affecting and the burlesque, the magnificent and the paltry, which exist and may be sought out in abundance in every great capital, are perhaps more vividly concentrated at Paris than any where else, and brought with less trouble under the eye of those whose spirits or leisure may not allow them to mix in society. In [2] London every thing wears a busy uniform exterior, varied only by the apparition of a Turk, a Lascar, or a Highlander; and home appears to be the place reserved for the development of character: but in Paris, from the fashion of living almost in public, and the freedom which every one enjoys of following his own taste in dress or amusement without notice, the history of most individuals appears to a certain degree written on their exterior; and a morning's walk brings you in contact with all the diversities of character which rapidly succeeding events have created. The old beau, with the identical toupet of 1770; the musty, moth-eaten nondescripts sometimes seen at the mass of Notre Dame, which remind you of a still earlier period; the faded royalist, with a countenance saddened by the recollection of former days; the ex-militaires, whose looks own no friendship with "the world or the world's law;" the old bourgeois riding in the same roundabout with his grandchildren, and enjoying the *jeu de bague* as cordially,—revolve in succession like the different figures in a magic lantern, while the place of Punch and Pierrot is supplied by a host of laborious drolls and *gens à l'incroyable*. The various members of this motley assemblage appear also more distinct from each other, as connected in the recollection with places so strongly marked by historical events, or bearing in themselves so peculiar a character:—the place Louis Quinze, the grim old Conciergerie, the deserted Fauxbourg St. Germain, with the grass growing in its streets; the Place de Carousel, the Boulevards, and the [3] Catacombs, the Palais Royal and the Morgue.

To attempt, however, to say any thing new of a place so well known and so fully described as Paris, would be as superfluous as to write the natural history of the dog or cat. The peculiarities of such animals are continually striking one in new and amusing points of view; but verbal delineation has already done its utmost in acquainting us with them. In like manner, every thing relating to Paris, and illustrative of it at a period of interest which probably will not arise again for centuries, has been already made known in Paul's admirable letters, in poor Scott's powerful but unmerciful satire, and finally in a host of books, booklings, and bookatees, teaching us how to spend any period of time at Paris from three to three hundred and sixty-five days; how to enjoy it, how to eat, drink, see, hear, feel, think, and economise in it.

Kotzebue has devoted sixty pages to its bon bons and savories; others more modestly give you only a diary of their own fricasseed chicken and champagne, and information of a still lower sort is supplied by the delectable Mr. Hone, for the instruction of our Jerries and Corinthian Toms. I shall commence dates, therefore, from the 26th of April, on which day we quitted the Hôtel de l'Europe, Rue Valois, not sorry to obtain a respite from sounds and sights. [4]

Though in such a country as Tuscany, where every furlong of ground affords a new and rich subject for the pencil, the voiture mode of travelling is preferable to posting; yet no one, I think, would recommend it in traversing the tedious interval which separates Paris from the southern provinces. We had adopted this species of conveyance from the idea that it would afford more leisure for observation to those of the party to whom France was new; but we found in reality that by subjecting us to a dependence on hours, it diverted our attention from those places where we might have spent half a day to advantage, and familiarized us only with one branch of knowledge, —the merit and demerit of most of the inns on the roads, whose characters I shall not fail to give as we found them. Homely as this species of information may be, I have often regretted the want of it beforehand; and concluding that others may be of the same opinion, I shall therefore afford it as far as I am able: premising, that it is as well not to vary, on this or any other road, from the practice of ascertaining beforehand the rate of the aubergiste's charges. The traveller's first impulse certainly is to save himself trouble, by paying whatever is demanded, and not to expend time and attention on a series of petty disputes, which make no great difference in his travelling expenses. There is, however, in all or most of those who are fitted to conduct the business of life, a feeling of shame at being outwitted even in trifles, which naturally rebels against this easy mode of proceeding, and inclines one rather to take the [5] trouble of asking a few questions, than to be laughed at as a *grand seigneur* by a cunning landlord. This trouble after all may be taken by a servant, and need not subject the master to the necessity of entering every inn like an angry terrier, with his bristles up and ready for battle; and the settlement of preliminaries does not lead to any want of attention on the part of the people of the inn.

We neglected this precaution at Essonne, where we breakfasted on leaving Paris, and where accordingly we paid about double the charge which Tortoni or the Cafe Hardy would have made. It appears, in truth, that at the Croissant d'Or, as at the Emperor Joseph's memorable German inn, "though eggs are not scarce, yet gentry are."

The distance from Paris to this place is about 24 miles: the road of course excellent, as is uniformly the case in the route to Chalons; but the only thing during the stage which remains on my recollection, is an obelisk inscribed, "Dieu, le Roi, et les dames;" a melange perhaps compounded in compliment to Louis XV. who greatly improved a part of this road, which was once nearly impassable. Corbeil, a neat flourishing town within half a mile of Essonne, and possessing large cotton manufactories, derives some interest from the celebrated siege it sustained during the war of the league. Two [6] miles beyond Essonne we remarked, at a short distance to the right, Château Moncey, once the seat of the gay and brilliant Duke de Villeroi and his descendants; and on a hill to the left, Château Coudray, the former residence of the Prince de Chalot. Both the possessors of these estates were guillotined during the reign of terror, and their places are filled by Marechal Jourdan, and some *nouveau riche*, whose very name the peasants seemed never to have heard, or to have forgotten from want of interest.

We found the Hôtel de la Ville de Lyon at Fontainebleau a good inn, and fair in its charges. The old palace, though not intrinsically worth a visit in point of architecture, yet conveys one of those "sermons in stones," in which the Fauxbourg de St. Germain so much abounds; and presents also more pleasing recollections of Louis Quatorze (a prince possessing many of the good points of the *bon Henri*) than the bombastic personification of him as Jupiter Tonans, in the palace of Versailles, which is on a par as a painting with Tom Thumb as a tragedy.

April 27.—To Fossard, eighteen miles: the first six through the forest, just sufficiently sylvan to suffer by a comparison with that of Windsor. At the end of two

more miles we crossed the valley, in which is situated the town of Moret, to which is attached a history equally curious, as Anquetil observes, with that of the Iron Mask. [7] The following is the extract from the Duke de St. Simon's Memoirs, which he introduces as relative to it.

"Il y avoit à Moret, petite ville auprès de Fontainebleau, un petit couvent, où étoit professé une Mauresse inconnue, et qu'on ne montroit a personne. Bontemps, Gouverneur de Versailles, par qui passoient les choses du secrèt domestique du roi, l'y avoit mise toute jeune, avoit payé une dot assez considerable, et continuoit à lui payer une grosse pension tous les ans. Il avoit attention qu'elle eût son necessaire, que tout ce qu'elle pouvoit desirer en agrémens et douceurs, et qui peut passer pour abondance pour une religieuse, lui fut fourni. La reine y alloit souvent de Fontainebleau, et prenoit grand soin du bien-être du couvent; et Mad. de Maintenon après elle. Ni l'une ni l'autre ne prenoit de cette Mauresse un soin direct, et qui peut se remarquer. Elles ne la voyoient même toutes les fois qu'elles alloient au couvent, mais elles s'informoient curieusement de sa santé, de sa conduite, et de celle de la superieure à son egard. Quoiqu'il n'y eût dans cette maison personne d'un nom connu, Monseigneur (le Dauphin) y a été quelquefois; les princes, ses enfans, aussi; et tous demandoient et voyoient la Mauresse. Elle étoit dans un couvent avec plus de consideration que les autres, et se prevaloit fort des soins qu'on prenoit d'elle, et du mystère qu'on en faisoit. Quoiqu'elle veçut très-religieusement, on s'appercevoit bien que sa vocation avoit été aidée. Il lui echappoit une fois, entendant Monseigneur [8] chasser dans le forêt, de dire negligemment, 'c'est mon frère qui chasse.' On dit qu'elle avoit quelquefois des hauteurs, que sur les plaintes de la superieure, Mad. de Maintenon alla un jour exprès pour tâcher de lui inculquer des sentimens plus conformes a l'humilité religieuse; que lui ayant voulu insinuer qu'elle n'étoit pas ce qu'elle croyoit, elle lui repondit, 'Si cela n'étoit pas, Madame, vous ne prendriez pas la peine de venir me le dire!' Ces indices ont fait conjectures qu'elle étoit fille du roi et de la reine, et que sa couleur l'avoit fait sequestrer, en publiant que la reine avoit fait une fausse couche."

In addition to this extract, Anquetil adds, "En effet, la fantaisie de garder devant ses yeux une naine monstreuse (her favourite negress mentioned previously), peut faire conjecturer que Marie Therèse n'aura pas été assez exacte à detourner ses regards d'objets qu'une femme prudente doit s'interdire; qu'elle les aura fixés sur les negres que le progrès du commerce maritime commençoit de rendre communs en France; et que de là sera venue la couleur de cette infortunée, qu'il aura fallu cacher dans un cloître. Cette Mauresse et l'homme au masque de fer sont les deux mystères du regne de Louis XIV. Le redacteur des Memoires de St. Simon dit qu'elle est morte à Moret en 1732, et que son portrait étoit encore en 1779 dans le cabinet de l'abbesse, d'où, [9] quand cette maison a été réunie ou Prieuré de Champ Benôit à Provins, il a passé dans le cabinet des antiques et curiosités de l'abbaye de St. Genevieve du Mont à Paris, où il est encore. On lit au bas de ce portrait, ces mots, Religieuse de Moret." Such are the words of the extract relative to this singular person.

The Hôtel de Poste, (as it chooses to style itself) at Fossard, is a dismal pot-house; and the people possess none of that good humour and alacrity which cover a multitude of faults. Having swallowed some of their gritty coffee, which might have been very delectable to the palate of a Turk, we walked about a mile and a half to the bridge[1] of Montereau-sur-Yonne, on which John Duke of Burgundy was murdered by Tannegui de Chastel, in the presence, and probably with the connivance of the Dauphin, afterwards [10] Charles VII. Near this spot we remarked a small mass of ruins, the only remains of the once magnificent Château Varennes. Its former owner, the Duke de Châtelet, as we were informed by some market-people, resided for six months in the year at this seat, maintaining or employing most of the poor within his reach, and entertaining his peasantry with a weekly dance at the Château. Like many others, he fell a victim to the guillotine during the reign of terror; his lands, with the exception of a portion recovered by his heirs, were alienated, and the fragment which we observed was the only part of his residence left standing. From the tone and manner in which the French peasantry appear to speak of these very common occurrences, I should judge that the effects of the revolution have not yet eradicated that "subordination of the heart," which is natural among a simple and industrious people, and which nothing but very gross neglect or misconduct on the part of their superiors, or the unchecked

licence of political quacks, can destroy. Most of the ravages in question might no doubt be traced to bands of plunderers, organized from the most desperate and notorious characters in many different parishes, and sufficiently countenanced by the revolutionary tribunals to overawe the peaceable and unarmed mass of the population, whom it would be hardly fair to confound with them. Let us fancy for a moment, how quickly, under similar political circumstances, a moveable Spencean brigade might be collected in any district of England from poachers, sheep-stealers, gypsies, incendiaries, and those whose latent love of mischief might be drawn out by proper encouragement, and we may find reason not to condemn the French peasantry in general, as sharers in the outrages which they probably abominated, but could not prevent. [11]

From Fossard to Sens, 21 miles: the country uninteresting as far as Pont-sur-Yonne. Chapelle de Champigny affords a tolerably exact idea of a Spanish village; each farm-house and its premises forming a square, inclosed in blank walls, and opening into the street by folding gates, with hardly a window to be seen. From Pont-sur-Yonne to Sens, the road becomes more cheerful; and its fine old cathedral forms a good central object in the valley, along which the Yonne is seen winding. The principal inn at Sens being full for the night, we found neat and comfortable accommodations, with great civility, at the Bouteille. Whether there be any object worthy of notice in this cheerful little city, besides its cathedral, I do not know; but the latter possesses works of art which deserve an early and attentive visit. Nothing can be more minutely beautiful than the small figures and ornaments on the tomb of the Cardinal du Prat, which is sufficient in itself to give a character to any one church. But the grand object of interest is a large sepulchral group in the centre of the choir, to the memory of the Dauphin and his consort, the parents of Louis XVI. The grace and classical contour of this monument, which is executed by the well-known Nicholas Coustou, would excite admiration even in the studio of Canova, while the deep tone of genuine feeling displayed, particularly in the figure of Hymen quenching his torch, is worthy of the chisel of our own Chantry. Somewhat might perhaps be owing to an evening light, which cast strong mellow shades on the figures, and gave an effect of reality to the fine white marble of which they are composed; but their merits are very striking, and are quite unalloyed by the graphic bombast of which the most able French artists have been with too much truth accused. The character of the Dauphin, whose exemplary life in the midst of a corrupt court, was a tacit reproof which his haughty father could ill brook, is well known. [12]

> Ostendunt terris hunc tantum fata, neque ultrâ
> Esse sinunt.

He was snatched in the flower of his age, in the year 1765, from an evil which was even then brooding, and which might have brought his grey hairs to a bloody end at a more advanced period: and his consort survived him about a year and a half. "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided." The latter monument, as well as others of inferior merit, owed its preservation from revolutionary fury to the conduct and firmness of Mons. Menestrier, an avocat, and mayor of Auxerre during the reign of terror. *Ce brave homme* (I like the old sacristan's term of *brave homme*, as it is one of the few untranslateable French words) flew to the cathedral at the moment that a horde of brigands had entered it to commence the work of mutilation; and, seconded by nothing but his known character for resolution, and an athletic person, fairly intimidated and turned them out for the time. Losing not a moment, he removed to a place of safety the Dauphin's monument, the avowed object of their vengeance, before a second visit took place; and desirous also to preserve a fine bas relief which stands in another part of the church, representing St. Nicholas portioning three orphan girls, he engraved on the wall under it an inscription to Benevolence in the republican style, which produced the desired effect. Not very long afterwards he fell a victim to a fever caught by over-exertion in advocating the cause of a poor family; and his wife survived him only a few days, exhibiting an humble copy of the conjugal affection of those whose memorials her husband had so loyally preserved. Whether to give full credit or not to the old sacristan's narration, I do not know; but it appears more probable that even so large a monument was removed piecemeal at short notice, than that the malice of the brigands would have allowed it to stand unhurt; and there is besides an ingenuity and presence of mind [13]

shown in the preservation of St. Nicholas, quite consistent with the character of M. Menestrier, as described by the old man. Had the latter felt that inclination to romance, which is not uncommon among his brethren, he would probably have adopted the hacknied legend, that both monuments were miraculously secreted from the eyes of the marauders. [14]

April 28.—To Joigny, where we breakfasted, twenty-one miles. Passed through Villeneuve, a decayed old town, with two singular gateways. Even this place emulates Paris in the possession of a Tivoli, which, in the present instance, consisted of a walled square of court-yard (for garden it could not be called), measuring about thirty yards by twenty, and overshadowed by poplars from three to four feet high: a most pleasant representative, in truth, of the wild olive woods, the sequestered waterfalls, and the classical ruins of the original Tivoli.

Domus Albunese resonantis,
Et præceps Anio, et Tiburni lucus.

On leaving Joigny, a neat pleasant town, extending in one wide street along the Yonne, and crowned by a handsome château, left unfinished by the Due de Villeroi, we reached the heart of the wine district of Burgundy. The country here assumes the appearance of a garden, both from the steep and regular form of the hills, which exactly resemble the Dutch slopes in old-fashioned gardens, and from the high state of culture to which their thin gravelly soil is brought. The hoe and the pruning-knife seem never at rest, and not a weed is to be seen; while the slightest portion of manure dropt on the high road becomes a prize, if not an object of contention, to the nearest vignerons. The air of cheerfulness and beauty, however, which we annex to our notions of high cultivation, is wholly wanting. The appearance of the vines was that of sapless black stumps, about thirty inches high, and pruned so as to leave only four or five eyes; and though the subject of poverty is too serious to joke on, the withered and stunted appearance of the country people exactly corresponded to that of these dry pollards. I trust that we were in some degree deceived by their natural ugliness, and that hard labour and scanty profits are not the only reasons which render their *tout ensemble* such a contrast to the healthy robust looks of the Normans and Picards, whose very horses show the effects of their abundant corn harvests. [15]

From Joigny to Auxerre, twenty-one miles. We arrived too late to visit the interior of the cathedral, which was not mentioned to us as containing any thing remarkable. Its exterior, however, is fine and venerable, and affords a beautiful evening study, viewed from the opposite bank of the Yonne, about half a mile on the Vermanton road. The rest of the town, seen from this point, is broken into fine masses of conventual and other old buildings; and the river and bridge complete a landscape very well worthy of an accurate sketch. [16]

The excellence of the Hôtel de Beaune, at Auxerre, "tenu par Boillet, gendre Mineau," as his cards inform us, deserves notice. This is one of those palm-islands among a desert of dirty pothouses, most treacherously adapted to lure onward a certain class of fair weather pilgrims, whom one wonders to meet with beyond Paris, and whose dolorous complaints of thin milk and large coffee-spoons, have afforded me no small amusement in casual rencounters. The most fastidious, however, of this class of smelfungi, would find but little to carp at under the roof the civil Mr. Boillet; and would do well to lay in a stock of comfortable recollections in this place, on which to feast as far as Chalons; for the interval between Auxerre and the latter city will prove but a dreary one to a traveller of the gastronomic school.

The general air of Auxerre is ancient and respectable; but conveys no ideas of populousness or commerce. In the opinion, however, of an old sub-matron of the Enfans Trouvées (who looked over my shoulder while sketching, and whom, by way of something to say, I ignorantly complimented on her fine family of grandchildren), there is nothing, or, according to Malthus, much to complain of in the former respect. [17] "Ah, Monsieur, que voulez vous? ce sont les militaires, ils vont par çi, ils vont par là, et puis—voilà des enfans, et où chercher les peres?"

April 29.—To Vermanton, our first stage, eighteen miles: a succession of fine vineyards and square steep hills, such as Uncle Toby might have constructed for his amusement, with Gargantua for an assistant instead of the corporal. About six miles short of Vermanton, at the bottom of a long descent, we remarked Cravant, a little town to the right, fortified in an ancient and picturesque manner, and which, the peasants said, had been the seat of much fighting in days of old. Our informant was ploughing in a fierce cocked hat, with a team composed of a cow and an ass. Query, might not cocked hats, which appear to our ideas an exclusively military costume, have originated in such countries as these, among the vine-dressers? who flap down the sides alternately, in a manner that shows they understood the true use of them as a parasol. Vermanton is a small obscure place, affording an inn slovenly enough, though not glaringly bad.

From hence to Lucy le Bois, where the horses were baited, fifteen miles. A pretty sequestered valley occurs about three miles beyond Vermanton; but the whole of the road, like that of the day before, may be travelled in the dark without any loss: the [18] best part of it consists of a distant view of the vale and town of Avalon, backed by the Nivernois hills. In the old French Fablieux, the valley of Avalon is selected as the spot where a fairy confined Sir Lanval, her mortal lover; but whether the French Avalon, or the beautiful vale of Glastonbury was meant, appears doubtful, as the latter formerly bore the same name. There is a resemblance between the two districts, which amounts to an odd coincidence, particularly with regard to one of the Nivernois hills in the back ground, which presents a strong likeness of Glastonbury Tor. We should have passed through Avalon, but for a trick of the voiturier, who took a cross road to avoid paying the post duty there, and save his money at the expense of our bones. For this manoeuvre he might have been severely punished, had we chosen to interfere.

From Lucy le Bois to Rouvray, where we slept, the level of the country becomes gradually more elevated, and its general features much more English, consisting of corn, woody copses, and pastures full of cowslips. I cannot say, however, that we found any thing to remind us of England at the detestable inn where we were quartered for the night, and have no doubt but that Lucy le Bois or Avalon would have afforded somewhat much better. The only civilized person was a large black baker's dog, who, like Gil Blas's first travelling acquaintance, seemed free of the house, and did the honours of the supper to us with an assiduity as disinterested, "Ah, messieurs," [19] said his civil master, when we stept across the street in the morning, to return the dog's visit in form, "je suis charmé que vous trouvez l'Abri si beau; je suis au desespoir qu'il ne soit pas chez lui a present, mais je vais le chercher partout afin qu'il vous fasse ses hommages." The good man could not have spoken of a favourite son with more unsuspecting complacency.

April 30.—To Saulieu, where we breakfasted at a tolerably good inn, fifteen miles: the morning intensely cold, and one of those white frosts on the ground, which so much endanger the vintage at this season. We observed, however, no vineyards on the elevated ridge of country along which we were travelling, and which was perfectly English. A respectable old château, with a rookery, quick hedges, and extensive woods, thick enough for a fox covert, kept up the illusion agreeably. This style of ground continues beyond Saulieu; and between the latter place and Arnay le Duc, eighteen miles farther, its features are not unromantic. One or two castles of a very baronial air occur; the first of which, reduced to ruins, is visible at about a mile beyond Saulieu, occupying an insulated hill at some distance from the road, and much resembling the remains of an Italian freebooter's stronghold. Another, situated at the head of a glen, about six miles farther on, and overlooking a small village, is more perfect and striking in its appearance. It is the property, as we were informed, of the [20] widow of M. Fenou, a royalist, who, during the revolution, stood a siege within its walls equal to that of Tillietudlem, repulsing a strong body of republicans with considerable loss. Buonaparte subsequently recalled M. Fenou, with the grant of a free pardon; and the estate was, in the course of things, restored to his widow. Such, as far as we could collect from the account of our informant, was the history belonging to Château Torcy la Vachere, which bears some resemblance, in situation and general outline, to Eastnor Castle, the seat of the Earl of Somers, at the foot of the Malvern hills.

Arnay le Duc, a town situated on commanding ground, where we slept, boasts of an earlier celebrity, having been the scene of one of Admiral de Coligni's victories. It possesses several convents, now private property, and one or two fragments of building of a peculiarly antiquated style. Among these I particularly remarked an old iron-shop, supposed, as a bourgeois informed me, to be more than seven hundred years old, and which seems to have communicated with the ancient walls as a guard-house. While busied in sketching this singular relic, we were saluted gracefully by an old chevalier de St. Louis, who was passing, and whose distinguished air would have become the person of Coligni himself. On casually inquiring the name of this [21] gentleman, we learnt that he had been one among the many imprisoned during the reign of terror, and would have fallen by the guillotine, had the fall of Robespierre happened four-and-twenty hours later. This, it must be owned, is a trite and common story; but it is, perhaps, by the very triteness and frequency of such hair-breadth escapes, more than by any other circumstance, that the extent and ferocity of the revolutionary massacres are brought home to the imagination. The appointed victims, whom the delay of a day or an hour preserved from destruction at this crisis, still survive in all parts of France, like widely-scattered land-marks, to remind one of the numbers swept away in the previous deluge of murder.

May 1.—To Rochepot twenty-one miles. We were not sorry to leave the Hôtel de Poste, at Arnay le Duc, which, with higher pretensions than the inn at Rouvray, only differs from it in the ratio of "dear and nasty" to "cheap and nasty;" and to commence a stage which promised more to the eye than any part of our former route. The country still continues to rise in this direction, and soon assumes the air of an extensive forest or chase, enlivened by half-wild herds of cattle, and opening into green glades and vistas of distant ranges of hills. At Ivry, we wound up a steep hill; the summit of which, a wide naked common, might match most parts of Dartmoor in height and bleakness. I had observed heaps of granite and micaceous stone at a much [22] lower elevation in the course of the day before; and conclude that we were now on one of the highest inhabited points which occur in the interior of France. We had not leisure to walk to a telegraph on the right, which, to judge from the occasional glimpses which we had, must command a splendid map of the country near Autun. It had been recommended to us to take the route to Chalons through the latter town, as affording the most objects of interest; but, on the whole, I doubt whether that which we had adopted as the least circuitous, be not also preferable, as possessing the striking panoramic point to which we had climbed. After two or three more miles over an expanse of parched turf, we reached what geologists would call the bluff escarpment of the stratum. The descent before us was so precipitous, as to leave us at first at a loss to make out how the road could be conducted down it: and the prospect which burst upon us in front, had apparently no limit but the power of human vision. Beyond the foreground, which was formed by a series of rocky glens diverging from below the point on which we stood, the immense vale of the Saone extended like a bird's-eye view of the ocean, its relative distances marked by towns and villages glittering like white sails. Above the flat line of haze, which, at the first glance, appears to terminate the prospect at the distance of sixty miles, or more, we distinguished a faint blue outline of lofty mountains, which must have been the barrier [23] separating France from Switzerland; and, as occasional gleams of sunshine broke out, the glittering and jagged lines of a barrier still more distant, and apparently hanging in mid air, became distinctly visible. Among these I recognised, at last, the features of Mont Blanc, in whose peculiar outline I could not be mistaken, and which, according to the map, cannot be less than 110 or 120 miles distant, in a direct line from the Montagne de Rochepot. It is, perhaps, not necessary to be a mountaineer, like Jean Jacques, by birth and education, in order to feel the peculiar expansion of mind, which he describes as caused by breathing mountain-air, and contemplating prospects like this of which I speak.[2] A boundless plain, and enormous mountains, such as the Alps, whether viewed individually, or contrasted with each other, are objects not physically grand alone, but affording also food for deep and enlarged reflection. The mind, while expatiating over the mass of feelings and projects, of hopes and fears, which are passing within the limits of the wide map below, feels the nothingness of the atom which it animates, and the comparative insignificance of its own joys and griefs in the scale of creation, and retires at last into itself, sobered into that calm state which is so [24] favourable to the formation of any momentous decision, or the prosecution of a train of deep thought. A moment's glance changes the scene from culture and population to the silence and solitude of a dead icy desert; from the redundancy of animal and

vegetable life to its "solemn syncope and pause." The ideas of obscurity, danger, and infinity, all powerful and acknowledged sources of the sublime, are excited at the view of a range of frozen summits, cold, fixed, and everlasting as the imaginary nature of those destinies, with whom a noble bard has peopled them; alternately glittering in sunshine, and enveloped in clouds, and from the well-known effects of haze and distance, appearing suspended in the air in their full dimensions and relative proportions. The imagination dwells upon the appalling hazards peculiar to their few accessible parts, and on the almost total extinction of life and animal powers, which is the penalty of a few hours sojourn there. And here again, too, the mind is forcibly impressed with the utter helplessness of the speck of dust which it inhabits, and that momentary dependence on Providence, which must be so convincingly felt in traversing such regions. Ascending in the scale of comparison, it may reflect, that these gigantic forms, which fill the eye at a distance at which cities and pyramids would fade into imperceptible specks, are but excrescences on the face of that earth, which itself is but an atom in the map of the universe. But I am wandering from my [25] subject, and from the route, which, in this quarter, is somewhat precipitous. I shall, therefore, only remark what has frequently struck me as not an improbable conjecture, that Milton might have formed his splendid conception of the icy region of Pandæmonium from some of these colossal ranges of Alps with which his eye must have been familiar, seen through the vistas of a stormy sky. In the well-known passage which I shall take the liberty of quoting, one seems to recognise the deep drifts of snow, and the blue crevasses which abound in such a spot as the Mer de Glace, as well as the castellated peaks and glaciers which border on it, and the biting atmosphere which prevails among their summits.

"Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile; or else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
'Twixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire."

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[26]

CHAP. II

ROCHEPOT TO LYONS.

"Mon Dieu, ma fille," says Madame de Sevigné in one of her letters to Mad. de Grignan, "que vous avez raison d'etre fatiguée de cette Montagne de Rochepot! je la hais comme la mort; que de cahots, et quelle cruauté qu'au mois de Janvier les chemins de Bourgogne soient impracticables!" Allowing this to have been the case in her days, I can hardly wonder that even Mad. de Sevigné was insensible to the magnificence of the prospect from this elevated point; and thought only of the safety of her neck. No danger however exists at present, as the road descending to Rochepot is good, and judiciously conducted down the brow of the hill; though the nature of the ground gives no very pleasing idea of what it must have been as a cross-country track. The inn also at Rochepot, situated at the junction of four roads, is clean and comfortable. A household loaf, weighing not less than thirty pounds, stood on the table to welcome us on our arrival, and we saw for the first time straw hats bearing a full proportion to it, the rim of which equalled in size a moderate umbrella. [27]

After breakfast we visited the ruined castle of Rochepot,[3] on which we had at first looked down, but which, seen from the village, bears a strong resemblance to Harlech Castle in North Wales, both in its form, and its position upon a commanding rock. We found upon inquiry that it had been tenanted at a much later period than its appearance would have led us to suppose. M. Blancheton, the proprietor, had made it his chief residence some thirty years ago, and kept it up in a style imitating as nearly as possible its ancient feudal grandeur. At the Revolution however it was forfeited, and

has since been sold twice; but though each purchaser has pulled down a part, and sold the materials, enough still remains to give a perfect idea of its former strength and massiveness. M. Blancheton now resides, as we were informed, near Beaune, regretted as a *bon seigneur* by his poorer neighbours, whom he has not visited since the demolition of his paternal seat. "It would break his heart," said a poor old woman, "to see it as it now is." I could not help thinking of Campbell's "Lines on visiting a spot in Argyleshire," which bear the impress of a real occasion of this sort.

From Rochepot to Chalons-sur-Saone, eighteen miles; commencing with a steep hill, to the left of which winds a rocky valley of a singular description, cultivated to the very top of the abrupt heights which surround it, and so bare of soil, that the eye is surprised by the flourishing state of its corn and fruit-trees. The heat reflected from the rocks upon the thin gravel which supports its vineyards, must boil their juices to a liqueur; at least such was its effect on ourselves, while winding along a series of these natural forcing-houses, through which the road is conducted into the great plain of Chalons. From the ridges which border these valleys, the wide extent of the latter, and its border of Alps, are visible, though not so finely as from the elevation which we had descended. "Mont Blanc, the monarch of mountains," was however more plainly discernible than before, like a thin distinct fabric of vapour, with his "diadem of snow faintly lighted up by the sun;" and I never recollect to have seen this white-headed patriarch of the Alps before in any position which gave so fully the effect of his enormous height, I will not even except the spot near Merges, where from a gap in the intervening mountains, he appears almost to rest his base upon the lake of Geneva. [28]

On emerging from the hilly country near Rochepot, the road to Chalons passes along a dead flat, cheerful from its richness, but rather monotonous. To the right, we looked back upon a semicircular range of well wooded hills, in front of which, on an eminence, stands a stately old château belonging to the Count de Rouilly. It answers very much to the beau ideal of what a French château ought to be, but seldom is. I say "ought to be," premising that most of us have formed our first ideas of French châteaux, from those works of imagination which endow such places so liberally with gothic architecture and haunted woods. The mansion of the Count de Rouilly would not greatly disappoint a reader of Mrs. Ratcliffe's romances; and bears a strong resemblance to Westwood, near Ombersley, in Worcestershire, the seat of Sir John Packington, which is said to have been once a conventual building. [29]

With no small pleasure did we arrive at the handsome town of Chalons, our patience being nearly exhausted by the tiresome running base with which our Noah's ark accompanied the driver's abuse of his clumsy grey mares. *Grand chameau, sacre vache*, and *canaille*, where the most genteel and decent terms with which he favoured them, and his perverseness was in proportion. For this precious commodity, selected I should conceive from the most consummate ragamuffins on the road, we were indebted to Mons. Picon, a master voiturier at Paris, who imposed on us both as to the number of horses, and the length of time in which we were to be conveyed to Chalons.

"Hic niger est; hunc tu, Romane, caveto."

Having met with a respectable voiturier, named Veroux, who conveyed us admirably from Calais to Paris, my habitual distrust of this class of gentry had relaxed just at the wrong time, for the benefit of M. Picon. [30]

If cities are to be estimated by their appearance of neatness and opulence, Chalons deserves to be marked on the map in more capital letters than the imposing names of Sens or Auxerre. To no town indeed does it bear a greater resemblance than to Tours, both from the modern air of its houses, and from its noble river, adapted for every purpose of internal commerce. The Hôtel des Trois Faisans is also an excellent inn, and, like that at Auxerre, sufficiently well frequented to find no account in these little beggarly impositions which are practised at inferior places.

May 2.—We walked before breakfast to St. Marcel, a village about a mile from Chalons, to visit the church and monastery where Abelard, after his removal from

Cluni, died and was buried. Our excursion however only answered in affording us an hour's healthy exercise; for the monastery has been destroyed, and the church stript of what ornaments it possessed, during the time of the Revolution; and the monument of Abelard is removed to Paris. Nor does the town of Chalons itself, handsome and cheerful as it is, present any food for the pencil, the more particularly as its flat situation offers no favourable point of perspective. The spot from which its stately [31] quay, and its stone bridge ornamented with obelisks, are seen to the most advantage, is about a mile down the river;—in fact from the deck of the coche d'eau, in which we embarked at noon for Lyons. This excellent conveyance is a large covered boat, towed at the rate of six miles an hour by four post-horses, or, when necessary, by six; and performs the journey from Chalons to Lyons, a distance of about ninety miles, in twenty-eight or thirty hours, affording ample time for rest and refreshment at a line of inns of a superior description. The reasonable amount of the fare paid by each person at the bureau des diligences, (nine francs fourteen sous) might induce a fastidious or inexperienced traveller to form an indifferent idea both of the company and accommodations of the coche d'eau. Both however appear unexceptionable in their way, as this is the mode of conveyance adopted for the royal mail, and as generally preferred for the sake of comfort and expedition, as the Margate or Glasgow steam-boats. It affords the range of a tolerably spacious deck, and a couple of cabins, to which the passengers may retire in inclement weather. Had it indeed been less convenient or agreeable, we should have found it a blessed respite after the rumbling tub of penance in which we had been cooped. Indeed, the abuse which our voiturier had vented on the *desagremens et disgraces* of the coche d'eau, in order to secure himself our company to Lyons, had determined us on trying this conveyance; for the [32] habit of lying is so constant and inveterate in this class of fellows, as to possess all the advantages of truth; inasmuch as you have only to believe the direct contrary of what they say. The only inconvenient and perplexing liars are those who sometimes speak truth by accident; and their fictions moreover are seldom extravagant enough to afford the amusement created by romancers of the former class; among whom I may reckon a beggar, who beset us on the quay of Chalons, maintaining in a strong French accent, that he was the son of a carman of Thames-street, in the parish of St. George Hanovre, and had only been a few months in France.

The *élite* of our company consisted of a tall well-looking officer, wearing the croix d'honneur; a shrewd old Provençal merchant, to whom we were indebted for much valuable travelling information; two young friends, one of whom sang very agreeably and unaffectedly, and the other, a lively French Falstaff ate and talked enough for both; and last, not least, an old gentleman of the name of C. travelling to his campagne in Languedoc, whose arch quiet manners answered very much to my idea of the imaginary Hermite en Province. At Tournus, we took in a host of additional passengers, not so polished, but unobtrusive and well-behaved. I question however, whether, in the event of a rainy day, we should have found this mode of travelling very desirable; as the common cabin is but small in proportion to the number of persons [33] capable of being accommodated on deck. There is indeed a smaller cabin adjoining, which, though the exclusive right of the diligence passengers from Paris, is usually shared by them with the rest. It is distinguished by the words over the door, "Chambre de Pairs," which some wag had altered into "Chambre des Paris," or the Upper House, inscribing the other cabin with his pencil as the Chambre des Deputés.

Many a person fond of indulging in classical reveries, and not aware of the real breadth of the Clitumnus, may have formed a very spacious idea of that celebrated stream, and longed to contemplate its wide reaches from the foot of its well-known temple. As however the Clitumnus is in this identical spot, not broader than what a Yorkshire farmer would call "a bonny beck," and a Yorkshire fox-hunter would ride at without hesitation, the imaginary picture of it may with real propriety be transferred to the Saone near Tournus, winding as it does through the extensive meadows of a rich champaign country, and reflecting in its broad blue mirror the herds of fine white cattle which we saw paddling in every creek. It bears a strong resemblance to many parts of the Po, excepting in the stillness of its current, which was so great, that it would have been easy while leaning over the bow of the vessel, to fancy the Saone into the blue sky, and the coche d'eau, into Southey's vessel of the Suras, or Wordsworth's [34] ærial skiff.

At seven in the evening we came within view of the stately towers of Mâcon, a town, to all appearance, fully equal to Chalons in size and opulence, and much exceeding it as a subject for the pencil. Its fine navigation, the general richness of the country, and the productive vineyards on the neighbouring hills, all unite to render it a central point of business and bustle. There are several inns on the quay, of a good appearance; but we found the Hôtel de l'Europe, to which we had been directed, in every respect deserving of its high reputation, and inferior, perhaps, to no country inn on the continent. After reconnoitring Mont Blanc again from the windows of the clean and airy bed-rooms to which we had been shown, we dined at the table d'hôte, which was served within a quarter of an hour after the arrival of the coche. Among the more polished company present, I was not a little diverted by some scattered specimens of the French gentleman-farmer, present for the express purpose of wallowing for once in a dinner drest by the Duc d'Angouleme's ci-devant cook; fat and well-clad; their countenances wearing a sort of awkward purse-proud defiance to the cool sarcastic look with which the Parisian travellers eyed them; and their conscious shame struggling with the desire to appropriate all the good things before them. Numps, in the well-known old tale, was but a type of these honest personages, who seemed to be [35]
considered as "de trop" by the majority. In spite of the mixtures (I do not mean those made in the stomach) which must necessarily take place on these occasions, and allowing for the English prejudice in favour of privacy, there are advantages in dining at all French table d'hôtes, frequented by tolerable company. To the epicure it ensures better fare and attendance than he can command by any other means, as the landlord and his attendants feel both their credit and interest concerned in displaying the most alacrity, and producing the greatest variety of dishes before a large party; while chance customers, after waiting for a long hungry interval, may have to encounter tired waiters, and partake of the tossed-up leavings of this very table d'hôte;

> Which, certainly, these gentlemen must own,
> Is much more dignified than entertaining,

as Colman pleasantly saith. There is a better and more satisfactory reason for this practice, which is, that it affords the best opportunity of ascertaining those points of local knowledge, which at once give an interest to the district through which you are travelling, and instruct you in the best methods of doing and seeing every thing. A Frenchman's manners and acquirements ought never to be judged of by his travelling suit, which is always avowedly the refuse of his wardrobe; and the importance which [36]
he is apt to attach to everything connected with his own town or district, if it leads to ridiculous minuteness, at least insures the accuracy of his details. The marked civility and attention of the French to strangers is too well known to be commented on, particularly to those who pay them the compliment of acquiescing in their national customs. I think I never saw the temper of French travellers thoroughly ruffled but on one occasion, when a shabby-looking Englishman and his gawky son, who had arrived in a cabriolet, made a fruitless attempt to exclude a large diligence party from any share in the table and fire of a country inn. Had they been contented to make their bread-and-butter arrangements in concert with the party, which included a member of the chamber of deputies, and a young officer, their company would have been considered as a pleasure.

May 3.—We embarked at five o'clock in the morning, in the face of a very strong gale, which rendered six horses necessary, and tempted us to wish for warmer clothing. The morning, however, was beautifully clear and bright; and Mont Blanc, which is perceptible even from the low level of the river, was without a cloud. To the right, the Beaujolois hills, at the foot of which Mâcon stands, accompanied us as far as Trevoux, presenting an outline not unlike that of our own Malverns; but more varied and rich, as well as occasionally more lofty, and sprinkled with thousands of white [37]
farm-houses and villas: many of the parts are similar, and almost equal, to the hills which front Florence on the Fiesole side.

At noon we stopped to breakfast, or rather dine, at Trevoux. Here the Beaujolois hills (or, at least, a range which runs in an uniform line with them) recede, and conduct the eye to a distant vista of higher mountains, toward the south; while, to the left, the river takes a sudden turn among the steep but cultivated sides of the Limonais. This curve brought us all at once upon such a green sunny nook, as might have served for

the hermitage of Alexander Selkirk, in the island of Juan Fernandez; in the centre of which stands Trevoux, crowned by the ruins of an old castle, and overlooking the beautifully fertile valley which skirts the foot of the Limonais hills. From its situation, and the form and disposition of its houses, piled tier above tier to the top of a woody bank, Trevoux affords a perfect idea of a little Tuscan town. The Hôtel du Sauvage, and the Hôtel de l'Europe, are equally well frequented; and, like Oxford pastry-cooks, take care to employ the fair sex as sign-posts to their good cheer. Each inn has its couple of waiting-maids stationed at the waterside, in the costume of shepherdesses at Sadler's Wells, full of petits soins and agrémens, and loud in the praises of their respective hotels. By these pertinacious damsels every passenger is sure to be [38] dragged to and fro in a state of laughing perplexity, like Garrick, contended for by the tragic and comic muse, in Sir Joshua's well-known picture; nor do their persecutions cease, till all are safely housed. We went to the Hôtel de l'Europe, whose table may be supposed not deficient in goodness and variety, from the specimen of one man's dinner eaten there. I shall enumerate its particulars, without attempting to decide on the question so often canvassed, whether our neighbours do not exceed us in versatility and capacity of stomach. Our young Falstaff then (for it was he of whom I speak), ate of soup, bouilli, fricandeau, pigeon, bœuf piquée, salad, mutton cutlets, spinach stewed richly, cold asparagus, with oil and vinegar, a roti, cold pike and cresses, sweetmeat tart, larded sweetbreads, haricots blancs au jus, a pasty of eggs and rich gravy, cheese, baked pears, two custards, two apples, biscuits and sweet cakes. Such was the order and quality of his repast, which I registered during the first leisure moment, and which is faithfully reported; and, be it recollected, that he did not confine himself to a mere taste of any one dish. Perhaps I may be borne out by the experience of those who have had the patience to sit out an old Parisian gourmand, by the help of coffee and newspapers, and observed him employed corporeally and mentally for nearly two hours, digesting and discriminating, with the carte in one hand, and his fork in the other. The solemn concentration of mind displayed by many of these personages is worthy of the pencil of Bunbury; and though French [39] caricaturists have done no more than justice to our guttling Bob Fudges, I question whether they would not find subjects of greater science and physical powers among their own countrymen. On our return to the coche d'eau, our fat companion lighted his cigar, and hastened to lie down in the cabin, observing, "Il faut que je me repose un peu, pour faire ma digestion;" and Monsieur C., instead of leaving him quietly in his state of torpidity, like a boa refreshed with raw buffalo, began to argue with us on the superior nicety of the French in eating. "Nous aimons les mets plus delicats que vous autres," quoth he; at which we laughed, and pointed to the cabin. We found, upon explanation, however, that Mr. C., though well-informed in general upon the subject of English customs, entertained an idea not uncommon in France, viz. that we always despatch the whole of those hospitable haunches and sirloins, which appear at an English table, at one and the same sitting: with this notion, his observation was certainly natural enough.

From Trevoux, the Saone winds between narrow, steep, and picturesque banks as far as Lyons, near which place they close in upon its channel, exhibiting more varieties of rock and wood than before. For the good taste displayed by the rich Lyonnais in their villas and gardens, which began to peep upon us at every step, I cannot in truth say much; but our French companions, who had overlooked the merely natural [40] beauties of the country, found much to commend in these little vagaries of art. A lively bourgeoise, on whom we stumbled the next day behind the counter of a glove-shop, ran up, openmouthed, to explain to us the beauties of one of their show spots, in view of which a sudden turn of the river was just bringing us. A conspicuous inscription on a large vulgar-looking house painted red and yellow, informed us that it was styled the "Hermitage du Mont d'Or." In the space of not quite an acre of ground, on the side of a wooded hill of the highest natural loveliness, the proprietor had contrived to commit a host of the most outrageous and fantastical absurdities, which were hailed with a smile from Mons. C., and a burst of approbation from the rest of the party. At the top of the hill were four scattered pillars of different diminutive forms, with gilt balustrades; all painted with gaudy colours, and none large enough for a moderate tea-garden, or sufficiently solid to have resisted the point-blank stagger of a drunken man. Lower down were two holes in the rock, which, from their size and appearance, I should have taken for a rabbit-burrow and a badger's earth, but for the young lady's joyous exclamation—"Ah! voilà les hermitages. Messieurs, il y a deux hermites là-dedans." "À la bonne heure, Mademoiselle; ils sont vivans, sans doute"—. "Mais pour

cela—pas absolument—c'est que—ils sont de cire, voyez vous, mais d'une beauté! ah, c'est une chose à voir!" Then came an inclosure so thickly studded with pillars of [41]
different sizes, as to resemble a Mahometan burying ground. "Vous y trouverez des inscriptions de toute espèce, et là vous voyez la colonne de Trajan." This was a wooden obelisk about ten feet high, painted white, at the base of which ROME was written in large black letters, occupying the whole of one side. Immediately above the house stood a small wooden building, with a red and white dome, and pillars and windows painted on the sides. The name COSMORAMA, which took up half the height of the side fronting us, still left us in doubt as to its use or intention; and our fair cicerone could no more explain the nature of her favourite building, than Bardolph could the meaning of the word "accommodate." "Eh, Monsieur, c'est ce qu'on appelle Cosmorama; je ne saurois vous dire precisement; peut-être il y a des bêtes sauvages;—ou—quelque chose de gentil, voyez vous—mais enfin c'est un Cosmorama." "Mais voilà ce qui est vraiment joli," resounded on all sides; and so general and good-humoured was their admiration of this rickety bauble, that we did our best to acquiesce in it. After all, we could admire, without any breach of sincerity, the natural beauties of this spot, which very much resembles the more open parts of the glen where Matlock is situated, and which all these abominations could not entirely deface. How to account for this perversion of eye in a people of sensibility and taste, I am rather at a loss; but this last is by no means a singular instance. "Bientôt vous allez sortir de ces tristes [42]
bois," compassionately observed a very gentleman-like officer, with whom we had fallen in during a stage of beautiful forest scenery; and not a soul in a voiture which breakfasted in the salle à manger at Rochepot, could understand why we stopped to admire the distant prospect of the Alps. Not to multiply instances of the indifference to the beauties of simple nature, which will, I think, be allowed to exist in the French, as contrasted with ourselves, I am inclined to extend the line of distinction still farther, and to affirm, that this deficiency in taste appears generally to distinguish the Teutonic from the Southern blood. It is no exaggeration to say, that for one French or Italian traveller in Switzerland, twenty English, or ten Germans, may be reckoned. The French taste in landscape gardening is well known, and that of the Italians[4] is but a shade or two better: witness the detestable baby-house with which they have defaced one of the finest scenes in the world, and which they distinguish, *par excellence*, as the Isola Bella; to say nothing of a host of similar instances, as contrasted with our [43]
own Longleat and Rydal Park.

The fairest account of the matter, perhaps, is, that this inferiority in one branch of taste may result from a difference of temperament in our lively southern neighbours, which, in other respects, has its advantages. Restless, acute, and loquacious, they delight more naturally in those objects which remind them of the "busy hum of men:" and, whatever the force of circumstances may have effected in particular cases, it may be safely asserted, that the diplomatist and man of the world is the indigenous growth of France and Italy, while the powers of abstraction and meditation exist more naturally in English and German minds, inducing the love of solitary nature.

The styles of Claude, who was a German by birth, and of our own Wilson, are strongly contrasted with that of Vernet, as illustrative of the present subject. In the admirable paintings of the latter, bustle and motion are generally the characteristics of the scene represented, and the features of nature seem intended to be subordinate to some human action which is going on. In the pictures of Claude, the combinations of scenery are every thing, and the figures nothing, or rather, merely introduced to illustrate and harmonize with the effect which the landscape itself is to produce: and nothing is allowed to disturb the repose and serenity of the whole. Of Wilson, who [44]
delighted more in storms and convulsions of nature, it may be said, that his figures, also are merely subordinate to the effect of a dashing sea, a thunder-cloud, or a forest waving and crashing with the wind; and that they are not strongly enough marked to interrupt the eye in the contemplation of these objects. Gaspar Poussin, I must own, is an instance that a French painter can understand and represent the deep repose of nature; but the style of Poussin is certainly not that of the French school in general, nor that of Salvator to be considered as establishing a rule by which to judge of Italian taste.

Mais revenons à nos moutons. We were surprised to observe how much our fellow-passengers interested themselves about the characters of the royal family of England.

Several of its members underwent a free review, though not an ill-natured one; but all who spoke of our late queen Charlotte, did her more justice than has, perhaps, been done in England, and particularly praised the purity of her court, and the excellent domestic example which her private life afforded to Englishwomen in general. On this point we cordially agreed with them; but our sly acquaintance, Mons. C., was not disinclined to lead us to ground more debateable, and lay a trap for our national vanity. The master of the vessel had a wooden leg, which led to the subject of artificial [45] limbs, and the perfection to which the art of making them had arrived in England. We accidentally mentioned the case of Lord Anglesey. "Et qui est ce Lord Anglesey?" said M.C., looking archly. "Un de nos plus grands seigneurs, Monsieur." Still he persisted in inquiring how he lost his leg. "C'était in Flandres." "Ah, vous voulez dire à Vaterloo, n'est ce pas?" said the old gentleman, with a smile, not displeased to observe the motive of our hesitation. He would not allow us to use the word *emprunter*, as applied to the conduct of his countrymen, with regard to the Louvre collection, "Non, *voler*, voilà le mot." The little bourgeoise, who had lionized the Hermitage du Mont d'Or so eloquently, grew very communicative on the strength of the display which she had made, and M.C.'s good humour; and volunteered her sentiments on the folly of reflecting too deeply, observing, that all but the old ought to banish the idea of death and such dismal bugbears from their minds. "Mais, songez, Mademoiselle," quoth he, interrupted in some observation rather better worth hearing, "que tout le monde ne possède pas votre force de caractère;" a compliment to which the young lady assented with a grateful curtsy.

By the time F. had finished his sleep and digestion, as he had proposed to do, and learned "Pescator dell' Onda," by repeated trials and lessons, we arrived at the Pierre [46] Incise, at the corner of which the Saone enters Lyons. Tradition says that this spot, which reminded me of St. Vincent's rocks, near Clifton, derives its Latinized name from the great work performed by Agrippa in cutting through the solid rock, and enlarging the channel of the river. The site of the castle of Pierre Incise, formerly a prison, and destroyed at the Revolution, is still visible on a strong height overhanging the river to the right; the bottom of which appears to have been cut away artificially.

On another height, to the left, stands an old fort; on passing which, an abrupt turn of the Saone brought us into the centre of dirt, bustle, and business. Its course becomes in a moment confined between masses of tall, smoky, old houses, and its azure colour stained by party-coloured streams from dyers' shops, and a thousand other abominations, which would defy the pen of a Smollett to describe, and all the breezes from the Alps to purify. There are several bridges in this quarter, mostly appearing from their paltry and irregular character, to have been erected on some sudden emergency; from these, however, the noble Pont de Tilsit, near the cathedral, claims an exception. Long before we approached this last bridge, however, the boat reached the diligence office, and our porter dived with us to the left, through a succession of [47] courts and streets as high and gloomy as the cavern of Posilipo. We emerged into the Place de Terreaux, and took up our quarters opposite to the Hôtel de Ville, a formal, but fine old building. [48]

CHAP. III

LYONS.

EVERY traveller on his first arrival at a large place of any interest, and where his time is limited, must have experienced a difficulty in classing and forming, as it were, into a mental map, the various objects around him, and in familiarizing his eye with the relative position of the most striking features. To meet this difficulty, I should advise any one visiting Lyons, to direct his first walk to the eastern bank of the Rhone, and after crossing a long stone bridge called the Pont la Guillotiere, to follow the course of the river for about a mile along the meadows, towards its junction with the Saone. From this point of view, Lyons really presents a princely appearance.[5] The line of quays facing the Rhone, and which constitute the handsomest and most imposing part of the city, extend along the opposite bank in a lengthened perspective, in which the

Hôtel Dieu and its dome form a central and conspicuous feature. In the back ground, the heights which divide the Rhone and Saone from each other rise very beautifully, [49] covered with gardens and country seats. More to the left, and on the other side of the Saone, the hill of Fourvières (anciently Forum Veneris) presents a bold landmark, and forms a very characteristic back-ground to the city. Instead of continuing his walk towards the junction of the Rhone and the Saone, which possesses nothing worthy of notice, I should recommend the traveller to re-cross the Pont la Guillotiere, and make for this eminence. In his way he may pass through the Place Louis le Grand, formerly the Place de Bellecour, of the architecture of which the Lyonnais are very proud, and which is a marked spot in the revolutionary history of Lyons. Though on a costly and extensive plan, its proportions want breadth, and are too much frittered away to convey the idea of grandeur or solidity; and the inscription Vive le Roi, which occupies a place on two of its sides, in enormous letters, assists in giving it the air of a temporary range of building for a loyal fête. Not so the beautiful[6] Pont de Tilsit, by which you cross the Saone soon afterwards. This bridge, built by Buonaparte, to commemorate the treaty of Tilsit, unites elegance, solidity, and chasteness of design in a very great degree. Some of the stones, which I measured, are eighteen feet in length, and proportionably large, and altogether it reminded me of Waterloo bridge [50] upon a smaller scale, and divested of its columns. The cathedral, which stands on the other side of the Saone, nearly at the foot of this bridge, is a venerable black old building of great antiquity, and though far inferior to those of Beauvais, Tours, Abbeville, or Rouen, in its general outline, possesses many detached parts of rich and curious architecture. It bears no marks of the devastation which it suffered in the Revolution, or during the late war, when, as we were told, the Austrians stabled their horses in it. Much of its repair has been owing to Cardinal Fesch, the late archbishop. The windows, rich as they are, have a gloomy effect, from being entirely composed of painted glass; and prevented us from distinguishing much very clearly. A statue of John the Baptist, however, crowned with artificial roses, should not be forgotten. A considerable part of the old town of Lyons lies on this side of the Saone; but as it will not repay the trouble of exploring, the traveller will do well to proceed immediately, or rather climb, to the church of Notre Dame de Fourvières. The fame of peculiar sanctity which this church enjoys, attracts many daily visitors from Lyons, though from its situation, it reminds one of the chapel in Shropshire, which as country legends tell, "the devil removed to the top of a steep hill to spite the church-goers." The continual resort of all ranks hither has attracted also a host of beggars, who have taken their stations in the only footway leading up to the church, some singly, some in parties, [51] every four or five yards, and all besetting you in full chorus. The same cause has drawn to the terrace in front of the church a seller of Catholic legends, who to suit all tastes, mingles the spiritual, the secular, and the loyal, in his profession. The legend of St. Genevieve, Le Testament de Louis XVI., L'Enfant Prodigue, Damon and Henriette, Judith and Holofernes, and Le Portrait du Juif ambulant, might all be bought at his stall, adorned with blue and red wood-cuts. Poor Damon cut but a sorry figure in this goodly company; for though adorned with a crook secundum artem, he looked more rawboned and ugly than Holofernes, and more villainous than the wandering Jew: fully justifying the scorn with which the stiff-skirted Henriette seemed to treat him. It is almost misplaced however to enumerate such follies in a place, which on a fine day presents perhaps one of the most varied and magnificent views in the world: and which a person who had only an hour to spare in Lyons, ought to visit, to the exclusion of every other object of curiosity. By changing one's position from the terrace of the church to some rude and imperfect remains of Roman masonry on the western side of it, a complete panorama of the surrounding country is obtained. The Rhone and Saone are both seen inclining towards each other from the north and north-east, like the two branches of the letter Y; the former issuing like a narrow white thread from the distant gorges of the Alps, and widening into broad reaches through the intermediate plain; [52] and the latter issuing suddenly from among the hills of the Mont d'Or: till after inclosing the peninsula in which the principal part of Lyons is situated, and which lies like a map under your feet, they unite towards the south; and the broad and rapid body of water formed by their junction, loses itself at length among ranges of hills surmounted by Mont Pilate, a lofty mountain near Valence. Towards the east, north-east, and south-east, the view is of the same description as that from Rochepot; a wild chain of Alps seen over a plain of great extent and richness. In a western direction, the broad hilly features of the adjoining country are enlivened by a continual succession of vineyards, woods, gardens, and villas of all sizes, absolutely perplexing to the eye from its undulating richness: with which the sober gray of distant ranges of mountains

contrasts well. One cannot form a better idea of this part of the view, than by fancying the most hilly parts of the country near Bath, clothed in a lively French dress; the only deformity of which consists in the high stone walls that enclose every tenement, and whose long white lines cut the eye unpleasantly. Most persons can point out the Château Duchere, which is visible from this spot at the distance of about a mile on the north-west side, and was the scene of a sharp action between the French and Austrians in 1814.

If an hour or two of leisure remain after this walk, they may be filled up by a visit to [53]
the public library and the Palais des Arts. The former contains, they say, ninety thousand volumes, rather an embarrass de richesses to a hurrying traveller. I confess I was more amused by the importance with which the little old woman, who acted as concierge, talked of the "esprit mal tournu de Voltaire." The latter building adjoins the Hôtel de Ville, in the Place des Terreaux, the scene of one of the revolutionary fusillades. It contains, besides, several good pictures hung in bad lights, a large collection of Roman altars and sepulchral monuments, arranged in a cloister below, which serves as the exchange; and a cabinet of Roman antiquities found in the environs. The Hôtel de Ville itself is a massy stone building, a good deal in the taste of the Tuileries, and containing two fine statues of the rivers Rhone and Saone, which deserve notice. Whether the interior of Lyons can boast of any thing else worth notice I know not, but from the specimen which we had, too minute a survey of it can hardly be edifying to any one but a scavenger; and no single building can be named of any particular beauty, though its masses of tall well-built houses are imposing at a distance. To complete the short general survey of Lyons, which I mentioned, another not very long walk will suffice; traversing first the fine line of quays which front the Rhone, from the Pont la Guillotiere to the Quai St. Clair. From this point ascend the highest part of the city, called the Croix Rousse, and inquire for a place called Château [54]
Montsuy, which stands bordering upon its outskirts, and is best described as the most elevated spot on this line of heights.[7] From hence the view of Mont Blanc and the vale of the Rhone is peculiarly fine on a bright evening; and the whole prospect as rich and extensive as that from Fourvières. Beware of being persuaded by the laquais de place to visit La Tour de la belle Allemande, which is one of their show spots, and so called from some old legend of the imprisonment of a German lady. The view from Château Montsuy must, from the nature of the ground, be just the same, or, perhaps, even superior: and, what is more to the purpose, the Baroness de Vouty, in whose garden this old tower stands, seldom admits either Lyonnese or strangers to see it. On descending from the Croix Rousse, cross the Rhone by the Pont Morand, the wooden bridge next to that of La Guillotiere. Near the foot of this bridge is situated a large open space of ground, called Les Brotteaux, where the most atrocious of the revolutionary massacres took place. The site of the fusillade, by which two hundred and seven royalists perished at one time, is marked by a large chapel, dedicated to the memory of the victims, in the erection of which they are now proceeding. Three only are said to have escaped from this massacre, and to be still living. One of them finding [55]
his cords cut asunder by the first shot that reached him, escaped in the confusion, and plunging amid the thick bushes and dwarf willows which bordered upon the Rhone, baffled the pursuit of several soldiers. There is nothing remarkable in the appearance of the Brotteaux at present; but no true lover of his country ought to neglect visiting a spot associated with such warning recollections. One of the stanzas inscribed by Delandine on the cenotaph of his countrymen (which has been removed to make room for the chapel above mentioned), expresses briefly, and much in the spirit of Simonides's well known epitaph on the Spartans, the impressions conveyed by the sight of this Aceldama:

Passant, respecte notre cendre;
Couvrez la d'une simple fleur:
À tes neveux nous te chargeons d'apprendre
"Que notre mort acheta leur bonheur."

This passage is, indeed, prophetic of the salutary effects of a lesson, which these and a thousand more voices from the tomb will proclaim to future ages; if, indeed, future ages will believe, that a[8] dastardly stroller was allowed to glut his full vengeance on the kindred of those who had hissed him from their stage, and to vow in a fit of wanton frenzy, that an obelisk only should mark the site of the second city in France; that he [56]

found himself seconded in this plan of destruction by thousands of hands and voices; that one citizen was executed for supplying the wounded with provisions, another for extinguishing a fire in his own house; and that when these pretexts failed, such ridiculous names as "quadruple" and "quintuple counter-revolutionist" were invented as terms of accusation. Such facts as these, written in the blood of thousands, furnish a strong practical comment on the consequences of anarchy, and the uncompromising firmness which should be displayed in checking its first inroads; the nature of which was never more eloquently or instructively described than in Lord Grenville's words.

"What first occurred? the whole nation was inundated with inflammatory and poisonous publications. Its very soil was deluged with sedition and blasphemy. No effort was omitted of base and disgusting mockery, of sordid and unblushing calumny, which could vilify and degrade whatever the people had been most accustomed to love and venerate. * * * * * * * And when, at last, by the unremitted effect of all this seduction, considerable portions of the multitude had been deeply tainted, their minds prepared for acts of desperation, and familiarized with the thought of crimes, at the bare mention of which they would before have revolted, then it was that they were encouraged to collect together in large and tumultuous bodies; then it was that they [57] were invited to feel their own strength, to estimate and display their numerical force, and to manifest in the face of day their inveterate hostility to all the institutions of their country, and their open defiance of all its authorities."

A vivid description this, and strikingly applicable to the operations of that evil spirit which is still at work, with less excuse and provocation than France could plead for her atrocities. Such are the first and second acts of the drama of modern sedition; the fifth is well delineated in a tract by M. Delandine, the public librarian of Lyons in 1793, as introduced in Miss Plumtre's Tour in France. This interesting narrative, intitled "An Account of the State of the Prisons at Lyons during the Reign of Terror," bears a character of truth and feeling, which bespeaks him an eye-witness of the horrors he describes. Torn from his family without any assignable cause, and imprisoned in the hourly expectation of death, his own apprehensions seem at no time to have absorbed his interest in the fate of his suffering friends; and to their merit and misfortunes he does justice in the verses before alluded to. The following is a free translation of them.

[58]

Oft, Lyonnese, your tears renew
To those who died upon this spot;
Their valour's fame descends to you,
In life, in death, forget them not.

Here calm they drew their parting breath,
Soul-weary of their country's woes,
Here, fearless, in the stroke of death
Met honour,—victory,—repose.

Pilgrim, revere their dust, and strew
One flow'ret on this lowly tomb;
Then say unto thy sons, "For you,
"Children of France! they braved their doom."

Thou fatal, hallow'd spot of earth,
Immortal shrines shall mark thy place!
Alas! what genius, valour, worth,
Lie mouldering in thy narrow space!

Within less than half an hour's walk of the Brotteaux, and on the same side of the river, stands the Château la Motte, in which Henry IV. received Mary de Medicis as his bride. The way thither is best found by following the street leading to the Turin road for about a mile, when a turn to the right, not far from the junction of the road to Vienne, brings you in the course of a few minutes to the castle. When seen at a distance either from the Croix Rousse or Fourvières, its four turrets and a watch-tower give it an air of grandeur consistent with its former history, and distinguish it from the adjoining suburb. In a nearer point of view, indeed, its patched and dilapidated

appearance shows the vain attempts which have been made to repair the ravages of the Revolution. At that period it belonged, as we were informed, to M. de Verres, a brave royalist gentleman, whose activity against the Revolutionists drew their marked [59] vengeance upon himself and his possessions. At the time of the siege of Lyons, he garrisoned the Château la Motte with a strong detachment of chasseurs; and, as a peasant informed us, "fought like a devil incarnate," obstructing the operations of the sans-culotte army materially, and retarding their success against Lyons by his obstinate resistance. The position of his extensive premises, detached from the rest of the suburb, and surrounded with a wall, added to the advantage of a gently rising ground, must have enabled him to prolong the contest with effect. His fate was like that of so many other loyal and intrepid Lyonnese: being forced at last to surrender, he underwent, as may be supposed, a very summary trial, and was shot on the Brotteaux, in sight of the distant turrets of his own house. The property was confiscated, and great part of the château pulled down; but fortunately the round tower, containing Henry the Fourth's bed-room, still remains, rather owing in all probability to the ignorance of the Jacobins, than their good will. A part of the estate has been restored to his daughter, Mad. d'A., together with the château, which she inhabits; but I have reason to fear this part is but an inconsiderable one. Observing us wandering round the château with an air of curiosity, she politely sent to invite us to walk in. The room in which she was sitting opened upon a terrace, commanding a fine view down the Rhone towards Mont Pilate; and its interior was decorated with a few [60] specimens of magnificent old furniture, which contrasted strongly with the air of desolation visible throughout. Two fauteuils of rich crimson velvet, with massy gilt frames, and two commodes inlaid and ornamented with brass, seem all the remains of the splendour of this once royal residence. From hence we visited Henry's apartment, which occupies the middle story of a large turret. It commands a fine view of Lyons and its noble environs; and the ceiling and walls bore some remains of the golden fleurs-de-lys on a blue ground, which had once ornamented them. Nearly the whole, however, had been white-washed during the Revolution; and on the advance of the Austrians, in 1814, the whole building suffered more by the hands of the combatants, than during the former sanguinary times. "Cependant il est bien connu," as Mad. d'A. answered with a proud smile, when we expressed our surprise at having found a well dressed person who could not direct us to Château la Motte. It may claim, indeed, to be well known to every good Frenchman, both from its former and latter history. It is singular, that in the course of the same day we should receive attentions from two persons, both of whom had lost their dearest friends in the carnage which followed the siege of Lyons. While I was sketching Mont Blanc and the course of the Rhone from the environs of Château Montsuy, a tall genteel old man, looking very like a Castilian, accosted us civilly, and, having peeped over my shoulder for a moment or two, invited [61] us into his garden, which commanded the same view in a much superior manner. His sister-in-law, who was walking with him, had, he informed us, lost her husband and son in the fusillade. Yet, perhaps, when we consider the extent of the havoc, it would seem more singular to find a family who had not suffered, nearly or remotely, from its consequences.

In returning over the Pont la Guillotiere, we were led to remark the probable antiquity of its construction. The centre still retains the drawbridge; and the whole fabric appears to have been widened, when wheel carriages came into fashion, with a supplementary parallel slice, riveted on to it by iron bolts. This expedient rather reminded me of a story which I had heard in my infancy, of a prudent housewife, who first roasted half a turkey for the family dinner, and when it had been twenty minutes on the spit, sewed on the remaining half to welcome an unexpected guest.

Our excursion on the Saone had in every respect answered so well, that we were tempted to make inquiry whether the Rhone was also practicable as far as Avignon. Learning, however, that this mode of conveyance was seldom resorted to, and not liking the appearance of the passage-boats which we saw, we concluded, and found afterwards, that there were sufficient objections against it, excepting to those who [62] wish to save time and expense. The rapidity of the current, and the violence and uncertainty of the winds which prevail upon the Rhone, render it necessary to employ a very skilful boatman; and, in a picturesque point of view, as much is lost by the intervention of the high banks of the Rhone, which shut out the distant parts of the landscape, as is gained by the perpetual accompaniment of water as a foreground. On

the whole, we found reason to prefer the land route by Vienne and Valence, for which our arrangements were made accordingly.

I think it is an observation of Cowper, that

"God made the country, and man made the town;"

and not even the centre of Lombard-street itself affords a truer illustration of the sentiment, than this town of mud and money, contrasted with its beautiful environs. The distant view of Lyons is imposing from most points; but the interior presents but few objects to repay the traveller for its closeness, stench, and bustle (not even good silk stockings). Its two noble rivers have had no apparent effect in purifying it, nor the easterly winds from the Alps, which stand in full sight, in ventilating its narrow smoky streets: and though usually considered the second city of the empire in wealth and importance, the houses and their inhabitants appear marvellously inferior to Bordeaux [63] and the Bordelais in the air of neatness and fashion which might be expected to mark this distinction. In every thing relating to Bordeaux there is an easy elegant exterior, which conveys the idea of an independent and frequented capital of a kingdom, and an eligible residence; whereas Lyons bears the obvious marks of its manufacturing origin, defiling, like our own Colebrook Dale, a lovely country by its smoke and stench, and leaving hardly one of the five senses unmolested. Those fine buildings of which it can boast, take their place amid the general mass, like a fastidious courtier in low company,

"Wondering how the devil they came there."

Whereas the elegant theatre of Bordeaux appears just in its proper situation, and supported by suitable accompaniments of well-dressed people and airy streets. After the sight of the Hôtel Dieu, a standing proof that the Lyonnese can employ their money laudably and well, I will not pretend to judge whether there is any truth in the charge of avarice brought against them, and which Voltaire slyly admits in a professed eulogium on Lyons. There are other reasons accounting in a degree for its inferiority to Bordeaux in appearance, and the sordid impression which it leaves on the mind. In the first place, to judge from the innumerable quantities of villas of all sizes within reach of the town, it seems that the rich Lyonnese appreciate their fine environs as [64] they deserve, and consider the country as the scene of display and enjoyment, while they treat Lyons as a mere counting-house. On the contrary, the villas in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux appear comparatively few, and business and pleasure to unite in the town itself. The imagination also may have some share in giving the preference, particularly after reading[9] M. de Ruffigny's tirade against his infantine life in the silk mills of Lyons. One fancies the merchant conversant with a higher and less sordid class of persons and details than the master spinner, and vineyards more agreeable objects than dying-houses and treddles. Be this as it may, appearances are certainly in favour of Bordeaux as the second city in France.

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[65]

CHAP. IV

LYONS TO MONTELIMART.

May 7.—From Lyons to St. Symphorien, our breakfast-stage, twelve miles. For the first seven, the outskirts of Lyons, extending along the western bank of the Rhone, continue to exhibit one unvarying appearance of wealth and population. The Archbishop's palace, which stands about two miles out of the city, on a hill overlooking the river, does not add much to the beauty of the country, as it strongly resembles a large manufactory. St. Symphorien, a neat small town, marked by a ruined watch-tower to the left of the road, possesses no inn at which a tolerable breakfast can be procured; but we fared well, in this respect, at a coffee-house in the middle of the town, situated under the Mairie. To Vienne, nine miles more. During this stage, the Alps become again visible in full majesty, from a high terrace overlooking a range of

woody rising ground; and extend as far as the eye can reach from north to south. Mont Blanc and Monte Viso, the Gog and Magog of this gigantic chain, preserve their pre-eminence; the distant pyramid of the latter, which shoots into the clouds like the Peak [66] of Teneriffe, from a cluster of lower mountains, contrasting with the massy dome of the former. From its figure and position in the map, I judged it could be no other than Monte Viso, which is so strikingly conspicuous on the road from Coni to Turin. Mont Pilate, towards the foot of which the Rhone wound to the right, sinks into utter insignificance when compared with these Alps, though of a height and grandeur which would render it a leading feature in Wales or Cumberland. It is considered in this neighbourhood as stored with rich specimens of botany, and its appearance, much less scorched and barren than the mountains of a southern climate usually are, renders this probable.

The view of Vienne, as you descend into the narrow green valley in which it is situated, crowned by the dark ruins of an old Roman castle, and watered by a deep and rapid reach of the Rhone, combines beauties calculated to please all tastes. On the opposite side of the river, overlooking the ruins of a bridge with which it probably once communicated as a guard-house, stands a tall, square, Roman tower, called the Tour[10] de Mauconseil. The legends of the country affirm, that this was the abode of Pontius Pilate,[11] and that, in a fit of despair and frenzy, he threw himself from its [67] windows into the Rhone, where he perished. This point the good Catholics must settle as they can with the Swiss, who maintain that he drowned himself in a little Alpine lake on the mountain which bears his name; and that the storms by which it is frequently agitated are occasioned by the writhings of his perturbed spirit. Nothing shows more forcibly the power of association in minds not capable of discriminating, than that the name of a man so obviously a reluctant instrument in the hands of God, and who declared by a public act his abhorrence of the part he was forced to act, should be selected as synonymous to every thing fiendlike and murderous.

The cathedral of Vienne was shut, and its external appearance did not tempt us to make further inquiries; but we were directed to a Roman temple, which, like that at Nismes, is called the Maison Carrée. It can only boast of the remains of lofty pilasters, and the marks of what was once an inscription; and the inside being converted into a paltry-looking palais de justice, will hardly repay the trouble of waiting for the concierge. We departed from Vienne with too unfavourable an impression of its dirty inn, and of the place in general, to render us desirous of spending the night there. The squalid, dispiriting appearance of the town itself, indeed, forms a strong contrast both to the fine country in which it stands, and the capital letters which decorate its name in the map of France. Instead of loitering in its smoky, desolate streets, while horses [68] are changing, I should recommend the traveller to walk on and await their arrival at the Aiguille, an old Roman monument so called, which stands close to the road on the right, within about a mile of the town. This singular pyramidical relic commands a beautiful view of the Rhone, winding into the sequestered vallies at the foot of Mont Pilate; and the variety of coins and other small relics, found there, indicate the ancient boundaries of the city as extensive, and comprising both this building and the temple above-mentioned; The inhabitants, forgetting that a person once set afloat "in the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone," would probably find no grave but the gulf of Lyons, have denominated this building the tomb of Pilate.

Near Vienne the country of silk-worms begins, every tree almost being a mulberry; and on the steep hills, which inclose the channel of the Rhone during two days journey from this town, the celebrated Cote-Roti wine is chiefly produced. The vineyards are in the highest state of cultivation; and, as in Burgundy also, the nature and position of the soil seem to operate as a forcing-wall upon the vines, which had, at this early season, made immense shoots from their knotty close-pruned stumps. Here I frequently observed the industrious expedient practised in many parts of Valencia and Catalonia. On the steepest parts of the hills, terraces above terraces, of loose stones, [69] are built to secure and consolidate the scanty portion of earth which would otherwise be washed away from the roots of their vines by the first winter storm; and not a spot is neglected, however unpromising and difficult of access, where a barrow-full of mould can be raked together, and increased by hand-carriage. One cannot witness such industry without wishing that it could procure more of the comforts of life; but here, as in Burgundy, the exertions of the inhabitants seem hardly repaid by a bare

subsistence, if one may judge by the general appearance of their houses and persons. Those travellers who have not yet learned to button themselves up in total indifference, will find, that the interest and pleasure derived from a tour depend on nothing more than on the apparent well-being of those whom they see around them. It is this circumstance which, viewed in the mind's eye, throws a perpetual sunshine over the fine scenes of Tuscany and Catalonia, and lends a charm even to the flat uninteresting corn-fields of Picardy. The absence of it, on the contrary, disfigures the finest scenes in the south of Italy, and causes Naples, the most delightful spot on earth, perhaps, for situation and climate, to dwell on the recollection like a whited sepulchre, a gilded lazar-house of helpless and incurable wretchedness. A Roman beggar, glaring at you from the arches of a ruined temple, like one of Salvator Rosa's [70] Radicals, with a look at once abject and ferocious, may be, perhaps, a characteristic accompaniment to the scene; but the active, erect walk, the frank countenance, and cheerful salutation of a peasant of the Val d'Arno, leave a more pleasing recollection on the mind, as connected with the ideas of comfort, manliness, and independence.

About five miles from Vienne, we ascended a steep hill to the left, leaving on the opposite side of the Rhone a well-wooded château, belonging to a Mons. d'Arangues; which forms a good accompaniment to the view of Mont Pilate. By the road side was a very primitive mill, near which we saw a woman sifting corn as we walked up the hill. The corn is laid in the circular trough, and ground by a stone revolving round the shaft in the centre; which is probably worked by an ass. Such little circumstances as these frequently remind us more strongly of the change of place, than the difference of language and costume, which we are prepared to witness in the different provinces of a wide empire. Nothing, for instance, forms a stronger or more distinct feature in one's recollections of the south of France, than the enormous remises which are annexed to every paltry inn on the road from Lyons to the southward, and which serve both as warehouse and stable to the hosts of stout Provençal carriers, who travel with wine, oil, and merchandise to the interior. The remise at Vienne was sixty feet square, [71] without compartment; its roof-timbers were worthy of Westminster Hall, and for its folding doors

> "The gates wide open stood,
> That with extended wings a banner'd host,
> Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through,
> With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;
> So wide they stood!"

Independent of the uses to which these capacious buildings are properly applied, they furnish the most agreeable place for rest and refreshment, during the heat of the day, being, as the traveller will frequently experience, the coolest and the sweetest place belonging to the inn.

During the rest of our day's journey, nothing occurred worthy of attention, until the descent into Peage de Rousillon, where we slept. Here the Rhone, of which we had lost sight, again appears winding through the broad rich valley which opens at the foot of the hill; and Mont Pilate also, after you have lost sight of it for the last seven or eight miles, and expect to see it behind you, again makes its appearance at a distance seemingly undiminished. So difficult is it to judge of the real bearings of objects in this clear air, which in fact is less favourable to the display of the grander features of nature, than our own misty Ossianic climate. [72]

Our inn at Peage de Rousillon, although the only place in the neighbourhood at which we could have slept in any comfort, somewhat resembled, in its general style, those recorded in Don Quixote, and afforded similar adventures. In the midst of our supper, (which was by no means a bad one of the kind), in burst a fat German woman in a transport of fury, who thought herself ill-used in the allotment of the rooms; squabbling in a very discordant key with the landlady, who followed her "blaspheming an octave higher." Both were apparently viragos of the first order, and the keen encounter of their wits was so loud, that we turned a deaf ear to the German's appeal, and insisted on their choosing another field of battle. Battle however was the order of the day, or rather night, for both myself and my servant were roused in the middle of

the night to put a stop to a drunken quarrel on the staircase, which we effected by ordering down stairs the Maritornes, who proved the bone of contention. The Hôtel du Grand Monarque, is evidently on a par with that class of inns in our English country towns, which bear the royal badge of the George and Dragon, through some fatality attendant on high names and dignities.

From Peage de Rousillon to St. Vallier, you traverse eighteen miles of flat road, only enlivened by the hills to the right of the Rhone, which, becoming gradually more rocky and abrupt, meet at length with a corresponding barrier on the left, and enclose the [73] river in a narrow valley. Just beyond its entrance, which we had distinguished from above Peage de Rousillon, stands the town of St. Vallier, where the conducteur intended that we should breakfast. The Hôtel de Poste is a most dismal hole indeed, in every respect, and no appearance of any other inn: but soon after we learnt by experience, that wherever there is a café of tolerable appearance, it affords a much better chance for breakfast than any inn of the same rank. Neatness is the more the trade of the cafêtier, and his notions of breakfast much more English, than those of the inn-keeper, who is usually put completely out of his way by our habits.

"Eh! Messieurs," said a well-dressed bourgeoise, who saw us sauntering about near the door of her shop, "vous irez sans doute voir notre beau château: il fut donné par Jean de Poitiers au premier Seigneur de St. Vallier, et il a descendu jusqu'à Mons. de St. Vallier l'actuel proprietaire." Nothing could be more acceptable to idle wanderers than this information, and off we set at a round pace up a most filthy street, according to our directions; our heads full of crenelles, pont-levis, donjon, fosse, and the proper etceteras. I am not sure that we did not half expect to meet M. de St. Vallier himself, (a good baronial name) cap-a-pie at the barbacan gate, his lance in rest, and his visor down, like Sir Boucicault, or the Lord de Roye, or the doughtiest of Froissart's heroes. [74] A long white-washed mud wall, with green folding gates, began somewhat to cool our Gothic enthusiasm—. "Perhaps the portcullis was destroyed at the Revolution." A bell hung at the gate. "Pshaw, it ought at least to have been a bugle-horn." When we had rung, instead of sounding a blast, not a dwarf, but a slipshod dirty girl, not much bigger, opened the door cautiously. "Il ne faut pas entrer: Monsieur ne permet personne de voir le château." We made involuntarily two steps forward; when lo! the end of a modern house, with a pea-green door and sash windows, and a shrubbery of lilacs interspersed with Lombardy poplars, blasted our sight. No longer ambitious of pursuing the lord of St. Vallier in flank, we hoped at least that a front view of his castle from the road to Avignon might afford some remains of feudal splendour. Off we set accordingly, and emerging from the dirty town as quickly as possible, beheld on turning round!—a large modern front, in the full smile of complacent ugliness, with a Grecian portico, not of masonry, but of red and yellow paint à la Lyonnaise; the whole edifice quite worthy of the Hermitage du Mont d'Or. The two short round towers on the sides might have been originally Gothic; but if really so, they had been most effectually disguised by white-washing, and new tiled tops, which very much resembled Grimaldi's red cap and his whited face. In front of the windows, instead of [75] the sweeping lawns and dark avenues of which Mrs. Ratcliffe is so liberal, stood a large close-pruned vineyard, inclosed by a high white wall; at one end of which, and facing the front of his red and yellow château, M. de St. Vallier had built a red and yellow summer-house, with green shutters, to keep it in countenance. Very much diverted at our ludicrous disappointment, we sauntered along the road, which followed the course of the Rhone. At two miles distance, just where the river winds with a broad and rapid sweep into a woody gorge, with one blue mountain peeping over it, a black venerable old ruin, with turret and watch-tower, and every thing to render it complete, stood cresting an abrupt rock which hung over the river. Nothing, said I, shall persuade me that this castle is not the genuine gift of John of Poitiers, and the real object of our search. Down we sat at all events to sketch it, and meeting by good fortune a communicative young officer on the road, we learnt that this castle, called[12] Château la Serve, had in reality been the residence of the lords of St. Vallier; that many years ago it had been reduced by an accidental fire to its present state, and was finally wrested from the family at the Revolution. Of the present Château St. Vallier, and the estate annexed, they have remained in uninterrupted possession; and all admirers of the Gothic must rejoice that the ruin has been purchased by the commune [76] of La Serve: for, standing as it does within view of the new château, no doubt it would have been brought to the state of that delectable domicile by the aid of the trowel and

paint-brush.

From La Serve to Tain, the same style of country continues, without much alteration. The utmost exertions of the inhabitants seem necessary to struggle against the stony ungenial nature of the soil; and a black storm which was rolling to the right over Mont Pilate, appeared to menace the scanty crops of vines which their labour had produced. In every hamlet we heard the bells ringing, and saw the poor peasants crowding to the church to put up prayers against the coming hail, which at this season of the year is peculiarly fatal. If this be a superstition, it is surely not a contemptible or uninteresting one to witness: nor can one wonder at the influence gained over peasants thus instructed to associate Heaven with their daily hopes and fears. To our great satisfaction, after two or three vivid flashes of lightning, the clouds broke away to the north-west, and a light rain fell partially, more beneficial to the parched vineyards than hurtful to the hay, which even at this early season was in great forwardness in most places. On the whole, I should say that the district lying fifty miles south of Lyons, is a month more early than our own in point of climate and productions. [77]

At Tain, the Rhone forces for itself a narrow passage into the vale of Valence, from among the rugged skirts of Mont Pilate, leaving on the one side Tain, and on the other Tournon; both backed by strong heights, which seem to guard the entrance of the defile. The situation of Tournon is striking, and very much corresponds with the ideas which one forms of a strong baronial hold upon the Rhine. A large portion of the precipitous hill which commands it, is connected with the town by a broken line of grim old walls and towers, which betoken the former importance of this position. Its castle, a building of a heavy conventual style of architecture, and standing on a fortified terrace, formerly belonged to the Prince de Soubisc, but is now converted, as we were informed, into a prison. To this purpose it is well adapted, as a leap from one of the round towers which breast the river at the angles of its terrace, would be fatal; and the character of despotism impressed on its walls seems to say, that in former times its uses were not very different. The resemblance indeed which it bears to the Château d'Amboise on the Loire, the scene of the Duke de Guise's murder, may possibly assist its effect on the imagination.

On issuing from this gloomy but not uninteresting spot, the eye opens upon an extensive prospect, rich in many of those features which we find scattered through the works of Claude and Salvator. To the right, the hills which hung[13] over the road to [78] Tain, recede into a long perspective, terminated in the distance by a ruined castle on a pyramidical rock, near Valence; and the Rhone, following the same direction, winds away from the road in a slower and wider current than before. To the left, the outskirts of the Dauphiné Alps form a singularly wild and fantastic barrier, sometimes rising in abrupt pinnacles, and sometimes rent as if by an earthquake into precipices of some thousand feet of sheer perpendicular descent. The vale inclosed between these rough walls, and in the centre of which the Isere unites itself to the Rhone, appears a perfect garden in point of richness, cheerfulness, and high cultivation. We crossed the Isere, a strong and rapid stream, by a ferry, for our Itineraire, with its usual accuracy, forgot to mention that the bridge of which it speaks was broken down by Augereau on the advance of the Austrians. Within two or three miles of Valence, a rising ground, fringed with scattered oak underwood, affords a more distinct and striking semicircular view of the mountains to the left; and glimpses of others yet more distant, bordering an immense plain, through which the Rhone takes its course towards Avignon.

As we approached Valence, the ancient Civitas Valentinorum, we again observed the ruined castle which we had at first remarked, called Château Crussol. It stands on a [79] conical cliff on the opposite side of the river, overlooking the town at about two cannon-shots distance. On inquiring into the history of this eagle's nest, we found that it had been in days of yore the fortress of a petty free-booting chieftain, who kept the inhabitants of Valence in a perpetual state of war and annoyance; a history which almost appears fabricated to suit its appearance and character. It bears a very strong resemblance, in point of situation, to the ruin within a mile of Massa di Carrara; which the tradition of the peasants assigns as the abode of Castruccio Castracani, the scourge of the Pisans. Seeing it relieved by a gleam of sunshine from a dark evening

cloud behind it, we could fancy, without any great effort of imagination, that, like the bed-ridden Giant Pope in honest John Bunyan, it was grinning a ghastly smile of envy at the prosperity which it could no longer interrupt. Or, if this idea should seem extravagant, at least the two opposite neighbours present as lively a personification as stone and mortar can afford, of their respective inhabitants; the town of Valence flourishing in industrious cheerfulness, and the castle domineering, savage, poverty-stricken, and formed only for purposes of plunder and mischief.

In the suburbs of Valence we found an excellent inn, called the Croix d'Or, worthy to [80] be recommended both for comfort, civility, and fair charges. A walk into the town of Valence itself has very little in it to repay the traveller, with the exception of the Champ de Mars, a sort of public garden bordering on the Rhone. Certainly no place ever united such a degree of dirt and closeness to so smiling an exterior. Its old Gothic walls still remain, and the streets therefore are probably built on the same scale as in those times when they crowded together for security against feudal aggressors.

May 9.—To Loriol five miles. The road passes through a country as beautiful and diversified as before, seldom deviating above a mile or two from the course of the river: corn and hay-fields, the latter fit for cutting, mulberry, almond, and fig-trees, cover every inch of ground. About a mile before we reached Loriol, and just after passing a small town called Livron, we crossed the Drome, over a noble bridge of three arches, constructed of a rough sort of whitish marble, and reminding us somewhat of a reduced section of the Strand bridge. Its massy solidity is not misplaced, as a view up the mountain glen to the left of it convinced us. Though the river was at this time low, the immense extent of dry beds of gravel showed what its volume and force must be when swoln by rain; and the cluster of gloomy mountains which close the valley from whence it issues, seem the perpetual abode of storms. In one of them I recognised the Montagne de Midi, whose form is so remarkably [81] perpendicular when seen from Tain; and altogether, I have no idea of forms more wild and extraordinary upon so large a scale. The rocks of St. Michel, in Savoy, near St. Jean de Maurienne, are a miniature resemblance of them; but a better idea as to size and wildness, may be formed by those who recollect the mountains of Nant Francon, in Wales, and can imagine them not yet settled into place, after the first confusion of the Titanic war.

> "Ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam
> Scilicet, atque Ossâ frondosum involvere Olympum;
> Ter pater exstructos dejecit fulmine montes."

The view is worth several hours of an artist's time, and its effect is considerably increased by a solitary tower, resembling a moss-trooper's abode, which stands in the middle distance. It is called, as we understood, the Château de Crest, and is the relic of a state prison. On passing a corner of rising ground this wild valley disappears, and the same rich and cheerful country as has been already described recommences. The same unbroken rocky barrier bounds the Rhone on the right, while in front numberless peaks of very distant mountains become visible over the plain through which its windings are traced.

The neat-looking inn at Loriol probably affords better breakfasts than the café, [82] which, in spite of its neat outside, is dirty and imposing, an exception to the usual rule.

To Montelimart fifteen miles: the first three we walked, and rested on a rising ground, commanding in each direction a long day's journey through this fine district. Our walk perhaps made us relish the more a bottle of the vin du pays, which Derbieres, a little village a mile or two farther on, afforded; but I have no doubt that worse is sold in Paris at seven or eight francs a bottle, under the name of pink champagne: it is at least worth the while of any thirsty traveller to try the experiment, if it were merely for the sake of the civil old landlady of the little inn. We could obtain no information from her respecting the history of a singular ruin on the opposite side of the river, excepting that it was called Château Crucis, and about seven hundred years ago was an abbey. Somewhat beyond this black pile stand two or three pyramidical rocks, projecting from the general line of hills, the same probably which

the French Itineraire mentions as commanding a celebrated view, and exhibiting in themselves a geological curiosity. I doubt, however, whether any person would do well to cross the Rhone to explore them, upon the mere credit of that wise octavo.

Montelimart is a large old town, the ancient fortifications of which, as of Valence, [83] remain in perfect preservation. The approach to it from Loriol gives by no means so favourable an idea of it as it deserves; and to estimate its beauties fully, it is necessary to visit the citadel, now used as a prison, which stands on a height above the town.[14] The view which it commands is uniformly mountainous in the back grounds, and flat and rich in its nearer details; but the finest part of it is towards the east. The snowy Alps near Grenoble, and the line of mountains from whence the Drome issues, and at whose foot Château Grignan is situated, are its prominent features; and the little farm-houses and tufts of trees in the rich pasture grounds which intervene, seem disposed by the hand of a painter.

Not to omit the luxuries of the palate as well as those of the eye, it is worth while to procure at Montelimart a wedge or two of the nogaux, or almond-cakes, which Miss Plumptre so particularly recommends. The genuine sort is as glutinous as pitch, and made in moulds, from whence it is cut like portable soup; and the makers at Montelimart, like the rusk-bakers of Kidderminster, have, I understand, refused a large sum for the receipt. Another of the good things of Provence, to which Miss Plumptre's Tour introduced us, was the confiture de menage, or fruit boiled up with grape juice instead of sugar. This is a preserve which you meet with in most of the [84] commonest inns, but which is so easily made and little esteemed, that they do not bring it without a particular order. It is very much like asking for treacle at an English inn; nevertheless I, for my part, felt obliged to the fair tourist for an information which has served to mend many a bad breakfast; and a bad breakfast, as the world doth know, is the stumbling-block, or the grumbling-stock, of most Englishmen, travelled or untravelled.

The inn at Montelimart is excellent; but Madame must not be left to make her own charges. We should, however, have parted from her in good humour, had not her avarice affected persons less able to help themselves. The poor maid, who appeared jaded to the bone, confessed that her mistress detained half her etrennes, and I have reason to believe that she spoke truth.

To the classical ground of Château Grignan, which we visited next day, I shall devote a separate chapter. [85]

CHAP. V

CHÂTEAU GRIGNAN.

MAY 10.—This was the day of the greatest interest and fatigue which we had as yet passed; and moreover afforded us a tolerably accurate idea, at the risk of our bones, of the nature of French crossroads. Having understood that the road from Montelimart to Grignan was inaccessible to four-wheeled carriages, we set off at four in the morning in a patache, the most genteel description of one-horse chair which the town afforded. Let no one imagine that a patache bears that relation to a cabriolet which a dennet does to a tilbury; for ours, at least, would in England have been called a very sorry higgler's cart. The inside accommodations were so arranged, that we sat back to back, and nearly neck and heels together, after swarming up a sort of dresser or sounding-board in the rear, which afforded the most practicable entrance. "Mais montez, [86] montez, Messieurs, vous y serez parfaitement bien," quoth our civil conducteur, haranguing, handing, and shoving at the same time. The alacrity with which he and his merry little dog Carlin did the honours of the vehicle, and the stout active appearance of the horse (to say nothing of the whim of the moment, and the fine morning), reconciled us to a mode of conveyance no better than that which calves enjoy in a butcher's cart; and for the first few miles we forgot even the want of springs.

After travelling a league or two, the road began to wind into the outskirts of the range of mountains which we had first seen from Tain, and reminded us, in its general features, of some of the most sequestered parts of South Wales. The soil is generally poor, but derives an appearance of verdure and cheerfulness from the large walnut and mulberry-trees which shade the road, and the stunted oak copses through which it occasionally winds. We passed an extensive pile of building, of a character which we had not before observed, consisting of a number of small awkwardly-contrived rooms, without any uniformity, piled like so many inhabited buttresses against the outside and inside of a circular wall. This, it seems, is the property and habitation of one person, a M. Dilateau; but it certainly has more the appearance of the residence of a whole Birkbeck colony, each back-settler established in his own nook, amid the contents of his travelling waggon. A little farther, on the summit of a bare rocky ridge to the left, [87] stands a castle of a more Gothic character, but equally uncouth and comfortless. It was demolished, as we understood, at the time of the Revolution; but in its best days must have been but a wretched residence, as no trace remains within many hundred yards of it, of any soil where tree or garden could have stood. To the genuine admirers of Mad. de Sevigné, however, even these cheerless mountain holds present an interesting object, as having been peopled by the honest country families whose ceremonious visits to Grignan afforded her many a good-natured laugh.[15] Or to treat the Château Race-du-fort (for such we understood to be the name of this last castle) with more respect, we may fancy its proprietor sallying forth, like old Hardyknute, at the head of his armed sons and servants, to join the seven hundred country gentlemen who volunteered their services, with the Count de Grignan at their head, in besieging the rebellious town of Orange.

We found it necessary, both from common consideration for the patache-horse, and our own necks, to walk up the two miles of steep ascent, which occur after passing this last castle. On the top of the hill all vegetation appears to cease, excepting a few shrubby dwarf firs, and a profusion of aromatic plants, such as juniper, lavender, southernwood, and wild thyme, which delight in the stony hot-bed afforded by the [88] interstices of disjointed rocks. The view from the high table of ground to which we climbed at length fully repaid our exertions, and may be almost compared, for extent and beauty, to those from the church of Fourvières, and the Montagne de Rochepot. Towards the north we surveyed not only the valleys of Montelimart and the Drome, but nearly the whole of the route of the three preceding days, bordered on the one side by the abrupt and lofty mountains, from which the latter river takes its source, and on the other by the steep banks of the Rhone. On proceeding a little farther, over a road which consisted of the native rock in all its native inequality, we caught sight of the Comtat Grignan, and the great plain of Avignon, into which that district opens in a south-western direction, flanked on the east by a colossal Alp, called Mont Ventou, on whose long ridge traces of snow were still visible. In the centre of the Comtat, [16]Château Grignan is easily distinguished by the grandeur of its outline and proportions, and the tall insulated rock on which it stands, somewhat resembling that on which Windsor Castle is situated, though inferior in size. Its effect is somewhat heightened by several other smaller crags at different distances, which thrust themselves through the scanty stratum of soil, each crowned with a solitary tower, or little fortalice. In the feudal days of the Adhemars, ancestors of the Grignan family, [89] who possessed the whole of the Comtat, these were probably the peel-houses, or outposts, of the old Château, in the quarter from which it would have been most exposed to attack. The Château Race-du-fort was, in all likelihood, also the key of the mountain glen leading to the hill which we were descending, and formed the line of communication with Montelimart, which was formerly included in the family territory. The records on this subject trace the foundation of the lordship of Grignan up to the days of Charlemagne, who is said to have created Adhemar,[17] one of his paladins, Duke of Genoa, as a reward for having re-conquered Corsica from the Saracens. Adhemar having fallen in a second expedition against the same enemy, his children divided his possessions: the elder remaining Duke of Genoa, another possessing the towns of St. Paul de Trois Château et Mondragon; and a third, the sovereignty of Orange. A fourth possessed the town of Monteil, called after him Monteil Adhemar, or Montelimart; and in 1160, the emperor Frederic I. granted to Gerard Adhemar de Monteil, his descendant and heir, the investiture of Grignan, with many sovereign rights, such as that of coining money. It was to this noble family that the Count de [90] Grignan, whose third wife was the daughter of Madame de Sevigné, traced his blood and inheritance in a direct line.

As we reached the level of the plain, and approached the castle, its commanding height and structure seemed completely to justify Mad. de S.'s expression to her daughter, "Votre château vraiment royal." Few subjects certainly ever had such a residence as this; which, though reduced to a mere shell by the ravages of the Revolution, still seems to bespeak the hospitable and chivalrous character of its former possessor. It rises from a terrace of more than a hundred feet in height, partly composed of masonry, and partly of the solid rock. The town of Grignan, piled tier above tier, occupies a considerable declivity at the foot of this terrace, and communicates with the castle by a road which winds round the ascent, and terminates in a massy gateway.

On entering the town, we were directed to the Bons Enfans, kept by a man of the name of Peyrol; which, contrary to the expectations we had naturally formed of an inn not much frequented, provided us with a breakfast, which even the editor of honest Blackwood would delight to describe in all its minutiæ, for it was quite Scotch in variety and excellence, and served up with great cleanliness. It may be well to remark, [91]
that as far as I could judge from the appearance of the rooms, a family might spend two or three days here without sacrificing their comfort to their curiosity, and would be as well off as at the Quatre Nations at Massa, or the Tre Maschere at Caffagiolo, the models of little country inns. Our host, we found, was entrusted with the privilege of showing the castle by the Count de Muy, in whose family he had been a servant; and he accordingly accompanied us in our visit thither. On gaining the level of the terrace, we found the wind, which had been imperceptible in the town, blowing with such force, as to account for[18] Mad. de Sevigné's fears lest her daughter should be carried away from her "belle terrasse" by the force of the Bise. Persons travelling to the south of France for the sake of health, should be particularly on their guard against this violent and piercing wind, as well as that called the Mistral; both of which are occasionally prevalent in this country at most seasons of the year, and render warm clothing adviseable. I shall quote, as illustrative of the power with which the
Bise blows, an extract from a letter by an intelligent traveller, written previous to the [92]
destruction of Château Grignan: "En faisant le tour du Château, je remarquais avec surprise que les vîtres du coté du nord étaient presque toutes brisées, tandis que celles des autres faces étaient entières. On me dit, que c'était la Bise qui les cassait; cela me parut incroyable; je parlai à d'autres personnes, qui me firent la même reponse: et je fus enfin forcé de le croire. La Bise y souffle avec une telle violence, qu'elle enleve le gravier de la terrasse, et le lance jusqu'au second étage, avec assez de force pour casser les vîtres." From the violence of the Bise wind this morning, and my subsequent experience of its force at Beaucaire, I have but little difficulty in believing this account; and conceive that the danger of yielding to the occasional temptation of heat, and wearing light clothing, cannot be too strongly insisted on in this country. Persons, indeed, who have not visited the south of France, connect its very name with the idea of uniform mildness; but in reality, its caprices render it, without proper caution, a more dangerous climate than our own.

On advancing to the balustrades of what appeared a projecting part of the terrace, we were surprised to find that it formed one of the towers of the lofty church of Grignan, on the top of which, as on a massy buttress, we were standing. A trap-door, formed by a moveable paving stone, admitted us upon the leads of the church, which
are secured from the effects of weather by the additional casing which the terrace [93]
affords. Its interior communicates with the lower rooms of the castle by a passage, terminating in a stone gallery, where from its height above the body of the church, the family could hear mass unperceived, as in a private oratory. The establishment of this church, founded entirely at the private expense of the Count de Grignan's ancestors, was very rich, and consisted of a deanery, twenty-one canonries, and a numerous and well-appointed choir. From its lofty proportions, I should suppose that the internal decorations had also been costly; but much mischief, we were informed, had been done to it during the time of the Revolution by the same troop of brigands which burnt the castle, and which consisted of the refuse of the neighbouring towns, countenanced by the revolutionary committee of Orange. With a natural aversion to every thing noble, these ragamuffins directed their outrages particularly against the statue of the founder of the church, whose grim black trunk stands in the vestibule, deprived of its head. One almost regrets that the figure did not possess the miraculous power of revenge which the corpse of Campeador[19] exerted when the Jew plucked his beard,

and fall headlong of its own accord into the thick of its assailants. The remains of Mad. de Sevigné, and of the Grignan family, however, were safe from their violence, as the [94] adherents of the castle had taken the precaution of changing the position of the flat black stone inscribed with the name of the former, which marked the entrance of the family vault; and which has since been restored to its original place. The inscription on this stone, which stands, a little to the right of the communion-table, is simply, "Cy git Marie de Rabutin Chautal, Marquise de Sevigné;" the date of her death, April 14, 1696, annexed. Such a name, in truth, does not need the assistance of owl-winged cherubs, brawny Fames, and blubbering Cupids, those frequent appendages of departed vanity and selfishness; which would have been probably as repugnant to the wishes of the good marchioness, as inconsistent with her simple and unassuming character.

To return to the subject of the revolution, as it affected Château Grignan. Miss Plumptre, a writer of much research and general accuracy, and whose book would furnish twenty gentlemen-tourists with good materials, has, I believe, been misled as to one circumstance, the disinterment of Mad. de Sevigné, which, as far we could ascertain by inquiry, never took place from causes to which I have just alluded. The silk wrapping-gown, the expression of the features, and the respect with which the brigands beheld the corpse, are circumstances which Miss Plumptre's French informant appears to have accumulated, "pour faire une sensation;" and, had they [95] taken place, our communicative guide, who was rather given to the melting mood, would have dwelt on them for the same purpose. They appear, however, to know nothing about the matter at Grignan, a place which Miss P. acknowledges herself never to have visited.

The work of destruction was more complete in the castle than in the church. The Count de Muy, whose family had become possessed by purchase of this splendid pile of building, inhabited it for half the year, doing extensive good, if one may trust the partial account of his old servant, and maintaining a mode of living which would have done honour to a legitimate descendant of the Adhemars. Eighty-four lits de maître, and servants' beds in proportion, were made up, we understood, during a visit paid to the count by the present king, then Count of Provence. These hospitable doings, however, were not to last long. The revolutionists broke into the castle, and having pillaged it of whatever they could turn to any use, burnt the remainder of the furniture, pictures, &c., in the market-place, to the amount of 20,000 francs. One fellow, now residing at Montelimart, had the good taste to select for his share the dressing-glass and writing-table known as those of Mad. de Sevigné. The castle, which they set on fire, continued burning for two or three days: yet such was the solidity and goodness of the masonry, that an imposing mass still remains, sufficient to give an [96] idea of what it must have once been.

"Qualem te dicam bonam
Antehac fuisse, tales cum sint reliquiæ!"

As the terrace remains uninjured, and many of the walls are still perfect, the castle might be rendered again habitable at a comparatively reasonable expense. But the Count de Muy is seventy, has no children, and has lost 25,000 pounds per annum by the revolution; a combination of circumstances not very favourable to the spirit of improvement. "C'est là," said Peyrol, pointing out a small house at the foot of the terrace, "c'est là que demeure l'homme d'affaires de M. le Comte; il y vient tous les ans pour peu de jours; moi je lui fais son petit morceau; et souvent je le vois se promener sur cette belle terrasse, les larmes aux yeux; c'est que Monsieur aimait passionnement ce beau château. Ah, mon Dieu! ça me fait pleurer; moi qui ai tout perdu; ma place, mon bon maître, et puis je gagne le pain ici avec beaucoup de peine: cette pauvre ville est abîmée; nous avons perdu tous nos droits, notre bailliage, notre cour de justice, tout, tout—" &c. Our host had apparently imbibed all his master's enthusiastic respect for the house of Grignan; for, finding that we had purposely deviated from our route to behold the residence of Mad. de Sevigné, his delight and loquacity appeared to know no bounds. The space of years, and the succession of [97] owners from the time of the good Marquise and her son-in-law, to that of his own master, seemed to have no place in his mind. He had her letters by heart, I believe, for he quoted them with great volubility and correctness, a-propos to almost every

question which we asked; and seemed fairly to have worked himself, by their perusal, into the idea that he had seen and waited on her. "C'est ici qu'elle dormait; voilà le cabinet où elle écrivait ses lettres; c'est ici qu'elle prisait ses belles idées." Nothing indeed could be more delightful, or more calculated to inspire fine ideas, than the situation of the ruined boudoir into which he conducted us at these words. It occupies one floor of a turret, about fifteen feet in diameter, and opens into the shell of a large bedchamber. Its large croisees, which look out in three directions, command an extensive bird's eye view of the Comtat Grignan, surmounted by the long Alpine ridge of Mont Ventou, and an amphitheatre of other smaller mountains: and enough remained of both apartments to give a full idea of the lightness and airiness of their situation, and of their former magnificence.

The walls, on which some gilding still remained, the stone window-frames, and the chimney-pieces, were still entire. From the door, we looked out into the long gallery[20] built by the Count de Grignan, and communicating with different suites of handsome [98] rooms, or at least their remains. We explored them as far as was consistent with safety, and descended to the "belle terrasse," now over-run with weeds and lizards, in order to take[21] another survey of the castle, and form a general idea of the parts which we had separately visited. Though built at different periods of time, each part is in itself regular and handsome. The two grand fronts are the north and west, the former of which is represented in Mr. Cooke's first engraving of Grignan. The eastern part, facing Mont Ventou, is in a more ornamental style of architecture, somewhat resembling that of the inside square of the Louvre.[22] The southern part, affording a view of Mad. de Sevigné's window, and of the collegiate church founded by the family, is represented in the second engraving, the subject of which was sketched on the road to La Palud, whither we were bound for the night. In our way thither, we made a short detour, accompanied by our host, to the Roche Courbiere, a natural excavation on the rock, within sight of the terrace, and to the left of the road. This cool retreat, it may be [99] recollected, was discovered and chosen by Mad. de Sevigné, as a sort of summer pavilion; and was embellished by the Count de Grignan with a marble table, benches of stone, and a stone bason, which collected the filterings of a spring that took its source from this cavern. I have since seen a drawing made previous to the Revolution, which confirms Peyrol's account. Even this modest hermitage, however, was not spared by the systematic spite of the brigands who destroyed the castle. Only one stone bench remains; the table and bason are demolished, and the spring now oozes over the damp floor as it did in a state of nature. On returning from this spot to the road, we crossed an open common field on the south side of the castle, planted with corn, and apparently of a better quality than the land in its vicinity. "Voilà le jardin," said our guide; "c'étoit là où il y avoit de ces belles figues, ces beaux melons, ce delicieux. Muscat dont Madame parle." The fine trees, which marked the limits of the garden, have all been cut down and burnt, with the exception of a row of old elms on the western side, forming part of the avenue which flanked the mail, or ball-alley, a constant appendage in days of old to the seats of French noblemen. The turf of the mail is even and soft still, and the wall on both sides tolerably perfect—"And now, Messieurs," said mine host, "you may tell your countrymen, that you have walked in the actual steps of the Marquise. C'est ici qu'elle jouoit au mail avec cette parfaite grace—et M. le Comte aussi—ah! c'étoit un plaisir de les voir." We hardly knew [100] whether to laugh at, or be interested by the comical Quixotism of this man, who I verily believe had, by dint of residence on the spot, and thumbing constantly a dirty old edition of Madame's letters, worked himself up to the notion that he had witnessed the scenes which he described. We were induced, in the course of our walk, to inquire somewhat into his own history, which appeared rather a melancholy one, though common enough in the times through which he had lived. About a week after the pillage and destruction of Château Grignan, he was denounced as a royalist, and immured in the prison of Orange, in company with several gentlemen of the neighbourhood, acquaintances of his master. By means of a friend in the town, (for they were not all devils at Orange, as he emphatically assured us), he was enabled to procure a few common necessaries, to improve the scanty prison allowance of some of the more infirm; but his charitable labour soon ceased, for all were successively dispatched by the guillotine in a short space of time. In the course of three months, 378 persons perished by decree of the miscreants composing the Revolutionary tribunal at Orange, whose names were Fauvette, Fonrosac, Meilleraye, Boisjavelle, Viotte, and Benôit Carat, the greffier. One of their first victims was an aged nun of the Simiane family, canoness of the convent of Bollene, accused of being a counter-

revolutionist; so lame and infirm, that her executioners were forced to carry her to the [101]
scaffold. Madame d'Ozanne, Marquise de Torignan, aged ninety-one, and her grand-daughter, a lovely young woman of twenty-two, perished in the same massacre. The personal beauty of the latter, which was much celebrated in the neighbourhood, had interested one of the brigands of Orange in her fate, who promised to exert his influence with the council of five, to save the life of the grandmother, on condition of receiving the hand of Mademoiselle d'Ozanne. The poor girl overcame her horror and reluctance for the sake of her aged relative, and promised to marry this man on condition of his success in the promised application. The life, however, of so formidable a conspirator as a superannuated and dying woman, was too great a favour to be granted even to a friend; and the only boon which he could obtain was the promise of Mademoiselle d'Ozanne's life, in consideration of her becoming his wife. "Eh bien! il faut mourir ensemble;" was her answer without a moment's deliberation, and next day, accordingly, both the relatives perished on the same scaffold. Poor Peyrol himself, after expecting the fatal *Allons* for many a morning, was at length relieved from his apprehensions by the fall of Robespierre, and obtained his release, on condition of serving in the army. After fighting for four years, with a cordial detestation of the cause in which he was engaged, he was disabled for the time by a severe wound, and obtained leave to return to Grignan, where he settled in the little [102]
inn; but the most severe blow of all was yet in store for him; for his wife died not long after, leaving him with five children. "Ainsi vous voyez, Monsieur, que j'ai connu le malheur. Au reste, Mons. de Muy m'a donné la clef de ce château, et cela me vaut quelque chose; car il y a du monde qui viennent quelquefois le voir." Then, relapsing into his habitual strain of complaint, he ended with, "Oh mon pauvre cher maître! ce beau, ce grand château! ah, j'ai tout perdu!" One bright moment, however, as he exultingly remarked, occurred during his compulsory service in the army; for it so chanced that he was one of the guard on duty during the execution of his former oppressor, Fauvette. "Moi à mon tour je l'accompagnois a cet echafaud où il m'auroit envoyé; il avoit la mine triste, un fleur de jasmin à la bouche; ma foi, ça ne sentoit pas bon pour lui."

Such is an exact transcript of our communicative host's conversation, which, notwithstanding the suspicion with which I regard the prattle of foreign guides, seemed to me not so much a well-conned lesson, as the genuine overflowing of such a disposition as honest Thady M'Quirk's. His interest in the persons and events of which he spoke, appeared as warm and genuine as his *naïveté* was amusing and we took leave of him with a strong feeling of good will towards himself and his little clean inn.

It is as needless to apologize for devoting a whole chapter to local circumstances [103]
connected with Madame de Sevigné's life, as it would be to detail the well-known social virtues which have erected this amiable and unpretending woman into a sort of household deity in the eyes of so large a class of persons, while the Lauzuns, the Montespans, and other gay and brilliant favourites of that period, are only recollected with disgust. [104]

CHAP. VI

ORANGE—AVIGNON.

Our road to La Palud lay along the rocky vale first discovered from the heights above Château Grignan, which in fact is not so much a vale as a high plateau of ground enclosed between hills, like many parts of Castille. To the latter country, indeed, the Comtat Grignan bears a striking resemblance in the characteristic features which prevail through the greater part of it. The insulated grey rocks have forced themselves through the starved soil, like projecting bones; the parched fields are more full of pebbles than corn; and the stunted evergreen oaks, with their diminutive tough leaves of a dingy grey, though well enough adapted to the inhospitable ground in which they grow, present an appearance quite repugnant to our English ideas of verdure and vegetation. The immediate neighbourhood of Château Grignan, indeed, seems tolerably fertile, but it is difficult nevertheless to conceive from whence the adequate [105]

supplies for the Count's immense table were procured, or how the feudal contributions of such a country could have supported in earlier days the number of castles and towers, whose ruins we saw on the summits of every detached rock. These, from their resemblance to the "antiguas obras de Moros," which the muleteers used to point out, presented another feature strongly reviving my Spanish recollections. In the days of romance, this country must have been the Utopia of Troubadours, where each might in the compass of a short walk have taken morning draught, breakfast, nooning, dinner, and supper, at the strong holds of different barons. The first of these fortalices, called Chamaret le Maigre, presents a striking landmark from the town of Grignan; but, on a nearer approach, consists of little more than a tall slender tower upon an insulated rock; the rest is in ruins. At a short distance beyond this spot stands Montsegur, a little old fortified town upon a hill, which, from its name and appearance, may have been one of those cradles of civil liberty, where the "bon homme Jacques" first found refuge from his haughty feudal oppressors. A ruin of a more lordly description close to it, is called, as we understood, the Château Beaume: but the number of less important ruins, which occurred in this day's journey, is too great to admit of a particular description. A turn to the right between a couple of commanding heights, brought us out of this barren country into the wide and fertile plain of the Rhone, and under the [106] walls of St. Paul de Trois Châteaux, the ancient Augusta Tricastinorum. From the respectable appearance of this town, we conceived ourselves in the high road to La Palud, and likely to be soon indemnified by dinner and rest, for the joltings of the day; but our driver, instead of taking the proper direction, lost himself in a series of inextricable cross roads, which terminated in a quagmire. In this slough of despond the unfortunate patache, from which we had descended, might have stuck for ever, but for the assistance of two shepherds, as wild in their attire, and as civil, as Don Quixote's friendly goatherds. By dint of their exertions and those of the floundering and groaning horse, the vehicle, which was too deeply imbedded in the muddy ruts to dread an overturn, was dragged out by main force; the driver sometimes wringing his hands in King Cambysses' vein, and sometimes strenuously applying his shoulder to the wheel. A franc or two dismissed our bare-legged friends grinning to their very earrings, and we pursued our road without further interruption, quite satisfied with this specimen of the loamy fatness of the soil. From the experience of this day, I certainly should recommend no one to make the detour to Grignan in a wheeled carriage of any sort. An active person might accomplish on foot, before breakfast, the whole distance from Montelimart to Grignan, and might reach St. Paul de Trois Châteaux, or perhaps La Palud, by night; but even lady travellers would find less [107] fatigue in hiring saddle-horses and mules from Montelimart, than in being bumped at the rate of two miles and a half per hour, over roads which frequently seem a jumble of unhewn paving-stones. We afterwards understood that there was a direct road from Grignan to Orange, which would have saved us some distance, and could not have been worse than that which we travelled this evening.

At La Palud we found the servants and voiture established in the second inn, the name of which I forget. The accommodations, however, were decent and comfortable, and the charges moderate: and, on the whole, the appearance of this inn was nearly, or quite as good as that of the Hôtel d'Angouleme. The people of the latter house, to which the servants were originally directed, concluding that they had positive orders to await us there, persisted in demanding a price for every thing which more than doubled any charge yet attempted; an instance of pertinacious rascality which it is not amiss to mention, and which would have diverted us by its very absurdity, had we not been too tired to find amusement in any thing but supper and beds. In the course of this day and the next, we heard, for the first time, the Provençal patois, which seems a bad compound of French, Spanish, and Italian, with an original gibberish of their own. As far, indeed, as a slight and partial observation enables me to judge, I have been much struck by a similarity which the inhabitants of the Mediterranean coast bear to [108] each other in language and character, a similarity so great, as to lead one to suppose them descended from the same original stock. The same savage originality of manner, (accompanied frequently by much good-humour and civility), the same extravagance of gesture, which seems the overflow of bodily vigour and animal spirits, the same red cap, and lastly, the same villainous compound of languages, mixed up in discordant cadences and terminations, appear to distinguish the inhabitants of Provence, Languedoc, Naples, and Genoa, and last and noblest of all, the Catalans.

May 11.—To Orange eighteen miles, through the same rich and extensive plain, from which the barrier of hills that accompanied us before, receded to a considerable distance; but which is still interrupted and broken occasionally by rocks of the wildest and most abrupt shape possible, with the addition in general of a frowning castle in ruins. The little towns of Montdragon[23] and Mornas, which we passed this morning, are each situated under heights of this description. The castle of the former, of which a plate is given in Mr. Cooke's work, I think even superior to that of Caerphilly, in South Wales, in the "awsome eyriness," as a Scotsman would express it, with which its detached masses are grouped. The castle of Mornas is not so remarkable, but the [109]
rocks on which it stands are very striking; for if they have any inclination out of the perpendicular, it is rather towards than from the road. It is indeed impossible, when you stand under the shade of this lofty barrier, and look up to the clouds drifting over it, to fancy that it is not in the act of toppling down upon your head. We had not as yet emerged from the land of castles, for, as in yesterday's route, almost every little town possessed some vestige of ancient fortification, a silent testimony to the peaceful virtues of "the good old days." The heat of the weather at this comparatively early season of the year, induced us to congratulate ourselves that we had not chosen a month, or even a fortnight later, for our excursion, particularly as the mulberry-trees, which in this thrifty country form almost the only shade, were beginning to lose their covering of leaves. Every where we met women and children carrying ladders, shaped exactly like those used by cocks and hens in roosting, or perched high in trees, stripping them for the food of the silk-worms. The natural gracefulness of the mulberry foliage is entirely destroyed by the unmerciful pruning and pollarding which it undergoes in this country, in order to concentrate it for gathering. Very little fruit, and that small and tasteless, is produced from these cabbage-cut trees; a circumstance which I mention to prevent disappointment, since, no doubt, many a gentle traveller may indulge, as I confess to have done, the luxurious hope of feasting [110]
on this fruit in perfection under every hedge-row in Provence. Another month would have rendered the heat of the country insufferable, and stript it of much of its beauty, by reducing to bunches of bare poles those trees which still continued to afford verdure and finish to the prospect.

Within a few miles of Orange we crossed the river Aigues by a handsome stone bridge, commanding a magnificent view of Mont Ventou. This mountain seems the most conspicuous landmark in the part of France which we were traversing, continuing visible as it does for two or three days journey with very little alteration of outline. To judge from its situation on the map, it could not be less than twenty-five or thirty miles from the place where we stood, though from the deception caused by its enormous length and height, and not uncommon in mountain scenery, it appeared accessible in a walk of two or three hours. I well remember, as an instance illustrative of this deception, the surprise of a Berkshire servant at Capel Curig, when informed that he really could not take an evening's walk to the top of Snowdon after littering up his horses, and return to supper. The effect in question is increased, and rather to the detriment of picturesque beauty, by the less hazy atmosphere of southern countries; but I never recollect so strong an instance of it, as in the view of Mont Ventou of which I am speaking. I was struck also by its great similarity to drawings which I had seen of [111]
Ætna from the Catanian coast, as well its outline, as the manner in which it rises from a cluster of satellite hills into the borders of the snowy region. Several scattered snow-ridges were visible near its top, contrasting curiously with the effect of the sun's rays reflected from its sides, which, instead of Campbell's picturesque "cliffs of shadowy tint" appeared a red-hot stony mass, and might be fancied by a slight effort of imagination, into Ætna covered with an eruption of burning cinders.

The approach to the celebrated arch of Orange, commemorating Marius's victory over the Cimbri, is marked by an avenue of Lombardy poplars which line the high road. The classical and sombre stone pine, which gives so striking an effect to the tomb of the Scipios (as it is styled) near Tarragona, would have been more in character as an accompaniment to this proud monument also; but since the days of[24] Alpheus and his red silk stockings, the taste for *quelque chôse de gentil* has constantly poisoned those classical associations of which the French are so fond. The grave Patavinian is still designated by the tom-tit appellation of Tite Live; and the majestic arch, whose history would have been so well illustrated by his lost annals, is tricked out with a poplar avenue, like a summer-house on Clapham-common.

The townsmen of Orange, however, deserve credit for the substantial style in which [112]
they have repaired one end of it, to prevent farther dilapidation, and for the manner in which the road is diverted from it on both sides in a handsome sweep, leaving a green space in the middle, in which the arch stands. We returned to it immediately after breakfast, and our second impressions were fully equal to the first. As[25] a work of art, it is certainly worthy of one of the proudest places in the Campo Vaccino, though of course its effect is more striking in the neighbourhood[26] of the victory which it commemorates. The bas relief on the side facing Orange, would not be unworthy of a place between the well-known statues of Dacian captives, which ornament the arch of Constantine. Different as were their respective æras, the stern thoughtful dignity of the barbarian chiefs, and the spirit which animates

"The fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe,"

as represented in the battle of Marius, appear to have been conceived by the same powerful mind, and embodied by the same master hand. The same chastened energy and unaffected greatness of design which characterizes the poetry of Milton, the [113]
painting of Michael Angelo, and the music of Handel, is conspicuous in both. The bas relief which I have mentioned forms the principal ornament of the arch; but the trophies, the rostra, &c. which appear in other parts, are in a style of simple and soldier-like grandeur corresponding with its character and the achievement which it commemorates. I do not pretend to consider this monument as comparable on the whole to the arch of Constantine; but still it is of a very different school of art from that which produced the arch of Severus. On the bas relief representing Marius's victory, one might fancy the most high born and athletic of Achilles's Myrmidons in the full "tug of war;" whereas the swarms of crawling pigmies which burlesque the triumph of Severus might be supposed the original Myrmidon rabble, just hatched, as the fable reports, from their native ant-hills, and basking in the sun like so many tadpoles.

The Roman colony of Orange, to judge from the relative positions of the arch and circus, must have been very considerable, and have occupied a far larger space than the present town. The arch stands detached from its entrance, as I mentioned, on the Lyons' side, and the circus at the extreme end, in the direction of Avignon; yet the former we may suppose to have joined on to the ancient town, and the latter to have stood in the same central position which the Colosseum occupied in Rome. Of the circus nothing now remains but the chord of the semicircle, or, to express it more [114]
familiarly, the straight line of the D figure, in which it was built. As far as I could guess, from pacing the length of this enormous wall, encumbered and buttressed as it was by dirty shops, it is in length nearly or quite a hundred yards, and of a height proportionate. The point of view from which it appears to the most advantage, is on the road to Avignon, about two or three furlongs out of the town. When viewed in this direction, it stands with a commanding air of a grim old Roman ghost among a group of men of the present day; forming, by its blackness and colossal scale of proportions, a striking contrast to every thing around it, and overtopping houses, church-tower, and every thing near, excepting a circular hill at the foot of which it stands. The latter is marked as the position of the ancient Roman citadel by the remains of tower and wall, half imbedded in turf, which surround it: and one veteran bastion still stands firm and unbroken, in a position facing the Circus, its companion through the silent and ruinous lapse of so many centuries. Without the affectation of decrying well-known and celebrated monuments of antiquity, or the wish to put any thing really in comparison with the ruins of ancient Rome, I must still own, that the unexpected view which I caught of the citadel and Circus from this position, realized more strongly to my mind the august conceptions so well expressed in Childe Harold, than any view in Rome itself, hardly excepting the Colosseum. [115]

O'er each mouldering tower
Dim with the mist of years, grey flits the shade of power.

The stanza concluding with these lines involuntarily occurs to the mind, while viewing Orange in the direction of which I now speak; and the lofty visions of the

noble author, which are, perhaps, too over-wrought and ideal to harmonize with the sober contemplations of the closet, seem in this spot to assume "a local habitation and a name." Undoubtedly they ought to do so more particularly at Rome, and would so in every instance, but that much of the effect of the "Eternal City" is lost from the deserved eminence in which we know it to stand, and the consequent familiarity which we have acquired with it through the works of Piranesi and innumerable other artists. Thus its very celebrity lessens its effect, as the commendations bestowed on a celebrated beauty frequently occasion disappointment. The *on admire ici* of the well-bound Itineraire, the elaborate descriptions of Vasi, and the *Ecco Signore* of your obliging cicerone, produce the same effect upon the mind, which the mistaken attentions of Koah, the South Sea priest, did on the stomach of Captain Cook. The meat was good, but honest Koah spoiled its relish by proffering it ready chewed; and in the same manner, the effect of what is really most admirable in nature and art is weakened by the impertinent obtrusion of ready-made ecstasies. It is no reflection on human perverseness to say, that every one has his own way of admiring, and loves to [116] feel and observe for himself; as well as to chew with his own teeth. For my own part, I never could appreciate the stupendous beauties of Rome as I wished, until I managed to abstract myself from the notion that I was come to admire as thousands had done before, and from the recollection of the unclassical comforts of the excellent inn in the Piazza di Spagna. An English letter, or newspaper, is an excellent preparative for this purpose; and when once absorbed in the train of thought which it creates, the sudden transition to the mighty scenes before you, produces by contrast the effect which it ought to do.

I have been led into these observations, to account for the reason why Orange struck me so much; a place of which I had heard and read little or nothing. No attentive and intelligent cicerone anticipated our reflections in this place; nor did the creature-comforts of a good inn debase our Roman reveries, though we could well have pardoned their so doing. Madame Ran, of the Croix Blanche, was as mean and dirty as the hole in which she lived; and looked as malevolent as Canidia, Erichtho, or any other classical witch; and as to the inhabitants of Orange, though the revolutionary anecdotes which we have heard of them at Grignan might create some prejudice to their disadvantage, I think, in truth, that I never beheld a more squalid, uncivilized, [117] ferocious-looking people. A grin of savage curiosity, or a cannibal scowl, seems almost universally to disfigure features which are none of the best or cleanest; and their whole appearance is as direct a contrast as can well be imagined, to the hale, honest Norman, or le franc Picard, as he is proverbially styled. We turned our backs upon them with pleasure, after casting back one lingering look at the noble old Circus; and soon found ourselves in the centre of the extensive plain in which Avignon stands. The forwardness of the climate, and the skilful system of irrigation pursued here, afforded us, at this early time of the year, the spectacle of hay-making in many places. An English farmer might be shocked by the rudeness of the method here pursued, the hay being mostly carried in sail-cloth sheets, and turned with large wooden forks. With respect to the former practice, I have nothing to say; but, having attentively observed their method of using these forks, I am confident that they are better adapted to the purpose of turning the hay than our heavy prongs of ash and iron. They are at once lighter in hand, and, from the length of their teeth, they take up a larger portion of hay at once; and must therefore be well calculated for making the most of the fine weather, which, in our climate, cannot always be calculated upon, and occasions a scarcity of working hands.

At three or four miles from Avignon, and before any other part of the town becomes [118] visible,[27] the legate's palace appears conspicuously

> Rising with its tiara of proud towers
> At airy distance, with majestic motion;

and a more splendid Gothic building, both as to outline and dimensions, cannot be imagined. On a nearer approach, a long and wide reach of the Rhone, winding round the base of this noble pile, and reflecting its figure in a deep mirror, adds greatly to its effect. In Mr. Cooke's work, the palace is represented nearly in this direction, from a point somewhat diverging to the right of the road, so as to introduce a broken Gothic bridge, and a part of the Roche Don, or Roche Notre Dame (for I believe it bears both

names). The rest of the town of Avignon, placed as it is on a low level, affords no striking coup d'œil, from the direction in which we approached it: the ancient walls, however, which inclose its whole circumference, unbroken and perfect, and beautifully crenated in every part, are a very remarkable feature. I know but of one other instance of this continuity of Gothic wall, which occurs at Valencia; but the fortifications of the Spanish town, though they far exceed those of Avignon in dimensions and strength, fall as short of them in beauty. We had a full opportunity of examining the merits of [119] the latter, as the police had unaccountably thought fit to shut up all the entrances to the town but one or two; which obliged us, on arriving at the foot of the walls, to add two miles more to our day's journey before we could reach their interior. We found the Hôtel de l'Europe, kept by the widow Pierron, a superior inn in every respect, both in the comfort and liberality of the establishment, and the cleanliness of the servants.

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[120]

CHAP. VII

AVIGNON—MURDER OF BRUNE—HOSPITAL DES FOUS—MISSION OF 1819.

On the opposite side of the square in which our inn was situated, stands the Hôtel du Palais Royal, the scene of Brune's assassination. The account which M. Joüy gives in the Hermite en Provence, of this horrible transaction, corresponds as nearly as possible with the particulars which we heard upon the spot. Being summoned on the restoration of Louis to answer the charge of treason, and having stopped with his escort at Avignon for the purpose of changing horses and refreshing himself, the marshal was recognized by the populace as one of the supposed murderers of the Princess de Lamballe. A ferocious mob soon assembled at the door of the hôtel, broke in by force, and after deliberately shooting him, dragged the body to the adjoining bridge, and with every mark of contumely threw it into the Rhone. Such is the brief outline of the murder of a defenceless man, on a charge which, whether true or not, [121] should have rested between God and his conscience. Joüy may indeed be pardoned for commenting and enlarging on this story, though the simple facts address themselves more strongly to the mind, than when dressed up with stage effect, and must be better adapted to produce the impression probably desired by that author. In the detestable ruffians who disgraced the good cause of loyalty on this occasion, we recognize the same black and fiery blood which flowed in the veins of the Marseillois assassins of 1793, and of the fanatics of Nismes: and whose ebullitions render them equally hateful as friends or enemies. There are many strange historical discoveries which would surprise me more than to learn that the Moorish blood remained in this part of France unextirpated by the victories of Charles Martel;[28] for to a person who knows them only by report and casual observation, the *tout ensemble* of its inhabitants seems to differ totally from that of the Gascon and the Basque; names which, like the name of Norman, convey to the mind an image of frankness and gallantry.

On the morning after our arrival, we ascended first of all the Roche Don, a hill [122] enclosed within the walls of the town, and backing the ruined palace of the legate; being desirous, as in Lyons, to begin our survey from a point which might serve as a general key to the whole, and instruct us in the bearings of different objects. From this elevated spot, situated at the north-western extremity of the city, we looked to the east, north, and south, over a plain as rich in verdure and cultivation as the finest parts of Lombardy; to which the stately towers of the palace, and the clustering spires and battlemented walls of Avignon form a fine foreground. The distant hills, at the foot of which Vaucluse is situated, form the eastern boundary of this plain; and are succeeded and overtopped to the northward by a chain of the Dauphiné Alps, among which the long sweeping mass of Mont Ventou predominates. From the latter quarter the Rhone is traced winding up in a wide and rapid current, till it reaches the highly cultivated islands at the foot of Mont Don, and pursues its course with increased grandeur towards the southward. The neighbourhood of its junction with the Durance is marked in this quarter by a barrier of mountains of less height than those above-mentioned, but more abrupt and wild in their forms, at whose foot appear casual glimpses of the two rivers, winding like narrow silver threads into the horizon. "Vous

avez passé ce diantre de Rhone," says Madame de Sevigné, "si fier, si orgueilleux, si turbulent; il faut le marier avec la Durance quand elle est en furie; ah le bon ménage!" The good people of Lyons have, however, settled this point otherwise by their inscriptions and statues in the Hôtel de Ville, which certify this river-god as already married to the Saone: the Durance, therefore, can hold no higher rank than that of his termagant mistress, while the gentle, even, beneficent character of her rival, and the priority of her claims, suit much better with the title of wife. If it be permitted me to quote Mad. de Sevigné once more, I should remark, that the broken Gothic bridge beneath our feet, which forms so picturesque an object in every point of view, is the same against the piers of which Mad. de Grignan was nearly lost.[29] It formerly connected the Roche Don with the heights on the western side of the Rhone, up which the road to Nismes winds near Fort Villeneuve; and is well worthy of a nearer survey as an architectural relic. The few arches which remain have the same bold span and elegant lightness of design so remarkable in the celebrated Pont y Prydd in South Wales; and the piers, which appear slight at a distance, are nevertheless solid and well adapted to the nature of the Rhone, whose current they cut like the sharp bow of a canoe. Its remarkable narrowness, which hardly allows two horses to pass abreast, and the ancient guard-house in the centre, secured by gates on both sides, carry the mind strongly back to those days of distrust and violence, which have by some been called "the good old times:"— [123] [124]

"Ego me nunc denique natum
Gratulor."

At the period when the territory of Avignon was styled by the kings of France the "derriere du Pape," from the convenient posture in which it lay for their correction, one may fancy the same scenes to have taken place on a larger scale, which are described as occurring at the bridge of Kennaquhair, the same struggle between secular and monastic authority, the same sullen important bridgeward, and the same forcible arguments employed by wandering troops of jackmen to effect a passage. In Mr. Cooke's first view of the legate's palace, this bridge appears projecting from the part of the Roche Don where we stood, a spot marked with two round buildings, like small Martello towers. The window marked by two birds flying directly over it, and second from the highest in the same tower, has acquired a bloody notoriety. From this giddy height, as we were informed by an inhabitant whom we met, the half-murdered victims of revolutionary massacre were thrown, to put an end to their sufferings: and their remains heaped up for a time in the square building which stands below, originally erected for the purpose of an ice-house. [125]

Having familiarized ourselves with the leading features of Avignon and its vicinity, as viewed from this commanding point, we descended into the town to take a more particular survey.

Rhetor comes Heliodorus,
Græcorum longè doctissimus.

To translate Horace freely, our companion was a rhetorician, or talker by profession, and the most learned of his class in extraordinary legends and fabrications; in other respects an useful civil fellow, with an Irish brogue, which his service in the French army had not been able to eradicate, or even weaken, and the established cicerone of the place. To account satisfactorily for his wooden leg and French uniform, he anticipated our inquiries by informing us, that he had been crippled by a shipwreck on the French coast, and through the recommendation of his friends the *Duchess* of Westmoreland and *Countess* of Devonshire, patronized by Louis, "who allowed him this uniform coat to wear, and two *males* a-day." In England, one would not have borne the sight of such a lying varlet another instant, but I must confess that the mere sound of our own language in a foreign town, disarmed our indignation, and we bore with the fellow, whom we found not unamusing, and from his local knowledge, serviceable. A very small degree of merit indeed suffices to open one's heart towards a fellow-countryman in a strange land; a truth no doubt known and acted on by knights of industry, matrimonial speculators, and [126]

The legate's palace is now divided into barracks and a prison, and the nakedness of its appearance upon a nearer view make its lofty proportions more striking. We were [127] expressing to each other our wonder at its size, when our guide interrupted us with an original observation of his own:—"The reason of its size, sir, is quite *clare*. The pope, you see, always went about with such a *hape* of monks—and of nuns—and of all them kind of people, that the big number of rooms which you see could hardly hold them any how." After all, if the annals of former times have been truly written, the Milesian's account of this merry menage might be nearer the truth than he knew or suspected.

The Papal Chapel exhibits now but few remains of its former probable grandeur, its inside having been defaced with the most persevering animosity during the Revolution, and presenting little more than a damp bare shell, filled with the broken remains of monumental figures. Headless popes and crippled cardinals lie together in heaps, mingled in a manner which will render it impossible to restore to each his proper allotment of limbs, when the projected repairs of the chapel are put in execution. One tomb, broken up and shattered to pieces more than the rest, was pointed out by the old woman as the sepulchre of La belle Laure, an honour which, for aught I know, may be claimed by a tomb in every church of Avignon. An assertion apparently still more apocryphal, however, is that one of the small side chapels was built by Constantine. [128]

The interior of Avignon affords a much more agreeable promenade than that of Lyons, from the superior cleanliness of its inhabitants, and the moderate height of the houses. These circumstances tend to disperse the combinations of ill smell, and purify the thick, vapid, flagging air which is felt so perceptibly at Lyons. It may, perhaps, be beneath the dignity of a *printed book* to enumerate such circumstances as these, but they occupy in fact a high place in the scale of human comfort; and, joined to the cheapness of the necessaries of life, (which we inferred from the price of two or three articles of consumption,) must have their weight in rendering Avignon a desirable place of banishment. Banishment, I say; for I have no better name by which to express a prolonged residence abroad, especially in cases where the mind has lost its power of deriving amusement from trifles.

With the exception of its fine walls, its Gothic bridge, and the legate's palace, Avignon possesses in itself no remarkable architectural feature, or fine combination of buildings. Its churches are numerous; but no one remarkable above the rest, as far at least as external appearance is concerned; and we had not time for a very minute internal survey. The Hôpital des Fous, however, is an establishment well calculated to gratify the laudable curiosity of the humane; and to judge from all we witnessed, may perhaps exhibit points of internal regulation worthy the attention of professional men. [129] Nothing indeed can exceed the quiet, orderly behaviour of the patients there confined, whom we found walking about at perfect liberty in a square court planted with trees. Many of them wore a certain air of content and satisfaction which could not be mistaken, and all seemed much gratified by the notice of the mild sensible ecclesiastic who accompanied us, and who presides over the establishment. No coercion, as we understood from him, is used, save restriction from walking with their fellow patients, and the restraint of handcuffs, when rendered necessary in cases of violent conduct. I particularly observed also, that he had never any occasion to exert that command of the eye, on which so much stress is laid as a means of intimidation, but passed all their little follies off with a smile, in which we were frequently inclined to join. One poor patient accosted us with high titles of nobility, dwelling on the peculiar pleasure he experienced from our visit; another, an old man of a very venerable appearance, called our attention to a dirty stone which he held in his hand, affirming it to be a piece of Henri Quatre's identical foot: but none were troublesome or obtrusive, and most appeared to be deriving as much enjoyment from their own little vagaries as their melancholy state would admit of.[30] Their apartments, built round the square, are neat [130] and airy, each furnished with a bed, dressing table, and a few plain utensils. In one large room are a row of hot and cold baths, which are frequently and regularly used; and nothing, the good priest said, has been found to produce so desirable an effect on the mind and body as this custom. The rank of the patients is various; the poorer sort

are supported by voluntary contributions; and many persons in the higher ranks are also placed here at their own expense, or that of their friends. Among others, there is a general who became deranged, as we were assured, on hearing of the abdication of his patron Napoleon; the most unequivocal instance of misplaced fidelity, which I have ever heard. How this poor man contrives to agree with the partizan of Henry IV., I am at a loss to make out: and he was not then visible to answer for himself. At the time of the Revolution, the estates belonging to the hospital were confiscated; and the [131] establishment itself would have been abolished, had not one of the members of the council at Avignon observed, half in jest, that they might possibly be one day glad themselves of such a retreat. It is now, as I mentioned, maintained by private donations, and by the salaries paid for the accommodation of the richer patients. The only objects of taste belonging to the institution are a fine altar-piece attributed to Murillo, and an ivory crucifix carved by Jean Guillermin, in 1659. The latter is not above two feet in length; but the manner in which every muscle and vein indicate suffering, and the mingled expression of pain and resignation in the countenance, place it on the footing of a statue; and I could hardly have supposed that a small piece of ivory-carving could do such justice to a sacred subject. The worthy priest dwelt, with great exultation, on the precautions he had taken to secure this favourite relic from revolutionary pillage, slightly alluding to the circumstance of having been forced to fly for his life to Italy, as a matter of minor importance to himself.

The admirers of show houses, may find some gratification in visiting the hotel of M. De Leutre, the banker; which was purchased of M. Villeneuve, an emigré, and contains, besides the usual etceteras of carving and gilding, orange-trees, and gold fish, a curious collection of prints representing Chinese battles, and supposed to be the only perfect duplicate of that in the royal collection. A sight more interesting is [132] presented in the hospital of invalid soldiers, established in the place; 1500 of whom are maintained as in-pensioners, apparently in great comfort. "On est bien ici," said a blind veteran, who, hearing the voices of strangers, invited us to walk in; and indeed most of those whom we saw strolling in the garden, or sitting under the shade of the trees, seemed very cheerful, though some of them, and those very young men, were dreadfully mutilated, and the loss of both legs very common. The two buildings which accommodate them were formerly the Convent des Celestins, and that of the Dames de St. Louis. Two other handsome convents have been converted to uses less beneficent, one being now a gunpowder manufactory, and the other a cannon foundery.

In the evening we walked across the long wooden bridge adjoining our hotel,[31] towards the western bank of the Rhone; and the expectations which we had formed of the view from this quarter, were not disappointed. The Roche Don terminates more abruptly on the side of the river than in any other part, and in a manner which sets off strikingly the commanding height of the legate's palace. With this princely pile of building, the broken Gothic bridge and its guard-house, the ancient palace of the [133] archbishop, and a portion of the battlemented walls of Avignon, combine to form a striking architectural group, whose unity of character is hardly at all broken by meaner objects; and the whole is well backed by Mont Ventou and the Dauphiné Alps. From this spot we again returned to Roche Don, a station to which every visitor of Avignon may return twice or thrice in the day with undiminished pleasure. In our way we fell in with a procession of children, the eldest of whom could not be more than seven years of age, in pairs, and with lighted candles in their hands, escorting a cross of lath and a very indifferent daub, which represented some female saint, and screaming in chorus with all their might. Those who had no candles, ran about with little dishes, vociferously begging money to buy some; and in spite of the respect with which one would wish to consider whatever fellow Christians choose to denominate, in pure earnest, a religious ceremony, it was impossible not to be reminded, by the petitions of these sucking Catholics, of Guy Fawkes's little votaries on the fifth of November. We thought involuntarily of a boy who had followed us that very morning into the church of St. Didier, tossing a ball in his hand, and after crossing himself with great gravity, immediately began his game again. Whether the interests of religion gain or suffer most by the familiarity with the ordinary business of life which it assumes in Catholic countries, is a point which I cannot presume to determine. It is [134] true, that it may frequently occasion such ridiculous scenes as those which I have mentioned; and our habits of mind, as Protestants, may lead us to conceive that such

familiarity may tend to generate levity and indifference. On the other hand, however, amidst all the mummery which may mix itself up with the occasional ceremonies of the Catholic service, there is much worthy of commendation in the more common ordinances, to which alone a sensible Catholic must look for religious improvement. I particularly allude to the shortness and frequent recurrence of the mass (such as it is), and the constant access afforded to Catholic churches, in which some service or other appears to be carried on during great part of the day. These regulations are well adapted to take advantage of those serious trains of thought which often arise most forcibly at accidental times, and from unpremeditated causes. The attention is thus excited without being fatigued, and the privacy of the closet is combined with that solemnity which attaches itself to the house of God. It may be said, indeed, that to consult the caprices and associations of the human mind, is to lower the dignity of religion; but surely a good end must justify any means which are not in themselves culpable or ridiculous. The mechanic, for instance, in returning from his daily labour, enters an open church from accident or curiosity, crosses himself from habit, and is led on by the momentary feeling of reverence which that act must generally awaken, [135] to employ five minutes in his devotions, a well spent portion of time, which probably would not otherwise have been rescued from the business of the day, but which may influence his conduct during the rest of it.

On ascending the Mont Don, we found it the scene of a graver ceremony than the infantine gambols which we had just witnessed. In the centre of the terrace facing the river, a new and highly gilt crucifix of colossal size has been erected at the expense of the Mission, round which a number of monks and inhabitants were collected on their knees, the still evening increasing the effect of a solemn mass which they were singing, and in which we heard the name of St. Paulus several times repeated. Several nuns, belonging to an establishment lately revived, knelt on the steps of the cross, enveloped in their black hoods; and the prisoners at the palace window united their deep tones to the chant, pausing every now and then to solicit the charity of passers by. Scattered at different distances from the cross, eight or ten separate groups of persons were kneeling farther off, in attitudes of the deepest devotional abstraction, though surrounded on all sides by sauntering soldiers, children playing, and groups of loungers laughing or whispering. The different distances at which they knelt were regulated, as we were told, by the degrees of penance imposed upon them, and the place which their respective consciences allowed them to assume. Some, in the true [136] spirit of the poor Publican, were kneeling at a considerable distance, just within view of the cross, to which they hardly lifted their eyes; others, whose penance was originally lighter, or its term abridged by frequent visits to this place, had approached the cross more nearly, and with greater signs of satisfaction.

I must confess, that we observed these poor penitents with an interest and attention which the other parts of the ceremony had failed to excite. The manifestation of a deep and genuine religious feeling is respectable in Catholic, Turk, or Bramin, and seldom or never to be mistaken; and though attended by no circumstances of external pomp, must impress upon serious beholders of every creed a reverence which trappings and mummery fail to excite. It should seem indeed that Providence, wishing gently to humble the pride of men, delights in producing by the simplest means those physical and moral effects, which they waste toil and expense in bringing about. The splendid procession, for instance, which takes place on the day of Corpus Christi at Rome, with all its assemblage of monks, horse and foot guards, cardinals, choristers, and banners, would dwindle before the eye of reason into "shreds and patches, were it not for the figure of the truly venerable man who now fills the papal chair, kneeling with the same humility and abstraction from the busy scene around him, which marked the [137] deportment of the penitents just mentioned.

Time, which decides all questions when they have ceased to be any longer interesting, will probably show whether the celebrated Mission, which has excited such a sensation in many parts of France, be a mere political manoeuvre to strengthen the hands of government by calling in the aid of superstition, or (which is at least as probable) a sincere and well-meant attempt to awaken the forgotten spirit of religion. In the mean while, it is a desirable thing to have turned the attention of the French to a subject which, by all accounts, is become nearly obsolete among the higher orders of the nation. Even with a view to the ascendancy which a more simple and purified

religion may ultimately obtain under an improved and free constitution, it is better that a religious feeling of some sort should exist. The worst and most twisted crabstock, if alive, possesses an active principle, which allows of successful grafting; not so with a dead branch.

I shall annex a statement of the proceedings of the Mission at Avignon, during the Lent of 1819, copied and abridged from a short pamphlet, written by a M. Fransoy, a lawyer of that city; which being published by a layman on the spot where the events in question recently took place, possesses the most probable claim to accuracy and impartiality. The writer begins by describing the demoralization and ignorance [138] occasioned by the Revolution, "which had completely realised," he observes, "in the kingdom of the lilies all the misfortunes foretold by the prophet Jeremiah. The people of Avignon, who had remained without instruction during this period of horror and barbarism, were soon infected with that gross ignorance which assimilates men to brutes: and in a short time this field of the Lord, once so fertile, only produced brambles and thorns; the evil plants choked the good, and the tares every where devoured the corn. Scarcely, however, was the Catholic worship restored in France by the concordat, before religion shed among us some rays of its former light. Dazzled by the majesty of religious ceremonies, the people were jealous to emerge from their revolutionary blindness. The dearth of ministers was the cause that instruction only distilled drop by drop upon this people famishing with want."

The scanty manner in which this dearth had been occasionally supplied for some time, excited a longing to participate in the instructions of the new Mission, which had already visited Arles, Valence, and Tarascon, under the sanction of the state; and whose claims to religious authority the writer defends by precedents unnecessary to enumerate here. On the first Sunday in Lent, 1819, its proceedings were commenced at Avignon, by a solemn procession, which made the circuit of the principal streets of [139] the town, singing penitential psalms, and halted on the hill of Notre Dame; where an inaugural sermon was delivered on a spot called Calvary, and supposed to represent that sacred place. The multitude, assembled by curiosity or a better feeling, was so great, that two of the missionaries found it expedient to address them at the same time from different stations. One of these was M. Guyon, the director of the Mission; of whose eloquence and animation, as a preacher, the author speaks highly.

On the succeeding day, the nine ecclesiastics composing the Mission attached themselves respectively to the different churches of the town, and called in the assistance of the neighbouring clergy, as confessors to those persons whom their discourses might affect most strongly. This step was rendered the more necessary, inasmuch as the common people of the vicinity understand French merely as the Welsh do English, and converse only in their native Provençal with any facility. If we may believe their zealous eulogist, the effects which the missionaries had anticipated immediately followed, and their utmost exertions, as well as those of their new associates, were taxed to satisfy the spiritual wants of the populace. "The Avignonese," says the narrative, "hungered so after the word of God, that the gates of the churches were besieged from three hours before daybreak, by those who flocked to be present at the morning exhortation. The inhabitants of the country and the neighbouring [140] communes walked during a part of the night, in order to secure seats; each anxiously sought to place his chair many hours beforehand, and caused it to be kept, in fear that another might deprive him of it; the churches were so full, that it was hardly possible to move in them. The eagerness to obtain room was so great, that indecorous and even scandalous scenes took place among the wives of the populace; they quarrelled for chairs and seats with a ferocity, *qui les mettoit souvent hors du cercle de la politesse civile et Chretienne*." (Perhaps, as a townsman, he is unwilling to be more particular). "More than twenty thousand individuals were assembled in the churches at every service; and a circumstance which proves how admirably each missionary and associate fulfilled his particular task is, that each parish gave the preference to the persons attached to it, and none allowed the superiority to its neighbouring quarter. Like mothers, who can see nothing more perfect than the children to whom themselves have given birth, each parishioner acknowledged no better men than the missionaries appointed to his own church. MM. Guyon, Menoult, and Bourgin, shone as much at St. Agricol, as MM. Ferrail and Levasseur at St. Pierre; and MM. Gerard and Rodet in the church of St. Didier, as much as MM. Fauvet and Poncelet in that of

St. Symphorien." To the character of M. Levasseur[32] the writer bears honourable testimony, as a young man who had devoted time, talents, and a liberal private fortune, to the cause; and whose exertions on this occasion impaired a naturally delicate constitution. "From four in the morning to eight or nine at night, their time," he says, "was for many days occupied in public or private instruction, and in visiting the hospitals and prisons; and forty missionaries would have been necessary to have completely accomplished what these nine took cheerfully upon them." [141]

The effects of their preaching were manifested by the number of penitents who flocked to confession, which, during the second week of the mission, increased to such an extent as to render access difficult. The missionaries, unable to meet the wishes of all at once, gave an obvious preference, not to the more habitually devout, but to those classes of persons whose attendance was most unexpected. "Dissipated young coxcombs, disabled soldiers, dragoon officers with fierce mustaches, and worldly-wise men with formal wigs," says our author, "met with attention and encouragement, to [142] the exclusion of those whose habits of piety deserved it better." The apparent injustice of this procedure he excuses by the plea, "that it was necessary to quit the regular fold in order to recover these lost sheep"—that "the stouter and better worth catching the fish were, the more anxious should they be to secure them in the net of the Prince of Apostles." When separated from the figurative bombast by which a Frenchman frequently obscures a sensible reason, this plea seems fair enough: provided that the motives of the missionaries were unmixed with spiritual vanity, and the pride of creating a strong sensation. It was no doubt most consonant to the purposes of a special mission like this, to accomplish that which was most difficult, and to make an impression, while the opportunity lasted, on a class of persons least accessible to the usual means of religious instruction. The example of such, if permanently reclaimed, would naturally be more striking than that of others, and influence public opinion more strongly, and this may furnish some excuse for a conduct which, in the ordinary course of things, would have been unjust and out of place.

A large part of the tract is occupied by accounts of several solemn ceremonies which ensued, "for the purpose," says the author, "of striking the senses of the lower orders, who are not sufficiently affected by argument." These, as in the instance of the general [143] communion, were rendered more imposing by the attendance of the civil and military authorities, and most persons of rank and wealth in the vicinity. Nor did they degenerate into mere processions and pompous forms, if the narrative is to be trusted. The missionaries appear on every occasion to have availed themselves of the excitation of the moment, in calling forth such feelings as must be approved by Christians of every country and persuasion, and which, among Frenchmen, may not be the less sincere for being expressed somewhat extravagantly. In the account of the Amende Honorable, a solemn act of profession of repentance, the following passage occurs:—"He (the missionary) drew an affecting picture of our unhappy country, oppressed by the burden of impiety and anarchy. He rapidly enumerated the series of crimes produced by license and want of faith. He implored the pardon of the most holy God in the name of all; and he proclaimed in a loud tone of voice, mutual forgiveness between enemies. All his questions were interrupted by the tears and sobs of his audience. 'Do you feel contrition and repentance,' said he, 'for your offences against God?'—'Yes.' 'Do you ask pardon sincerely?' The congregation again answered 'Yes.' 'Does every one of you individually pardon his neighbour all the injuries and offences which he may have received from him?'—'Yes.' 'Do you renounce all hatred, all enmity, all revenge?'—'Yes.' 'Do you promise God to live in future as becomes good Christians, [144] in a perfect union and concord among yourselves?'—'Yes.' 'Do you promise fidelity, respect, and love, to the monarch who governs France, to the princes of his blood, and his representatives, and submission to the laws?'—'Yes.' The pen can but imperfectly describe the effect produced by these questions of the missionaries, and the answers of the congregation. No countenance but wore the expression of grief and repentance, no cheek but was wet with tears. The officiating priest who held the host in his hand, then pronounced in the name of the God of mercy, his holy pardon; the Magnificat, the Benedictus, and the Te Deum, were thundered forth; and the festival concluded with the benediction of the host. The innumerable crowd of individuals present, each holding a lighted taper, presented a magnificent spectacle." In describing the renewal of the baptismal vow, the next ceremony which took place, the author says,—"This act was held in so solemn a manner, that it will remain eternally engraved in the memory

of the Avignonese. A magnificent altar was displayed to the sight of the faithful: a great number of priests in their sacerdotal habits encircled this altar, which a thousand tapers and a thousand sacred objects rendered more dazzling, and the holy sacrament was majestically exposed on it. After the performance of the anthems appropriate to this august ceremony, the missionary delivered a discourse, as forcible as it was sublime, on the object of the festival, which produced the greatest [145] impression on his congregation. The eternal book of the gospel was then held up to the people. They were summoned to swear to the observance of the precepts of the Lord, contained in that book.—'We swear it,' answered the congregation. All their baptismal vows were in turn repeated, ratified, and confirmed by the congregation, with an effusion of tears which might have affected the hardest hearts. Their cries, their tears, and their sobs, were more eloquent than the addresses of the missionaries. The minister in his chair seemed to receive the promises and the vows of his parishioners, as Ezra formerly received those of the people of Israel."

After the consecration of the Avignonese and their children to the service of the Virgin Mary and the general communion, which followed the ceremonies last described, the great cross, which now stands near the cathedral, was carried in procession to the place of its erection, on the 18th of April. So great a sensation had been excited by the expectation of this ceremony, and so anxious were all ranks to participate in it, that "the town," says the narrator, "swarmed like an ant-hill (fourmilloit) with strangers, the inns and private houses afforded no more room, and they who could find no quarters, covered the roads during the whole of the preceding night." [146]

The number of persons employed to assist in the procession amounted to twenty thousand, including the civil and military authorities, the monastic establishments, the neighbouring clergy, and a limited number of inhabitants from each parish. The cross, amounting in weight to three tons and a half, was supported on a frame constructed so as to admit one hundred and twenty bearers at once. These were relieved from station to station by detachments from all ranks and professions, selected from innumerable claimants, and amounting altogether to two thousand men. Having thus traversed thirty principal streets, the inhabitants of which vied with each other in decorating their windows with garlands and tapestry, the cross was borne to the terrace on the Roche Don, and erected in sight of more than eighty thousand individuals, who crowded the hill above, the extensive space of ground adjoining, and the windows and roofs of the houses. "The whole discourse pronounced on the occasion," says the narrator, "was as affecting as it was energetic. The orator at length closed it, by exhorting his audience not to forget the cross and their religion. 'Remember,' said he, 'that you are Christians and Frenchmen; fly to the foot of the cross as Christians in all your misfortunes, and it will be your consolation; as Frenchmen, you will there learn to be faithful to your country, and submissive to your king.—Et d'un ton plein de franchise il s'ecria, Vive la Croix, vive la Religion, vive la Roi—L'auditoire repeta les [147] mêmes mots avec la même enthousiasme, et y ajouta, 'Vive les Missionaries.'"

On the 19th, the following day, a solemn service was performed for the dead in the cemetry of St. Roch; and the Mission was closed by sermons, exhorting the people to perseverance in the religious vows which they had voluntarily made. Having thus performed their proposed duties, the missionaries prepared for a private departure. The affectionate zeal of the people, however, would not allow the execution of this plan; and numbers, consisting chiefly of the national guards, kept watch at the doors of their lodgings all night; and in the morning they were besieged by a crowd of persons desirous to take leave of them. At the special request of these visitors, among whom were some of the most distinguished inhabitants of Avignon, they performed an additional service at the foot of the newly-erected cross, and were escorted out of the town amidst the acclamations of the multitude, who persisted in drawing their carnages a certain distance. Many persons accompanied them on horseback and in coaches as far as Orange.

To the practical effects of the Mission, the writer bears the following testimony. —"Prudence restricts us from naming individuals; and yet we can vouch, that many husbands, separated from their wives and living in concubinage, have put away their mistresses and re-established their legitimate wives in their houses. After the [148]

revolutionary horrors which have afflicted our city, there existed inveterate hatreds and animosities, founded on real offences. Well! union and concord have removed many of these intestine divisions, many deadly enmities have been laid at rest, many resentments have been stifled; great numbers of enemies have made the sacrifice of all their revengeful feelings. A citizen, round whose neck one of the revolutionary hangmen had actually fixed the noose for the fatal suspension, perceived his executioner in a state of penitence during the Mission, and approaching the communion table—'I congratulate you,' said he, 'on your reformation, and I pardon your offences against me, as I would God may grant me his pardon and peace.' The porters of the Rhone, who had been long at variance, have been many of them cordially reconciled: the invalids of the national guard have also mutually vowed a perpetual friendship."

Whatever the interests and prejudices of M. Fransoy may be, it is improbable that he would have risked his professional and private reputation, by misrepresenting recent occurrences on the spot where they took place; and certainly his narrative places the Mission in a new point of view, both as to its conduct, its reception, and its effects. It is, indeed, natural enough that such wits as do not affect either much knowledge or much interest on religious subjects, should indulge in desultory sarcasms (and the [149]
Hermite en Provence prudently does no more) on such instances of spiritual Quixotism as may possibly have occurred. The absurd[33] choice of hymn tunes, the petulant zeal of one or two ecclesiastics, and the rueful countenances of some of the penitents, though they prove nothing as to the main question, present a ludicrous picture to the imagination, and have been made the most of by the fictitious correspondent of the Hermite. It is also natural enough that the violent Liberaux, who view with distrust every measure countenanced by government, should treat the Mission as a mere engine of policy; that the avaricious should consider the donatives received on its behalf as squandered away; and that a large class of persons, who are inveterately sceptical as to their neighbour's good motives, and childishly credulous as to his bad ones, should pronounce it a mere manoeuvre of bigotry. The little tract in question, however, addressed to the experience of eye-witnesses of all that it describes, tells a different story, though its effect may be weakened by the ludicrous *naïveté* of its style. It describes the missionaries as addressing themselves particularly to those who stood most in need of their instructions, and who were most likely to treat them with derision; as availing themselves of the favourable reception which they experienced from the Avignonese, to preach the duties of forgiveness and reconciliation, both [150]
private and political, and to dwell on the practical and fundamental parts of Christianity.

Had they, indeed, in a public manner, denounced the vengeance of Heaven against the murderers of the unfortunate Brune, or pointedly rebuked the religious and political animosities subsisting in the south of France, they would have given a proof of their sincerity, but at the risk of much of that good which it was desirable to use their temporal influence in effecting. Instead, therefore, of giving unnecessary offence, they laboured to eradicate from the minds of their hearers the seeds of hatred and uncharitableness, and to divert their attention from their private bickerings and dissensions, to the common guilt of all in the sight of Heaven. The very object which, from all we learn respecting the state of feeling in Languedoc and Provence, appears particularly desirable, appears also to have been sought, not only by repeated and fervent exhortations, but by the exaction also of public vows and promises, so as to enlist the sense of shame as much as possible, in favour of the general forgiveness which the missionaries preached. Their exertions also, always supposing the tract in question to be entitled to credit, were rewarded by the conduct of their penitents, some of whom put away their vices, and others their mutual animosities. If this be fanaticism, then it were to be wished that such fanaticism should prevail widely in the [151]
south of France. "Out of the same mouth cannot proceed blessing and cursing;" and if the secret object of the Mission be to denounce the disaffected, or preach crusades against Protestants, it must be owned that their public labours at Avignon savour but little of such a purpose, as far as all appearances go.

There is, it is true, something extravagant and bordering on stage effect, in many of the ceremonies performed, and expressions used, as recorded by the pen of M. Fransoy. An Englishman, however, is not always a fair judge of the best means of

influencing the mind of a Frenchman, more particularly a south-eastern one. The Provençaux possess, both in appearance and in character, the strong characteristics of a people born under a burning sun; at once lively and ferocious, strongly led away by the excitement of the moment, and ardent in their partialities and antipathies: in short, the same romance of character is perceptible among them, which, in the dark ages, peopled the country with troubadours. The mass of such a people, particularly when profoundly ignorant, may not be accessible to cool argument; and the manner and style of oratory which would disgust a reasoning Scotch peasant, or English mechanic, may be exactly adapted to act on the temperament of an Avignonese. The surest test, therefore, of the character and design of the Mission, will be the practical effects which it produces on the conduct of its congregation, as well as the future [152] application of those liberal donatives, which have excited so much unfavourable feeling against it. Time and fair play alone can justify the motives of those who planned and conducted it. The question in the mean time is, not whether they may or may not have occasionally gone to the lengths of a "zeal without knowledge," but whether or not their purpose has been to instruct and benefit their fellow-countrymen according to the best of their power and belief, and without reference to political party. [153]

CHAP. VIII

PONT DU GARD—NISMES—MONTPELIER—CETTE.

MAY 13.—This day was fixed on for a journey to Vaucluse, the road to which is better adapted for the accommodation of two wheels than of four. M. Durand, our voiturier, attended accordingly with one of his portly mares harnessed to a sort of cabriolet, very much resembling an Irish noddy. Its high boarded front reaching to our chins, and the little fat person of Durand rather incommoded than accommodated on a cushion tied to the shaft, and much too near the mare on every account, formed a grotesque combination but little in character with what ought to have been a voyage of sentiment. The deficiency in pathos, however, was made up by the poor mare, who bewailed her absent companion with such incessant roarings, as to draw many cuts of the whip, and "sacra carognas," from the unrelenting Durand. We were struck, by-the-by, more than once during this day's route, by the Spanish and Italian terminations of [154] the Provençal patois. A village which we passed, on an insulated height commanding the road, and crowned by ruined fortifications, is laid down as Château Neuf in the map, and called by the peasants Castel Novo. A man of whom we inquired the distance to Avignon, answered "Tres horas," using not only the words, but the method of computation which a Spaniard would employ.

Whether we really reached our place of destination, or were stopped short by intense heat and execrable roads, were interested, or overturned, this deponent saith not, nor indeed is it necessary. One may be pardoned for omitting the mention of a subject already so fully described as Vaucluse, its rocks and fountain, its associations, and even its eatables; for some travellers have dwelt on the subject of its excellent bisque, or crayfish soup, and its eels, a solace, no doubt, to[34] that gentle degree of melancholy, which Fielding affirms to be a whet to the appetite.

> "And, says the anatomic art,
> The stomach's very near the heart;"

as Peter Pindar also maintains. Some also, with an accuracy worthy Moubrays [155] treatise on domestic fowls, have informed us that the hens near the fountain of Vaucluse are peculiarly prolific in fine eggs, and so on. For my own part, I may as well honestly confess that I am more partial to the memory of Petrarch as a philosopher, a patriot, and reviver of ancient learning, than as the Werter of Troubadours, though in the latter capacity he has stood unrivalled for five hundred years. I must own, also, that the hermitage whither he retired to stifle his rebellious passion for the wife of another, however melancholy and impressive the ideas may be which it would of itself excite, is poisoned, in my mind, by the pestilent frivolities with which the mawkish of

all ages have defaced its sombre features, in violation of truth and sound feeling. What syllables of dolour the forgotten Della-Cruscan school may have yelled out on the subject, is not worth ascertaining, and probably recollected by few or none. The French, who with all their ingenuity, are not very apt at comprehending the madness of contemplative minds, have caricatured the shade of poor Petrarch most woefully, and[35] the Abbé Delille (peace to his ashes!) has teazed the innocent trees of Vaucluse with embarrassing questions, fitter for the mouths of Susanna's elders. Under such blighting influence, the stern rocks of Vaucluse are transformed into a sentimental [156] tea-garden, the high-minded and melancholy Petrarch into a more ingenious Piercie Shafton, and the virtuous Laura, who probably never saw the place, into a starched Gloriana of the old school, paraded and gallanted round it with all due form. It is, perhaps, a judgment on Petrarch's adulterous Platonism, that it has laid him open to impertinences like these, which would torture his sensitive ghost almost as keenly as oblivion itself, and which very strongly remind one of Punch's intrusion at a tragedy. Such ideas cannot be engrafted on the [36]Nonwenwerder, or the[36]Pena de los Enamorados, spots on which a simple and obscure legend has thrown an interest which Vaucluse cannot really possess, though embellished by every thing which poetry can do for it.

It were to be wished, that the shade of Petrarch could return to his former haunts, to frighten away frivolous visitors, and read a lesson to the thinking. Instead of rejoicing at the posthumous fame which his poetical talents have earned, he would probably dwell on the insufficiency of the highest mental endowments without conduct and self-command. He would also probably describe his passion as fostered by the pedantic and high-flown gallantry of the age, and the applauses bestowed on his verses; as [157] increasing and strengthening, after the marriage of Laura had rendered it criminal, without any purpose which his better conscience dared avow, till his eyes at length opened themselves too late to its culpable nature. His mind, of that high-wrought and desponding tone which often characterizes extraordinary genius, and too sincere to trifle with impunity, struggled then fruitlessly against a fatality formerly imagined, but become real; and the flower of his life was passed amid illusions and conflicts, in alternate self-deception and self-reproach, in wild and beautiful visions from which he awoke to sickness of heart and weariness of himself and all things, like the victim of a powerful opiate. Compromising weakly between his passion and his conscience, he would say, he secluded himself at Vaucluse from a society which had become dangerous to him, and by the verses which he composed as a vent to his feelings, fixed the illusion too deep to be eradicated by lapse of time, or the indifference of Laura. Such voluntary mental martyrdom resembles the punishment inflicted by some tyrant of history on his prisoners, whom he commanded to embrace his Apega, a beautiful automaton so constructed as to plunge a concealed dagger into their hearts.

The better feelings of Petrarch's readers will dwell with the least alloy on the period after the death of Laura, when he contemplated her as beyond the reach of human ties, affections, or jealousies, and sought only to rescue from oblivion the virtues and [158] purity which had strengthened and refined his passion, while they rendered it hopeless. There is a beautiful passage in Campbell which appears exactly written to express his state of mind at this time, and the retrospective glance which he must have often cast on his past life.

> "And yet, methinks, when wisdom shall assuage
> The griefs and passions of our greener age,
> Though dull the close of life, and far away,
> Each flower that hailed the dawning of our day,
> Yet o'er her lovely hopes that once were dear,
> The time-taught spirit, pensive, not severe,
> With milder griefs her aged eye shall fill,
> And weep their falsehood, though she love them still!"

The private memorandum,[37] written in the manuscript Virgil, of this extraordinary man, which is shown in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, may be considered as expressing his most undisguised feelings, as excited by an event which dissolves trifling attachments, while it gives permanence to those of a genuine nature. It was

probably intended for no eye but his own. I annex as literal a translation as possible, and from the beauty and ease of their latinity, have been tempted to precede it with the original words.

"Laura, propriis virtutibus illustris, et meis longum celebrata carminibus, primum [159] oculis meis apparuit sub primum adolescentiæ meæ tempus, anno Domini 1327, die 6 mensis Aprilis, in ecclesiâ sanctæ Claræ Avinioni, horâ matutinâ. Et in eâdem civitate, eodem mense Aprilis, eodem die 6, eâdem horâ primâ, anno autem Domini 1348, ab hac luce lux illa subtracta est, cum ego forte Veronæ essem, heu fati mei nescius! Rumor autem infelix, per literas Ludovici mei, me Parmæ reperit, anno eodem, mense Maii, die mane.

"Corpus illud castissimum ac pulcherrimum in loco Fratrum Minorum repositum est ipsâ die mortis ad vesperam. Animam quidem ejus, ut de Africano ait Seneca, in coelum, unde erat, rediisse, mihi persuadeo.

"Hæc autem, ad acerbam rei memoriam, amarâ quâdam dulcedine scribere visum est; hoc potissimum loco, qui sæpe sub oculis meis redit, ut cogitem nihil esse debere quod amplius mihi placeat in hac vitâ, et effracto majori laqueo, tempus esse de Babylone fugiendi, crebrâ horum inspectione, ac fugacissimæ ætatis æstimatione, commonear. Quod, præviâ Dei gratiâ, facile erit, præteriti temporis curas supervacuas, spes inanes, et inexpectatos exitus acriter ac viriliter cogitanti." [160]

"Laura, illustrious for her own virtues, and long celebrated by my verses, first appeared to my eyes, in the time of my early youth, on the morning of the sixth day of April, in the year of our Lord 1327, in the church of St. Clare at Avignon; and in the same month of April, on the same first hour of the morning, in the year of our Lord 1348, that light was removed from this light of day, while I by chance was at Verona, unconscious, alas! of my fate. The unhappy news, however, reached me at Parma, in a letter from my friend Ludovico, on the morning of the 19th of May.

"Her most chaste and fair body was buried in the evening of the day of her death, in the convent of the Fratres Minores; but her soul, as Seneca saith of the soul of Africanus, hath returned, I am persuaded, to the heaven from whence it came.

"I have felt a kind of bitter pleasure in writing the memorial of this mournful event, the rather in this place, which so often meets my eyes, to the end that I may consider there is nothing left which ought to delight me in this world; and that I may be reminded by the frequent sight of these words, and the due appreciation of this fleeting life, that my principal tie to the world being broken, it is time for me to fly from this Babylon; which, through the preventing grace of God, will be an easy task, when I reflect deeply and manfully on the superfluous cares, the vain hopes, and the [161] unlooked for events of the time past."

This simple and affecting tribute, written, as it evidently seems, under such solemn impressions, clears the memory of Laura from the imputation of any thing trifling or criminal, while it sufficiently establishes the identity of "a nymph," according to Gibbon, "so shadowy, that her existence has been questioned."

May 14.—We left Avignon this morning, with a more favourable impression of its cleanliness and comfort than any other town had as yet left on our minds. The road to Nismes, winding up a hill on the opposite side of the river, above Fort Villeneuve, is remarkably adapted also to display its numerous spires, and the grand Gothic mass of the legate's palace, to the utmost advantage: and we watched with something like regret the disappearance of these objects over the brow of the hill which we had ascended, more especially as on this spot the eye takes leave, for some time, of every thing agreeable. The view here consists of a high dull flat, with hardly a tree, and the road of rolling stones and dust; and a high wind prevailed, which seemed a combination of the Bise and Mistral, aided by all the bottled stores of a Lapland witch, and very nearly blew poor Durand off his box. After passing Fouzay and Demazan, two [162] Little villages, adorned each à la Provençale, with a ruined castle, we turned out of the

road to Nismes at Remoulin, where the features of the country somewhat improve. Another mile and a half brought us to an indifferent inn within a ten minutes' walk of the Pont du Gard. It is adapted for nothing more than a baiting-place for a few hours, and not at all of that description which so well-known a ruin would be in most cases capable of maintaining. The landlord, however, "a sallow, sublime sort of Werter-faced man," was civil, and inclined to do his best, and gathered us some double yellow roses, of a sort we had never seen before, to season his bad fare.

The Pont du Gard, which we were not long in visiting, is seen to the greatest advantage on the side on which we approached it from the inn. The deep mountain glen, inhabited only by goats, whose entrance it crosses from cliff to cliff, forms a striking back-ground, and serves as a measure to the height of the colossal arches which appear to grow naturally, as it were, out of the gray rocks on which they rest.[38] There is certainly something more poetical in the stern and simple style of architecture of which this noble aqueduct is a specimen, than in the more florid and graceful school of art. The latter speaks more to the eye, but the former to the mind, [163] possessing a superiority analogous to that which the great style of painting (as it is termed) boasts over the florid and ornamental Venetian school. Our own Stonehenge is too much, perhaps, in the rude extreme of this branch of architecture to be quoted as a favourable instance of it; but few persons can come suddenly in sight of Stonehenge on a misty day without being struck by its peculiar effect; and the Pont du Gard, placed in as lonely a situation, exhibits materials almost as gigantic in detail, and knit into a towering mass which seems to require no less force than an earthquake, or a battery of cannon, to change the position of a single stone. A large and solid bridge which has been built against it by the states of Languedoc, appears by comparison to shrink into insignificance, and shelter itself behind the old Roman arches, the lower tier of which, eleven in number, overtop it in height by about three-fifths. The span of the largest arch is about 78 feet; of the other ten, 66 each: and they are surmounted by a row of thirty-five smaller arches. With the exception of two or three of these last, the whole fabric is complete, and, if unmolested, appears likely to witness more changes of language and dynasty than it has already done. I do not know that the mind is ever more impressed with the idea of Roman power and greatness, than by contemplating such structures as these, erected for subordinate purposes at a distance from the main seat of empire. It is like discovering a broken hand or foot of the Colossus of Rhodes, and estimating in imagination the height and bulk of the [164] whole statue from the size of its enormous extremities.

From the Pont du Gard the road to Nismes has little to recommend it excepting the high state of cultivation of the country, and this is not of a nature to gratify an eye accustomed to English verdure. Olive-groves, it is true, have been naturalized in poetry as conveying an image of beauty and freshness; but in reality nothing can be more opposed to the oaks and elms of an English hedge-row, than the pale shining gray of this stunted tree, which has more of a metallic than a vegetable appearance. Nor does a perpetual succession of corn-fields, however rich in reality, present the same appearance of luxuriant vegetation as an English pasture. There is, besides, nothing in the nearer approach to Nismes, which reminds one of the environs of an opulent commercial town, and its precincts would cut a poor figure when compared with those of Leeds or Bristol. The transition is immediate, from a dull range of corn-fields, without a gentleman's house, to a long dirty suburb. On emerging, however, from the latter into the better and more central part of the town, one is surprised to find wide and elegant streets well watered and planted, and public buildings, whose beauty and good taste show that the citizens of Nismes have made a good use of the fine architectural models afforded by the ancient Nemausis. The Palais de Justice [165] deserves to be particularly remarked for its classical elegance, and contrasts well with the black solid arches of the Arenes, near which it is placed.

"*Monsieour!* les antiquités!—*Heou! Monsieour!* les Arenes!—Commissionaire pour voir la Maison Carrée!—*Heou—ou! Monsieour!* decrotteur, s'il vous plait!—Le Temple de Diane, *Monsieour!*" are the cries with which every third or fourth ragamuffin at Nismes salutes you, enforcing his application by a peculiar yell, of which no combination of letters can give an idea uncouth enough. As it is hardly possible to walk in the central part of Nismes without seeing its antiquities before you, it is best to avoid a troublesome live appendage of this sort, by appearing totally deaf. The

Arenes are nearly in front of the Hôtel du Louvre, and the Maison Carrée is within two or three minutes' walk of it: the Temple of Diana and the Baths are situated in the most conspicuous spot in the public gardens, whither a perpetual concourse of people may be seen thronging; and the Pharos overlooks them from the summit of a small precipitous hill, which may be ascended in five minutes by a good walker. Every thing therefore lies within the compass of an evening's stroll.

The Maison Carrée is a beautiful bijou, better known than any other of the curiosities of Nismes. I believe the opinion of Mons. Seguier (formed from a laborious [166] examination of the nail-holes belonging to its last bronze inscription) is generally adopted; viz. that it was a temple dedicated to Caius and Lucius Cæsar, grandsons of Augustus. A perfect copy of it, built from actual measurement, may be found in the Temple of Victory and Concord, in the Duke of Buckingham's gardens at Stowe. So admirable is the preservation of the original in every part, owing to the dry and pure air of Languedoc, as almost to operate as a disadvantage. Its freshness and compactness suggest rather too much the idea of a modern pavilion of twenty or thirty years standing, instead of that of a temple; and if I may venture to say so, the same want of the ærugo of age, which renders it more valuable as an architectural relic, produces an incongruous and unpoetical effect on the imagination. Age, in fact, has its own characteristic branch of beauty. An old man with curly hair and a fresh smooth complexion, like Godwin's Struldbrugg, St. Leon, would be an unpleasant and unnatural object. There is a masculine and imposing medium between youthful vigour and decay, in which the leading features of the former man may be distinctly traced; as in Wordsworth's beautiful description of the old knight of Rylstone, and Sir Walter Scott's fine portraiture of Archibald Bell-the-Cat: and I think the analogy holds good in classical remains. Somewhat should be decayed for effect's sake; and those parts only left which are strikingly beautiful, or of a leading and important nature. The Arena, [167] which we next visited, is perhaps more consonant to this standard than the Maison Carrée. Its structure is similar to that of the Colosseum at Rome, of which, however, it falls infinitely short in size and grandeur, while at the same time it so far exceeds it in perfectness, as to give a complete idea to an inexperienced eye of its original figure and arrangement, and of the admirable system of accommodation which such places possessed. It has just enough of the graceful decay of age to render it picturesque, and enough of freshness to answer the questions of the antiquarian: and neither too much nor too little is left to the imagination. Mr. Albanis Beaumont, in his work on the Maritime Alps, calculates the number of persons which this building must have held at 16,599, and the spectators in the Colosseum at 34,000. He also states the widest interior circumference of the Arena, as 1110½ feet. The plate engraved in his work, dated 1795, represents two square towers over the principal entrance, erected perhaps by Charles Martel, when he converted the building into a citadel; they have however been since destroyed, and the work of clearing away the houses which defaced both its inside and outside, commenced originally by Louis XVI., has been completed. It now stands in a broad open space, adapted to set off its full height and proportions. [168]

The public garden also presents a well-arranged group of interesting objects; but to behold them to any advantage, it is necessary to turn your back upon a pert little café, roofed with party-coloured tiles like the scales of a fancy fish, which glares from under the shade of the trees. From hence you look over a handsome balustrade into a large excavated space adorned with stone steps, which collects the waters of a fine fountain, and in which the foundations of the ancient Baths are still visible. On the summit of the opposite cliff, from whence these waters issue, the ruined Pharos, which forms the principal landmark of Nismes, rises with great majesty, and at its foot, immediately to the left of the fountain, the ruined temple of Diana, though not individually striking, combines admirably with the general group. From the fountain arises a beautifully clear stream, which is distributed in wide and deep stone channels through some of the principal streets at Nismes, and greatly contributes to the ornament and cleanliness of the town. The Pharos, or Tour Magne, to which I scrambled from the Baths, fully answers to its distant appearance. There is a peculiar dignity and solidity in a figure approaching to the pyramidical, when placed on the top of a rock; and independent of its height, which is between eighty and ninety feet, the Pharos has this recommendation also. Its interior appears a curious work of masonry. A high wide conical vault, without pillar or buttress, constitutes almost the whole internal space, [169]

admitting just light sufficient to render "the darkness visible," and give additional solemnity to a mere shell of brickwork.

We found the Hôtel du Louvre (to which we had been recommended in preference to the Hermite's inn, the Hôtel du Luxembourg) excellent in every respect. The two hotels adjoin one another so closely, be it observed, and are so similar in appearance, that one may walk into the wrong salle-à-manger, and only discover the mistake through the difference of the waiter's faces.

May 15.—Seventeen miles to New Lunel, where we breakfasted indifferently enough, not liking French customs sufficiently to qualify the bad coffee with a glass of the brandy of this place, which is as celebrated as its wine. New Lunel, which has grown on the back of the old town, in consequence of a branch of the Languedoc canal which runs close to it, is a neat and thriving place, but possesses no feature worthy of remark. The country is of the same character as the town, a dull rich flat, over which one may sleep with the soothing consciousness that every thing is going on well with its trade and agriculture. To Montpelier eighteen miles. Within the last league or two, the country begins rather to improve, and rise into somewhat of an undulating form; [170] but no romantic or interesting feature marks the approach to this celebrated town.

"How I envy you the sight of that delightful Montpelier, of which one reads and hears so much!" exclaims many an untravelled lady, no doubt, to her travelled brother or cousin. No place certainly sounds more familiarly in the ear as a novel-scene; and its very name is associated with ideas of beauty, verdure, retirement, orange groves, hanging woods, and all the et ceteras of a spot.

> "Where simply to feel that we breathe, that we live,
> Is worth the best joy that life elsewhere can give."

The truth is, that the Montpelier of the imagination may be found at Vico, Sorrento, Massa di Carrara; or, with a little alteration, in some spots of our own Devonshire coast. The real Montpelier is a large, opulent, well-frequented provincial capital, full of noise and dress, and possessing an air of neatness and fashion, but totally devoid of any thing allied to the poetry of nature. It stands on a round sweeping hill, commanding a considerable extent of land and sea; but the sea-coast is chiefly an expanse of low ground and etangs, or salt-water lakes; and the neighbouring hill country, resembling in form a succession of cultivated downs, has neither height nor variety to recommend it. The most interesting spot in Montpelier is the Place Peyrou, a [171] public garden raised on high terraces, in a situation commanding the rest of the town. At the extremity of the principal walk stands an elegant open building of the Grecian order, overarching a basin into which the waters of the celebrated aqueduct of Montpelier are received, and from thence distributed through the town. The aqueduct itself, which springs from the foot of this pavilion, and conveys the water from the crest of an opposite hill, is a truly noble work, and, though modern, worthy in every respect of a Roman ædile. It was erected by the states of Languedoc in honour of Louis XIV. whose statue is placed in the garden. Like the Pont du Gard, it consists of two tiers of arches, fifty of which we counted in the lower range, and one hundred and fifty in the upper, until the lessening perspective baffled all farther attempts at reckoning. The architecture is inferior in dignity and massiveness to that of the Roman work, but exceeds it in extent, and probably in the quantity of masonry employed. Nothing can be more elegant than its general form, and the manner in which it is united to the terrace of the Place Peyrou.

Whatever natural objects are interesting in the environs, may be seen also from this elevated spot, though I am inclined to think that the views of distant Pyrenees which we were taught to expect, are a fiction existing in the minds of some travellers. At all events, the glimpses must be partial, and only to be obtained on a fine day. The [172] Cevennes mountains rise, however, to a tolerable height in the distance to the west; and to the south-east, the remains of the old town and cathedral of Maguelone, form a striking distant group, projecting like a low reef of rocks into the sea at the distance of three or four miles. To judge from the site of this ancient town, which tradition describes as the original nucleus of Montpelier, the sea must have made great inroads

on the neighbouring coast. The air, it is said, is growing less wholesome than formerly, owing probably to the accumulation of the etangs. From the edge of the coast to Maguelone, the distance cannot be much less than a mile and a half at low water.

The Montpelliards are considered a scientific people; and, at all events, they seem to have found out the secret of perpetual motion, if we may judge from the experience of the first night we spent in the town. At half past nine, the principal street, which our hotel overlooked, began to swarm with heads. The whole population were on the alert, promenading during the greater part of the night; and such a busy hum arose from beneath the windows, which the heat obliged us to keep open, that it was impossible even to think of sleeping till daybreak. Our accommodations indeed were not of the most tempting sort; for finding the Hôtel du Midi full of travellers, and consequently saucy and unaccommodating, we had tried the Cheval Blanc, described to us as the [173] next best hotel; and detestable enough we found it. On stepping however next morning into a café and restaurant in the Place de Comedie, whose superior appearance had attracted us, we found that M. Pical, the master of it, was in the habit of letting rooms, and we immediately removed to his house. Nothing indeed could be more clean and elegant than its accommodations, or more refreshing after the dusty journey of the former day, and the nightly bustle of the streets, than its quiet and coolness, situated as it is in a large area in the suburbs or boulevards. The salle-à-manger partakes of the same character with the rest of the house, and the carte contains a list of many more good things than we were inclined to do justice to. In short, no traveller can do better than order himself to be driven directly to this house, which comprises all the advantages of a private residence at a reasonable charge, with the recommendations of great attention and civility.

This day, May 16, we attended service at the French Protestant Church, and were gratified both with spending a morning on the shores of the Mediterranean in a manner which reminded us of an English Sunday, and witnessing also the full and respectable attendance of fellow Protestants. The service was performed in the following order:—1, a psalm; 2, a general confession of sins; 3, another psalm; 4, a [174] sermon; 5, the commandments and the creed; 6, a long prayer for the sick and distressed, the king and the royal family; 7, another psalm, and the blessing. The singing was impressive, not so much from any intrinsic merit in the performance, as the earnestness in which the whole congregation joined in it, "singing praises lustily with a good courage," instead of deputing this branch of religious duty to half a dozen yawning and jangling charity children, assisted by the clerk and parish tailor. I believe it is an observation of Dr. Burney, in his History of Handel's Commemoration, that no sound proceeding from a great multitude can be discordant. In the present instance, certainly, the separate voices qualified and softened down each other, so as to produce a good compound. Of the sermon I cannot speak so favourably, for in truth it savoured somewhat of the conventicle style. Its theme was chiefly the raptures which persons experience under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and it was calculated to discourage all whose imaginations were not strong enough to assist in working them into this state. The manner of the preacher was however good, and his delivery fluent; and so great was the attention of the congregation, that during three quarters of an hour not a sound interrupted his voice, until, on his pausing to use his handkerchief, a general chorus of twanging noses took place, giving a ludicrous effect to what was, in fact, a mark of restraint and attention. [175]

In the evening we departed for Cette. The road, according to the set phrase of the French Itineraire, is through a "campagne de plus agréables;" but our observation showed us only a bleak high common to the right, and to the left a succession of etangs and sandy flats, affording a prospect at once desolate and uninteresting. The space between the etangs and the road is generally marshy; and instead of a fine blue expanse of sea in motion, the horizon is commonly bounded by a long white sandy line, over which the sails of the little vessels appear very oddly. One or two houses erected on these ridges, which border the etangs, give to the view, if possible, a still more desolate appearance, being totally unaccompanied by even a tree or a patch of verdure, and only serve to remind you of the nakedness of the land. Near Frontignan the prospect improves, as far merely as concerns its fertility; for it is in the vicinity of this town that the famous Frontignac wine, or to denominate it more correctly, the Muscat de Frontignan, is made. The only thing during this evening's route which could

be considered as a feature, was the lofty cape at whose foot Cette stands; a perfect idea of which, from the side on which we approached it, is given by Vernet's picture of that port, in the Louvre. A bridge of fifty-one arches, traversing a series of swampy ground and etangs, connects this promontory with terra-firma, and crosses the great Languedoc canal, which communicates at this spot with the sea. A beautiful sunset, [176] which made the whole expanse of back-water appear of a rose-colour, and which, I confess, I have seldom seen equalled in England, gave as much richness to the view as it was capable of receiving. There is naturally but little in it; and the effect of Vernet's view is derived from accidental circumstances purposely introduced; so that, on the whole, we wished that our evening's excursion had been confined to the Place Peyrou. I should, however, conceive the air of Cette to be much better adapted to tender lungs than that of Montpelier, as well from the difference of temperature, perceptible even to a person in sound health, as from the superior shelter which its situation affords; while the high and exposed site of Montpelier leaves a doubt whether, in most cases it would not be more hurtful than salutary. The productions of the neighbourhood of Cette are also in a more forward condition than those of Montpelier. We saw hedges of arbor vitæ in full flower; and peaches two-thirds grown, in almost a wild state.

May 17.—We rose at five in the morning, desirous to secure a cool walk to the Tour des Pilotes, a signal post on the high cape above Cette. The sun was however prepared for us, and continued to grill us alive from the first moment; and, after all, the prospect from this station, to which you climb as if ascending the steep roof of a house, is not of a nature to repay the exertion. We went to satisfy our consciences that [177] there was nothing to see, and we saw nothing. The Pyrenees, so far from being visible near Montpelier, cannot be distinguished even from this nearer point, excepting, perhaps, on a peculiarly clear day; and no other feature worth mentioning occurs. The coast presents a bare and uninhabited appearance, arising partly from the almost total want of trees. Our perquisitions in the town of Cette itself were more fortunate, though, by-the-by, it exceeds Lyons itself in dirt and ill smells. It is a place of considerable trade in proportion to its size, and is employed chiefly as an entrepôt for goods, which may be landed and reshipped without paying duty: and a walk on the quay affords, in consequence, considerable varieties of the human face divine, neat as imported. I recognised a group of Catalan sailors by their brown jackets embroidered with shreds of gaudy cloth, their red night-caps, and the redicillas in which their hair was bagged. No race of men with whom I am at all acquainted bear so marked a character of animation and decision in every movement of ordinary life as these sturdy provincials, or would be more remarked by a stranger among a mixed concourse of different nations. The same exuberance of animal motion which degenerates into restlessness and buffoonery in the Neapolitan, or the native of Languedoc, assumes a more dignified character in the Catalan, who is certainly a gentleman of Nature's own making. One of the crew, a tall athletic fellow, was holding forth to the rest on some [178] trivial matter with a varied and graceful action, which might have served as a model to a painter. The rest were at breakfast; but even their mode of pouring the wine on their tongues at arm's length, from the long spout of a sort of glass kettle, had somewhat classical in it, and reminded me of the recumbent figure in the Herculanean painting, who is drinking in the same manner. Simple as it may appear, this knack is not to be acquired without a long apprenticeship, and I was ludicrously reminded of my abortive efforts to master it by the sight of the party on the quay. It certainly is adapted for making the most of any liquid, and might have been adopted during such a scarcity of water as the Hanoverian consul informed us existed in Cette during the former year. Not a drop of rain fell for ten months, and water at last became dearer than wine.

On crossing the bridge, we observed a man on one of the piers, spearing aiguilles de mer, a beautiful silvery fish, of which he had taken several. They were about two feet long, and of the shape of an eel, excepting in the form of their long picked heads and jaws, which correspond exactly with their name. The tunny is also caught in abundance near this part of the coast; and Vernet has introduced the fishery, from a lack of picturesque circumstances, into one of his sea-ports, painted by royal order. No other fish can better deserve this particular compliment, uniting, as it does, size, [179] flavour, and the merits of both fish and flesh in a great degree. The "thon mariné" is its plainest and best preparation, and is preferable, with a dish of salad, to all the high-seasoned dishes which form a Provençal bill of fare; in short, if our national sirloin obtained knighthood, such a good lenten substitute as the tunny deserves

canonization.[39] I cannot say so much for the dish, common enough among Frenchmen, which a well-dressed man, the harlequin to a troop of comedians, was eating in the salle-à-manger when we entered; viz. a raw artichoke with oil and vinegar. Sterne, it appears, little knew the extent of the ass's good taste, when he deprived him of this article in the Tabella Cibaria, "to see how he would eat a macaroon."

We set off at two o'clock in the day on our return to Montpelier, not a little envying the horses and mules their cool quarters in the immense remise. Within a mile of Cette lies the breakwater of rough stones, which forms a prominent object in the foreground of Vernet's picture, and serves to ascertain the spot from whence he took his design. At Villeneuve, where we stopped to bait the horses, we were diverted by a scene characteristic of the country. A bag had just been found on the road by the conductor of the Cette diligence, which drove up to the inn while we were there; and on Durand [180] disowning it, a shabby-looking foot passenger claimed it, but could not establish his plea by identifying a single article. In a few seconds every soul in the inn, excepting ourselves, was assembled to take part in the discussion, and argued the pro and con with a vehemence of voice and action, which would have made a stranger believe it was a matter of life and death to each. A female inside-passenger, with an infant in her arms, which she nearly let drop in her energies, was the coryphée of this chorus of tongues, which could be compared to nothing but bees in the act of swarming, or the cackle which the entrance of a fox causes in a hen-roost. We were no longer surprised at hearing the peasants whom we met conversing in a tone which we had mistaken for quarrelling. The French generally, indeed, are fond of noise and action and emphasis about what does not concern their own interests a jot, while a London mob indulges an equal degree of curiosity by silent gaping; but these good folks certainly outdid anything I ever witnessed in France before. An action for defamation brought in Languedoc[40] might, with propriety, be worded, "that the defendant did, with four-and-twenty mouths, four-and-twenty tongues, and four-and-twenty pair of lungs, vilify and damnify his neighbour's reputation;" for it is probable that a scolding match could not [181] take place in the open air of that country, without enlisting volunteer seconds to that amount on both sides, all equally bawling and violent. At Nismes, a fellow bellows across the street to offer himself as cicerone, in a tone which seems intended to warn you of a mad dog at your heels; and, in general, the lungs of Languedoc appear constructed on a larger and more discordant scale than is usual, and their volubility is rather a contradiction to the yea and nay appellation of the country. A respectable Frenchman informed us, that the peasants of Languedoc were considered to possess much wit and ingenuity by those who could understand their patois, which he frankly owned was unintelligible to himself. Their liveliness and animal exuberance are as strong a contrast to the immoveable form into which they are swathed when infants, as the flutter of a butterfly is to its torpidity as a chrysalis; indeed a fanciful person might be apt to suppose, that on emerging from their bandages, they indemnify themselves for the previous constraint by a life of perpetual fidget, and that the same re-action takes place as in the case of Munchausen's horn, which played for half an hour of its own accord when unfrozen. To speak seriously, nothing can be more piteously ridiculous than the state of a poor Languedoc child, swathed and bandaged into all the rigidity of a mummy, and totally motionless. Our friend H. declares, that [182] his attention was once drawn behind a door by a faint cry, and that he there discovered and took down one of these little teraphims from the hook by which it hung suspended by a loop, like a young American savage. "C'est la mode du pays," is the only account of the practice which you get either here or at Nice; and it is fortunate that they have not still improved on it by a hint from the black nurses of Barbadoes, who embalm weakly young Creoles in wrappers lined with assa-foetida, and think it prejudicial to "burst their cerements" more than once in a fortnight.

After our horses had eaten a pound of honey with their corn, which honest Durand considered a powerful cordial, we resumed our route, and reached Montpelier to a late dinner, enjoying in no small degree the coolness and quiet of Pical's house. It was indeed the love of quiet, and the dislike to a constant ferment, which drove our landlord from Nismes to settle in this place. The bigotry and party zeal of the former town, in truth, appear to have been hardly exaggerated in the accounts which have reached England, and to exist in such a degree as to render Nismes an unsafe place for a moderate man, who is owned by neither party. The spirit of discord and enmity is

[183]

instilled by the more violent of both parties into their children as a duty, so that it will probably descend from generation to generation. Both parties, indeed, might adopt as a crest and motto a boot-maker's sign in Montpelier, which is somewhat diverting from its bombast, when merely applied as honest Crispin meant it. A lion is represented tearing a boot, with the inscription, "Tu peux me dechirer, mais jamais me decoudre." Construe it, "You may cut my throat, but not alter me," and it will show the pleasant state of party spirit at Nismes, if what we heard so near the scene of action be true. We returned to Nismes on the 18th with associations not so pleasant as had been created by its beautiful walks and buildings, and the civility with which our questions were answered by the inhabitants. We might have seen the country between Montpelier and Nismes to greater advantage, the dust being somewhat less stifling than before; but unluckily there was nothing worth seeing. The district is certainly a garden, but then it is a flat uninteresting kitchen garden, for the supply of the Lunel brandy merchants, and the rich Nismes manufacturers, who appear too polite in their tastes to venture into it. Hardly a single thing that can be called a gentleman's house occurs, and that not for want of culture or opulence. The case seems to be this; the people of Nismes, like the Bordelais, are proud of their elegant and airy city, embellished with classical relics, and uniting most of the advantages of town and country, and are well satisfied without the campagne which a rich Lyonnais, carrying [184] on his business in a close town, considers as his paradise. Although this system of "rus in urbe" gives but a mean and poor appearance to the environs of a town, it produces much pleasure and convenience to such resident strangers as can enjoy the society of Nismes, which, by all accounts, must somewhat resemble sleeping in Exeter 'Change, the keepers, in the shape of a strong preventive force of military, on the alert, it is true, and the bars are well secured, but the beasts only watch their opportunity to tear each other to pieces. How an Englishman would fare in a public disturbance is difficult to say. It is probable that the Catholics would abominate him as a heretic, and the Protestants denounce him as an anti-Buonapartist, and that he would consequently be thrust from the one to the other, like a new comer between two roguish school-boys. This, however, was no concern of ours, as we left Nismes the next morning on the road to Beaucaire. The old Pharos was the last landmark we took leave of, as it was the first of which we caught sight. It contrasts with the Maison Carrée as a wild legend of the dark ages would with a letter of Pliny; and though rough in its fabric, and uncertain in its history, dwells as strongly on the recollection as that highly-finished gem. [185]

"The tower by war or tempest bent,
While yet may frown one battlement,
Demands and daunts the stranger's eye,
Each ivied arch and pillar lone
Pleads haughtily for glories gone!"

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[186]

CHAP. IX

TARASCON—BEAUCAIRE—ST. REMY—ORGON—LAMBESC.

To Tarascon 19 miles of road for the most part bad and sandy. I am not geologist enough to decide with accuracy on the formation of that part of the banks of the Rhone which we were approaching, but the detached specimens of rock are of a curious nature. After passing a little village called St. Vincent, we came to an open plain, bounded in front by several singular round hills on the summit of one of which, called the Roche Duclay, was a rock so exactly resembling an old castle in size and shape, that a nearer inspection alone satisfied us as to its real nature. There is also a great singularity of outline in the hills which became soon visible in the distance on the other side of the Rhone, one or two of which appeared as if they had shells upon their backs. Beaucaire, with its old castle overhanging the Rhone, soon came in sight. [187]

"Jeunet encore, étois sortant de page,
Lorsque à Beaucaire ouvrit un grand tournoi.
Maint chevaliers y firent maint exploits,
Dames d'amour animoient leur courage;"

says the French Roman: and in the old fabliaux also, the scene of Aucassin and Nicolette is laid in this place. These are, I believe, but a small portion of the claims which Beaucaire possesses to chivalrous celebrity, and its very name is in a manner connected with knights and ladies, tourneys and pageants. There is something in its appearance also which does not belie these associations, although it was crowded with farmers and market people at the time of our arrival: and those too of the vulgar bettermost sort, which is the most hopelessly unchivalrous.[41] The castle stands detached from the town, on as bold and perpendicular a cliff as any romance writer could wish, and overlooking one of the broadest and most rapid reaches of the Rhone; an extensive green[42] meadow planted with trees, and large enough for a tournament on the most extensive scale, or another Champ du Drap d'Or, divides the steep side of this rock from the river; and on the land side it is backed by another cliff garnished with as many windmills as Don Quixote himself could have desired. We crossed the [188]
Rhone on a bridge of boats to a long narrow island, from whence the view on both sides is striking. Beaucaire, with the accompaniments I have just described, and Tarascon, flanked by the large ancient castle of the counts of Provence, front each other on the opposite banks of the Rhone, which rushes and thunders on both sides of the isle, making the cables by which the floating bridge is lashed, creak most fearfully every moment.[43] From this point I made a drawing of Tarascon in defiance of a violent wind, which forced me to place my paper on the lee side of a stranded boat, and to sketch in the attitude of a plasterer white-washing a ceiling. Another bridge of boats conducted us to Tarascon;[44] where we walked out while the horses were baiting, the whole inn being in the same confusion from market people as Beaucaire itself, and not seeming of the most comfortable description. Being driven by a heavy scud of rain into a shoemaker's shop, we found a civil and intelligent guide in his son, from whom, however, we could not ascertain that there was any thing worthy of notice in this populous place, except the castle. We passed the Maison de Charité, in front of which
is a new cross lately erected by the Mission, on the scale of that at Avignon, and [189]
profusely gilt and ornamented. The same agency also has lately re-established an Ursuline convent of fifty-two nuns in this place. The cathedral is old and mean, and apparently under no very strict regulations, for an old woman was selling cakes in the aisle close to one of the chapels. We went into a vault beneath to see a marble statue of St. Martha, which has merit in itself, and by the light of a single wax candle, had a striking effect: the great admiration, however, in which it is held here may chiefly arise from an opinion of its miraculous powers. "Elle devenoit invisible pendant la Revolution," whispered our young Crispin.—"Oui, elle étoit cachée, voilà ce que tu veux dire, mon petit—." "Eh! non, pardon, Messieurs, elle se cacha; mais il y a trois ans qu'elle se montre encore," replied the little fellow, with the most confident gravity. I trust that this monstrous fiction did not originate in the Ursuline convent which he mentioned; and that the fifty-two good ladies employ their time in more charitable and useful actions than in filling the heads of poor children with stories so hurtful to the real interests of religion. However credulous our young guide was, he was not mercenary, being with difficulty persuaded to accept a franc or two for what he styled the pleasure of having conducted us. We next visited the castle of Tarascon, now used as the public prison, and in which 1500 English were confined during the war. The
enormous height and massiveness of its walls, which overtop the weather-cock of the [190]
cathedral, and the smallness of its few windows, qualify it well for this purpose; and a greater appearance of strength and solidity is given by the solid rock in which its foundations are embedded, and which in some places is shaped into wall and moat. We crossed a drawbridge into a court flanked by four round towers, and having a square keep in its centre. On the top of one of these towers is an esplanade, from whence the view of the course of the Rhone, and the great plain of Arles, is fine: the latter town, which is about nine miles distant, was seen distinctly. We were rather disappointed by the inside of the castle, which seemed chiefly to consist of small mean rooms: perhaps the baronial hall might be the dormitory of the prisoners, and not in a presentable state; but we saw nothing which recalled any idea of feudal magnificence. The same description which serves for the tower of Westburn-flat, in the Black Dwarf, allowing for the difference of size and finish, would exactly suit the cubical shape and high blind walls of this castle, which probably was intended to serve similar purposes in the days of club law. Its durability is not so remarkable as the fresh colour and sharpness of every part of the carving, and it might pass for a modern gothic edifice of twenty years standing, but for the solidity and frowning grandeur which characterise it. The
air of Provence appears more clear and dry than even that of Italy, and to be more [191]
favourable to the preservation of old buildings. Its clearness certainly is remarkable,

particularly in diminishing the effect of distance; and on Monday night, at Montpelier, I recollect that we could plainly discover with the naked eye the stars of the milky way, which are commonly imperceptible without a glass. I cannot say that our route from Tarascon to St. Remy was well calculated to show the climate of Provence in this light. The whole eleven miles were performed in almost a perpetual storm of rain and wind, which prevented our seeing much of the rich plain we were traversing. What we could see, however, was pleasing: every inch teemed with olives, vines, mulberries, corn, onions, and lucerne. We remarked many sheep sheared in a comical manner, with two or three tufts, like pincushions, running down the centre of their backs, and painted red. Circumstances like these, though trivial, are or ought to be pleasing, as they indicate that something like comfort or leisure exists, and that the farmer's business is partly become an amusement. A needy peasant, pinched by high rents or bad seasons, would have but little inclination to ornament his favourite wether in this absurd manner; and though Forsyth's remark is very true, that a peasant never attempts to become fine but he is hideous, such hideous attempts[45] are grateful to the [192]
mind's eye from the cheerfulness and play of mind which they indicate. Within a little distance of St. Remy the storm cleared sufficiently to enable us to discern the line of hills to the right, the foot of which we were skirting, and which border the great plain of Avignon to the south. There is something very singular in the outline of these rocks, which are a miniature resemblance of the wild mountains near Valence, but more savage and fantastic, presenting the appearance of the sea turned to stone in its wildest state of commotion, or in the powerful words of Manfred,

> "The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam
> Frozen in a moment; a dead whirlpool's image."

At the foot of one of these barren gray rocks, which, from its shape and perforation, exactly resembles the barbacan and gate of a castle, St. Remy is situated. The Hôtel de la Graille, where we took up our abode for the night, was as comfortable as most French inns, excepting those in the large towns: and though the *gros chien de menage*, for whose company we always stipulated, was perfectly agreeable, and of a gigantic size, yet he was by no means, as is frequently the case, the only civilized person in the house. This *gros chien du menage*, be it known, is a person of great responsibility in a Provençal inn, as well as of formidable strength and size, and is entrusted for the night with the care of the remise, and all the live and dead stock, [193]
horses, carriages, and waggons, which it contains; and a more effectual guard cannot well be: his manners during the day are very mild and gentleman-like, as if he acted as master of the ceremonies; and he generally steals in at supper-time, as if to inform you that all is safe, and to claim a pat of your hand, and a pairing of your fricandeau in acknowledgment of his professional care. The greasy landlord will stand staring at his kitchen door, the landlady will not be very attentive to your accommodation when you are once safely housed, and the dirty, bare-legged fille will poison you with steams of garlic; but the *gros chien* will always make amends to a genuine lover of dogs.

May 21.—We were tempted by a beautiful morning to rise somewhat before four o'clock, in order to visit the Roman ruins near this place, before our departure for Orgon. A walk of ten minutes conducted us up a gentle terrace on which they were situated, and which rises between the town and the fantastic hills we had remarked the day before. Having heard but little of these classical remains, we were most agreeably surprised to find them in such perfect preservation, and so beautiful in themselves. They consist of a mausoleum and an arch, which stand within a few yards of each other, and appear to have formed the principal objects in a public square or place; the area of which is evidently marked out by a row of solid stone seats, well [194]
adapted for the accommodation of gazers[46] at these beautiful gems. The arch has suffered the most decay of the two: or rather, it most exhibits the effects of violence; for the unmutilated parts are as sharp and bold as if fresh from the hand of the sculptor. The human figures on each side have suffered the most, either perhaps from some party commotion of past ages, or the same wanton propensity which leads man to disfigure his fellow-creature's image in preference to any other work of art; and to which we owe the demolition of André and Washington's heads in Westminster Abbey. The fretted compartments in the inside, and the border which surrounds the bend of the arch, are in the highest preservation. The latter represents clusters of grapes, olives, figs, and pomegranates with the accuracy of a miniature, and in a free and

natural style. One of the pomegranates was represented as ripe and cracking, and every seed distinctly expressed. The mausoleum is, I should venture to say, a building perfectly unique in its way, as a remnant of antiquity; and therefore more difficult to describe by a recurrence to any known work of art. I cannot better, however, describe its effect on the mind than by saying, that it ought to be removed to Pompeii in company with the arch. It is certainly superior, as a work of art, to any thing yet discovered in that singular place; while it possesses the same indescribable domestic [195] character which seems to bring you back to the business and bosoms of the ancients, in a manner which nothing at Rome can do. As far as I could judge by the eye, it is from forty to fifty feet in height. An open circular lanthorn of ten Corinthian pillars, surmounted by a conical roof of stone, and containing two standing figures, rests on a square base, presenting an open arch on each side, which is in its turn supported by a solid pedestal, exhibiting on each of its four sides a bas relief corresponding to the respective arch. There is great spirit and fine grouping in the bas reliefs, which represent battles of cavalry and infantry. The standing figures before-mentioned, to whose honour the mausoleum may be supposed to have been erected, are in the civil garb: and there is an ease and repose in their attitudes, corresponding with the grave, calm expression of the heads, of which necessary appendage the merciless French Itineraire has guillotined them without warrant. The colour of the freestone of which it is built is as fresh as that of the castle of Tarascon. The building is constructed with a thorough knowledge of what the human eye requires, tapering and becoming more light towards its conical top. It is also of size sufficient for all purposes of effect, though not too large for a private monument. The situation in which these relics stand is sufficient to add beauty to objects of less merit. They are placed, as I mentioned, on [196] a cultivated rising ground, at the foot of the wild gray rocks which ran parallel to the former day's route, and which assume from this spot a more castellated appearance than when viewed from the road. On the other side a fine and boundless view opens into the great plain of Avignon and the Rhone, almost perplexing to the eye by its variety and number of objects: in which we distinguished Avignon itself, and Mont Ventou many leagues behind it, rising in height apparently undiminished, with light hazy clouds sailing along its middle, and backed by the wild Dauphiné mountains, near Château Grignan. We could also distinguish Beaucaire, Tarascon, and a large part of the former day's route, to the extreme left; and the right opened into various vistas of the hilly country which we had to cross in our road to Marseilles. The whole scene was lighted up and perfumed by the effects of the shower of rain which had fallen in the night, and without which a summer landscape in this country is a dusty mass oppressive to the eyes. The thyme and lavender on which we sat, and the mulberries and standard peaches which shaded us, seemed, as well as the vineyards, to be actually growing; and the catching lights were thrown in such a manner as to make every distant object successively distinct. After a couple of hours survey, we took leave of the ancient Glanum Livii, convinced that we had as yet seen nothing more perfect in [197] its way than their tout ensemble, when combined with the surrounding scenery.

To Orgon twelve miles: winding still round the base of the cluster of rocks which form the southern barrier of the vale of Avignon, and which assumed every variety of whimsical shape during our morning's route. At about a mile and a half from the conclusion of our stage, we joined the high road from Avignon to Marseilles, which renders the Hôtel de la Poste at Orgon, a good and well-accustomed inn. While we were at breakfast, a Sœur de la Charité called on us to beg for an hospital newly established, and in truth her request was but reasonable, for the town seems poor enough, and unequal to the maintenance of such an establishment. Several of the houses are well built, but wear a decayed appearance, as if they had seen much better days. Orgon still deserves notice from its beautiful situation, and from its having been the place where Buonaparte met with so narrow an escape from the fury of the inhabitants during his journey to Elba. "Vous allez sans doute voir la Pierre Percée," said every body at the inn, whom we interrogated as to what was best worth seeing in the compass of an hour's walk. To the Pierre Percée we went accordingly, and found it nothing but a common tunnel cut in a neighbouring rock, to draw off the waters of the Durance when swoln with avalanches, from the vale of Avignon, and supply a canal [198] communicating with the Etang de Berre.[47] The summit of the rock affords by far the best view of Orgon, and one which seems expressly constructed for the purposes of landscape: nothing can group better together than an old ruined castle just above it, and a dilapidated convent on the summit of the hill, standing out in bold relief from the narrow vale of the Durance, up which we traced the course of our next stage; and

the variety of exotic dwarf shrubs, which grew on the cliff where we were standing, gave great richness to the foreground. These, and the hedges of cypress and cane, which we occasionally saw, began to give an Italian character to this part of France.

The adjoining part of the vale of the Durance is called the district of the Cheval Blanc, and, like its namesake, the vale of White Horse in Berks, is celebrated for its fertility. To Lambesc twelve miles. For six or seven miles the road follows the course of the Durance, which, to judge from the extent of its stony shoals, must be a tremendous stream at high water, and deserving the termagant appellations which Mad. de Sevigné bestowed upon it. The back of the rocks of Orgon, which we traversed during the first mile, and on which the convent stands, is very singular, and resembling more a mass of strange petrifactions than any regular stratum. At Senas, [199] we saw the ruins of a handsome house belonging to a M. de B. to whom his property has been restored since the Revolution; but the gentleman was disgusted at the woods having been cut down and sent to Toulon for ship-building, and resides entirely at Aix. An English squire in M. de B.'s case would have rebuilt his ruined mansion, and raised a belt of young forest trees in a very few years. For some miles during this stage the face of the country was interesting and rich in cultivation, with a ruined castle or two, which form striking features; but on turning to the right up a long hill which led to Lambesc, and leaving the vale of the Durance behind us, backed by its high barrier of table-shaped mountains, the country became very monotonous. It is on a higher level, and though tolerably fertile, is deficient in verdure, the olive being almost the only tree met with. Lambesc, like Orgon, which it much exceeds in size, has an air of faded gentility and desertion, and its fine public fountains tell a tale of better days. In this town the states of Provence were convened annually in the reign of Louis XIV.; and it possessed also many of the privileges of a capital in the days of the counts of Provence, but at present it is celebrated for nothing but the growth of the best Provence oil. This is no small distinction in the *almanac des gourmands*, as there is no article in which it is so difficult to hit the critical taste of a Provençal. I have seen them often make hideous faces at the twang of oil which a Spaniard would abuse, and an [200] Englishman admire, for its tastelessness. A Provençal lady, with the knowing air of a *bonne menagére*, told us, that no traveller could meet with really good oil, for that the ordinary sort which we ignorantly thought excellent, was made from heaps of olives laid to ferment in order to increase the quantity of produce. The best (which answers, I suppose, to the Cayenne pepper sent in presents) is made by the proprietors in small quantities for their own use, from the natural runnings of choice fresh-picked olives, like cold drawn castor oil, and has a greenish tinge; and this the good lady assured us was the only true thing.

> No more, when ignorance is bliss,
> 'Tis folly to be wise;

more particularly in matters relating to the palate. We walked to see the house where the Count de Grignan resided in state, during his official visits to Lambese: like many other dilapidated mansions in the place, it bears the marks of fallen greatness. There is a handsome stone gateway belonging to it, decorated with a carved coat of arms supported by lions; but the house, like the poor Palazzo Foscari at Venice, is tenanted only by a nest of squalid families. The Hôtel du Bras d'Or is a plain, comfortable country inn, civil and reasonable. [201]

CHAP. X

AIX—MARSEILLES.

May 22.—To Aix sixteen miles. Though the country during the first part of the stage is hilly without any romantic character, and rather unpromising, the difference of climate was already apparent from the strong and brilliant colours of the very hedge flowers, of which we observed an endless variety. After passing St. Canat, the first post, the country improves a little, and the[48] mountain under which Aix is situated begins to thrust its lofty head above the intervening line of hills. In proceeding a little

further, we caught a distant glimpse of the Etang de Berre to the west, and presently distinguished Aix in a deep vale under our feet, into which the descent is long and steep. A cart escorted by five gens d'armes, in which we saw a priest and another person quietly ensconced, and exposed to a burning sun, was toiling up the hill on a very different errand from ours. We were surprised to see a grave character in so equivocal a situation, but found on inquiry that he had benevolently offered his assistance in escorting a woman on her journey to Arles, where she was to be executed for a murder. The circumstances under which it had been committed, struck us as more atrocious than common. About seven years before, this person, in concert with her husband, who was since dead, invited an old lady, their friend and patroness, and godmother to one of their children, to walk and eat grapes in their vineyard. Watching their opportunity, they cut her throat, buried her on the spot, and possessed themselves of her property, with which they removed from the neighbourhood of Arles, where the murder was committed. [202]

Arles and its environs, it seems, are a sort of French Lancashire in point of brutal ferocity, and are celebrated for murders as much as for pork sausages; not that I mean to connect the two things together, as in the well-known nursery tale.

The Hôtel des Princes at Aix is justly to be praised for cleanliness and excellent accommodations; but Madame Alary is too well aware of its merits to lose by them. It is somewhat ridiculous to pay, in this fine fruit country, three francs for a small coffee-saucer of marmalade, with which we were charged as a separate item in the breakfast; and those therefore who intend staying a couple of days at this inn, should make their bargain first. [203]

Mons. Gibelin, a physician residing in the Rue Italienne at Aix, possesses, and obligingly allows to be shown, some good pictures, including original portraits of Mad. de Sevigné and her daughter. Finding him from home, and the house shut up, we extended our walk further into the town, which, in point of airy streets and cleanliness, deserves to hold a very high rank indeed among French cities. The houses are generally stately, regular, and well built, and give you the idea both of former and of present gentility and opulence. It is in some degree cooled by several fine fountains, a circumstance of no small importance at this season of the year, for the effects of the "beau soleil de Provence" began to exceed even my recollections of Naples. Speaking merely at hazard on the subject, I should doubt whether any place in the south of France is better adapted for the cure of pulmonary complaints than Aix. It stands on the side of a rising ground, facing a delightfully well-watered and fertile valley to the south-west, and sheltered from the piercing winds, so prevalent in Provence at some seasons, by a mountainous barrier which rises to the north and north-east. Its situation is thus at once sheltered, airy, and cheerful, and does the greatest honour to the taste of King Réné[49] in selecting it for his capital. [204]

To Marseilles sixteen miles. At the end of a mile and a half, the road ascends a hill to the south, marked by a clump of stone pines, which commands the best view of Aix and its environs. The vale running up to the right under Mont St. Victoire deserves particular mention, as uniting the highest degree of beauty and verdure with a certain wildness of feature; and would give a fair idea of the best parts of Italian scenery to a person not desirous of crossing the Alps. After taking leave of this valley, which better deserves to be called the garden of Provence than any other district I have yet seen, the face of the country is less pleasing, but in some places more singular and original. The first few miles were dull enough, it is true; and to add to our pleasure intensely hot, and destitute of any sort of shade. It was therefore with no small satisfaction that we stopped for a few minutes under a grove of tall old trees which overshadowed the road, with a fountain spouting up in the midst, which completely altered the atmosphere. No palm island in the deserts of Arabia was ever more welcome than this cool spot, which belonged, we understood, to the adjoining Château Albertas. Whoever was the planner of it, he has discovered more true taste and gentlemanly feeling than if he had built the finest possible entrance or lodge as a mere tribute to self-love: and were pride alone consulted as a motive, nothing leaves so striking a recollection on the minds of strangers, or so strongly disposes them to inquire the name of the proprietor of a spot, as an elegant proof of attention to their convenience, like the one in question. [205]

Having traversed a second interval of dry parched country, we crossed another pleasant valley, in which is situated the Château Simiane. This seat, visible about a mile to the left, was the residence of Pauline de Grignan, wife of the Marquis de Simiane; who is said to have inherited much of the talent and liveliness of her grandmother and mother. Her verses beginning with

"Lorsque j'étois encore cette jeune Pauline," &c.

jesting on the annoyance of a lawsuit in which she had to defend her title to the Grignan estates, are still on record. After passing the Château Simiane, the country [206] became wild and singular in parts. We particularly remarked a small village built round the base of one of those castellated rocks which abound in the neighbourhood of Beaucaire, as also a singular defile near the post-house of La Pin. The high gray rocks which inclose this spot appear as if seared to the quick with drought, and for some distance leave room only for the road and a narrow riband-shaped line of rich cultivated ground of a few yards in breadth; which is again succeeded by a small village, whose houses completely block up the defile. From this point you creep and wind gradually to the hill called La Viste, from which we were instructed to expect the most celebrated view of Marseilles. It fully equals all that can be said of it; and, though inferior to the bays of Naples and Genoa, possesses features which strongly remind one of both. On reaching a wood of stone pines on the summit of the hill, the bay of Marseilles bursts on you all at once, in an immense sheet of bright blue, studded with sunny islands, among which the Château d'If, a little spot fortified to the teeth, and commanding the entrance of the inner port, is most conspicuous. On advancing a little further, the shores of the bay are seen lengthening themselves into a half moon, one horn of which is formed by a line of mountains of no remarkable outline, and the other by a more lofty chain, communicating with Mont St. Baume and Mont Victoire, and the out-post of which is formed by a lofty and barren cape jutting into the sea at the back of Marseilles. The town itself possesses no remarkable feature [207] from this point, except the fort of Notre Dame de la Garde, which crowns and commands it at the top of a lofty hill; but its environs, which rise in an amphitheatre from the sea to the adjoining mountains, are one perpetual succession of white villas, vineyards, orange, lemon and fruit-tree groves, and every thing in short which can enrich and enliven a prospect. Too much certainly is not said by the French of this celebrated Viste, which deserves at least a quarter of an hour's attention; and there are one or two decent cabarets on the top of it, the resort of the Marseillois for cool air and refreshment, where the horses can be baited while a survey or a sketch is taken.

After the descent of this hill, nothing worth notice occurs, till you have passed a long and uninteresting suburb, and enter Marseilles by the Cours, the first effect of which is striking, as it runs in a straight line dividing the town into two parts. We turned off to the right, towards the stately quarter which Vernet has represented in his celebrated view from the inner harbour; and took up our abode at the Hôtel de Beauveau, which we found in every way deserving the rank which it holds among the number of excellent hotels in this place. We rose soon after day-light the next morning, to walk to the fort and signal post of Notre Dame de la Garde, the most conspicuous object in a distant view of Marseilles, and which we had observed rearing [208] its flag-staff at the end of almost every vista of street, like the castle of St. Elmo at Naples. In our walk we picked up a species of locust, the sauterelle of this country, of a pale, dirty brown, and somewhat more than three inches in length. Thanks to the great cleanliness of the Hôtel de Beauveau, this was the first insect which we had as yet met with at Marseilles. In a climate, indeed, of a certain degree of heat, perpetual scouring and sweeping becomes absolutely necessary in all comfortable establishments, and these little evils are more completely eradicated than in those places where they are less natural. The simple precaution of shutting the windows before candles are brought, is commonly sufficient to keep off the mosquitos; and as for the scorpions, this formidable bug-bear exists only in the imaginations of travelling ladies, in glass jars at apothecaries' shops, and occasionally in the poorer houses of the old town, where the dirt and rubbish afford it a shelter.

On ascending the hill of Notre Dame de la Garde, we found reason to approve our choice of it as a point of general survey. It commands not only the whole bay, but also the flat space of land encircled by mountains, in which Marseilles is enclosed as

between hot walls, and the town itself lies like a map under it. As a point, however, for a general sketch, I should prefer the island of Ratoneau, which possesses sufficient elevation for all purposes of the picturesque, and brings in the sea and the Château d'If as a front ground, grouping at the same time the masses of building of Marseilles better than a mere bird's eye view would do. [209]

The chapel of this fort, like that of Notre Dame de Fourvières at Lyons, possesses a great reputation for sanctity, and much resembles it also in its steep ascent, which one would suppose that some austere monk had in both cases contrived as a penance to short breathed devotees. The same hosts of beggars also besiege both places, of all ranks and pretensions, from those who stand silent in a white sheet for drapery, to those who obstreperously exhibit their want of any drapery at all. The chapel is hung with little pictures, dedicated to the Virgin by the honest sailors and peasants, and representing different providential escapes: the wretched daubing of which is somewhat atoned for by the good feeling which placed them there. One of them represents the Virgin appearing to a ship in a storm, with a visage and demeanor which might as well accompany a flying mermaid; another describes a man run over by a cart, and preserved unhurt by a similar interference; a third, the recovery from a sick bed, and the joy of the friends on the occasion, whose countenances not a little reminded us of our grim friends Damon and Holofernes. Some offerings of a better and richer description were pillaged at the time of the Revolution. [210]

We descended from this airy situation down a range of streets as precipitous as the roof of a house, the slope of which probably counteracts the effect of heat, and prevents the stagnation of air in the crowded situations of the old town: Marseilles is said to be healthy in consequence; and the generally active and fine appearance of its population confirms it. The heat, however, to judge from a comparison with Naples at the hottest season of the year, must be tremendous. It struck on us at nine in the morning, on re-entering the town, like the air from the mouth of an oven; and the herds of poor goats who compose the walking dairies of Marseilles and the environs, dead asleep on the trottoirs, formed, with a few strolling Turks, almost all the out-of-doors population in the principal streets. We had no objection whatever to imitate the general practice, and to sit still in a cool room for the rest of the morning, reserving ourselves for an evening's walk on the quay. I have as yet seen no place where a promenade of this sort is so fraught with little circumstances of amusement, or where such a variety of different ideas can be taken in by the eyes alone.

"Greeks, Romans, Yankeedoodles, and Hindoos,"

and more nations than could be described in a whole stanza of names, may be found clustering in knots, or lounging under the awnings of their different coffee-houses; [211] while new detachments of fresh-men are seen continually landing, with lank staring quarantine faces, and elbowed in every direction by the busy Marseillois, whose curiosity is too much deadened by continual importations, to be excited by the newest or strangest costume. In short, the memorable political masquerade which was got up so awkwardly by Anacharsis Clootz and his friends from the Fauxbourg St. Antoine, might here be represented almost every day in the week by real and genuine actors, in every possible variety.

May 24.—I cannot say much for the old cathedral; and as far as I can collect from the conversation of a scientific Englishman, who has dropt his watch into one of the boiling vats, while minuting some process, the great soap manufactory of this place offers nothing very different from other places of the same sort. Our morning's walk was therefore confined principally to the Cours, the shade of whose spreading trees, and the profusion of fine bouquets and cheerful faces in the flower-market at one end of it, render it a most agreeable promenade. The pleasure of lounging, which in the spirit-stirring climate, and among the busy faces of England is the offspring of conceit, becomes in such places as this, and to an unoccupied person, a real and physical satisfaction, and we much preferred it to the lions of Marseilles, which are not many. In the evening we explored the western side of the bay, and the low reef of rocks [212] opposite to the Lazaretto, which may someday or other be known by the name of Alfieri's[50] seat, as he has described it in his life with sufficient accuracy to mark the

spot. It commands one of the best and most cheerful views of Marseilles, including several features of the prospect afforded from the Viste, but of course on a lower elevation.

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CHAP. XI

OLLIOULES—TOULON.

MAY 23.—From Marseilles to Cujes twenty-four miles. From the views which we had from the Viste and Notre Dame de la Garde, we were prepared to expect much from the nearer acquaintance with the environs of Marseilles, which the first seven or eight miles would afford us. In this case, however, as in Campbell's mountain,

"'Twas distance lent enchantment to the View;"

for that which as a distant whole presented a scene of the highest beauty, and the richest cultivation, was nothing better in detail than a drive between stone walls. I have always thought that the ostentation of riches, or of those things which they will procure, was not a subject of vanity so common in France as in England; but there is a medium in all things, and it would be as well if the Marseillois and their countrymen of [214]
Lyons, had a little of that social and respectable pride, which induces every cit of Hampstead or Clapham to set off his little box to the best advantage. They seem to prefer the philosophical sulkiness which Shakspeare's Iden describes himself as enjoying between four garden walls.[51] On passing Aubagne, however, the valley of Gemenos makes ample amends to the eye, uniting the verdure and wild character of a Swiss vale, to the rich productions of Provence. After about three miles, the road narrows to a mere cleft in the hills, which we threaded for several miles, emerging at last upon the green bason of ground on which Cujes stands. Here, for the first time, we saw capers, with a profusion of every sort of esculent vegetable, which the inhabitants cultivate with great assiduity, losing not an inch of ground. To such a pitch, indeed, does their laudable economy proceed, that every inhabitant of Cujes keeps a pet dunghill before his house, fearing no doubt to lose sight of it; and in this wilderness of sweets the good women sat basking and gossiping with great satisfaction.

At Cujes we breakfasted in the same salle-à-manger with an agreeable old Marseillois and his wife, who confirmed Peyrol's account of the bloody revolutionary committee at Orange, and added circumstances which, at this distance of time, [215]
seemed still fresh in their minds. The latter had been confined four months in the prison at L'Isle, near Avignon, from which detachments of persons were daily sent to be tried at Orange, none of whom returned. Among the sufferers were a Mad. Vidou, a superannuated widow of ninety, who was guillotined in company with her son, an amiable and respectable man, and was unconscious of her fate till the last. Forty nuns of the convent of Bollene were also among the prisoners, accused of a plot to bring about a counter-revolution, and four had been already guillotined on this charge when the fall of Robespierre took place. Three of this lady's friends had been reported as emigrants, and lost their property, merely from not having been at home when the commissaires made their visit. The wife of one of these offered to recall him in ten minutes, if necessary: "Non, Citoyenne, c'est egal;" and he was accordingly enrolled and treated as an emigrant, though he never had been absent a single day from his home. In a nation where almost every person of a certain age has such incidents as these burnt into his recollection, it is not wonderful that the general character should somewhat alter, and that the lively thoughtless Frenchmen of Sterne should become nearly an obsolete race. It may be perhaps a fanciful idea to trace to the same source the nature of a Frenchman's vanity, which has generally more reference to mental qualities, than to those goods of which fortune or the will of a despot may deprive him [216]
in an instant. "Bene vixit qui bene latuit" should seem the motto of the bulk of the nation.

The first part of the road from Cujes to Toulon traverses great inequalities of ground, affording very odd bird's eye glimpses of the sea through little chasms in the line of cliffs to the right. Beausset, through which we passed, is as filthy a town as Cujes, and the country as beautifully cultivated, and as rich in flowers, fruit, and corn; it is difficult, indeed, to find animal and vegetable nature more strongly contrasted. If I may be allowed to parody the words of a noble poet—

> "They are brown as the dunghills whereon they decline,
> "And all, save the dwelling of man, is divine."

About three miles from Beausset, the road inclines towards a barrier of high and nearly perpendicular rock to the right, which it appeared impossible either to penetrate or ascend. A large string of mules, however, which met us from Toulon, loaded with barilla for the great glass works at Beausset, showed us that the one or the other was practicable, and on advancing a little farther, we distinguished the chasm through which the road to Toulon is conducted, surmounted by the black ruins of an old castle to the left. On the right of the road in this place, a singular cluster of conical rocks occurs, which, both from their form and position, seem exactly like a [217] heap of gigantic shells, piled up to batter the old ruin on the opposite cliff. Their appearance was that of a mass of large pebbles, held together by indurated clay; but as each probably weighed some scores of tons, it was impracticable to bring away one as a geological specimen; nor would such specimen give a more accurate idea of the singular and wild effect of the whole mass, than a single corner stone of the Colosseum would of the grandeur of the whole amphitheatre. The country name of the castle is Château Negro, as we understood from some gens d'armes whom we met in the pass; and the houses adjoining it, which seem actually overhanging the perpendicular edge of the rock, belong to the ancient bourg of Emenos. Nothing, one would suppose, but the overruling motive of security, ever could have induced human beings to take up their abode in such an eagle's nest as this, and its date is therefore probably as ancient as it professes to be. In days of old, the castle must have been completely the key of the pass, many hundred yards of which would have been exposed to stones and arrow-shot from it. A turn to the right conducted us into the heart of the Val d'Ollioules, as this mountain chasm is called, which is somewhat on the scale of the celebrated pass of Pont Aberglasllyn in Wales, but far exceeds it in striking effect. A dreary whiteness, unrelieved by hardly a single blade of vegetation, covers the whole, as if it had been recently cleft by a volcanic eruption, and had as yet [218] had no time to smooth down the sharpness of its original fissure; and nothing occurs to break the silence, except the trickling of a narrow brook, which just finds room to creep along the side of the road, the distant bleating of numberless adventurous goats, climbing over head from the mere love of peril, and the occasional echo of large stones disengaged by their leaps. One of these, of a size which would have shattered the carriage to pieces, came whirling and crashing down just in the direction which it had quitted. The whole spot, in short, is such as Tasso might have imagined to be the scene of Ismeno's incantation, and the congress of devils whom he convoked; and at a sudden turn of the road, the Château Negro peeps from between the opposite heights in such a new and striking position, as to seem, without much stretch of imagination, the abode of the wizard himself. After threading all the sharp angles of this savage pass, some of which are chiseled out to admit the road, the eye is at length relieved by a vista of sky, and the sight of the little town of Ollioules close at hand, sheltered in a grove of orange trees and olives, and just filling up the entrance of the pass. The view is completed by some singular gothic ruins to the right, and by the town of Six Fours in the distance, which is situated on such a commanding conical hill, that we mistook it for the citadel of Toulon. On emerging from the pass, we turned abruptly to the left, pursuing our route along the foot of the mountain barrier through whose bowels we [219] had just penetrated, and which acts on the climate and productions of Toulon like a high south wall. Some corn was already reaped at Ollioules; and it may be said almost without exaggeration, that the two last miles of the road make a difference of at least a degree in latitude, if one could be allowed to judge by one's feelings. There is nothing remarkable in the situation of Toulon itself, which is flat and uninteresting; but the shores of the bay possess great beauty and variety, and the mountains which overhang the town are very bold in their outline. The bastides of the wealthy inhabitants are sprinkled along the foot and sides of this abrupt range, overlooking extensive views of the bay and its vicinity, and disposed with better taste and less

encumbered with walls than those in the neighbourhood of Marseilles. Instead of a multitude of white spots, vying in numbers with the trees which surround them, the mansions of the Toulonais are placed just thickly enough to agreeably enliven the woods, pleasure grounds, and vineyards from which they peep at scattered and irregular distances. We found ourselves well accommodated at the Croix de Malte, situated in one of the best parts of the town, which although airy, neat, and well watered by little streams conducted through the streets, possesses no building or feature worth recollection, save its strong and regular fortifications. [220]

May 26.—A morning of very pleasant lounging, without any particular object. We rose at five, and not obtaining admission to the platform of the Fort du Malgue, walked about on the heights near it, which are situated on the south-east of the town, and form one of the best panoramic points in its vicinity. The mountain cape to the south, under which the entrance to the harbour winds, the distant islands of Hieres, and in a different direction, the town of Six Fours, are striking objects from this place. There is certainly more local propriety in this latter name, than in its more classical and ancient appellation, Sextii Forum, from which it has probably been corrupted in the derivation by some wag, for no one would suppose that such a situation afforded room to heat more than six ovens, or indeed bread to fill even one.

The town of Hieres, seen at a distance in a contrary direction, appears to much more advantage. The nature of its soil is said to be peculiarly favourable to the growth of the orange and lemon trees, for which it is celebrated, but the climate can hardly exceed that of Toulon in mildness. We were particularly struck with the softness of the sea breeze during this morning's walk, and the vivid verdure of every thing around us, contrasting strongly with the dry and naturally sterile character of the immediate neighbourhood of Marseilles. The vegetable productions of the latter place seem [221] wrung by the hand of industry from a rocky and hide-bound soil, whereas a walk near Toulon almost realizes the ideas of some favoured green spot in a tropical climate, where the sun has both soil and moisture to act upon. The pleasure of sitting down upon cushions of lavender and other aromatic plants, under myrtle hedges in flower, of gathering capers in their natural state, and tracing the most curious and rich varieties of our own wild and garden flowers, amid the infinite profusion of others which we could not name, may seem trifling to a scientific botanist, but is no small addition to the morning's walk of a plain traveller. A visit to the Jardin des Plantes will complete the illusion to the most critical eye: and the lovers of romance may fancy themselves at once in Juan Fernandez, or in the Isle of France, as they walk in the open air, under the shade of palm-trees, and seeing tea, coffee, guava fruit, and a hundred other exotic luxuries, growing in their natural state. This establishment, which we visited in the course of the day, appears a favourite walk of the inhabitants of Toulon, and is conducted in a manner which reflects the highest credit on their taste and liberality. The system of irrigation is well contrived, and the whole, from its variety and extent, interesting to the commonest observer.

We were unsuccessful in our attempts to see the arsenal, the object best worth attention in Toulon; as it is open to none but naval officers, the very class of men, one [222] would suppose, whose prying eyes it would be least desirable to admit. The young officer at the gate, however, was very pleasant and communicative, and conversed with us in excellent English; a language which he had partly acquired as a prisoner during the war, and partly by his education at the Marine School of this place, where our language is one of the first things taught. An inveterate John Bull might remark, "Ay, these fellows know they are sure to be made prisoners, if they fight with us; and that is the reason they take this precaution." Our English pride was certainly gratified this evening, but it was by the voluntary civility which we experienced during our walk from this young man and several others who had been prisoners in our country. It is peculiarly pleasing to find those who visited England under circumstances commonly the most unfavourable, expressing grateful recollections of their treatment, and ready to acknowledge them by little attentions. We found, indeed, nothing but friendly faces among that very class of people of whom we should have been most shy of making inquiries, and at the very place where we should have expected them to excite the least pleasant recollections. Two marines accosted us on the quay, to point out a sand-bank which the English had attempted to cut through during the siege of Toulon, in order to facilitate the entrance into the harbour; and on our inquiry whether they had

penetrated as far as a station where we saw a 140 gun ship and some others laid up, they answered with a laugh, "Ah oui, Messieurs, ils étoient là, et encore plus loin, je vous en reponds." [223]

It were to be wished on many accounts, that the French government would keep their galley-slaves as much out of sight as they do their arsenal. Under the ancient regime, these unfortunate creatures were only employed in the works of the latter place, which they never left; but under the present system, those only who are condemned for life are so treated, and the rest are employed in different parts of the port, where they perform the work of horses, in the most public manner, chained by the leg in pairs. Some were drawing timber, and stone carts; and others, rather more favoured, were laying the pavement of the pier, with a single heavy iron link on one leg. How far economy may justify this arrangement, or whether the exposure of incorrigible offenders may answer as a public example, it is not for a mere visitor to determine; but certainly a plan more adapted to deaden and sear the sense of shame which may still remain in them, and brutalize their minds by constant irritation, can hardly be devised. The mildness and temper with which the guard and superintendants appear to behave is not likely to counteract sufficiently the effect of the constant gaze of passengers, a circumstance which to judge by one's own sensations must tend to stifle those feelings of repentance which solitary confinement [224] naturally induces, and harden every manly particle of the mind into rebellion. It is hard to reproach them with the natural effects of this rough mode of regeneration; but I think I never saw a worse or more obdurate set of countenances. One fellow in particular, when civilly directed by the overseer to change the position of a stone, gave him a look of deadly malignity when his back was turned, which reminded me strongly of the look of Kemble in Zanga, while pronouncing the emphatic "Indeed!" Strange as it may appear, we were informed that there were several colonels, generals, priests, and men who could afford to spend 300 francs a day, among this body. These contrive, it seems, by bribery, to procure more variety of food than the bread, soup, and vegetables, which are the regular allowance; and are permitted to purchase better linen than the ordinary convicts; but the dress and regulations are to outward appearance the same in all. Those condemned for military insubordination are marked by a bullet round their necks, and the convicts cast for life by a green cap. The individuals whose term of confinement is nearly expired wear only an iron ring round the ankle, as it is presumed they will not incur the penalty of fifty blows and three years additional confinement by an attempt to escape: there are others, however, sentenced for five, ten, fifteen, or twenty years, and these are heavily ironed and more strictly watched. [225]

A detachment of the celebrated Thibet goats, who are to make the fortune of the French shawl-manufacturers, is now in harbour, and others are performing quarantine at Marseilles. The specimen of their fleece which was shown us, resembles the coat of the musk ox. The wool of which the shawls are made grows at the roots of the longer hair, and is of a warm and delicately fine texture; a circumstance which should seem to prove these animals natives of the cold and mountainous districts of Thibet, and capable by dint of British skill and enterprise, of being naturalized in our own country. [226]

CHAP. XII

FREJUS—CANNES—ISLE OF ST. MARGUERITE—ANTIBES.

May 27.—From Toulon to Puget les Crottes, 23 miles. On passing the small town of La Valette, from which the road to Hieres diverges, the mountain barrier under which Toulon is situated ends abruptly in a precipice, fortified by a strong redoubt. From this spot a detachment of the combined forces were driven by the republicans, who scaled the rock during the night at the most imminent risk; and the evacuation of Toulon was the ultimate consequence of this daring coup de main, in which Buonaparte is said to have first distinguished himself. After passing this point, and leaving on the right the distant hills of Hieres, no remarkable feature presents itself. The country is chiefly an extensive olive forest, varied by a few vineyards, and enlivened by hedges of

pomegranate, and Spanish broom. We found Puget les Crottes but a bad exchange for [228]
the fountains, and clean airy streets of Toulon: and it better deserves the name of Puget le Crotté, by which it is laid down by some mistake in some maps. The inn was perfectly worthy of the place; a frowzy kennel of bustling Yahoos, totally deficient in that readiness and attention which can put a reasonable traveller in good humour with the worst accommodations. Our servant fought his way to the kitchen fire to execute our orders; finding them neither attended to by the old dame who presided in the kitchen, of whom Gil Blas's Leonarda was a faint type, nor by the maid who screamed rejoinders at the top of the stairs, to the ravings of her mistress at the bottom, in a tone that deafened us. The arrival of the Draguignan diligence, which we had passed on the road, heavily laden with money and passengers, and travelling at a foot pace, escorted like a condemned cart by two gens d'armes, accounted for this mighty sensation. We were glad enough to escape from the din of tongues and the steams of garlic, and resume our road, which did not offer any variety, till we had nearly reached La Luc, 17 miles from Puget, whose situation and red sandy soil reminded us of a Herefordshire glen. The junction of two main roads has created a tolerable inn at this small place, which may with safety be recommended to persons on an abstemious regimen, and to none else. [229]

May 28.—To La Muy 19 miles, without any remarkable feature, though the character of the country is rather pleasing. La Muy is a wretched village, whose *tout ensemble* is completed by a ruinous house of the Count de Muy: this, as well as his castle at Grignan, was destroyed in the Revolution, and the annexed property alienated from him. To Frejus 12 miles: the few last of which improve as to scenery. We saw cork trees for the first time, and a profusion of myrtle in hedges and bushes. There is something peculiarly stagnant and wo-begone in the appearance of Frejus, which, however, is in more strict poetical character with its Roman ruins, than the populous and wealthy streets of Nismes would be. The inn where we dined and slept preserved the same character most rigidly; indeed, Madame, whose ideas seemed perfectly in unison with those of mine hostess of La Luc, wished apparently that our feast at Forum Julii should be entirely intellectual, and that we should rise from dinner with unclouded heads, to enjoy a walk among its antiquities. We were really diverted by the formal parsimony with which the good woman had contrived to invent a dinner for four, out of what would have hardly have sufficed as a whet to an English farmer. Were I blest with the culinary accuracy of the facetious Christopher North, or his friend Dr. Morris, I could better record a bill of fare which would form a complete contrast to the vaunted luxuries of their inspiring deity, Mr. Oman of Edinburgh. [230]
Suffice it, as a specimen, that three pettitoes of an unfortunate roasting-pig, or rather pigling, which I fear must have died a natural death, formed the most substantial part of our repast.

The amphitheatre of Frejus, to pass to a more dignified subject, is situated without the walls of the town, on the side by which we had entered from Toulon; and is sufficiently perfect to be interesting, though it must suffer by a comparison with the better known, and finer specimens of the same sort which exist. There is also a temple, and an arch, the latter known by the name of the Porte Dorée, neither of which possesses any thing remarkable when compared with the ruins of Nismes and Orange. The aqueduct built by Vespasian, and situated to the north-east of the town, is on a more extensive scale, and taken with its concomitants, better merits the attention of a painter: even when viewed from under the walls of Frejus, which it adjoins at one end, it possesses as sombre a character of repose as Poussin could have wished, and which is unbroken by the intervention of mean houses, and busy figures. Its scattered groupes recede from the eye up a solitary valley, interspersed with clumps of olive trees, and backed by pine forests, and the foreground derives a degree of wildness from the profusion of Spanish broom of an unusual size and beauty, with which its scattered blocks are fringed. We walked also to the small village of St. Raphael, a mile or two from the town, which is the modern port of Frejus, and stands in what was [231]
formerly the main sea; while the Pharos which marked the entrance of the ancient harbour is now surrounded by an alluvial meadow, and in place of the numerous vessels which must have crowded the ancient quay, a brig, and two or three feluccas, were quietly at anchor. A change like this, of the very soil, and local features, speaks more strongly to the imagination than the most mighty and extensive ruins.

29th.—We rose at a very early hour to pursue our route,

——for our sleep
Was airy light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland,

thanks to the precautions of mine hostess of the Chapeau Rouge: the first part of our road lay almost parallel with the line of ruins, marking the course of the aqueduct, and afforded a more just idea of its extent and size than the view which we had taken before. To judge from the scattered groupes of arches, it must have extended as far as the hills bounding the bay of Napoule, up whose sides we began to wind, at the distance of about two miles from Frejus, and continued to ascend for six more. This morning's drive was agreeable enough from its novelty, so little reminding us of the usual features of France. The bold and sombre character of its fine woods, [232] undiversified save by an occasional patch of cultivation, or a solitary hut, and swept by bodies of clouds in their progress from the Mediterranean, reminded us more of the descriptions of Norwegian forests, and of the mountains haunted by the Wild Huntsman, than of Provençal scenery. The enormous extent of these forests has not, as may well be supposed, improved the state of society. About fifteen years ago a banditti, composed of deserters, and of the peasantry of the country, and regularly organized, held them for a length of time, and defied the efforts of a numerous body of gend'armerie sent to subdue them. We observed also the traces of a wider spread conflagration, which we understood to have caused damage to the amount of a million of francs, and the perpetrators of which had equally escaped detection: it had made but a small comparative gap in these immense tracts of wood.

Soon after passing the post-house of Estrelles, situated on the summit of the mountain, the view which opens on the other side becomes strikingly fine, and extensive. The shores of the bay of Napoule, beautifully wooded and interspersed with white villas, lie under foot in a complete bird's-eye view, backed by the sweeping mountains of the neighbourhood of Grasse, and terminated by the cape where Antibes stands. Farther still the back-ground is surmounted by the colossal groups of the [233] Maritime Alps. The descent from this hill to level ground is about seven miles of road as excellent as the former part of the stage; the whole having been very much improved by Buonaparte; and although the distance from Frejus to Cannes cannot be less than twenty-eight miles, it appears to occupy a shorter space of time than many much shorter stages.

A nearer approach to Cannes in no way disappointed us: the bay of Napoule, in the centre of which it is situated, presents, in different points of view, every variety of Italian scenery; and there may be conjectures less probable than that it was called originally by mariners the bay of Napoli, from some fancied likeness. To the latter celebrated spot it bears somewhat of a resemblance, but a stronger still to the Porto Venere, or bay of Spezia, both in the wilder and the softer part of its features; and the illusion is kept up by the grouping and form of the houses, and the Italian patois of the inhabitants, who are mostly a colony of Genoese fishermen. Nor ought the Hôtel des Trois Pigeons to be forgotten, though its cleanliness and comfort, and the cheerful alacrity of its inmates, remind the traveller more of some quiet country inn on the Devon or Somerset coast, than of any thing Italian or French. It stands on a little rock just out of the town, looking on the sea, and facing the island of St. Marguerite; and [234] there is perhaps no scene in which more historical recollections are combined under one point of view, than that which its windows command. The island, whose garrison and buildings are distinguishable by the naked eye, was for many years the prison of the mysterious Masque de Fer, whose identity, like that of Junius, has hitherto baffled conjecture. In the room where we were sitting Murat passed some of the time intervening between his expulsion from Naples, and the crisis of his fate; and on the sands about half a mile to the left, is the spot where Buonaparte first landed from Elba, and bivouacked during the night, surrounded by numbers whom curiosity had drawn out of the town to behold him. There is perhaps something characteristic of the different fortunes of this singular man, in the place from which he had embarked for Elba a year before, and in that where he first set foot on his return, full of hope and confidence. The former was Frejus, a place dreary and comfortless, surrounded by memorials of departed greatness, shrunk within a small part of its former limits, and

deserted by the very sea, and it might have been mercifully chosen on purpose as the scene of his exit, in order to blunt his regret at leaving France. The latter was Cannes, a place,[52] as I have fully described it, full of cheerfulness, beauty, and rich distant prospects, corresponding almost in brilliancy to those which his mind was forming at the time. [235]

Far different must have been the feelings of Murat during the anxious interval of forced leisure which he spent at this place; and I will confess, that while listening to the landlord's simple account of the manner in which he passed his time, we forgot the massacre of Madrid in the well-known anecdote of the drowning officer's rescue. During the first eight days he remained shut up in the bed-room or sitting-room which we occupied, in expectation of despatches from Buonaparte, to whom he wrote on his arrival at Cannes. At the end of this time, having received no answer, he used to beguile his impatience by rambling on the sea shore, or watching the sports of the peasants, till at length, evidently heart-sick and desperate, he set out for Toulon on the rash expedition which closed his career. "Toujours, toujours, il avoit la mine triste.—Ah! si vous l'aviez connu, vous auriez pleuré son sort—il étoit un si bel homme!—d'une taille superbe!" said our honest host, whose knowledge of Murat was probably confined to his soldier-like figure, and his desolate state: he could have been no judge of the small extent of Buonaparte's obligations to his brother-in-law, whose former defection was but repaid in kind. He pointed out a green spot under the walls of an old [236] castle which overlooked the inn, where he had frequently observed Murat lying with his face concealed in his hands, or in his more cheerful moments, watching the dances of the country people who resorted thither, and whose sports seemed to interest him considerably. It would be a task for the hand of a master poet or painter, to describe an ambitious and desperate man, softened for a time by disappointment, overleaping in thought the immeasurable distance between his present and his former self, and contemplating the sports of his youth with a sort of melancholy pleasure, yet under the influence of the strong fatality which hurried him to his end. It is by mixing somewhat of this feeling in the character of Macbeth, that Shakspeare has excited a momentary interest even for a murderer and usurper, who perceives "his life fallen into the sere and yellow leaf," and pauses for a moment in melancholy reflection as he rushes to "die with harness on his back."

"Out, out, brief, candle," &c.

Having spent an hour among the sunny basking places which abound in the rocks of this place, we hired a fishing-boat to convey us to the island of St. Marguerite. It was impossible to help being diverted by the uncouth appearance of our new conductors, [237] which was two or three degrees wilder than that of poor Murat's amphibious subjects: one fellow in particular, was

"A man,
Cast in the roughest mould Dame Nature boasts,
With back much broader than a dripping pan,
And legs as thick about the calves as posts,"[53]

or indeed thicker, and tanned a bright copper colour by sun and salt water; his broad face grinning with good humour, from beneath a mane as shaggy as a lion's. It may be supposed that two or three such rowers, proud of the new honour of officiating in a pleasure-boat, got us on more quickly than the less athletic boatmen of show lakes, and we soon landed at the small fort which was the object of our pursuit, and which the commandant politely allowed us to explore. At its eastern extremity is situated a guard-house, a chamber of which on the ground floor served as the prison of the mysterious captive; it is airy and commodious enough, in comparison with places of the sort in general; but the height of its only window, strengthened by treble bars from the sea, and the perpendicular cliff which it overhangs, with the dangerous breach under it, are sufficient protections against any escape. For the last five years no [238] persons have been confined in this fort, which was formerly used exclusively as a state prison, but in the Revolution its benefits were extended to persons of all ranks. Restraint, indeed, is not at present the order of the day within its precincts, to judge from appearances. The soldiers seemed to have little or nothing to do, but to flirt with

two or three gaudily-dressed negresses, who showed their white teeth and their black muzzles from the doors of the casernes, and to laugh at the chaplain of the garrison, for such I conclude was the grade of the old priest, who met us, toddling about in a state of drunken fatuity, very much resembling the condition of Obadiah in the Committee, with a nose exhibiting the visible effects of a fight or a fall. Having escaped at last from the good man's persecuting attentions, we got back to Cannes in time to make a sketch from the precise spot where Buonaparte landed.[54]

May 30.—From Cannes to Antibes eleven miles; a pleasant drive, chiefly running close to the sea. Though considerably flattered in Vernet's beautiful picture at the Louvre, Antibes, nevertheless, leaves a pleasing impression on the mind, from its airy, well-frequented, prosperous appearance, and the bustle arising from the presence of a garrison. Its inner harbour, and the neck of land which defends it, terminated by a [239] little picturesque fort, seem beautifully constructed by nature for their respective purposes; but I do not know of any thing else meriting notice. [240]

CHAP. XIII

NICE—COL DE TENDE—CONCLUSION.

From Antibes to Nice, sixteen miles, along a beautiful sweep of coast, the whole extent of which, crowned by the gigantic chain of Maritime Alps, lies in full view for the whole way. No sketch, much less any description, can give an idea of the combined effect of this extensive bay, or the air of cheerfulness spread over the whole; among all the celebrated first views of Italy, there are probably few which speak to the imagination in a more imposing as well as pleasing manner. We crossed the frontier by a long wooden bridge over the Var, a broad, wild stream, roaring down with violence after the storm of the preceding night. We were immediately struck with the different culture of the vines, festooning as near Naples, over the other trees, in a manner more picturesque than useful. The straw hats of the Nissardes, also resembling an inverted [241] wicker corn basket, gave quite a new and laughable character to the human apex. Such little novelties as this, which would excite no more attention in a professed book of costumes, than a view into an old fancy clothes shop, are nevertheless recollected with interest when seen in travelling, as connected with particular trains of thought or association, which they preserve fresh in the mind; and to forget these extraordinary potlids of straw, and the fanciful little red toques occasionally substituted for them, would be to forget an important feature of the Italian frontier.

Much as I had heard of Nice, I was not disappointed either in the first view, or in the nearer survey of it. The situation of its ruined citadel on a commanding and insulated rock, and its narrow valley of almost tropical richness, surrounded by tier above tier of mountains, and studded with villas and orange-groves, present every variety of beauty; and there is a stateliness of proportion, and a careless elegance in its white houses, and an airiness in their situation, which very much remind the eye of the best parts of Naples near the Chiaja and Villa Real. The first glance of Nice, in short, bespeaks a higher and more fashionable tone of society than that of any French town, excepting Paris, through which we had passed. It is impossible, nevertheless, for a person looking beyond the mere amusement of the moment, to banish a certain train of morbid ideas which connect themselves with the sight of this beautiful town. There are [242] few persons perhaps moving in good English society, whose ears do not familiarly recognise the hopeless phrase of "being sent to die at Nice," and many have watched the departure of the wrecks of what was once health, strength, and beauty, consigned to this painted sepulchre with the certainty of never returning from it. Thus the very efficacy of the air of Nice, which has brought it into vogue when all other resources have failed, has inseparably connected it in the mind with despondency and decay. If such ideas occurred to us, they were certainly not removed by the sight of a funeral which past the windows of the inn, within an hour or two after our arrival; the corpse laid on an open bier, the hands crossed, and ornamented with flowers, and the monks and attendants all joining in a solemn chant. A bell was also tolling in another quarter, the signal that a man just condemned to the galleys was passing in procession through

the town, as is customary.

"But let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play."

The English dance and dress during an assize week, and the lively Nissards, more naturally still, enjoy their fine climate, and elegant town, without entering into the gloomy reflections which haunt the mind of an Englishman on his arrival. The cafés [243] and public walks were swarming with company, and the whole place appeared to take its tone of gaiety from the gaudy young officers, whose troops were quartered in the extensive barracks; the peasants were dancing their grand round on the quay, or fighting between jest and earnest with open hands; the native dandies managed their green fans with the same adroitness as their fair companions; the shops displayed every luxury and accommodation; and every thing, in short, savoured of the habits of a continental Cheltenham.

The Hôtel des Étrangers, where we established ourselves, is somewhat high in its charges, but proportionably good, and possesses a delightful garden of orange-trees adjoining. After being kept awake by mosquitos, which seem more prevalent than at Marseilles, and whose little angry note of preparation had apprized us of an attack, we walked in the morning to the citadel hill, whose solid masses of ruin had attracted our notice on the first view of the town. This point affords the best general idea of Nice and its vicinity, though in the month of May, it is not attained without a roasting walk. The heat indeed was tremendous, as may be expected in a triangular tongue of land only a few miles in extent, and encircled by lofty mountains; and the mildness of the climate in winter, as we were informed, bears a full proportion to its oppressiveness in summer. Green peas are to be had all the year: mulberries and gourds were already [244] ripe, and every garden was a wood of the finest orange and lemon-trees loaded with ripe fruit. The thermometer too is seldom or never lower than 55 in the depth of winter. At the foot of the citadel hill is a road blasted out of the solid rock, running along the edge of the sea, and connecting Nice with its port; along which we walked towards the afternoon. I should be inclined to remark this spot, near which is an esplanade of good houses, as the most sheltered and desirable quarter of Nice. The breeze, which had begun to freshen, was just perceptible where we stood, though its effects in the open sea were visible by the plunging of the waves under our feet; and it appears hardly possible for any but a south or south-west wind to get at this point. Whether or not the part of Nice north of the citadel be equally calculated for an invalid, I should doubt. The mountain gully running up towards Escarene may possibly bring down searching winds from the north-east; and on the whole the marine esplanade seems to afford a situation cooler in summer, and warmer in winter, than the interior of the town.

Such as are tolerably active pedestrians will find themselves well repaid for an evening's toilsome walk to the height which divides Nice from Ville Franche, and whose situation is marked by a small fort.[55]

From hence the view to the west is very wide, including nearly the route of the two [245] preceding days. Towards the east it is less extensive, but more striking. The town of Ville Franche, and the beautiful little basin which forms its port, appear as completely under the feet, as if you could leap over them to the opposite side of the water; and the headland between that town and Monaco, up and down which the road to Savona is seen meandering, is more boldly defined and on a larger scale than that of Lulworth Cove, and though strongly resembling it possesses greater beauty and variety.

One of Buonaparte's projects was to render the Corniche, as this giddy track is expressively called, practicable for carriages; but the Sardinian government, instead of completing, have defaced (as we heard, out of jealousy) the part which he had begun: this is, I think, rather too absurd for belief. It is at the same time probable enough, that the undertaking has been abandoned for want of adequate funds. We were lighted homewards by myriads of fire-flies, a circumstance which produces on a person unaccustomed to the sight, a more novel and brilliant effect than any other accompaniment of an Italian climate.

June 2.—Our original idea had been to have proceeded to Genoa either by a felucca or the Corniche, but learning that the latter route was impracticable, excepting on [246] mules, and that the variable nature of the wind on this coast rendered feluccas a dangerous and uncertain mode of performing the journey, we preferred the road into Italy by the Col di Tende.

To Escarene twelve miles: the first four skirt along the beautiful valley at whose mouth Nice stands, following, and sometimes crossing, the course of the river Poglion; the rest gradually winds up into the heart of the mountains, through deep ravines and woods of gigantic olives, which in this district become picturesque forest-trees. We breakfasted at Escarene, a quiet pretty village, possessing tolerable accommodation. To Sospello fifteen miles of good road, the first seven or eight of which ascend the lofty wall of mountain which closes up the entrance of the valley, and appears at a distance like a score of corkscrews laid in a Vandyke figure. Up the whole of this we walked, mounting, by an easy but tedious circuit of good road, a long series of crags, and courses of torrents, and sometimes looking almost perpendicularly down upon the point which we had passed half an hour ago. Nothing can be more bare or desolate than the rocky mountain ridge in which this ascent terminates, and on which vegetation seems at its last gasp. A dance of Satyrs might be appropriately introduced to complete the wildness of a sketch from this spot, but that it does not afford a single berry or blade of grass to regale them, even if they could live like their cousins the [247] goats. A large family of peasants, as wild and merry as these "hairy sylvans," accompanied us up the mountain with their cattle, on their way to the summer chalets, exhibiting the laughing side of human nature in a manner which it is delightful to witness in the poor.

"Pleased with a feather, tickled with a straw,"

and grateful for the slightest civility, they seemed to consider the mere change of place as a festival. The wife had twitched off her husband's cocked hat, which she wore in frolic; the bare-legged children appeared ready to dance to their own voices as they walked; and the very infant, committed in his cradle to the entire discretion of the family donkey, was equally pleased and satisfied with his own situation, as he headed the patriarchal cavalcade.

The view of the Mediterranean and the coast of France, which this point commands, is prodigious; and the intermediate ranges of mountains which shut out Nice, and which appeared elevated peaks when seen from its citadel, seem from this spot only masses of wavy ground. From hence a descent much steeper than the ascent and almost equally long, conducted us into the rich and well-inhabited valley in which Sospello stands. The inn at this place is rather below mediocrity; the mistress sturdy and rapacious in her demands, and shameless in retracting them when forced to do so. [248]

From the valley of Sospello, which appears as completely insulated by nature from the society of the world as Rasselas's happy valley, we wound next morning up another eight miles of ascent as steep and tedious as the last. On a wild heath between the tops of two mountains called the Col de Brouais, in which this ascent terminated, we unexpectedly discovered a hut tenanted by an old gend'arme, a pet lamb, a kid, and two tame hares, to all which quadrupeds we were introduced by the master with great glee, while waiting for the carriage under his roof. We were so much pleased and diverted by the whimsical manner in which this merry contented mortal lived among his menagerie, that we sent the horses on to Breglio, and complied with his eager desire of entertaining us at his cabaret, if a hut the size of a tea-caddy, without another human habitation visible for four miles, could be so called. He produced, to our surprise, bread, milk, cheese, fresh curd, eggs, fruit, and preserves, all clean and neatly served, and was equally surprised at our giving him two francs a head, which tender he at first remonstrated against with great naivété as too extravagant. The trouble which he had taken in fetching most of these articles from a distance of five miles appeared not to enter into this honest fellow's calculation. The French were encamped in some force on the Col de Brouais at the time of the session of the Comtat [249] of Nice and of Savoy by the king of Sardinia in 1796. It was, also, about four years previous to our visit, infested by a band of robbers, to whom its lofty situation afforded

great facilities: these were, however, swept off and conveyed to the galleys by the exertions of the mountain patrole, of whom our host was one, and the whole of the country is now perfectly safe and undisturbed. After contemplating for a short time the principal summit of the Col de Tende, which from this point appears at its full height, we dived into the intervening valley of Breglio by a rapid descent, like the road into a mine. The trout stream, which runs past this place in its way to Vintimiglia, is such as would cause a traveller fond of fishing, to regret the want of his rod and tackle. After leaving Breglio we ascended the course of this river till it narrowed into a defile between two rocks; on entering which the town of Saorgio appears, after a mile or two, piled on the top and shelving side of the precipice to the right in a singular manner. The architect who planned it must have taken his idea from a colony of swallows' nests in a sand-rock, for it seems hardly possible to get to or from it without wings: to judge of it from the road, there is no room or footing for streets; a man might jump down the chimney of his neighbour's house, or be dashed to pieces on its roof, by leaping from his own ground floor; and the fall of a house in the upper tier would probably open a clear downward passage to the valley. A traveller desirous of making [250] a sketch of what is an unique thing in its way, would do well to get three hours start of his carriage from Breglio,[56] and scramble among the heights to the right of the river, for a point which gives a more accurate idea of Saorgio than we could obtain from the valley. The view is attempted in aquatinta in Beaumont's Maritime Alps, and badly as it is executed, the original drawing must have been good, and, as far as I can judge, have given an accurate idea of it. The peasants call the place by some name sounding in their patois like Chavousse; it cannot, however, be mistaken. This is the only spot between Breglio and Tende which would be adapted for a drawing; but the scenery, nevertheless, is of the most stupendous and extraordinary nature I ever witnessed, exceeding, on the whole, the defile of Gondo and Iselle in the route of the Simplon, and more decided, though less varied in its features, than that justly admired spot. The pass is not on a larger scale than the Val d'Ollioules, as far as Saorgio; but after leaving the latter village, the rocks rise to a much greater height, and assume a more savage character. It is impossible to form an adequate idea of the depth of the defile and its effect on the eye, without actual inspection; the nearest approach to it will be made by conceiving a chasm rent from top to bottom by an earthquake through [251] Snowdon, or any other mountain of similar height. For about twelve miles you travel in the condition of those fabled criminals,

> "Quos super atra silex jamjam lapsura, cadentique
> Imminet assimilis."

Jutting rocks, whose gradual change of posture is marked by the inclination of the pines on them, hang toppling over your head at a height to which the strongest voice could not be heard from the valley; and above and between them just peep glimpses of still more elevated heights, where a tree appears hardly of the size of a pin's head. A peculiar gray, sombre atmosphere overspreads the whole at noon day, similar to that which prevails during a solar eclipse; and the deep echo of the river is the only sound heard for miles. On the whole, I never saw any place so calculated to convey gloomy and wild ideas, and the Sicilian name of "Val Demone," or John Bunyan's "Valley of the Shadow of Death," would be appropriately applied to this savage spot. Nor would the danger be imaginary at the breaking up of a frost, or after violent rains, which might bring one of the highest rocks perpendicularly down without the intervention of a single crag to give warning and break its fall. The visible rents made in the road from time to time, and the obstructions in the deep bed of the stream, show sufficient marks of these formidable incursions. In one place the valley originally afforded only a [252] passage for the river, and the road has been cut and blasted along the cheek of the rock: Close to this spot an inscription on the stone informs you that this road was the work of the late king of Sardinia; and he had in truth a right to be proud of such an undertaking. The whole road from Nice to Turin is admirable, presenting hardly a single mauvais pas. The natural difficulties which the construction of the road presents have been surmounted in a manner which might be a study to a civil engineer, and the whole is, perhaps, as fine a specimen of labour and skill as Buonaparte's route over Mont Cenis or the Simplon. The natural features of its wilder parts resemble those in the pictures of Salvator Rosa, but on a larger scale than he ever attempted to give an idea of.

Within a mile or two of Tende,[57] the chasm in the rocks (for it was no more) widens into a small narrow valley of a peculiarly quiet character, in which the monastery of St. Gervase occupies one of those retired green spots which prove so well the good taste of the monks of old. A turn which this valley takes to the left affords the view, first, of the old castle of Tende, looking quite ghastly in the dusk of evening, and next of the town of Tende itself, which stands piled like Saorgio, against the shelving side of the valley. Tende is a large and apparently flourishing town, affording two inns of [253] very respectable appearance. The Albergo Imperiale is high in its charges, but makes amends for it by the liberality and comfort of its appointments. It fronts one of the principal peaks which form the chain of the Col di Tende, which we contemplated as it caught the last rays of the evening sun, forming different guesses how we were to get up it.

June 4.—From Tende to Limone 15 miles. We left Tende at a quarter before four: after twisting and re-twisting for about an hour and a half among narrow defiles, through which the first part of the rise is gradually conducted, we reached a mountain valley at a high level above the sea, closed at the opposite end by the main ridge of the Col di Tende. Here the chief ascent commences, in a regular zigzag up a jutting shoulder of the mountain. The road is wide and good, and free from ravine or precipice; but from its continual turns, (of which I counted not less than sixty-five) is difficult and embarrassing to any but a crane-necked carriage; though in no place could an overturn produce worse consequence than a roll of a few yards. The distance may be abridged on foot, either by crossing the zig-zags, or by taking the summer path to the right through a fine range of Alpine pasture, which exhibits a profusion of hardy flowers growing up to the edge of the snow-drifts: amongst many others, whose names [254] were unknown to us, we observed blue and yellow crocusses, hearts-ease, oxlips, cowslips, primroses, and two sorts of gentianella. In this direction the road cannot be missed to the turf cabaret which stands on the sharp edge of the mountain. It is curious to look back a moment from this elevated spot down the narrow valley behind you, and observe the road curling from below your feet into blue distance, like the coils of an immeasurable white snake.

At this fine season of the year, it exhibits a busy scene of passengers and loaded strings of mules, toiling up in your rear, or lessening in the perspective till hardly visible at the bottom of the ascent. The site of the cabaret borders on the line of perpetual snow, and though inferior in height to the crest of the Simplon road, stands in a situation, I should conceive, much more exposed to the effects of sudden hurricanes and snow storms. The road appears to be commanded by no spot where avalanches could accumulate, as on the precipice where you first overlook Brieg, and must, therefore, during the winter, be rather difficult than dangerous. On the other hand, no mountains intervene on the Turin side, to blunt the edge of the north winds from the Savoy Alps; and in the direction of Nice, the south-west winds must be concentrated and driven up the mountain avenue of Tende with the roar of artillery. I can, therefore, easily credit Beaumont's account, that many mules are annually lost in [255] consequence of the tempestuous weather on the Col. We did not, however, taste any of the mule-hams at the cabaret, which, according to that writer, are afforded to the frugal natives by these casualties, but contented ourselves with a spoonful of brandy, and a taste of their good brown bread. Had our stomachs been desperate, other refreshments, I believe, were to be had.

The view to the north from this "raw and gusty" ridge affords a more striking idea of height and space combined, than any other prospect with which I am acquainted; though not on the whole so imposing as the first glimpse of the Swiss side of the Simplon. The eye is carried directly over two or three lower peaks of the Col, grinning with snow drifts, to the great range of Alps south-west of Mont Cenis, which appear hanging in mid air like the domains of a cloud-king; their jagged and glittering tops distinctly defined, but their bases melting into the hazy abyss which the plain of Piedmont presents.

As far as I can estimate, we were about five hours in performing the ascent from Tende. Two more hours took us to Limone, at a jog trot, down a zigzag road, less abrupt in its turns than that on the other side. At Limone the post-road to Turin begins. The post-house is a tolerably good inn: the douaniers, the most troublesome [256]

we had yet met with, refusing to compound for the customary donation, and asking for money when their search was ended. We had, therefore, the sweet revenge of first watching them as pick-pockets, and next refusing them as beggars.

To Coni fifteen miles; the first seven or eight through a beautiful valley fringed with chestnut woods; every thing, however, appeared diminutive, as our eyes had not yet recovered the strain which the enormous scenery of the Col had occasioned. In this fine open valley, goitres abound as much as near Sion; this malady, therefore, cannot be attributed, as some think, to the stagnation of air.

Coni, a neat arcaded town, deserves mention for the beauty of its situation, and the fine Alpine panorama which it commands. The glittering pinnacle of Monte Viso, is the most striking feature through this and the following day's journey.

June 5.—Breakfasted at Savigliano, a large flourishing town; slept at Carignan, and reached Turin to breakfast next day.

June 6.—The best of Turin is seen in the general survey of the town and its princely environs, particularly on the Moncaliere side. Our principal amusement was derived from Zuchelli's masterly performance at the Opera Buffa. The plot of the piece turned [257] partly on the discomfitures and discontents of a supercilious English dandy, which part this singer performed with an immoveable countenance, which kept us in a roar of laughter, his grave rich toned bass voice giving a double effect to the solemn absurdity of the character. For the sake of avoiding open offence to our countrymen, the hero was styled a Danish count; but the portrait was perfect to the very tail of the coat, and could not be mistaken, and the countenances of some of his prototypes in the next box showed, that the satire, fair and gentlemanly as it was, cut deeper than the awkward puppet-show of "Les Anglaises pour rire." The Neapolitan character was handled more unmercifully in the part of a guttling, fulsome old coxcomb, as cowardly as the Dane was quarrelsome.

Milan, its inimitable cathedral, and its other curiosities, have, I am aware, been well-trodden ground for some years. No one, however, appears to notice the courier's little spaniel in the Archduke Rainier's hall, who has watched for his master's return from Russia more than a year without stirring from his mat, and whom the good-natured Viceroy feeds and protects without allowing him to be disturbed. I hope he will find a place in some future animal biography, for the credit of his species. As to the splendid Fête Dieu, which we just arrived in time to witness, with its military, civil, and [258] ecclesiastical pageantry,—the beggar-boys plucking the guttering wax from the long tapers of the priests, and the priests occasionally singeing their noses in return, I could no more undertake to describe, than to sort a bag of gaudy feathers of different birds.

The best companion over the Simplon with which I am acquainted, is a little French tract, written, I think, by a M. Mallet, and touching slightly, but sufficiently, on all subjects of interest connected with that stupendous route. The short account which it gives of the life of Cardinal Borromeo may be read through while walking up the hill of Arona to visit his colossal statue, which deserves a higher rank than perhaps it holds, either as a work of art or an achievement of labour. The attitude of the figure is easy and graceful, and the artist has managed the flowing cardinal's robe with great taste. There is also an expression of benevolence and majesty in the countenance and extended hand, suitable to one's conceptions of this apostolic character, who seems looking and waving a blessing on his native Arona. The height of the figure and pedestal is stated at 104 feet; but the effect of its grace and proportion renders this difficult of belief, until you look back at the distance of two miles on the road to Baveno, and see it like a walking giant overtopping the neighbouring woods by more than the head and shoulders. [259]

With this noble statue ends my admiration of Borromean taste: for it is not to be borne that the Isola Bella, which nature intended as a central finish to such a fairy land as the Lago Maggiore, should have been tortured into a piece of confectionary

less elegant than the good taste of Gunter or Grange would have devised as the centre of a bowl of lemon cream. The Isola Madre, it is true, is beautiful; for no Italian landscape gardener has yet assailed it with his line and rule.

Our welcome into Switzerland was novel, but pleasing to lovers of animals. Several herds of cattle met us on our road to Brieg, accompanying their masters to the mountain chalets, and fairly beset us with their attentions. The cows crowded and shouldered each other to be scratched; one large goat; slipping under their legs, put her head under my arm, and took my hand in her mouth; and a whole flock of sheep turned round and ran after us in order to obtain more notice. I had no idea before that any animal but the dog might be tamed to such a degree of instinctive tact, as to perceive whether or not its caresses will be acceptable to a stranger; and I am convinced, that the celebrated Ritson might have made more converts to his Braminical system by importing and exhibiting a Swiss flock, than by writing a book against animal food, and classing eggs as a vegetable succedaneum. [260]

It would be as superfluous to describe the well-known ground of Switzerland, as that of Cumberland; and indeed when once within sight of Geneva, one is almost at home. One and one only stage seems to remain, more desirable still.

"Cum peregrino,
Labore fossi venimus larem ad nostram,
Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto."

THE END.

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[261]

"The tower of Mauconseil must have been very difficult to express; for the water on the right is between a light coloured stone-quay and the tower itself, also very bright; yet the artist, W.B. Cooke, has contrived to give it a fine and natural transparency entirely in keeping with the scenery around. The second is a simple and lovely landscape, with a sky exquisitely managed: but Avignon is still a greater favourite with us. The rich architectural structures on one hand, the silvery river, the picturesque bridge, the distant Alps of Dauphiné, and the little bit of rustic scenery on the foreground of the left, all combine to render this a very charming view; and Mr. Allen has great merit in executing it as he has done. The Château Grignan is of a different and darker character, and an extremely interesting performance. Upon the whole, the lovers of elegant art will find this publication well entitled to their attention."—*Literary Gazette*, No. 309.

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Those shores of glory, and to sing them too;
And sure no common muse inspired thy pen
To hail the land of gods and godlike men."

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FOOTNOTES:

[1] In 1419, John Duke of Burgundy, and the Dauphin, against whom he had taken part during the troubles of France, agreed to a reconciliation. "An interview was fixed to take place on the bridge of Montereau-sur-Yonne, where a total amnesty was to be concluded, to be followed by an union of arms and interests. Every precaution was taken by the duke for his safety; a barrier was erected on the bridge; he placed his own guard at one end, and advancing with only ten attendants, threw himself on his knees before the Dauphin. At this instant Tannegui de Chastel, making the signal, leaped the barrier with some others, and giving him the first blow, he was almost immediately despatched. Though the Dauphin was in appearance only a passive spectator of this assassination, there can be no doubt that he was privy to its commission."—*Wraxall's Valois*.

[2] The Welsh proverb, that a man who sleeps on the top of Snowdon, must awake either a fool or a poet, refers as probably to the effect produced on the mind by the prodigious mountain panorama discernible from thence, as to any fancied influence of the genius loci.

[3] Vide Cooke's View.

[4] The characteristic beauties of Italy are no proof of the picturesque taste of the Italians themselves, as planners and architects. The commanding situation of their villages, and the small proportion of window to wall, are circumstances favourable to landscape, but intended merely as the means of catching and retaining cool air. Their classical ruins are preserved as a source of pride and profit, and the natural features of the country cannot be altered.

[5] Vide Cooke's View.

[6] Vide Cooke's Views.

[7] Vide Cooke's Views.

[8] Collot d'Herbois.

[9] See Godwin's St. Leon.

[10] Vide Cooke's Views.

[11] There is, I believe, positive historical authority, which fixes Vienne as the place of Pilate's banishment and death.

[12] Vide Cooke's Views.

[13] Vide Cooke's Views.

[14] Vide Cooke's Views.

[15] "See Mad. de S.'s Letters."

[16] Vide Cooke's Views.

[17] "Je me réjouis, avec M. de Grignan, de la beauté de sa terrasse; s'il en est content, les ducs de Genes, ses grands pères, l'auraient été; son gout est meilleur que celui de ce temps-là; * * * * * ces vieux lits sont dignes des Adhemars."—*Mad. de Sevigné*.

[18] "L'air de Grignan me fait peur pour vous; me fait trembler; je crains qu'il n'emporte, ma chere enfant, qu'il ne l'épuise, qu'il ne la dessèche—."

"Voilà le vent, le tourbillon, l'ouragan, les diables dechaînés qui veulent emporter votre château; quel ébranlement universel! quelle furie! quelle frayeur répandue partout!"—*Mad. de Sevigné*.

[19] See Southey's translation of the Cid.

[20] Eighty feet by twenty-four, according to a measurement made previous to the burning of the castle.

[21] Pour entrer au vestibule (says the same letter which I quoted before, written before the Revolution) on monte par un escalier, car les appartemens sont tous au premier. Il y a quatre beaux salons, qui s'appellent la salle du roi, la salle de la reine, la salle des evêques, et la galerie: le reste de la maison, qui est vaste, est distribuêe en divers appartemens, dont chacun est composé d'une chambre a coucher, un grand cabinet, et un cabinet à toilette.

[22] Vide Cooke's Views.

[23] Vide Cooke's Views.

[24] See the Spectator.

[25] Vide Cooke's Views.

[26] Marius's victory is said to have been gained near Aix (Aquæ Seætiæ).

[27] Vide Cooke's Views.

[28] "Cette memorable bataille, sur laquelle nous n'avons aucun détail, nous sauva du joug des Arabes, et fut le terme de leur grandeur. Depuis ce revers, ils tenterent encore de pénétrer dans la France; ils s'emparerent même d'Avignon; mais Charles Martel les défit de nouveau, réprit cette ville, leur enleva Narbonne, et leur ota pour jamais l'espérance dont ils s'étaient flattés si longtemps."—*Florian's Précis Historique sur les Maures.*

[29] As late as 1688, Louis XIV. seized on the territory of Avignon in consequence of disagreements with Innocent XI., and the Count de Grignan held the city as his viceroy for two subsequent years. Mad. de Sevigné, in her letters written at this period of time, congratulates her daughter (whose boat was nearly overset against the piers of this identical bridge), on the dignity of the situation conferred on the count, and the more solid advantages which might accrue from it.

"Vous prenez, ma chere fille, (says she) une fort honnete resolution d'aller à votre terre d'Avignon, voir des gens qui vous donnent de si bon cœur ce qu'ils donnoient au vicelegat."—June, 1689.

"Quelle difference de la vie que vous faites à Avignon, toute à la grande, toute brillante, toute dissipée, avec celle que nous faisons ici!"—*Les Rochers*. June, 1689.

"Toutes vos descriptions nous ont divertis au dernier point; nous sommes charmés, comme vous, de la douceur de l'air, de la noble antiquité des eglises honorées comme vous dites, de la presence et de la residence de tant de Papes, &c. &c."—June 26, 1689.

[30] It is to be hoped that Adam Smith has taken a correct view of the subject of madness in his Moral Sentiments. "Of all the calamities," says he, "to which the condition of mortality exposes mankind, the loss of reason *appears* by far the most dreadful; and we behold that last stage of human wretchedness with deeper commisseration than any other. But the poor wretch who is in it, laughs and sings, perhaps, and is altogether insensible of his own misery. The anguish therefore which humanity feels at the sight of such an object, cannot be the reflection of any sentiment of the sufferer. The compassion of the spectator must arise altogether from the consideration of what he would himself feel if he were reduced to the same situation, and, what perhaps is impossible, were at the same time able to regard it with his present reason and judgment.

[31] Vide Cooke's Views.

[32] "Ce vertueux jeune homme paroit dejà consommé dans l'art Evangelique; ses instructions sont aussi sublimes qu'elles sont precises et pathetiques; il joint a ses grandes qualités un amour ardent pour les pauvres; il consomme annuellement les revenus d'un patrimoine majeur a de bonnes œuvres dans les cours des Missions. Une foule de faits attestant ses liberalitês journalieres."—*Fransoy's Memoir*.

[33] See the letter introduced in Joüy's Hermite en Provence.

[34] "And do not forget the toasted cheese." Vide *Matilda Pottingen* in "The Rovers."

[35] See the Quarterly Review, to which I am obliged for the Abbé's remark.

[36] See Campbell's ballad of "The Brave Roland," in one of the numbers of the New Monthly Magazine; and Southey's tale of Manuel and Leila, in his early productions.

[37] I had procured this document from Milan, and translated it for the press, previous to reading the version of it which is given in the Quarterly.

[38] Vide Cooke's Views.

[39] A similar dignity was conferred by some heathen poet, I believe, on the ποτνια συχη (the august, or god-like fig).

[40] The word Oc, according to tradition, meant in the old patois of the country "yes:" hence the original derivation of "Langue d'Oc."

[41] Vide Cooke's Views.

[42] The celebrated fair of Beaucaire, which may be almost called the carnival of the Mediterranean, is held in this meadow yearly.

[43] Vide Cooke's Views.

[44] For an account of the Tarasque, or fabulous dragon, which infested the country, and the ceremonies commemorative of it, see Miss Plumptre's tour. The name of Tarascon, she says, is derived from this animal.

[45] I do not except even John Bull's favourite yew peacocks and dragons, at least when they decorate the garden of a poor man.

[46] Vide Cooke's Views.

[47] Vide Cooke's Views.

[48] According to Sanson's excellent Atlas, the French part of which was laid down from measurement, in the reign of Louis XIV., this mountain is the Mont St. Victoire, near which Marius gained his celebrated victory over the Cimbri. The field of battle is fixed by history as near Aquæ Sextiæ.—(*Aix*.)

[49] For an account of the curious ceremonies and processions instituted by this monarch, see Miss Plumptre, under the heads of "Leis Razcassetos," "Lou Juec des Diables," &c. I cannot say but that the enumeration reminds me of the merry court of Old King Cole, with his fiddlers three, his tailors three, and the long list of et ceteras detailed in the well-known song.

[50] Vide Cooke's Views.

[51] See Second Part of Henry VI. Act 4.

[52] Vide Cooke's Views.

[53] See Colman.

[54] Vide Cooke's Views.

[55] Vide Cooke's Views.

[56] There is, I believe, no inn at Saorgio.

[57] Vide Cooke's Views.

[58] 'Mr. Wright, late Consul General for the Seven Islands, is author of a very beautiful Poem just published: it is entitled Horæ Ionicæ, and is descriptive of the Isles and the adjacent Coast of Greece.'—*Lord Byron's English Bards*.

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