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FAIR ITALY. THE RIVIERA AND MONTE CARLO

FAIR ITALY. THE RIVIERA AND MONTE CARLO

COMPRISING A TOUR THROUGH

NORTH AND SOUTH ITALY AND SICILY
WITH A SHORT ACCOUNT OF MALTA

BY

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AUTHOR OF
"A CRUISE IN THE 'GORGON' IN THE SUPPRESSION OF THE SLAVE TRADE"

LONDON
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH & CO., 1, PATERNOSTER SQUARE
1884

TO

MY DEAR WIFE

THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED,
IN REMEMBRANCE OF OUR HAPPY TOUR
IN
FAIR ITALY.

PREFACE.

Fair Italy, the land of song and cradle of the Arts, has been so often written about, and so well described both in prose and in verse, that I feel there is a presumption in my attempting to say anything fresh of that classic land, its art treasures, and its glorious past. But within the last few years a new Italy has sprung into existence—the dream of Cavour has been realized; and, contrary to all predictions, she has evinced a union and cohesiveness so complete as to surprise all, and possibly disappoint some who were jealous of her.

What was once a conglomeration of petty rival states is now one constitutionally governed kingdom. Italy has ceased to be only a geographical name; she is now a nation whose voice is listened to at the council tables of the Great Powers.

The old terms of Piedmontese, Tuscan, Lombard, and Neapolitan, have no longer aught but a local significance; from the Alps to Tarentum every one glories in the name of free united Italy, and feels proud of being an Italian.

Young Italy is so rapidly developing the resources of her gifted people and of her fruitful lands, [viii] that she daily becomes more interesting to all who sympathize with a free and vigorous country; more especially to the English, who have many interests in common with her, and few, if any, reasons to fear either antagonism or competition.

And the beautiful Riviera—

> Where God's pure air, sweet flowers, blue sea and skies,
> Combine to make an earthly Paradise.

Yes! the Riviera is certainly one of the loveliest spots on this fair earth, and is visited by streams of human beings, lovers of nature and students of art; but is more especially dear to the thousands of sickly invalids, who—

> Journeying there from lands of wintry clime,
> Find life and health 'midst scenery sublime.

But, to be truly candid, I must confess that, while humbly trusting I have succeeded in making this little book both interesting and instructive, one of the chief reasons for my putting pen to paper has been to make an effort, however feeble, to expose the deadly evils of the plague-spot of this paradise, Monte Carlo.

From this centre there circulates a gambling fever not only throughout the Riviera—from Cannes to Genoa—but everywhere its victims may carry it. After being stamped out from all the German watering-places, the demon "Play" has fixed his abode in this fair spot, in the very [ix] pathway of invalids and others, and, under the ægis of a corrupt prince and his subjects who share the proceeds of the gaming-tables, this valued health resort, which was surely designed by a beneficent Creator for the happiness of His creatures, is turned into a pandemonium.

> "Base men to use it to so base effect."

Few can be wholly unaware of the sad effects resulting from this gambling mania, whereby the happiness of many homes is wrecked, and thousands of our fellow-creatures are brought to ruin and a shameful end.

During the past season the public papers have teemed with instances of Monte Carlo suicides, [A] the lifeless bodies of its victims frequently being found at early dawn in the charming gardens surrounding the Casino. The gen d'arme patrol is so accustomed to the occurrence, it is said, as to view the object with perfect *sang froid*, but, let us rather hope, with pitying eye.

It may possibly be said, Why all this virtuous indignation about Monte Carlo, when gambling, to a frightful extent, is carried on at our clubs and stock exchanges in England? I can only answer, two wrongs can never make one right; besides, Monte Carlo cannot be allowed to exist as an independent principality when conducted so dishonestly and detrimentally to the highest interests of humanity.

I am thankful to feel that the matter has now been brought before the Parliaments of England [x] and Italy, and even France, and has been the subject of diplomatic remonstrance. This is hopeful, but I have the greater hope in the power of public opinion and sympathy against this monstrous evil; and also in the belief that one of the highest developments of this nineteenth century is the recognition of the truth that "I am my brother's keeper."

LONDON,
March, 1884.

FOOTNOTES

[A] See Appendix.

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[1]

FAIR ITALY. THE RIVIERA AND MONTE CARLO.

CHAPTER I.

ToC

Introduction—Charing Cross—Dover—Submarine Channel Tunnel—Calais—Advantages of travelling second class—Superfluous examination of luggage—Paris—Dining *à la carte* versus *table d'hôte*—Noël—An Officer's Funeral—Lyons—Scenery of the Rhone—Constant change in the landscape—Want of proper accommodation at the railway stations—Defective lighting of railway carriages.

If any person is desirous of putting forward a good excuse for spending a few weeks on the continent, the climate of the British Isles at any time of the year, but more particularly between November and May, will always justify his so doing. To exchange the damp and fog that too frequently form the staple of the weather about the festive time of Christmas and the opening of the new year, for the bright clear skies and sunny days of the south of France and Italy, is so pleasant, and travelling is now so easy and so cheap, the only wonder is that more people do not take advantage of it to leave "the winter of their discontent" for a short time at this season.

[2]

In our case—that is, of myself and my wife—having not only this disposition for a trip of a month or so, but also the leisure time at our disposal, the only question was, in what particular direction was our Hegira to be?

Our object being purely that of pleasantly spending our time and seeing as many interesting places and objects as we possibly could, it really mattered little whither we steered our course, provided it was to climes where fogs are known to the natives only by hearsay, where Nature assumes a brighter aspect, and Art collects her treasures to reward the traveller for his pains.

We took down that most instructive though mysterious of all books, "Bradshaw," and spreading out the map showing various continental lines of railway, proceeded to study the network puzzle with a view of determining which should be the land of our pilgrimage.

Should we cross the Pyrenees and traverse Spain, visiting Madrid and the Escurial *en route* to Seville, and thence through Andalusia and Granada, and home by Valencia, Malaga, and Barcelona? Visions of Don Quixote, Gil Blas, the Great Cid, and the Holy (?) Inquisition passed before our mental eye in wondrous confusion.

"No, I don't think Spain will do," remarked my wife, slowly. "I fear Spanish hotels—*posadas*, don't they call them?—are not very comfortable."

"You are right," was my reply. "I have never heard Spain praised for her hotel accommodation; [3] and as we are going for pleasure, and wish to be as comfortable as possible, we will leave Spain till *posadas* are things of the past. But what do you say to Italy? Beautiful climate, charming scenery, the choicest Art treasures in the world, every mile teeming with historic and poetic interest, good hotels, and generally comfortable travelling!"

"Yes, Italy will do," decided my wife; and we folded up the map and proceeded at once to examine the time-tables, lists of fares, calculate the costs of first and second class, and plan our route. The book of mystification was then almost ungratefully closed, and the serious business of packing commenced.

On the 20th of December, 1882, my wife and I,

"Fired with ideas of fair Italy,"

started on our travels in good spirits. Having secured our tickets, we put up at the Charing Cross Hotel for the night, so as to be ready to start the first thing in the morning.

Whatever vague feelings of regret we might secretly have nourished in leaving dear old England and our time-honoured, old-fashioned Christmas, were quickly dispelled the next morning, for as we sped away by the 7.40 train for Dover the weather assumed its most dismal aspect—cold, raw, damp, and foggy. So we started with easy consciences, resolved to obtain all possible benefit and enjoyment from the change.

Before reaching Dover, a little sunshine struggled forth to gladden us; but it was blowing [4] rather hard when we arrived at our destination, and there was something of a sea to frighten the timorous. Being pretty fair sailors, however, and by the exercise of a little thoughtful physical preparation, we did not suffer from the voyage, and were able to render some assistance to others less fortunate.

After being at sea even for a few hours, there is much in the sound of "land ahead" to raise one's spirits, perhaps more especially when crossing the Channel. There is no one who does not hail with delight the first sight of the shore. It gladdens the hearts of the sickly ones, and soon their childlike helplessness disappears; hope and life return, sending the warm blood once more to the pallid cheek, and lighting the languid eye with fresh joy and anticipation. It is pleasant to see how quickly the sufferers shake off the evil spirit of the sea—the terrible *mal de mer*, pull themselves together, and step on shore, beaming with heroic smiles.

It is just at this time that the submarine Channel Tunnel scheme possesses peculiar interest for the thoughtful. All lovers of Old England feel proudly and justly that this little "silver streak," with its stormy waves and rock-bound shores, is, under the blessing of Providence, her natural and national strength and glory. It has made her sons daring and hardy, industrious, prosperous, and happy. It has enabled her to people more than half the world with the Anglo-Saxon race, and has [5] extended her empire and influence beyond the setting sun. It has made her the arbiter of the world, her sword—nay, her very word, turning the scale against any power of wrong and might. It has protected the world against the lust and avarice of Spain, and the conquering tyranny of a Napoleon. It has made her the Bank and commercial depôt of the whole globe, and the first of civilized and civilizing powers.

It is true that the more closely nations are connected by mutual interests, the more prosperous they become and the more friendly they are. And doubtless such a means of communication between Great Britain and the continent would materially increase that mutual interest—might even make sulky France more friendly towards us, and probably prove of benefit both commercially and socially; but only so long as the insular power of England is maintained. Although our army and navy are hardly as strong as they should be, we want no conscription here. What we do want is to preserve the peace and honour of our homes, our children in the colonies, and to increase rather than decrease the power of England for the good of the whole world.

Therefore, if a tunnel or tunnels be made, we must be sure beforehand that they can be perfectly protected against the means of surprise and invasion, that in no manner of way can they be made a weak point in our harness. As for destroying the tunnel, there would in all probability be a train or two in it when a surprise was intended, and what commander would blow up or [6] destroy it under such circumstances? I fear the tunnel would prove a grand place for ruffians; and what hideous depredations and murderous attacks might not be committed in transit! Five minutes is in all conscience long enough to be under the depressing influence of a Hadean tunnel, but it would be an evil spirit who could tolerate it for the best part of an hour.

Arrived at Calais, the train was already waiting to carry us onward, but there was ample time for breakfast.

Calais station always seems to be undergoing a certain kind of metamorphosis; and with its sand-hills and generally unfinished condition, reminds the traveller of some remote part of the world, such as Panama, for instance. Some day it may possibly be able to digest the passenger traffic from England to the continent, but at present much time is lost there from its being so gorged. It is absolutely refreshing to catch a glimpse of the Calais fish women, with their gay costume, wonderfully frilled, spotless white caps, and healthy faces.

Soon we are spinning along towards Paris, the weather pretty fine so far, but the country sadly flooded; and, the lowlands being under water, the gaunt and leafless poplar trees are the most conspicuous objects of the landscape. Then for miles we travel along through a gloomy drizzling

rain, the land looking most forlornly desolate. The arrival at Amiens, however, cheers us a little, and here we get a stretch and some refreshment. After leaving this place, always interesting for its beautiful Cathedral, the weather brightens up, and we reach Paris in good time for dinner. [7]

Thus far we have found travelling second class very agreeable, for when the trains are fast there are advantages in so doing—more room and less expense than by first class.

At Paris the examination of luggage is a perfect nuisance. An Englishman, and still more an English *woman*, very reluctantly hands over her keys to a French gen d'arme, who, be your presence never so imposing, ruthlessly capsizes your careful and thoughtful stowage, whilst you angrily or impatiently watch your travelling sanctum pried into by dirty-handed, over-zealous officials. The one examination at Calais, when there was plenty of time, should surely have sufficed; but at the end of a journey, when one is tired and anxious to get to one's hotel and dinner, it is aggravating beyond measure.

On this occasion the ladies' baggage was particularly selected for inspection, much to the annoyance of my wife, who most unwillingly gave up her keys, and declared her opinion that "it was because gentlemen put their cigars into the ladies' trunks." Of course this fully explained it!

There is some difficulty in claiming one's possessions after their examination, as there are legions of voracious hotel touters ready to pounce upon not only "somebody's," but everybody's luggage, and the owners too, if possible, and carry all off to the omnibuses attached to their several hotels. [8]

However, we at last arrive at the St. James Hotel, in the Rue St. Honorè, where, as usual, there is quite an army of waiters to welcome the "coming guest." To an inexperienced traveller, and indeed to my pleased wife, this is gratefully accepted as a *warm welcome*, but those who have had some little experience know better, or rather worse. Fortunately, we secure a room on the third floor, and therefore so far carry out our resolutions of economy! and now, in preference to the sumptuous *table d'hôte*, we decide to dine *à la carte*, which means a little table to yourself, where you may select what you wish to eat, have it at any hour you please, and pay for just what you order. This is not only less expensive, but far more quiet and comfortable after the fatigue of a journey, than the crowded and imposing *table d'hôte*, with its never-ceasing clatter and chatter, where you will be lucky if you find a dish that will prove agreeable to your palate. Sometimes, however, the change is enjoyable, as you cannot fail to be amused at the eccentricities of your neighbours; perhaps finding your own weaknesses reflected in them. Often you will find a dozen nationalities represented, and a perfect Babel-like talk, each little exclusive party, like crows, intent only upon covering its own nest.

Paris is beautifully brilliant at the festive seasons, the shops filled with lovely and costly presents, arranged with that exquisite taste so natural to the French artiste. I think they have some very pretty sentiments about their "Noël." For instance, at early morn on Christmas Day, whilst still in the land of dreams, a light tap comes at your chamber door, and on rising you find it is a messenger bearing a bouquet of choice and lovely flowers, with some dear friend's greeting. [9]

Unfortunately the weather continued wet and cold; still, under cover of the colonnades and on the fine boulevards there is always so light-hearted and gay a throng, and so much to interest one, that it is impossible to feel dull. Things here, however, quickly change from gay to grave. A general officer's funeral passed through the boulevards where we were standing, followed by a procession in which nearly every branch of the army was represented. The open hearse, with coffin, was covered with beautiful wreaths of flowers, among which lay the deceased officer's sword, honours, etc. The touching expression of regret in the faces of his comrades, and the respectful reverence evinced by the people, making it altogether a very impressive sight.

The weather being still so wet, we decided not to remain after the second day, and on the following morning left Paris by the 9.40 train for Marseilles. The long journey, occupying some fourteen or fifteen hours, is exceedingly tedious, and should be broken at Lyons, especially in the summer-time.

Lyons is one of the largest and most important cities in France, very interesting in its manufactures, and well worth a day or two's visit. Unfortunately, like its sister Marseilles, with its huge working population, it is extremely democratic, and only quite lately has been the scene of a kind of communistic outbreak. The neighbouring scenery is very striking and beautiful, in some places grand. We were reminded somewhat of the Thames at Charing Cross when passing over the noble bridge, with the great city stretching far and wide, and the numerous bridges spanning the river. At night the illumination is a pretty and brilliant sight. [10]

In the summer the journey from Lyons to Marseilles in one of the many flat-bottomed steamers would be very enjoyable, and a pleasant break to the pent-up, wearisome railroad.

The scenery much resembles the Rhine, with its high cliffs, richly wooded promontories, historic and baronial castles, and picturesque chateaux. The turbulent river in some places dashing wildly by, and separating two beautiful shores.

"Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear, as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted.
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage."

How grand and sublime that part of the Rhone must appear, with its great forest-clad cliffs, and the rushing foaming waters during a thunderstorm!

The land is full of ancient interests, especially near Marseilles, at Avignon and Arles. Here we [11] meet with many old Roman settlements and ruins.

Passing thus swiftly through France, we obtain a wonderfully comprehensive idea of the country, and note the different products of the soil springing into view in ever-varying profusion, making a continuous change in the appearance of the landscape—a change which would perhaps be less noticeable were the journey performed in a more leisurely manner. Thus we pass from the wheat-growing country to the land of the vine, and thence to that of the olive. And one cannot help being struck by the wonderful industry of the people, women taking almost more than their fair share of out-door work, in the fields, etc. Up to the very summit of the hills and rocky knolls, terrace upon terrace, every inch of ground, seems to be well cultivated.

I could not but think that in some places women are employed out of their proper sphere, more particularly at the railway stations, where one is shocked to find a woman where none but a man should be. And while on this subject, it may be well to remark how exceedingly disgusting some of the retiring places are at these stations—at all events, to English men and women, who do not like being treated as cattle. At some places it is really shocking, and the Lyons and Mediterranean railway officials should certainly rectify this evil without loss of time; for if the [12] unpleasantness is so great in winter, what must it be during the hot months?

The officials are most exemplary in providing fresh foot-warmers, but not so particular in a more important matter—that of lighting the carriages, even the first-class compartments being dull and gloomy in the extreme. The kind of oil burnt has probably something to do with it.

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[13]

CHAPTER II.

ToC

Arrival at Marseilles—Change in climate—The mistral—Some account of Marseilles in the past—Marseillaise hymn—Docks and harbour—Hill-side scenery—Chateau d'If—La Dame de la Garde—Military practice—St. Nazaire—An ancient church—The Exchange—Courtiers of merchandize—Sunday at home and abroad.

Having left Paris at 9.40 a.m., we reached Marseilles at nearly midnight, feeling very tired, and were glad to get to the Terminus Hotel, which is comfortably close to the station. What a charming station it is, with its courtyard and garden, orange trees and flowering myrtles!

Here is indeed a change of climate; one begins to realize at last the fact of being in the "sunny south." Although it is mid-winter, and but a few hours before we were shivering in Paris, here the heat of the sun is as great as an English June. Overhead a sky of such a blue as we seldom see in our island home, and which is only matched by the azure waters of the glorious Mediterranean. The vegetation is almost semi-tropical; palm trees waving their graceful feathery heads; cacti, aloes, and other strange-looking plants meeting the eye at every turn. Orange and olive trees [14] abundant everywhere, the former loading the air with the luscious fragrance of its blossoms.

But unfortunately, on the Sunday morning following our arrival, there was a disagreeable dry parching wind blowing from the north-west called *mistral*; the Italians call it *maestro*, meaning "the masterful." It is very prevalent along the south coast of Europe at certain times of the year, drying up the soil, and doing much damage to the fruit trees. The dust, like sand in the desert, is almost blinding; on one side you have a cold cutting wind, on the other perhaps scorching heat—altogether very far from pleasant. This wind sometimes raises a tumult in the Mediterranean Sea, which is much dreaded by the French and Italian sailors.

Marseilles, the third city of *la belle France*, enclosed by a succession of rocky hills, and magnificently situated on the sea, is almost the greatest port of the Mediterranean. It is a very ancient town, having been founded in 600 B.C. by the Phoceans, under the name of Massilia. When ultimately conquered by the Romans, it was for its refinement and culture treated with considerable respect, and allowed to retain its original aristocratic constitution. After the fall of Rome, it fell into the hands of the Franks and other wild northern tribes; and was subsequently destroyed by the Saracens, but was restored in the tenth century. In 1481 it was united to France, to which it has ever since been subject. In 1720 it was ravaged by the plague, which was [15] memorable not only on account of its wide-wasting devastation, but also for the heroism of Xavier de Belzunce, Bishop of Marseilles, whose zeal and charity for the poor sufferers commands our respect and admiration. Pope, in his "Essay on Man," says—

"Why drew Marseilles' good bishop purer breath,
When Nature sicken'd, and each gale was death?"

In 1792, hordes of galley-slaves were sent hence to Paris. It was about this time that the celebrated revolutionary song, "*Allons enfans de la Patrie*," with its thrilling and fiery chorus, "*Aux armes! Aux armes!*" was introduced, and it has ever since been known as the Marseillaise Hymn; but it was in reality written by an officer of engineers, Rouget de Lisle, to celebrate the departure of a band of volunteers from Strasburg. Both verse and music were composed in one night.

Marseilles is often called the Liverpool of France, but its importance has been somewhat lessened since the opening of the Mont Cenis tunnel. The great docks, wonderfully constructed and sheltered, were much improved and enlarged by Napoleon III.: some of the finest basins are cut out of the solid rock. The harbour is very extensive, and capable of containing over 1700 vessels; but the entrance is very narrow.

Here we stand and view the crowds of shipping, from the magnificent Orient liner, to the saucy, piratical-looking, Sicilian fruit felucca; the latter closely packed, with their sterns to the wharves, [16] their enormous sails and masts telling of many a speedy voyage made, and their swarthy red-capped crews having much the appearance of what we suppose pirates might be, if piracy were now a paying instead of a dangerous game. As it is, their mission is to carry cargoes of oranges and other fruit to the Marseilles market.

We next ascend the Cordière Gardens, commanding beautiful views of the city as we wind round and upwards. The sea, running eastward into the heart of the town, forms the harbour; the older part of the town, with somewhat narrow streets and massive but irregular houses, occupies a triangular point to the north; while the new town—much the largest, consists of wide, handsome streets and many fine public buildings and institutions. It is, I think, an excellent plan, when visiting a place, to ascend some commanding height as soon as possible. You will comprehend much at a glance, and, with the typographical knowledge thus attained can afterwards find your way about much more easily and quickly. The fine harbour and docks, with the shimmering blue sea below, and the grand amphitheatre of sun-bleached hills rearing their rocky summits to the skies as a noble background, form a truly magnificent and impressive bird's-eye view.

On gaining the summit of these windy heights, we stand charmed with the pure beauty of the blue sky and sea. Away some few miles to the southeast are several small islands of a deeper blue [17] than the waters that surround them. On one of these islands is the celebrated Chateau d'If, immortalized by Alexandre Dumas the elder, in his extraordinary romance of "Monte Christo."

After gazing for some time at the lovely view, we turn our attention to the very interesting church of Notre Dame de la Garde. On the highest pinnacle is a colossal gilt figure of the Virgin Mary, looking over the seas, and, as it were, guarding her poor sailor devotees engaged thereon.

This ancient beacon-like church has, I believe, been a votive shrine for sailors for some centuries; and was rebuilt from designs by Espèrandieu. It is prettily decorated inside by delicately stained windows, and has a small but fine organ. It is full of pathetic relics of poor lost mariners, and when the wind is howling on stormy nights, one can realize and understand the sentiments which prompted the building of this votive temple, and the numerous mementoes, literally covering its walls, placed there by loving hands in remembrance of dear ones lost—wrecked perchance in sight of home. Yes, the walls are covered with these tablets and touching mementoes, and with pictures illustrating the many terrible shipwrecks which have occurred.

Below is a crypt where the last offerings and prayers are made by sailors departing on a voyage; and, alas! it is filled with the saddest relics of those who have never returned. Those, [18] however, who reach their homes in safety, make it a religious duty to offer up their grateful thanks.

The purposes of this sea-rock church struck me as a fine and beautiful expression of affection. I fear we lack much of this kind of sentiment in England—daily blessings are taken too much as a matter of course, while reverses are loudly mourned over as afflictions.

Whilst lingering in sympathetic thought, I saw an aged, white-haired woman, who, poor soul! having toiled all the way up these great heights, was now on her knees in sorrowful prayer. I saw also several younger women and maidens in deep mourning, some of them sobbing bitterly over their prayers. Alas! who could rightly enter into the depths of their individual sorrow?—perchance a tender husband, a loving son, or devoted sweetheart, lost in the angry waves below!

On descending, my attention was attracted by a sham military attack made by a regiment or two of French soldiers. It was interesting to see how they attempted to carry these well-defended, Gibraltar-like heights.

After passing through the public gardens, and crossing the dock basin in a small ferry-boat, we walked to the church of St. Nazaire, which stands on high ground almost immediately opposite to Notre Dame de la Garde.

It is a finely restored Byzantine church, a copy on a large scale of the little mosque-like temple [19] at its side, which latter was once the Cathedral church of the town. It is built of alternate blocks of black and white marble, and the interior is something after the style of Notre Dame at Paris. Fortunately, we caught the workmen just leaving the building, and so obtained permission to view it.

But the little Moorish temple under its lee, as a sailor would say, interested me far more than its imposing and grand-looking child alongside. It has a low dome, square façade with small cupolas, and circular chancel. We ascended some steps to its low doorway, almost stooping as we

entered. It was dimly lit by a few oil-lamps; its quaint arched dome, little galleries, altar, crypts, and organ all within the compact compass of a circle, or rather, as it seemed to me, of a Maltese cross—tiny aisles forming the sides of the cross, where there were shrines and tombs, though scarcely distinguishable in the gloom. The dome and aisles are supported by wonderfully strong Byzantine arches and arcades. It struck me that the Maltese cross may have been the shape of the most ancient Christian temples, the more orthodox Latin cross shape being afterwards developed by the lengthening of the nave. The date of this unique little church is said to be very ancient, and probably stands on the site of the temples of Diana.

Perhaps the place was made even more interesting to me, by the fact of my thoughts being brought back from the dark ages by observing a christening going on in one of the dimly lighted [20] aisles; after which a number of little Sunday school children went through an examination of the catechism.

In the early part of the evening we sallied forth to visit the Exchange and Bourse at the end of the principal street near the harbour, receiving yet another impression as to the commercial greatness of Marseilles by a careful survey of this building, which is well worthy of a great city. I can now better understand why these large towns are so republican, and show so strong a dislike to imperialism. They complain that while they *make* the money, the imperialists *squander* it.

We were much amused to see nearly all the merchants on 'Change, wearing white neckties and generally black coats—a very respectable and ancient custom, which has come down from the time when Marseilles was in the zenith of her prosperity. I believe even now these merchants are called "courtiers of merchandize."

The main streets and boulevards are very handsome, with elegant fountains which relieve the somewhat monotonous regularity. Some of the squares are of immense size. There is a very large lazaretto, which is said to be one of the best managed in the world. The *cafés* are like small palaces, and the shops rival the finest in Paris.

Here, as in most French cities, no expense is spared in making the streets gay and brilliant at [21] night. In some of them the electric light is used.

The French people dearly love their *cafés*, spending many of their evening hours there instead of *chez eux*. I am not quite sure whether the Frenchman may honestly be termed a domestic animal; I should rather say he was intensely gregarious. At all events, I do not think he understands the full value of *home* as we do.

It was Sunday when we were there, and the town teemed with holiday life. Up to noon it was comparatively quiet, with some appearance of sabbath rest, but after that what a change! The whole place was like a great fair, every one bent on fun and pleasure: hucksters' stalls, marionettes, bazaars, rifle-galleries, concerts, theatres, and crowded *cafés*, the latter resounding with the click of dominoes and billiard balls; the more quiet folk reading their beloved *Figaro*.

We felt this was indeed very different to our English way of enjoying Sunday. Even our museums, picture galleries, and such-like comparatively quiet and innocent places of recreative amusement are not yet declared open. And thankful we should be that on at least one day in the week there is peace and rest for both man and beast; and that simply in obedience to a natural and Divine law, made by the great Creator who so well knew our human wants and requirements. The more one sees of this sabbath *unrest* abroad, the more content one feels for the sweet and [22] peaceful Sunday rest at home. I do not really believe in the happiness, health, and prosperity of any people who disregard the sabbath as a holy day, dedicated to God for bodily rest and spiritual refreshment.

"Then I turned away in sadness, from these gay and
thoughtless lays,
Longing for my own dear country, and the voice of prayer
and praise."

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[23]

CHAPTER III.

ToC

Leaving Marseilles—Toulon—Hyères—Fréjus—Coast scenery—The Hotel Windsor—An unexpected meeting, and a pleasant walk—Isles de Lerins—The Mediterranean—Defective drainage—Mosquitos and Nocturnal Pianos—Christmas Day—Cannes—The Pepper tree—The English cemetery—Antibes—Miscalled Health Resorts—Grasse—

Orange blossoms—Leaving Cannes.

The *mistral* blew us away from Marseilles, which we left on the afternoon of the 25th by the two o'clock train for Cannes. The route lay through rocky defiles, with numerous tunnels, for we were cutting through the promontories on the sea coast, of which we occasionally caught magnificent glimpses.

Of Toulon, the great naval arsenal of France, we saw but little as we passed quickly through its suburbs. Here it was that Napoleon, then a young lieutenant-colonel of artillery, first made his mark in the capture of the place by storm from the English in 1793. Englishmen, however, do not forget that it was accomplished only after a long and stubborn defence of its garrison, consisting of only a tenth of the storming party.

The little islands off Hyères look like gems in the clear dark sea. They were known in ancient times as the Stoechades, signifying "the arranged" islands, a name indicative of their position in a line from east to west. The town of Hyères seems tempting enough as a place of quiet residence, but the air is very unhealthy from the marshes in the vicinity. [24]

So far our journey has been pretty close to the sea, but now we quitted the coast for a time, winding through the Montagnes des Maures, with an endless succession of tunnels, yet still obtaining frequent peeps at the coast scenery.

At Fréjus we were greatly pleased at the beautiful ruins of the ancient Roman amphitheatre, quite close to the station: the railway being on a viaduct here enabled us to get a good view, looking downwards. This amphitheatre, though not nearly so large as the coliseum at Rome, is far more perfect. This was the port where, in 1799, Napoleon landed on his return from Egypt; and from whence, fifteen years later, he embarked when banished to Elba. Fréjus was the ancient *Forum Julii* established by Augustus Cæsar as a naval station.

At Les Arcs we again approached the coast. The country as we drew nearer Cannes is very interesting and romantic—great rocky glens and chasms, with here and there glimpses of the beautiful Mediterranean. It was about here that we first caught sight of the snow-crested Alps, forming a grand and sublime background to the lovely scenery.

Many of the little towns *en route* are finely and picturesquely situated on the hill-side, overlooking great ravines. Their churches perched on the highest pinnacle, the wonder being how their congregations get to them! But probably many of them are only convents. [25]

What very different lives people lead on this fair earth! What a contrast between the inhabitants of a great city, with its wearing cares and its exciting pleasures, and the dweller in these isolated, peaceful, silent mountain homes! To some the latter life would be intolerable while strength and human passion last; but these poor yet happy people, being nearer to Nature, are often nearer also to Nature's God.

We now pass through groves of olive trees, whose sombre and silver tinted foliage, and wonderfully gnarled and twisted trunks, give quite a foreign tone to the landscape. Also the orange trees, with their green and golden fruit and enchantingly fragrant white blossoms; and the lordly palm, with its graceful outline clearly defined against the blue sky.

It has frequently been a question with me which tree is the most useful to man, especially in the east—the olive, bamboo, palm, or cocoa-nut. The first carries my mind back to pleasant memories of the Holy Land and Mount Olivet, where a single tree is said to bear fruit for more than a thousand years. We know the fine and wholesome oil it yields. Its fruit is used as food, and its beautifully grained wood is highly valued for cabinet purposes. Then the bamboo, which, growing by the water-side, is so refreshing to hear whispering in the breeze, is used for very many purposes, being at once so light and strong; for carrying great burdens, for aqueducts, house-building, musical instruments, and for numerous other purposes and articles useful and ornamental; while the graceful palm, or cocoa-nut, provides food, drink, clothing, and building material. Each doubtless in its region and sphere is equally prized. But the more we examine and understand the bountiful gifts of God for our use and happiness, harmonizing so well with our needs, the greater wonder we feel that there is such an ungrateful animal as an *Atheist*. [26]

At some of the little railway stations we passed, the Gloire de Dijon and other lovely roses were clustering the walls, and growing almost wild in the hedges, loading the air with their sweet perfume. The days were gradually lengthening, and we felt as if fast approaching a warmer latitude, where—

"The green hills
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer birds sing welcome as ye pass;
Flowers, fresh in hue, and many in their class,
Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;
The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems colour'd by its skies."

We reached Cannes in the last glow of the setting sun, the crimson, purple, green and orange contrasting, harmonizing, blending, and slowly settling into the neutral tints of evening. By six

o'clock we were at the Hotel Windsor, and fortunately secured a bedroom on the fourth floor, from the windows of which we had a splendid view of the sea. [27]

The "Windsor" is beautifully situated on the hillside, some ten minutes' walk from the shore. It is surrounded by very pretty and tasteful gardens, well stocked with flowers of all kinds, roses being most conspicuous, while the perfume of the orange trees ascends from the valley below. I should think this hotel was much more healthy than those situate lower down and close to the sea, catching the upper drainage.

The interior is well appointed in every way, with a comfortable, homely air about it. The landlord, a man of some refinement, is not above personally looking after the welfare of his visitors. But he is evidently a little too indulgent, for he allows pianofortes in the bedrooms, and the young ladies in the room next to ours strummed away till a very late hour at night, when we wished to sleep, tired with the day's travel, and anxious to rise early the next morning. We thought two good pianos in the drawing-room below quite sufficient for the musical exercise of young ladies, and for the comfort of all at an hotel. We supposed, however, that its being Christmas-time was probably the cause of the nocturnal music, of which we were the somewhat reluctant and suffering listeners.

After engaging our room, we sauntered out on a voyage of discovery and as an appetizer for dinner, and were so fortunate as to meet an old friend, who was staying at the same hotel. Under his kind pilotage we had a very pleasant walk on the sea-shore, listening to the waves dashing and tumbling against the sea-wall. [28]

At Cannes there is neither harbour nor roadstead, but only a small bay or cove, appropriately called Gulfe de la Napoul; and it is indeed worthy of its name, being a miniature Bay of Naples,—but without its Vesuvius. It is, however, so shallow that the coasting vessels that use it are obliged to anchor at some distance from the shore, exposed to the full action of the swell. Yet in spite of this disadvantage, Cannes is for its size a busy and populous little town.

Immediately opposite are the Isles de Lerins, St. Honorat and St. Marguerite. On the latter is Fort Montuy, where the "man with the iron mask" was confined from 1686 to 1698, and which has more recently been the prison of Marshal Bazaine. St. Honorat has its name from a monastery founded in the fifth century by St. Honoratius, Bishop of Arles. These islands abound in rabbits and partridges.

Until modern scientists discovered it to be otherwise, the Mediterranean was supposed to have no tide, and was called by poets "the tideless sea." It has but a very slight ebb and flow, and this in most places is scarcely perceptible. The greatest rise and fall of tide in any part of this great inland sea does not exceed about six feet. Here it appears always high water; the long stretches of sand, shingle, and rock that provide such delightful strolls to those visiting the shores of our own dear island home at low tide, are nowhere to be found in this part of the world, and thus on coming to the Mediterranean we lose one of the usual charms of a visit to the sea coast. [29]

We found it necessary to walk briskly, as the fall in temperature is very great in one short hour after sunset. Indeed, those who come here essentially for health generally contrive to get housed about four p.m.

Our olfactory nerves had already told us that in this lovely little seaside paradise there are such prosaic things as defective drains. This is more detectable in the evening on the beach, than elsewhere, in the daytime; but is being rectified as the town grows.

It was Christmas Day, and on returning to the Hotel Windsor we found the large dining-room tastefully decorated with evergreens and flowers, and, by the kind and thoughtful attention of the landlord, we felt the absence from dear home at this joyous time less than we might otherwise have done. We had our *tête-à-tête* dinner, and toasted our friends in Old England, who probably included us in their "absent friends and dear ones abroad."

My wife admired the handsome net mosquito curtains around our bed, but I rather shuddered at the memories they awakened, having had some experience of tropical climates—the river Zambezi, for instance, where a single tiny insect of the Zebra species nearly drove me out of my senses when suffering from fever. Probably, however, the mosquito only visits Cannes in the summer, though my wife declared she heard a buzz, and experienced a bite. It was certainly consolatory to think that I was no longer considered tempting enough, by these insatiable torments. [30]

The next morning we realized something of the beauty of Cannes. It was so pleasant to dress by the open French windows, and enjoy the freshness of the morning air, the warmth of the sun, and the delicious perfume of the roses and orange blossoms rising from the gardens beneath. The birds flitting about, with joyous song; the lovely blue sea in the distance; and above, the cloudless sky. We felt in no hurry for breakfast, and in imagination pictured to ourselves dear foggy London, cold and wet as we had left it. This was indeed a grateful contrast!

When we did descend, however, our tea and toast were thoroughly enjoyed, thanks to the appetizing air; and it was a pleasure to see our fellow-guests sunning themselves in the gardens, and making plans for the day's excursion and pleasure.

Cannes is essentially the beautiful and peaceful abode of the invalid, whose desire is health. A few years since, it was a very small place indeed, but can now boast of its sixty large hotels; and new roads and boulevards are being opened in all directions. The Count de Chambord,[B] and other lucky owners of property here, must feel highly gratified at the rise in the value of land. [31]

Cannes stretches along the sea-shore from north to south, and is protected from the *mistral*

and other cold winds by the fine Esterel mountain range. There is one long main street running parallel to the beach, which contains many good shops and *cafés*. Some of the houses are built in a line facing the sea, and divided from it by gardens and promenades; others are clustered on the slope of the hill, which is surmounted by a picturesque old castle. At the north end, high up at the back of Cannes, is the charming little village of Le Cainet: a new boulevard is now opened connecting the two. This is the warmest part, and the most suitable for patients. There are many exceedingly pretty and luxuriously appointed villas nestled amidst the trees and gardens, looking refreshingly cool with their green jalousie verandahs. Handsome carriages roll along, and one is reminded of some of the most fashionable of our own watering-places. The stabling for the horses is beautifully clean and neat; roses, jessamine, and flowers of every kind climbing over and around the walls and trellis-work, affording a pleasant shade from the scorching heat of the *December* sun.

Among other fine trees, such as the blue gum and eucalyptus, the pepper tree, with its graceful acacia-like leaf and pendant clusters of red berries, is to be seen overhanging the roads. After sunset its pepper may distinctly be smelt, almost sufficiently so to make one sneeze. This prolific [32] and beautiful tree seems to be indigenous to Cannes, Nice, and Mentone.

We determined, first of all, to visit the English cemetery. Our kind friend whom we had met the evening before accompanied us as cicerone. We set off in a northerly direction. It was a warm walk up the hill, but we were soon at the gates of the cemetery, and, passing through, were both astonished and gratified at the natural beauty of the position, and the cultivated loveliness, of this truly peaceful resting-place of those of our dear country who had come to this little paradise on earth, alas! to die. But, then, what a beautiful spot to die in! and how very much loving hearts have done to render their last resting-place even more lovely than Nature has made it! The very flowers, roses, honeysuckle, and jessamine, planted by loving hands, seemed to cling fondly and sympathetically to the spotless marble monuments.

Then we crossed over rivulet and ravine, up to the forest-clad hill overlooking the cemetery, and who can describe the truly magnificent and extensive views before us? There lay the lovely valley beneath, the grand semicircle of Esterel hills and the snow-capped Alps outlining the azure sky; and behind us the broad, blue sea, rippling its white-crested wavelets upon the warm, sandy shores, while further away to the left, the little town of Cannes lay peacefully reposing on the mountain slopes towards the sea.

This delightful excursion occupied us until nearly one o'clock, and we had only just time to catch the train leaving for Antibes. Not, however, without first making a successful forage at the [33] station, to provide luncheon, our tall friend cramming *half a yard of bread* into each of his tunic pockets, which caused him to cut rather a comical figure, especially as he wore knickerbockers; and he was consequently a source of great amusement to people we met, who laughed good naturedly enough, setting us down in their own minds, I doubt not, as mad English people, in whom any amount of eccentricity was allowable.

The journey to Antibes, accomplished in a short half-hour, was very interesting, different views and aspects of the snow-clad Maritime Alps giving us from time to time ever-varying features of sublime beauty, and moving our heartfelt admiration.

Antibes, the ancient Antipolis, a colony of the Massilians, was once a Roman arsenal; there still remain two towers to mark this period. The present fortifications were erected about the time of the first Francis, and of Henry of Navarre, and afterwards greatly improved by Vauban under Louis le Grand. Their erection had the salutary effect of draining the marshy ground, and rendering the air healthy; but the sanitary arrangements both here and elsewhere are still very defective. Before Nice was annexed by France, this was her frontier line, which accounts for its being still so strongly fortified. The remains of a theatre and other ancient buildings attest to its former importance.

On reaching our destination, we strolled along the road leading to the ramparts, and from these [34] heights enjoyed a most glorious sea view. The snowy Alps rising majestically on the opposite shore, and a fine old Genoese fort, with wedge-shaped bastions, boldly standing at the end of a peninsula, stretching out into the sea and agreeably breaking the distance.

Antibes is almost surrounded by the sea, and, from the beauty of its position and the natural purity of its air, is fast becoming a favoured health resort, in spite of the dirtiness of the town and the inadequacy of hotel accommodation. Nowadays doctors call all kinds of places "health resorts," but they should first of all make sure that the sanitary condition of the place justifies their recommendation. The sublime and lovely views in this neighbourhood cannot fail to make a lasting impression on any lover of fine scenery.

Catching our train back, we arrived at our hotel in time to make up for our meagre lunch and rectify the danger of neglecting the *inner man*, as travellers are sometimes prone to do when so deeply interested in the objects around them. Later, in the cool of the evening, we had a deliciously pleasant walk through the town towards the beautiful gardens of Hesperides, and along the beach.

On the road from Cannes towards Fréjus is the villa of the late Lord Brougham, whose eccentricities were as remarkable as his almost universal talents. At the time of the formation of the second French Republic in 1848, when the cry of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity!" was in [35] every one's mouth, Lord Brougham somewhat astonished the world by enrolling himself as a citizen of the Republic, resting his qualification upon the fact of his being a land-owner —*propriétaire*—at Cannes.

Our excursion on the morrow was to have been to Grasse, but unfortunately we had to go on to Nice early in the day. At Grasse flowers are largely cultivated, especially roses, jessamine, heliotrope, and orange and lemon blossoms, from which are manufactured most of our delicious scents and essences—this being one of the principal places where the culture of the lemon is most successful. Eugene Rimmel, and also Dr. Piesse, of Piesse and Lubin, have large flower farms near Cannes and Nice, from which their perfumes are produced. This to some extent accounts for the neglect of the fruit itself, which frequently lies scattered unheeded on the ground. Whilst returning from the expedition to the cemetery, we had passed whole terraces of orange and lemon trees covered with white blossom, their exquisite fragrance filling the evening air. It was a pure pleasure to me to stretch out my hand and pluck a beautiful spray from an orange tree, and, placing it on my wife's shoulder, remind her of the "day of days"—especially as she had scarcely seen the blossoms *au naturel*, but only their skilful imitation daintily modelled in wax for the adornment of some fair bride.

That day's excursion will ever be remembered, both for our visit to the charming little English cemetery and the trip to Antibes. We were indeed sorry to leave beautiful Cannes, containing so much of the loveliness and grandeur of Nature. [36]

We found the Hotel Windsor very quiet, comfortable, and moderate in charge, and hope some day to renew our agreeable impressions of it.

I think, to comprehend in full the beauty of Cannes and other parts of the coast, they should be seen from the sea from the deck of a yacht or packet some three or four miles off.

On the 27th we left by train for Nice, arriving there towards evening.

FOOTNOTES

[B] Since writing the above, one more hope of unfortunate France, the head of the Legitimist party, faithful to the last of his "divine right," has passed away.

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CHAPTER IV. ToC

Nice—Its persistently Italian character—Its gaming propensities—Hints about luggage—Old and New Towns—Flower-shops—A river laundry—The harbours of Nice and Villafranca—Scenery and climate of Nice—A cowardly outrage—In the Cathedral—Hotel charges—Leaving Nice.

From Cannes to Nice, or Nizza, is but a short run by rail, but on reaching the latter we see at once that we have entered another country—as one of the natives epigrammatically remarked, "The Emperor Napoleon made Nice France, but God made it Italy." In spite of the French flags, French soldiers, and French gens d'armes, it is soon perceptible that we have entered Italy, more especially on going into the old part of the town, out of the way of the large hotels built for the English, who flock here in such numbers.

Nice, the birthplace of Garibaldi, the great liberator of Italy, will some day be Italian again. In 1870-71, the debt of gratitude to France for her assistance in wresting Lombardy and Venice from the Austrians, was of too recent a date to admit of the Italians taking advantage of her weakness to resume possession of the provinces of Nice and Savoy, and they were, besides, intent at the time on seizing upon the city of Rome; but there is no doubt that, sooner or later—in fact, on the very first opportunity that offers, the old boundary between the two countries will be resumed, and both Savoy and Nice will be re-occupied by their natural owners, the Italians. There was a bitter and fateful irony in the fact that no place could be found to barter to a foreign power but the very birthplace of the champion of Italy's liberty; and the best friend of this fair country cannot but acknowledge this act on the part of Victor Emmanuel to have been unjust to her devoted people, and a blot on her ancient honour and glory; but at the same time, France will share in the condemnation of the world, for exacting so great and unnatural a sacrifice. It is equally iniquitous for a sovereign to barter away the birthright of his subjects as for any foreign power to require it, but how much more so when that power is an ally! [38]

If France continues on the same course she has pursued for the last year or two, the opportunity Italy waits for will not be far distant, as evidently her present rulers are bent on estranging her from the rest of Europe, and are doing all they can to provoke another war. If that

day should unhappily come, Italy will naturally look for the sympathy of England, which, with her own magnificent seaboard and England's maritime and naval power in the Mediterranean, would prove the most powerful alliance. But meanwhile Italy has only to be patient, develop her industries, mature her strength, and pursue the upright tenor of her way. [39]

Immediately on arriving at the station, you see what a gay and busy place this is. The society is far more *doubtful* and mixed than at Cannes, where you feel pretty sure of every one. But Nice being so close to Monaco and Monte Carlo, there is a constant stream of—well, I might almost say adventurers, passing through the town, hoping to return with their expenses liberally recouped from the "tables"—of course, in most cases a delusion and a snare. It is said that Nice itself is a little Monte Carlo, and unquestionably there is a great deal of card-playing going on openly in the *cafés*, while the stationers' shop-windows literally teem with books professing to teach the secrets of roulette, how to win at Monte Carlo, and all the other gambling paraphernalia. This being the case, it is small wonder that private gambling is also carried on to a great extent, besides the races, etc., which are fostered and supported by the owners of the gambling saloons at Monte Carlo, and the crowd one meets at the Nice station much resembles such as we unfortunately meet at a London suburban station during a race week. These are the *lovers of sport*, who demoralize and spoil the peace and beauty of a place both at home and abroad.

We put up at the St. Jullien, a quiet, pleasant hotel; but our comfort was somewhat disturbed by the fact of our luggage having most vexatiously miscarried, and not making its appearance for forty-eight hours after our arrival. In France, after having seen your luggage registered and [40] labelled, you are generally content to trouble no more about it till it reaches its destination; but it is really very necessary to *see it put into the train*, for, despite the otherwise good system, the porters are carelessly content to get their fee without properly completing the service for which they are paid. And I may here remark that there is far too much "black mail" levied altogether, one man simply transferring his duty to another, who expects similar fee. To avoid loss of time and other unpleasantness, travellers will always find it best to make the first man fully understand that he alone is responsible for the luggage placed in his care, and that he is expected to see to its safety, no payment being forthcoming till this is done.

In the present case, our luggage had been sent on to Mentone by mistake, although properly labelled for Nice, and when we regained possession, one of the trunks was so knocked about that it cost fifteen francs to have it repaired, and in reply to my application to the railway authorities to recoup me, I was simply told, with the usual French shrug of the shoulders as if to get rid of a disagreeable burthen, that it could not be entertained.

One of the great secrets of comfortable travel consists in carrying as little luggage with you as possible, and as there is no difficulty in procuring the services of a laundress at a few hours' notice, this rule may be readily complied with. It is always well, however, to be provided with a [41] good-sized hand-bag, containing all the necessaries you require for one or two days, *and this you should never lose sight of*.

Nice is a charming town, with its beautiful promenades facing the sea, its palatial hotels, fine streets, and gardens. The Promenade des Anglais, and the graceful, waving palm trees planted along the streets, give it quite a different character to the French towns we had visited. We were much struck, and again reminded of the Italian nature of the place, by the elaborate way in which the houses and villas are decorated on the outside with paintings, giving the flat surface all the effect of being embellished with beautiful frescoes and works of statuary. Some of the villas, which are on the hill overlooking the town and sea, and surrounded by their gardens full of orange and lemon trees, are most delightful residences. Among other places of interest, we were pointed out the villa where the young Czarowitch, the elder brother of the present Emperor of Russia, died, attended in his last moments by his mother, and his betrothed wife Princess Dagmar, who afterwards married the brother of her first *fiancé*. The house is in no wise remarkable, save for the lovely views it commands, and the large and beautiful gardens which surround it, where almost every variety of orange and lemon trees grow to perfection. Before the Czarowitch's death visitors were allowed the privilege of viewing the grounds, but this is now refused.

Nice is divided into two distinct parts, known as the Old and New Town. The latter is well laid [42] out—there are two very fine squares, one being surrounded by very handsome porticoes; while the other is supplemented by a raised terrace, which serves both as a sea-wall and public promenade. Part of this promenade is on the flat roofs of a row of low houses, which at harvest-time are utilized as drying-floors for wheat and other grain, which are spread in the hot sun. This is, of course, before the season for visitors sets in, and while there are but few strangers in the town.

The shops are remarkably good, the confectioners' windows being very tempting with their array of airy-looking pastry, which is as nice as it is novel to us, accustomed to the more substantial and perhaps slightly heavy preparations of the kind in our own country. Especially to be noticed, too, are the displays of corals in all its most exquisite varieties, which may be purchased at a very reasonable rate, as also various kinds of lace. Indeed, this modern part of Nice is quite a little seaside Paris: the tramcars pass smoothly up and down, and the fashionable equipages, sometimes with bells attached to the horses' heads, dash gaily along.

The Old Town consists of narrow, dirty-smelling labyrinths, unworthy the name of streets, with blocks of shops of every kind. It is, however, interesting, as one here sees the working population "at home." In a large market-square we saw one of the lumbering old-fashioned diligences arrive, [43]

which recalled all that we had read of the days of continental travel before railways. There can be no doubt that the smart stage-coaches of England were very superior conveyances to the cumbersome, cobwebby diligence, which seems better adapted for night than for day travelling.

The flower-shops are one of the most interesting features of Nice, especially to ladies. Bouquets composed of the most exquisite flowers, of every size and description, from tiny button-hole sprays to masses of blossoms two feet in diameter, surround you on every side. Yet, after all, I believe no people arrange flowers so tastefully as the English. Our bouquets are not so large or so closely packed, and the flowers may be less rare, though scarcely less beautiful, yet they are grouped with more discernment and harmonious taste than elsewhere. The great business in these little "floral arsenals" is to pack the fragrant blossoms carefully in cotton-wool, for transmission to all parts of the world, especially to Covent Garden. Some are stowed in large round boxes like cheese-tubs, with a hole for the stalks to come through. I could have bought a bouquet here for seven francs which in London would have cost almost as many guineas. There are also small boxes, which you can get addressed and sent, post-free, for three or four francs inclusive. In fact, almost the first thing visitors do on their arrival here, is to send off one or more of these tiny boxes of dainty flowers to dear friends in England. You simply pay for them and give [44] the address, and they are at once despatched. So large a trade is done that there is a special Flower Post, and at the station a warehouse is set apart which is generally filled with these flower-boxes, ready to send off by the night train.

The culture of flowers in this part of the world is a very profitable and important industry, and, remembering all the distilleries—such as at Grasse—for making perfume, we can well understand the numerous beautiful flower-gardens in Italy, particularly along the shores of the Mediterranean. Italy may truly be called the "Garden of Europe," but it is rather difficult to imagine that she sends her vegetables away as far as St. Petersburg!

The river Var passes though the town, and falls into the Mediterranean. Its valley, or bed, being spanned by a number of bridges, adds not a little to its picturesqueness. At this season the river is almost dry; a few slender streams wind in and out of the rough stones which form the river-bed, and at these streams are to be seen hosts of women and children, most busily engaged in washing, and the whole valley by the river is white with the clothes of the numerous visitors, hanging out to bleach and dry in the hot sun. At times, when the snow on the Maritime Alps melts, this dry bed suddenly becomes a foaming, roaring torrent, and signals are given from the upper stream to warn people of the approaching rush of water. Instances of women engaged at their washing being carried away by the torrent have frequently occurred. [45]

The harbour of Nice is but a small affair, and only capable of accommodating fishing-craft and small vessels; but at little Villafranca, a mile or so away to the eastward, is an excellent port, affording shelter to large ships; occasionally men-of-war are to be seen there. The harbour of Villafranca is very prettily situated, surrounded, as it is on the land side, by high hills rising from the water's edge, and beautifully timbered. The walk from Nice to Villafranca, either by way of the sea, along the face of the rocks, where the road is lined with aloes and cacti (which impart quite a semi-tropical aspect to the country); or by the higher road, over a steep hill and deeply shaded roads,—is very beautiful, and well rewards the wayfarer for his fatigue; for fatiguing it is in the broiling sun, along a dusty road. On approaching the port from the upper road, the first view obtained from the high ground, looking down into the land-locked basin of the harbour, is very charming.

Nice is so surrounded by beautiful walks and drives, that one fails in the attempt to describe the half of them. View after view breaks on the admiring gaze, till you cease to exclaim at the varying loveliness, and content yourself by drinking in the grandeur and beauty of nature in silent admiration.

It is colder and more bracing here than at Cannes, but on the whole the climate is more equable, there being no such sudden fall in the temperature after sunset; it is, however, I fear, [46] less suited for invalids of a consumptive nature than other parts of the Riviera. It is dangerous to be out late, almost less on account of the heavy dews and chill atmosphere than for the very questionable people one meets, in every grade, from princes to pick-pockets. Nice is literally infested with doubtful characters, for, being so near the frontier, numbers of Italian vagabonds, who have been in prison and find it best to leave their country, assemble here, and tragedies are constantly occurring. There are also many wretched desperadoes from the gaming-tables.

On one occasion, two men attacked an old lady who was reading a placard on a wall. They were fortunately observed by a woman from a small shop near, who called her husband, and also summoned two gens d'armes. The men drew their knives, but the gens d'armes threatened to use their revolvers if the weapons were not instantly given up, and, being probably as deficient in pluck as most bullies, they finally succumbed, and were taken in charge—but, I have no doubt, got off with a day or two's imprisonment; while the poor old lady was confined to her bed for some time, and did not easily recover the shock she had received. The only uncommon feature in this occurrence was the fact of *two* gens d'armes being found within call at the same time.

With the exception of the splendid hotels, Nice can boast of few buildings of any importance, save the Cathedral of Notre Dame, which is a fine-looking edifice, and has several objects of [47] interest in the interior. A ludicrous and amusing incident was witnessed here one day by a friend.

Several country people had entered, and were engaged in offering up their orisons at the various altars. One woman, who had been in the market, making her purchases, entered the Cathedral, basket in hand, and, kneeling down on the steps in front of the high altar with her basket beside her, proceeded to tell her beads, and was soon deeply immersed in her prayers. A

homeless cat was quietly prowling about, and, approaching the woman, began to smell at the contents of her basket. Evidently church mice are much the same all the world over and do not afford too bountiful provender for the hungry cats, for puss had all the appearance of being desirous of dining, and, after poking her nose into the basket several times, seized upon a sausage, and proceeded to pull it out. The poor woman cast a discomfited glance at the robber, but before the devout Catholic could finish her beads, sacrilegious pussy had carried off and finished her sausage.

The hotel charges here are much the same as at Cannes, and not unreasonable. Five francs for bedroom, three for luncheon, and five for *table d'hôte*.

Most visitors fall into foreign habits, and have their coffee and rolls in their bedrooms, *dejeuner* or heavy luncheon at noon, and *table d'hôte* at six; but we came down to our breakfast between eight and nine o'clock, *à l'Anglais*, and dined *à la carte* at any hour that suited our convenience. [48]
The day's expenses were generally from ten to twelve francs for each person. Carriage hire is also very reasonable, for you can go from one end of the town to the other for less than a franc.

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[49]

CHAPTER V.

ToC

The beauty-spot and plague-spot of the Riviera—Arrival at Mentone—Hotel des Isles Britanniques—English church—Her Majesty's Villa—Gardens of Dr. Bennett—Custom-house—Remarks on Mentone—A charming walk—A word about Brigands—An adventure—In the cemetery—A labour of love—A frog concert—Excursion to Monte Carlo—Lovely coast scenery—Castle of Monaco—The sombre Olive—The exodus of the Caterpillars.

In travelling from Nice to Mentone you have to pass through some of the most lovely and enchanting scenery in the world.

The tiny principality of Monaco is indeed a little Paradise; but, alas! Paradise *after the fall*, for does it not include that awful gaming pandemonium, Monte Carlo? It is sad to think that the choicest spot on this fair earth should be selected by sinful men for their evil purposes. Here, amid all that is beautiful and captivating in nature, is a pit dug for the unwary, the innocent, and the weak; and, alas! too many succumb to the fatal allurements prepared for their ruin and destruction.

As we passed Monte Carlo, we saw some of the *shady fraternity* I mentioned as having observed at the Nice station, on one of the heights above the town, overlooking a grassy [50]
enclosure. They were characteristically engaged in slaughtering tame pigeons, by way of a manly recreation and noble sport!

We arrived at Mentone in the evening, about seven o'clock. It is a quiet, pretty little town something like Cannes. As usual, there were a legion of hotel omnibuses, with their liveried porters, the name of the hotel they belonged to on their cap, and each accurately measuring the length of your purse. Fortunate the traveller who has already determined on the hotel he intends to patronize! We had selected the Hotel des Isles Britanniques. Here we had a small but handsomely furnished apartment on the third floor, commanding a charming view of the sea from its French windows, and we were soon sitting down to our quiet little dinner.

Everything at this hotel was comfortable and satisfactory. Cleanliness and courtesy were predominant, and I should think altogether it was one of the best conducted hotels on the Riviera. Only one little drawback lay in the fact that the reading-room opened into the ladies' drawing-room, and the almost incessant pianoforte-playing made it impossible to read with any real enjoyment. Indeed, who *could* sit down selfishly to reading, even one's favourite newspaper, with the momentary expectation of a loving wife or daughter strolling in from her music, for a little chat?

A more serious defect, however, in these Riviera hotels, perfect as they are otherwise in all [51]
their appointments, lies in the fact that there is very inadequate provision for extinguishing fire—a terrible consideration at all times, but disarmed of much of its terror when properly provided against. One evening, when descending the main staircase of our hotel, there was an evident smell of fire, and soon a painful sensation in my eyes told me of smoke also. On reaching the hall, I found the smoke issuing from the warming shaft in the floor. I returned, quietly warned my wife and others of the danger, and soon the master of the hotel and all the servants were on the spot. In their excitement to subdue it, before the numerous visitors should be alarmed, they opened the aperture still more, so as to give free vent to the smoke. I at once told them their mistake, and, seizing the nearest door-mat, put it over the aperture; my example was followed, and other exits closed, the servants meanwhile carrying buckets of water below, where the fire had

originated. Fortunately, the fire was soon extinguished, little harm being done; but the event showed me that there was no systematic preparation or appliances in case of fire, which I thought a very serious omission in the comfort and safety of the visitors.[C]

The day after our arrival was Sunday, and we attended the English church, and were greatly pleased with the reverent, home-reminding way in which the service was conducted. We then [52] took a pleasant walk by the sea, listening to a good band of music in the gardens; then into the one long main street of the town, calling at the post-office for letters, and leaving our address, that all others might be sent on to our hotel. We had a peep, too, into the numerous little shops, especially those for the sale of flowers, as at Cannes, and the cheerful little market-place. Finally, turning the promontory at the end of the street, and emerging on the road by the sea, we found a delightful promenade; and further on, in the eastern portion of Mentone, another English church, "Christ Church," and several finely situated hotels and pretty villas standing in groves of orange trees, facing the sea, and under the shelter of the almost precipitous mountain ranges in the background.

The natives here are evidently of very dirty habits, and the residents must be sadly wanting in nasal sensibility, for, on attempting to advance through one of the narrow side streets dividing the pretty villas, we were obliged to beat a hasty retreat; and this was not the only pretty lane so vilely misused, much to the reproach of the municipal authorities.

On the hill-side, almost buried amid the trees, is the little villa where her Majesty the Queen so quietly resided last autumn; while at the large hotel just below, Mr. Spurgeon rested from his Tabernacle labours, and, it is to be hoped, got rid of his painful rheumatism.

Straight up this road, on the slope of the hill, is an ancient aqueduct, and a milestone denoting [53] where the French and Italian territories meet. My wife was much interested in this precise point of division, and I laughingly assisted her to place a foot on each territory, thereby establishing her as the queenly Colossus of two great countries; but she was greatly relieved by a very short reign. A little higher up on the left are the beautiful mountain gardens of Dr. Bennett. By his kind courtesy, all visitors are welcome to roam about therein, though, of course, within certain hours. It is indeed a wonderful example of botanical skill combined with excellent taste. Every inch of ground, right up to the rocky mountain-side, is turned to advantage, for the production both of the most lovely flowers and ferns and also for miniature aqueducts and water-courses to refresh them. I have never before seen a collection of flowers, ferns, and trees brought to so great a perfection under such difficulties. All are most systematically named and classified.

A little further on is the Italian custom-house, picturesquely situated on a promontory, and commanding a very fine view of the sea and surrounding country. Every person and vehicle has here to undergo the usual delightful examination by the custom-house officials. This is the high-road to Ventimiglia and Genoa, and a *high* road indeed it is, running right along the edge of the cliff, forming a most magnificent drive, and commanding grand views.

Not far from here is the residence, with its superb gardens, of Mr. Hanbury. Some friends who [54] have visited these gardens assure me they even surpass those of Dr. Bennett. It is said that next time the Queen visits Mentone, she will take up her abode at this house. Mr. Hanbury is equally courteous in welcoming visitors to his beautifully cultivated grounds and gardens.

Mentone is more sheltered than either Cannes or Nice, the mountains encircling the town more closely; there is consequently more hill-climbing, and fewer extended walks and excursions for invalids. It was occasionally bleak and cold after sunset during this early part of the year, and invalids were all obliged to gain the shelter of their dwellings by about four p.m. These cold, biting winds generally blew from north or east, the main streets being like drafty narrow gorges.

We had one exceedingly pretty walk up the valley to the right of our hotel. The river, now almost dry, flowing silently along on one side; on the other, hills and orange groves, and a little church or monastery perched among the trees in the far distance—it resembled a Swiss mountain valley. It was a very romantic road, and I incidentally remarked to my wife that it was just the kind of place where, a few years ago, we might have heard a shrill whistle from the hills, then an answering echo, and by-and-by a band of brigands suddenly swooping down upon us to carry us off to their lair upon the mountains. This was quite enough to make her nervous, and, despite my [55] pacifying assurances that in these days of enlightened progress no such thrilling adventure would be likely to befall us, she begged that we might return at once; and, as our walk had already been a somewhat extended one into the still recesses of the mountain valley, I thought it just as well to follow her prudent advice and retrace our steps. For although I laughed at my wife's fears, they were really not so utterly without foundation as might at first appear, for we had recently heard of a most daring case of brigandage in the neighbourhood. As I have before remarked, there are a great many very questionable characters loitering between Nice and Genoa.

Two ladies at an hotel here met with a small adventure that might have ended in something more serious but for one fortunate circumstance. They were a mother and daughter, staying at Nice about the same time as ourselves, and related that having started one fine afternoon to walk to Villafranca, on getting out of sight of all signs of habitation, they were much alarmed to find they were being followed by two ill-looking Italians. The men passed them, and disappeared round the promontory which shuts Nice out of sight, and forms one side of the natural harbour of Villafranca. The ladies, wishing to give them a wide berth, walked very slowly, hoping to be left far in their wake; but soon after, on reaching a particularly dull part of the road, they came on the men again, who were evidently waiting for them. Still hoping they might be mistaken, the two [56] ladies stopped likewise, as if to admire the scenery and consult their guide-books, but the men held their ground, and presently walked towards them. Just as they were approaching, a carriage

containing a gentleman came in sight, and they thereupon walked on for a short distance, as if they were only returning the way they had come; but as soon as the carriage had fairly passed, they once more turned. The ladies were now thoroughly alarmed, and the younger one flew down the dusty road after the carriage, in hopes of overtaking it and soliciting protection. She was fortunately observed by the occupant, who at once stopped the horses, and very kindly invited them to continue their journey in his carriage, remarking that many of the roads along the Riviera were decidedly unsafe for foot-passengers, and that he had been surprised at two ladies undertaking such a risk alone. They gratefully accepted his offer, and proceeded to the Villafranca station without meeting a single human being—a fact which they noted with a shudder and a deep sense of thankfulness at their narrow escape.

We made a second trip up the hill-side to the Roman Catholic cemetery, which gave us a charming view of the town, environed by gardens. The place itself was peacefully beautiful and full of mournful interest. We noticed at one of the tombs a young lady, evidently a German, who, assisted by her maid, was diligently employed in cleaning a marble statue placed over the grave. It was difficult to refrain from offering to help her in this labour of love, which appealed so [57]
pathetically to the heart. I do not think we care to display so much outward proofs of loving reverence for our dead as we often see abroad, in the shape of flowers and *immortelles* placed upon the graves by affectionate relatives and friends. Still, I believe it is only an external indifference. We have as much true and deep love in our hearts for our dear ones as those who are more demonstrative, though perhaps it *is* a pity that we do not allow ourselves to indulge in the pretty reverential sentiments of our French and Italian neighbours.

We were much amused during our stay here at the constant chorus the frogs kept up. They croak almost unceasingly, especially in the evening. It would seem that they wish to take the place of the song-birds, which we seldom hear in this part, as they are all shot to supply the table, nearly every kind being eaten—a needless cruelty, one would think, not only to the poor little birds, but also to those who miss their grateful song of joy and praise.

We had a pleasant carriage excursion to Monte Carlo, by the Corniche road, starting one brilliant morning soon after breakfast. Leaving Mentone behind us, we commenced the circuit of the cliff road, which gradually got higher and higher, occasionally passing through olive plantations, and then suddenly emerging from their sombre shade to the dazzling bright sea once more; then we doubled a finely wooded promontory, almost a sheer precipice, catching a glimpse [58]
of the beautiful little circling bays sparkling in the abyss below; sometimes passing sharp curves in the road, which required very skilful driving, there being but a low wall—and that partly broken in many places—to divide us from a fall of about sixty feet! Still ascending, we gained the summit of the first fine headland (I believe, the highest point), and from thence had a most entrancing outlook. On the extreme left, a lovely retrospective and bird's-eye view of charming Mentone; the towns and little villages on the distant shore as far as Bordighera; dimpling in the glowing sunshine, and before us, the long stretch of inimitable blue sea, with just a feathery ripple on the golden sandy shores below, winding in and out in a series of tiny bays and creeks; while beyond us, like a realized dream of Paradise, lay the beautiful plague-spot of the Riviera—the town of Monte Carlo, nested amid luxuriant gardens of semi-tropical foliage, the mosque-like minarets and cupolas of the casino standing boldly out on the heights and glittering in the sun. Beyond this, another fine bay and promontory, on the summit of which stands the Castle of Monaco; and below, surrounded by groves and gardens, the town and principality of Monaco, with roads stretching out, leading towards Villafranca and Nice.

I had seen Constantinople, Madeira, and many other parts of this fair earth of ours, but I do not remember anything that compares with this bit of Italian coast scenery, which I think is surely the loveliest in the world.

Dismissing our carriage, we walked through Monte Carlo to Monaco, and ascended to the [59]
palace of the prince. It stands on the summit of a bold headland, surrounded by fortifications, from which we had another splendid view. One can readily see how fair and beautiful a place, full of the sweetest harmonies of nature, and filling the human heart with a grateful sense of God's love, has, by the sordid wickedness of man, been perverted into a paradise of the Prince of Darkness, who, knowing too well the weakness and folly of poor erring humanity, lures by every artificial attraction and fascination even the poor pilgrim invalid, who hopefully journeys here to breathe the pure fresh air and to recover health; and also does his best to complete the moral degradation of the less innocent but infatuated gambler, who stakes his life upon the cast of a die and rushes madly and miserably to unutterable ruin.

I have already mentioned the plantations of olive trees we passed in our drive on the cliffs. Nothing strikes one more singularly, in coming to this part of the world, than the contrast in appearance between the olive tree and the rich, luxuriant foliage of the orange, lemon, myrtle, and other beautiful vegetation so prolific here. Toward evening especially, the gnarled and twisted olive has a strangely sad and sombre effect, with its long, pointed leaves of dull green lined with a chilly pale tint—as it were, a thing of a past period in the earth's existence, ancient and venerable, almost sacred, and little in harmony with the gay, luxuriant vegetable life around. [60]
I think nothing describes better its cold sombre aspect than the remark Marianne Hunt made to her husband during their first unfortunate visit to Italy. "They look," she said, "as if they were always standing in the moonlight." And, indeed, this is just the effect they have, as though having been once lighted on by Cynthia's cold, chaste glance, they had ever remained petrified and blanched. Still, there is much grace and beauty in the outlines of olive trees against a sunlit, blue-grey sky, the silver tints of their leaves quivering in the light.

It was interesting to watch a procession of caterpillars on the road to Monte Carlo, a distance

of about a mile. They were moving from one part to another, probably because there was disease amongst them, or else in the trees in that neighbourhood, for there were many dead ones lying about. They advanced in one long line, following their leader, the head of the second joining the tail of the first, and so on. There were more than a hundred in a chain, a company of ten coming to join them, and large masses waiting in different parts of the road, and taking their places one by one as the procession approached. They looked like a long, thin snake. The marvellous instinct of these small insects, notwithstanding Mark Twain's ingenious stricture on the proverbial "ant," will ever remain a source of the deepest interest and wonder to thinking, reasoning, intellectual man.

This wonderful army of caterpillars suggested, as things in nature will often do if one takes heed of them, that it might be possible to introduce the culture of the silkworm here, and so substitute a profitable and honest industry for the present curse of this beautiful and otherwise highly favoured place. Silk is almost a staple of Italian industry, and doubtless the mulberry tree would flourish here as in other parts, and with as much success as at Beyrout, on the coast of Syria, a place not at all unlike Monte Carlo in its climate, the beauty of coast scenery, and luxuriance of vegetation. [61]

FOOTNOTES

[C] The recent destruction of the Grand Hotel at Giessbach is a convincing proof of the truth of these remarks. Had it occurred but a month earlier, there would inevitably have been a terrible loss of life.

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[62]

CHAPTER VI.

ToC

Monte Carlo—In the Concert-room—The Gambling-saloons—The Tables—The moth and the candle—The true story of Monte Carlo—An International grievance and disgrace.

We reached Monte Carlo in time for the grand concert at two o'clock. Passing through the delightful gardens surrounded by *cafés*, we entered the dazzling and gorgeous concert-room. There was nothing to pay. Plush-liveried servants handed us to our seats, and we enjoyed their soft luxuriance, admired the handsome and profuse decorations, and scanned the mixed society around us, listening meanwhile to some of the finest classical music.

After spending a pleasant hour, we retired to make room for others. There was a silent expression on the countenances of the attendant croupiers, and also on many of the faces of the habitués of the place, which showed that, although this refined and intellectual enjoyment was the ostensible reason of their presence, the real and more appreciated object was the gaming-table.

Impelled by earnest desire to judge for ourselves as to the evils of Monte Carlo, we followed the stream of people through the gilded and handsome suite of ante-rooms, to the gambling-saloons. The obsequious lacqueys opened the doors to all who wished to pass, and no questions were asked, though I believe you are supposed to have your private visiting card in readiness. [63]

"'Will you walk into my parlour?' said the spider to the fly."

There was no doubt on that day, at least, of the flies swarming in. Frith's celebrated picture occurred instantly to my mind, and I saw at a glance how faithful it was to the sad reality.

You cannot fail to be struck by the extreme quiet amongst so many people. Every one speaks in whispers. There is a certain solemnity about it, the same as that felt in a church; and truly this might be termed the house of the devil. The large and spacious rooms, with beautifully painted walls, Moorish ceilings, and polished floors, are without furniture save the long tables and chairs for those intending to play steadily. Here sit the yellow-faced, sleepless, hard-eyed croupiers, spinning the fatal ball, and mechanically sweeping in with their rakes the piles of money staked and lost by the infatuated players. These are not limited to those seated at the table and who form but the front row. What a mixture they are! Cadaverous, selfish old women; others, handsome, gay, and reckless, evidently in the interest of the table, and hired to act as decoys; others, again, young and inexperienced; and even *ladies*, pale, unhappy-looking,—were all represented. The men for the most part hardened and merciless, and many careless young [64]

gentlemen, some of them innocent-looking lads enough, but others, alas! showing painfully their habits of dissipation, in spite of their youth,—all waiting eagerly to clutch their winnings or silently lose their money.

Further up the room are other tables, at which higher stakes are played. *Trente et quarante* is perhaps a little more favourable to players than roulette, though it depends very much on the shuffling of the cards. Piles of gold and notes were laid upon the table, either for or against the numbers backed turning up. But here was the same sickening sight—mad, selfish infatuation; and we turned away, having had quite enough of the "shady side" of the lovely but too fascinating Monte Carlo, being glad to get out into the bright sunshine once more. In the rooms we had left, the blinds and curtains were closely drawn, excluding the pure light of heaven, as if those so earnestly engaged within preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil.

A great number of people from the "tables" followed to catch the train, and we had the sad reflection that a fresh batch would soon arrive in time for the *evening* concert. *Residents* of Monaco and Monte Carlo are not supposed to be admitted, as it is not desirable that the half-frenzied losers should remain in these peaceful elysiums; a fresh and continuous stream of victims is much preferred.

But these Shylock millionaires, the owners of the tables—these Princes of Hades who alone [65]
profit by the wreck of their fellow-creatures, are perfectly content to fatten, like over-gorged leeches, on the weaknesses and follies of their prey. What matters it to them, the misery and unhappiness of others, so long as they thrive? What matter the means, so long as their end is obtained?

I am sorry to say that ladies are the greatest victims. They are more easily tempted by their love of excitement and adventure, and once they touch the fatal dice it is almost impossible to hold them in. Many ladies who come to Nice and Mentone as invalids, go to Monte Carlo, not only for the enchanting scenery, but for the fine concerts, which are free to all comers. Indeed, most invalids long for such a means of recreation, and it is a great pity they cannot obtain it elsewhere when visiting the Riviera. Then their curiosity is aroused about the gaming-tables, purposely encouraged by lying reports of people having made their fortunes by a single throw of the dice. After the concert, how natural to stroll into the gay saloons, the liveried servants so politely opening the doors to them! And all this is the most cruel part of the gambling fraternity—Messieurs Blanc and Co., who so heartlessly lay out these alluring baits. Perchance these ladies are accompanied by pure-minded daughters, all unthinking of the frightful contamination of the numbers of so-called "ladies of fashion"—habitués and hirelings, decoys simply in the pay of the gambling propriétaire. It is impossible to know the moral injury it will do these innocent young [66]
girls. Then, there is the husband who takes his wife, and permits her or himself to chance a napoleon. It is impossible to touch pitch without defilement, or to know where that one thoughtless yielding to temptation may lead. Yes! it is too often just one napoleon and no more. Unfortunately they win, and then of course they come again and again, with the sad result of eventually losing all that is worth living for.

Some of these invalid ladies actually starve themselves, when they ought to be nourishing and strengthening their poor bodies; acting meanly at their hotels in order to save sufficient money to go to Monte Carlo, and in the end it is all lost! Then they return to their homes with mind, health, and nerves completely shattered, to the grief and astonishment of kind friends and family doctors. There is no doubt that when people are once tempted, it creates in them quite a disease; this is called "play-fever."

An English gentleman staying at the same hotel with us told me that he came to the Riviera almost every year, and that he limited himself to £100 for the gaming pleasures at Monte Carlo, which he could not resist, and this sum he invariably lost at the end of the season.

But, of course, all those who frequent this place are not "innocents abroad." That is another evil resulting from this pandemonium. Blacklegs and adventurers of both sexes swarm here from all parts of Europe, demoralizing and degrading the lovely shores of the Mediterranean, by their [67]
vulgar and hateful presence. Thousands of invalids and others of all nations yearly visit the beautiful little towns along the Riviera, and this fatal trap at Monte Carlo, whereby so many are helplessly ruined, and so many suicides result, should at least have the moral voice of the world against it—in fact, an international protest, for it is a gross scandal and disgrace to the whole of Europe. All who know anything of this gambling Hades—what is done to keep it alive, its irresistible fascination over even strong minds, and the number of its victims, will, I think, acknowledge that it is even worse than slavery. For the poor negro has to bear physical degradation only, whilst here it is both moral and physical; body and soul-suffering to the victim and his friends. Why, then, should this place have been allowed to exist so long?

First of all, France secretly encourages and indirectly profits by it. Were she earnest in her endeavours to suppress this infernal machinery at Monte Carlo, it would soon be stopped, and she would have the thanks of the civilized world for her good efforts. Italy is not entirely without blame: the late Pope Pius IX. more than winked at it. Russia is also accessory to it; the propensity to gamble seems natural to her people; and the corrupt journalists on the continent gloss over and help to support it.

The story of Monte Carlo is perhaps not sufficiently well known. In consequence of his subjects revolting from his tyrannical rule, the Prince of Monaco lost part of his territory. France having [68]
annexed Nice and Savoy after the Italian campaign of 1859, the prince's fortunes were at a very low ebb indeed. But under the protection of Napoleon III., who put him up to a good thing in ground speculation at Paris, when Baron Hausmann was going ahead with his great building

furore, the prince's coffers were not long empty. Then, the gambling-houses in Germany having been suppressed, the notorious Blanc—whose family, I believe, are still the proprietors of the tables at Monte Carlo—appeared upon the scene, doubtless accompanied by a few choice friends. The importance of Monaco, from a gambler's point of view, and the natural beauty of the place, were not lost sight of by him. The constant stream of visitors to Cannes, Nice, Mentone, and San Remo, must pass through Monte Carlo and pay there a terrible toll. An immense sum was lavished in making the place the delightful paradise it has become, less, of course, its Satanic evils. Beautiful gardens, *cafés*, concert and gaming-saloons, constructed with all the fascinating skill and taste that money and art could accomplish, were added to its natural attractions. The best of music and artistes procured, journalists bribed to advertize its advantages as a "health resort," men and women of fashion drawn hither, and then all was ready for the dupes.

Nice became an adjunct. The proprietors of the Monte Carlo Tables support the gaieties there, giving prizes at the races, and other inducements, to render it more attractive to visitors, the [69] majority of whom would invariably find their way to Monte Carlo. Besides, it were better that their unfortunate and maddened victims should blow out their brains at Nice and other places, rather than give Monte Carlo a *bad name*! Though, frequently, they evade the gens d'armes, and at dawn of day are found in the beautiful gardens lifeless. The glorious sun rises over the dreadful scene, lighting up the lovely coast, and makes it a paradise, in spite of man's wickedness and merciless cruelty. At Monaco itself, there are thousands of pounds given away annually as the *casino* prizes, for the *tame* pigeon-slaughtering matches, which generally bring a great gathering. But the wonder is, that gentlemen will soil their hands with the stakes, tempting, as undoubtedly they are; and the marvel is that some of our leading newspapers, who righteously declaim against the iniquities of Monte Carlo, still condescend to advertize these *decoy* matches.

And thus the "owner of the tables" became exceedingly wealthy, and married his daughters to foreign princes—one to Prince Roland Bonaparte, and the other to Prince Radziwill. The Prince of Monaco shares the profits, amounting in the gross to some fourteen millions of francs annually. The people of his wretched principality are relieved of all taxes, even for gas and water—which secures their gratitude and silence: the profits from the gaming-tables pay for all. I believe it pays the entire expenses of the municipality, so that the prince has simply to draw the remainder [70] of his share in this inhuman plunder.

Religion has been drawn in as a veil, as is so often the case with unscrupulous persons. Churches have been built to quiet and satisfy the Roman Catholic conscience,[D] after so many shocking deaths had occurred, or rather to "whitewash" the scandal. The Pope was satisfied with the liberality of the great gambling Crœsus, and gave his blessing. Indeed, so religious has the place become that on Good Friday the Passion play is acted in the Cathedral, and without the least sense of incongruity.

The powerful alliances made with unscrupulous and needy princes of France and Russia by the family of the Crœsus Croupier and Co., have enormously increased their power. Hence the difficulty in dislodging them.

But it is an international matter. Monte Carlo is a curse to the people of every nation who pass through it, and the voice of the civilized world should be raised to insist on its absolute suppression. The Prince of Monaco should be given to understand that he must do this, or cease to exist as a petty independent power. *We* English, who are so earnest to prevent even small nuisances in our own land, where it is an indictable offence for a poor itinerant Italian organ-grinder to refuse to "move on" when ordered; where the owner of an overloaded dust-bin, vitiating the atmosphere, is called to account;—*we*, proudly the foremost in suppressing wrong [71] and upholding the right, should surely not be backward in striving to uproot this hell upon earth —existing solely for the inhuman greed of a few selfish individuals; this plague-spot threatening deadly contagion to soul and body, and causing misery, madness, and suicide of thousands of our fellow-creatures.[E]

FOOTNOTES

[D] The grand Cathedral is still in progress, under the auspices of the gambling fraternity.

[E] In my former work, "The Cruise of the *Gorgon*," my object was to expose the iniquity of the East African slave-trade, and our mode of suppressing it; and it is now my object to draw attention to the immorality of the Monte Carlo gambling principality, with a view to the exposure and suppression of its evils, for the benefit of those who, for health and pleasure, resort to these lovely shores of the Mediterranean.

While these pages are passing through the press, the author is greatly gratified to see the noble exertions Italy is making, both in her Parliament and through the press, for the suppression of this gambling principality—recounting the many terrible suicides so frequently occurring there. But, a still more hopeful sign is the action recently taken in our own House of Commons as evidenced by the following extract from the *Morning Post* of Feb. 12th, 1884:—

"A question is to be put to Lord E. Fitzmaurice to-morrow by Mr. Anderson (Glasgow) on the subject of the recent tragedies reported from Monte Carlo. The hon. member will ask whether her Majesty's Government will make friendly representations to the

Governments of France and Italy, with the view of inducing them to unite for the suppression of the public gambling tables in that principality; and whether her Majesty's Government will also make friendly representations to the Government of France regarding the continuance of public gaming tables at Aix les Bains?"

Italy, however, would do well to set the example by the abolition of her State "Lotto Banks;" and we in England would do well to suppress the little "Monte Carlos" at our West End, and so called Proprietary Clubs and Stock Exchanges.

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[72]

CHAPTER VII.

ToC

Scenery *en route*—Bordighera—Pegli—Genoa—Its magnificent situation—The grandeur of its past—The harbour—Streets—Palaces—Churches—Cathedral of San Lorenzo—Sacred Catina—Chapel of St. John the Baptist—Italian Beggars—Sudden change in the atmosphere—The Campo Santo—Shops of Genoa—Marble promenade—City of precipices—Climate of Genoa.

After our visit to Monte Carlo, we returned to our hotel at Mentone, which we left early on the following day for Genoa, our next halting-place.

The country around Ventimiglia, Bordighera, and San Remo, is in many parts grand and beautiful, affording varied and interesting excursions. These three places are filled with visitors. The climate is somewhat more relaxing than at Nice or even Mentone. The date-palm seems to flourish at Bordighera, which is said to have the monopoly of supplying these graceful branches to Rome, for the Church ceremonies at Easter-time.

Savona was the largest town passed on our route. It has a very fine Cathedral, and was at one time a considerable port. A little further eastward on the coast is Pegli, a pretty little seaside place, fast growing into favour. The Imperial Princess of Germany stayed here with her children some time since.

[73]

After a very pleasant journey by rail we reached Genoa at 10 p.m.

Genoa, Gênes, Genova, as it is called in English, French, and Italian, derives its name from the Latin word *genu*, the knee, supposed to be the shape of the large inlet of the sea around which the land lies in a vast semicircle. It is also called "La Superba," from its magnificent situation; indeed, few cities equal its imposing grandeur as seen from the sea. Handsome buildings line the shore for about the length of two miles; splendid palaces, churches, and convents rise tier upon tier on the steep sides of the hills, whose barren summits are crowned by formidable-looking forts and ramparts. Immediately behind are the Apennines, and upon these mountain heights are again several strong forts commanding the town, which is also enclosed by a double line of fortifications on the land side. The stern aspect of these works is relieved by gardens, whose foliage gives the one touch needed to soften the beauty of the whole. The harbour has a pier at each end, and upon one of these is a very fine lighthouse.

From time immemorial Genoa has been famous as a seaport, and as the contemporary and rival of fair Venice, and, like her, has had a proud and eventful history. How sadly are these splendid cities of the past, these great and wealthy republics of ancient times, sunk at the present day to a shadow of their former magnificence and grandeur! Their ruined splendour alone remains to show us what they were. But it is like gazing on the beauty of death; the soul, the spirit, is wanting, and we are continually haunted by the hollow mockery of the empty house which was once its dwelling. Doubtless the Genoese are proud of their city, yet it reminds one of the last descendant of a long and ancient pedigree, whose ancestors were once lords of many a fair manor, but who now has nothing but his name left, to recall the recollections of bygone days, and points on this side and on that, with the words "These lands once belonged to my illustrious family, of which I am the sole representative."

[74]

Baedeker says, "The beauty of its situation, and the interesting reminiscence of its ancient magnificence, render a visit to Genoa very attractive, especially to the traveller who is visiting Italy for the first time.... The Renaissance palaces are objects of extreme interest, surpassing in number and magnificence those of any other city in Italy. Many of the smaller churches are of very ancient origin, though usually altered in the Gothic period."

The many splendid palaces of the old nobility, with all their art treasures and galleries of fine paintings by the great masters, have been left to the city as a free gift, with the stipulation of

their being open to visitors. Rubens and Vandyke both resided here, and there are a number of their greatest works to be seen. As an example of the wealth of the nobles even at the present [75] day, and their patriotic pride in their city, the Duke of Galliera, who died in 1876, presented twenty million francs for the improvement of the harbour, on condition that the Government would advance the remainder of the sum required, and the work is now in progress.

This semicircular harbour is crowded with shipping, while all around are large warehouses, and stretching along the edge is a superb promenade of white marble on raised arches. The Gulf of Genoa is very stormy, and there are but few fish to be found in it.

The streets are paved with stone which tires one to walk on. Many of them are dark and crooked, particularly in the interior of the town and near the sea, and so steep and narrow that in some of them a carriage cannot pass through. Most people will remember Dickens' amusing remarks on this subject in his "Pictures of Italy."

Some of the streets, however, are very fine. The Via Roma stretches up the hill, and descends in an almost unbroken line to the valleys beneath the mountains, and is remarkably clean and pleasant. On either side are houses of stone, with overhanging roofs. In the Via Carlo Felice is the Via Carlo Felice Theatre, the third largest in Italy. The Via Garibaldi has no less than eighteen splendid marble palaces in succession, while the fine streets, Nuovissima, Balbi, and Carlo Alberto, are also lined with these grand old palaces of the Genoese nobility. Many of them [76] contain rare and magnificent works of art, and their furniture and decorations are rich and beautiful in the extreme. They are usually on view from ten till three, on payment of a small fee to the keeper. In each saloon you find catalogues of the pictures, amongst which the works of Rubens, Titian, Correggio, and Vandyke are conspicuous.

Palace after palace, gallery after gallery; it is really *embarras de richesse*, and one gets quite bewildered with the wealth of artistic genius.

The churches are also very fine, but many of them are left in a very unfinished condition. The Capuchin church of St. Annunziata, in the Piazza del Annunziata, erected in 1587, has a portal upborne by marble columns, while the brick façade is left quite unfinished, with great holes between the brick and mortar, where seemingly the scaffold-poles had been inserted, and in which the birds have built their nests. The interior presents a striking contrast in its splendid and almost over-gorgeous decorations. It is in the form of a cross, with a dome, the vaulting supported by twelve fluted and inlaid columns, richly gilded and painted. But a far more interesting church is the old Cathedral of San Lorenzo, in the Piazza of the same name, and close to the Via Carlo Felice. It is in the Gothic style, or rather represents three different periods, the Romanique, the French Gothic, and the Renaissance. It was mostly built about the year 1100, and restored in 1300. It has a triple portal, with deep-recessed, pointed arches. Above these are several rows of arcades, a small rose window, and a tower with a little dome at the top, two [77] hundred feet high. At the south corner above the central door is a bas-relief of the martyrdom of St. Lawrence, its patron saint, and many quaint carvings of monsters. The beautiful and curiously twisted columns, triple portals, arches, and arcades, as well as the whole façade and front exterior, are of black and white marbles; and there is some very fine bronze-work, painting, and statuary. In the sacristy they show the Sacred *Catina* (basin), a six-sided piece of glass brought from Cæsarea in 1101, and reported to be that which held the Paschal lamb at the Last Supper of our Lord. It was given out to be a pure emerald, till the mistake was detected by a scientific judge. It may be seen for five francs—a large fee, evidently charged in the hope of some day making up for its deceptive intrinsic worth. Like Westminster Abbey, the interior of this church has the impress of antiquity, especially in its worn columns. I was invited by the old verger to view the Sacred Chapel of St. John the Baptist, but my wife was mysteriously prohibited, as women had been concerned in the saint's martyrdom. I believe this stern order is waived once a year, probably by payment of a pretty large fee for conciliation. There are other chapels, paintings, and relics that are well worthy the trouble and time of study, making this ancient cathedral the most interesting duomo in Genoa.

St. Ambrogio, in the Via del Sellag, is rich in pictures: Ruben's "Circumcision," and his "St. [78] Ignatius," healing a man possessed of an evil spirit, and also Guido's "Assumption." It is splendid in colouring and wonderful in the elaboration of detail. These to some may appear too extravagant. The Santa Maria di Carignano, or Church of the Assumption, in the same street, is one of the finest in Genoa. The walk from here, along the walls and ramparts of St. Chiara, gives a splendid view.

Many other churches, some sixty in number, are well worth a visit; but, like the palaces, they require considerable time to properly appreciate them.

One scarcely likes to see all these gorgeous buildings, with so lavish a display of the money laid out on their profuse decoration, when the mendicant poor, the halt, maimed, and blind are crowding the porches, piteously begging alms; it spoils your pleasure and study of these beautiful edifices. We ought, however, to recollect that at home we have our crossing-sweepers, match and flower sellers, and many wretched objects of suffering and poverty, who perhaps make a similar impression on foreigners visiting our great and prosperous London, but who will perhaps marvel also at our lukewarmness and niggardliness in beautifying our St Paul's and other churches.

At the commencement of our stay here the weather was warm and bright, but on the day following our arrival a most sudden change occurred, and it was very wet, and on Sunday bitterly cold. We went to the English church, and afterwards walked to the top of the fine street leading [79] from the Carlo Felice, right up the valley at the foot of the mountains, and there we had a most glorious view. The Campo Santo in the distance; the harbour on the right; and the great hills,

with their strong forts perched on every projecting point and pinnacle, all covered with snow; quite a white world since the day before. We saw ice in the streets, and were glad to return to the Hotel Isotta. The poor fasting Priests seemed quite nipped up; and the Genoese ladies, who under more favourable circumstances would have been graceful and good-looking, appeared unaccustomed to this severity of weather, and hurried along with red noses and pinched faces.

Of all our visits to interesting places in this ancient city our excursion to the Campo Santo gave us the most pleasure. It is some three or four miles from the city: the weather continuing cold, we preferred walking. We went up the main street, through the valley at the foot of the snow-clad hills we had seen before, and in little more than an hour we arrived at the gates of the Cemetery. This Campo Santo is indeed most eloquently illustrative of loving reverence and remembrance of the dead, and is quite a museum of beautiful monumental statuary.

This burial-ground is a system of sheltered colonnades, where the dead are deposited in sarcophagi, resting on shelves on the inner walls, tier upon tier. Only the very poor people seem to be buried in the *common earth*, in the open spaces which lie before the colonnades, and these [80] are crowded. It rather shocked us to see the gravedigger remove some bones from the ground and throw them into a kind of bin, which was there for the purpose, in order to make room for a new corpse. I thought, with Hamlet—

> "Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with them? Mine ache to think on't."

The colonnades are paved with marble, and are scrupulously clean. Some have exquisite monuments and statuary, the figures most eloquently expressive of tender feelings of both joy and sorrow. The draperies and lacework are wonderfully real. One we thought especially beautiful. The bereaved mourners are reluctant to part with their beloved relative and endeavour to detain him, but an angel gently leads him away; and he, though expressing love and sympathy for his friends, gladly follows his winged guide to a happier world above. Another portrays a little girl, tripping joyfully out from the tomb, over roses and other blossoming flowers. There are hundreds of others, full of deep pathos, works of Italy's greatest sculptors.

One tomb is said to have cost some £5000. The patriot Mazzini is buried here. At the highest point of the cemetery is a rotunda chapel, with very fine statuary of Moses and the prophets, Adam and Eve, and many other subjects.

There is an echo in this chapel that is wonderfully and unusually clear and distinct.

The shops at Genoa are small but handsomely furnished. The Genoese jewellery is very [81] beautiful, particularly the gold and silver filagree work. We were surprised to learn that the gold so-called is only silver twice gilt.

The postal arrangements here are very convenient. By leaving your address at the poste-restante, you have all your letters sent to you at the hotel without delay. There is a nice sheltered colonnade, a kind of Burlington Arcade, running half-way up at the back of the Via Roma, where the Hotel Isotta is situated, and close to the post-office; but on a rainy day, the noise made by those talking and promenading there is somewhat of a nuisance to visitors in the hotel. A very favourite promenade—indeed, the best in Genoa—is that before mentioned, in front of the harbour, but only when shaded from the heat of the sun, as the glare of its rays on the white marble is scarcely to be borne. Here in the evenings, when fine, the ladies of Genoa are seen to advantage, with their charming dress at once so elegant, modest, and becoming. English women might well take a few hints from its simplicity. These ladies are mostly handsome, and their movements are exceedingly graceful.

Here and there among the houses you sometimes see between two windows a painting simulating a third window half open, with perhaps a lady looking out into the street below, and this is so natural, that for the moment you fancy it is real. The houses are mostly six stories high, and the shops and lower apartments are consequently extremely gloomy. The upper rooms are [82] the most suitable to dwell in, but visitors frequently find it exceedingly fatiguing to toil up and down the stairs; and some of the stone-paved passages, miscalled streets, are almost perpendicular. Altogether, one needs extraordinary strength in this city of precipices. It is thus very unsuitable to invalids, apart from its variable climate. It is subject to very rapid changes of temperature, warm winds from the south alternating constantly with dry cold winds from the north, which render it very trying to delicate people.

The weather was so very cold during our visit, that, despite the great interest with which Genoa inspired us, we were glad to leave it for Pisa, which we understood would be milder. We had intended going hence to Milan, Florence, and Venice, but the cold warned us not to go further north; and we therefore altered our plans, and left Genoa on the 9th of January for Pisa, *en route* for Rome.

CHAPTER VIII.

ToC

Pisa—Hotel Victoria—Pisan weather—The poet Shelley—Historic Pisa—Lung 'Arno—San Stefano di Canalia—Cathedral—Baptistery—Leaning Tower—Campo Santo—The divine angels—The great chain of Pisa—Leghorn—Smollett's grave—Poste-restante—A sweet thing in Beggars—Ugolino's Tower—Departure for Rome.

We arrived at Pisa towards evening, and got into comfortable quarters at the Hotel Victoria, a quiet house, reminding us of the Swiss hotels in its style of entertainment. We soon had a nice little dinner set before us, and were hungry enough to do justice to it.

The next morning we found to our great disgust that it rained heavily. Our hotel was close to the river Arno, the river of Dante and Petrarch. It looked sandy and muddy as it flowed rapidly by. There were several gondola-like barges being towed by ropes on the other side, and Shelley's lines occurred to my memory, more in association of the poet with the place, than from the poetical look of the river itself—

"Within the surface of the fleeting river
The wrinkled image of the city lay
Immovably unquiet, and for ever
It trembles, but never fades away."

It is impossible to visit Pisa without recalling touching memories of the unfortunate and gifted [84]
poet who passed the last few years of his stormy life here, and only left it in the summer of 1823 for the Casa Magni, on the wild sea coast between Lerici and San Terenzio. It was from here that the *Don Juan* set out on its fatal trip to Leghorn one July morning—never to return.

Pisa is another very ancient city. It was founded about six centuries B.C., and was one of the twelve Etruscan cities. Like Genoa, it underwent many changes and vicissitudes, one of the greatest of which was the unexpected receding of the sea for some three or four miles, changing it from a busy, prosperous port to a comparatively unimportant inland town. It is still, however, much respected on account of its ancient greatness and learning, and is generally looked upon as the cradle of Italian art. In these latter days it is again becoming wealthy and enterprising. It is considered a remarkably good place for consumptive invalids. A fellow-traveller informed me that a friend of his had lived here for many years with *both lungs gone*! The climate is exceedingly mild, almost humid from the quantity of rain that falls: there is said to be, on an average, seventy-three days of rain, and one of snow, between October and April. We remained there only two days, and it rained almost incessantly during the whole time; the place looking very miserable under the circumstances. However, the inhabitants appeared quite used to it, and walked about unconcernedly enough, with their *green* umbrellas, evidencing at least some sunny days in the [85]
past.

The busiest part of the town is the Lung 'Arno (Street along the Arno), a broad, handsome quay extending down both banks of the river. The houses here are very imposing; one, in particular, is fronted with marble so exquisitely smooth and pure it might serve as a looking-glass.

Fortunately for visitors, most of the objects of interest are concentrated in one spot—a large square some ten minutes' walk from our hotel. The streets we passed through on our way thither were very quaint, the overhanging shops and cloistered pavements reminding us much of Chester. On the way we visited San Stefano di Cavalier, the church of the Knights of the Order of St. Stephen, and were much interested in the number of flags—Turkish trophies captured from the Moslem by the valiant Knights Crusaders. There were also some beautiful ceiling paintings of the battle of Lepanto, and other subjects.

On reaching the Piazza del Duomo, we found the four chief objects of interest we had come to seek. Forsyth pithily observes, "Pisa, while the capital of a republic, was celebrated for its profusion of marble, its patrician tower, and its grave magnificence. It can still boast some marble churches, a marble palace, and a marble bridge. Its towers, though no longer a mark of nobility, may be traced in the walls of modernized houses. Its gravity pervades every street, but its magnificence is now confined to one sacred corner. There stands the Cathedral, the [86]
Baptistery, the Leaning Tower, and the Campo Santo, all built of the same white marble, all varieties of the same architecture, all venerable with years, and fortunate both in their society and their solitude."

The Cathedral is indeed very fine; the columns, arches, and carvings are curiously beautiful. It was built by the Pisans after their great naval victory in 1063, and is, I think, the finest specimen now existing of the style called by the Italians the Gotico-Moresco. Baedeker says, "This remarkably perfect edifice is constructed entirely of white marble, with black and coloured ornamentation. The most magnificent part is the façade, which in the lower storey is adorned with columns and arches attached to the wall; in the upper parts with four open galleries, gradually diminishing in length: the choir is also imposing. The ancient bronze gates were replaced in 1602 by the present doors, with representations of scriptural subjects, executed by Mocchi, Tacca, Mora, and others from designs by Giovanni da Bologna." The interior is upborne by sixty-eight ancient Greek and Roman columns, captured by the Pisans in war. The nave, transept, and dome are most beautifully decorated with paintings, frescoes, and sculpture by Italy's greatest master, of whom Ariosto truly says—

"*Michael, piu che mortal, angel divino.*"
(Michael, less man than angel, and divine.)

Altogether it is one of the most beautiful Cathedrals I have ever seen, more particularly in its external architecture. [87]

Opposite, and but a few yards distant, is the Baptistery, but, unfortunately, we were too late to obtain admittance. It is a beautiful, circular structure some 160 feet in diameter, surrounded by columns below, and a gallery of smaller detached columns above, covered with a conical dome 190 feet high. The building was commenced in 1153, but was not finally completed until 1278. It is famous for its wonderful echo.

The Campanile, or, as it is usually styled, the "Leaning Tower," is on the other side of the Cathedral. It is 188 feet high, 53 feet round the base, and about 14 feet out of the perpendicular. It is now, I believe, generally understood that this obliquity was occasioned by the imperfect state of the foundations and the sinking of the soil, which is light and sandy, and which caused it to settle down on one side while the building was still uncompleted; and this defect was afterwards provided for by its architect. This is evident from the staircase, of some 294 steps, being also at an angle. There are some very heavy bells on the topmost towers, to counterbalance the deviation. It is supposed to have been constructed about 1174, by William of Innsprück, and afterwards finished by Italians, but it was not finally completed until 1350. It rises in storeys, which, like the Baptistery, are surrounded by half columns and six colonnades.

It is said that Galileo, who was born at Pisa, took advantage of the peculiarity of the leaning tower to make his experiments regarding the laws of gravitation; and there is in the Cathedral a great silver chandelier suspended after his design—by a simple rod—from the great height of the roof. This was so mathematically correct that the celebrated astronomer took his idea of the pendulum from it. There is a very fine view from the top of the tower, well repaying the trouble of ascending. We were very pleased with the old "leaning tower of Pisa," so familiar in our childhood as "one of the eight wonders of the world," and were not in the least degree disappointed, but rather wondered at its height and circumference. It seems perilous to have erected other buildings in its proximity, yet there are several handsome houses in its immediate vicinity, affording, perhaps, additional grounds for the theory of its accidental settlement. [88]

The Campo Santo, or burial-ground, was the next place we visited, accompanied by the custodian. It is not so beautiful in statuary as that of Genoa, but from its great antiquity is even more interesting. It is a long parallelogram 430 feet in length, with a covered cloister running all round; the central part supported by beautiful pilasters adorned with painting and frescoes, chiefly by Giotto, Orgagna, and Memmi, some of them almost obliterated. There is a very ancient and interesting collection of Roman, Etruscan, and Mediæval sculpture and sarcophagi, important links in the history of early Italian sculpture. The pavement is formed by the tombstones of those who have been interred here. Through the round and beautifully traced arched windows you look out on the original burial-ground in the centre, which is open to the sky, and, tradition says, is filled in with some fifty-three ship-loads of earth brought from Mount Calvary in the twelfth century (after the loss of the Holy Land), by the Archbishop of that time, so that the dead might repose in holy ground. I have heard that this Campo Santo is very impressive when viewed by moonlight, which can be done by arranging with the custodian at suitable times. [89]

One other memento of past naval glory that we saw, was the great chain across the more ancient part of Pisa. This was carried away by the Genoese as a trophy, after their conquest of the city, but was afterwards generously returned.

One of the pleasures of travelling not to be overlooked is that of retrospection: picture after picture and memory after memory rises to the mind, and one could go on for ever rebuilding in fancy all that has pleased and interested. With all my heart I can echo Dickens' words—"I find it difficult to separate my own delight in recalling, from your weariness in having them recalled."

We took train to Leghorn, to procure our letters from the post-restante there. The weather was so unpleasantly wet that, under the circumstances, we did not find the place very interesting. Leigh Hunt sums up *his* impressions in a few exceedingly apt, albeit somewhat unkind, words: "Leghorn is a polite Wapping, with a square and a theatre." The grave of Smollett, who lived here for some time, is one of the objects of interest to visitors from the British Isles. There is always a degree of melancholy pleasure in coming across the last resting-place of a distinguished countryman in a foreign land. [90]

While at the post-restante, we experienced a singular example of the persistency and malevolence of the typical Italian beggar. This time it was a woman and her child, both extremely dirty, the latter evidently alive with vermin. The woman, on my wife's refusing to give her anything, deliberately told her poor neglected child to rub up against her—in order, no doubt, to communicate some of her infirmity. To relieve only a portion of the beggars of all kinds who pursue you wherever you go in Italy, although this pest has been greatly reduced of late years, would leave you with very little time or money.

On returning, we had a fine view of Pisa. In the distance it appears like a city of white marble, with its tower leaning at one end, and the blue mountains far away in the background, looking, however, much nearer than is actually the case. Distance is almost annihilated in this clear, dry,

Italian atmosphere, which also to a great extent prevents decay, the most ancient buildings looking often singularly fresh. "Antiquity refuses to look ancient in Italy; it insists on retaining its youthful aspect."

The *Torre del Fame*, or "Tower of Famine," where Ugolino and his sons were starved to death, [91] stood "a littel out" of Pisa, as old Chaucer has it, but the very site of this monument of cruel tyranny and vengeance is now lost, or at any rate apocryphal.

We were really glad to reach the Hotel Victoria once more, our journey having been performed in the presently falling rain. There is much of interest in this old city, but our time was limited, and we were compelled to press on towards the south, and therefore left on the evening of the second day for Rome, the weather clearing up just about the time of our departure.

The Pisans have a significant motto:

"Pisa pensa a chi posa."
(Pisa sits ill
On those who sit still.)

We did not, however, stay long enough in the town to experience the truth of the aphorism.

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[92]

CHAPTER IX.

ToC

Arrival in Rome—Hotel de la Ville—The Corso—The Strangers' Quarter —Roman Guides—View from the Capitol—"How are the Mighty fallen!"—The sculpture-gallery of the Capitol—The Dying Gladiator —The Venus—Hawthorne's Marble Faun—Bambino Santissimo— The Mamertine Prison—The Forum—Palaces—The Coliseum— Longfellow's "Michael Angelo."

Travelling by the slow second-class train, we did not arrive at Rome until nearly 11 p.m.; yet the journey proved interesting, especially as we approached our destination. The stillness of night increased the impressive awe that inspired us as we neared the "Eternal City." It was not only cold and dark, but foggy; and we could see very little; conjecture, however, was busy as we caught, through an occasional gleam of light, the shadows of outlying monuments and ruins. As we crossed the silent-rolling Tiber, and the reverberations of the railway bridge smote on our ears with a hollow, sepulchral sound, we felt, almost with a shiver, that we were entering a city of the dead.

The fog was extremely cold and penetrating, striking one almost like the malaria, and we were glad to get to the well-lighted station, and mingle with the cheerful animated crowd on the [93] platform, and did not even feel the intrusive hotel omnibus-conductors a nuisance, but gladly consigned ourselves to the guidance of one, and drove away. However, we soon found that Rome was *Imperial* in her charges. The first hotel wanted from ten to twelve francs for a bedroom per night, the second likewise. Ultimately we were safely housed about midnight in the Hotel de la Ville, in the Piazza del Popolo, at the head of the Corso. Though perhaps a little out of the way, and less conveniently situated than the more central hotels in the Piazza di Spagna, it has many advantages in comfort, is quiet and moderate in charge, and close to the English church.

This Hotel de la Ville was once the palace and museum of the Marquis Campana. It is surrounded by so-called "English gardens," beautifully decorated with columns, statues, fountains, and orange trees full of golden fruit.

The next morning, on rising, we felt the dream of many years was at last realized!

"Thou art truly a world, O Rome!" says Goethe; and we indeed felt it so, as, having breakfasted, we sallied forth, eager to begin our explorations. Our first visit was naturally to the English bookseller's, where we purchased a guide-book. A plan of Rome may always be obtained at one's hotel, and it is well to study the streets, etc., and arrange one's campaign of sight-seeing. A good way is to begin by visiting the nearest objects of interest, which can be accomplished on foot; [94] then to make use of the omnibus; and finally, of the carriages, for more distant places outside the walls. These latter are cheap enough, as you may drive from one end of Rome to the other for a franc.

The Corso, the main street in the city, is very narrow, and about a mile in length. Starting from the Piazza del Popolo, it extends to the foot of the Capitol. Most of the shops are situated here, and when lined with fashionable carriages, it is very crowded, particularly just outside the *cafés*. The other principal thoroughfares are the Strada del Babbuina, ending in the Piazza di Spagna; and the Strada di Ripetta, leading to the Tiber. Most of the streets converge into the Piazza di Venezia, where is situated the tramway station, from which omnibuses run to all parts of the

town. This corner of the city is usually known as the "Stranger's Quarter." Groups of military men were lounging about, and blocking the pavements, characteristically indulging in *dolce far niente* aided by the eternal cigarette; indeed, the whole population appear to smoke all day long; both wine and tobacco being too cheap and plentiful for the good of the people.

I believe there are very few *good* guides in Rome—few at least who do their duty conscientiously, and with interest, but all asking some twelve francs a day, just to ride about with you and smoke innumerable cigarettes. A really good guide is worth securing, and saves much time, trouble, and expense, besides giving most valuable information sometimes. On the first day, we were lucky enough to pick up one of the right sort, with a toga, cloak, and Roman profile; but [95] unfortunately his pronunciation of English was such a jargon we were quite unable to make head or tail of it, especially when most eager to obtain some information of interest, which he was willing and even anxious to convey.

He took us to the top of the Capitol—at least, I accompanied him to the very flagstaff; but it was blowing so tempestuously that my wife was obliged to be content to remain a flight of steps below, and, being the hour of noon, the great bell (which Garibaldi struck when he called the Romans "to arms") boomed out twelve mighty strokes with its immense clapper, and nearly deafened her. The wind was so strong that I had to take off my hat and cling to the parapet. But how interesting was the panorama that met my gaze! Right over the Eternal City beneath me, and far away beyond the plains around it, lay that great range of bare mountains over which, in the day of her distress, poured Rome's Gothic enemies, in wild and overwhelming hordes. Wasted and enfeebled by the constant drain made on her resources to supply the many provinces of her fair empire, her very vitals insidiously sapped and impoverished by the selfish luxury and vice to which her pagan civilization had brought her, what wonder that she fell an easy prey. Yet the heart still yearns over her in her mighty fall, and as I looked, and caught the enthusiasm of my Roman guide, the lament of Byron rose to my lips:

"O Rome! my country! city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee, [96]
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, ye
Whose agonies are evils of a day!—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

"The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless, and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago:
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers; dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

"The Goth, the Christian, time, war, flood, and fire
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climb'd the capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:—
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er her dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, 'Here was, or is,' where all is doubly night?

"Alas! the lofty city! and alas!
The trebly hundred triumphs! and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page! but these shall be
Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
Alas, for earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free!"

Around lay the seven hills on which Rome was originally built. The Capitoline, on which I was [97] standing, the Palatine, Quirinal, Cœlius, Aventine, Esquiline, Viminal. Some of them appeared merely green mounds, the remains of the wonderfully strong and ancient walls, and here and there the broken outline of some palace of the great Cæsars. Immediately beneath us lay the mighty Coliseum, the Forum, and other monuments of Rome's ancient grandeur and departed glory. Away to the north-west, across the muddy, silent Tiber, lay decaying papal Rome, crested by the dome of St. Peter's and the Vatican. Again, to the north-east, right over ancient Rome, and towards the Quirinal and Esquiline hills, young Italy, emancipated and free, her national flag

floating in the breeze from the palace of the king. It was a grand and impressive sight, and one never to be forgotten.

On descending from the tower, we passed through storehouses filled with broken remains of figures, capitals, plinths, and other fragments disentombed from the Forum, etc. The three palaces which comprise the principal buildings of the modern Capitol were designed by Michael Angelo, and form three sides of a square. In the centre stands the noble equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius. The open side faces the modern part of Rome. The palace on the left side, or Capitoline Museum, as it is called, contains one of the finest collections of sculpture in Italy. It is quite a day's work to see it properly, but we had to be content with an hour or two.

[98] Here we saw that most noble and pathetic presentment of Death, grappled with, and almost conquered, in the statue of the Dying Gladiator. The right arm was restored by Michael Angelo, and the guide informed me that by general agreement it should have been brought a little more forward, and that the great sculptor, although aware of it, was unable for some reason to restore it in this way. I think, however, that his conception as resting, must be the right and natural posture, as the wounded man seems to depend on the support of that arm entirely, while struggling in the agonies of death. You may almost see the moisture on his manly brow, while in the intensely expressive face you catch glimpses of that lifetime which is passing across his memory in the space of a moment—thoughts of the wife and little ones in that far-away home to which he will never return. It is a fine subject, exquisitely conceived and executed, and worthily described in Byron's two immortal stanzas. Upstairs, in a small rotunda-shaped temple, enshrined in a niche in the wall, we saw that most beautiful conception of womanhood, known as the Venus of the Capitol. She appears as though suddenly disturbed while taking her bath, and the expression of frightened innocence and maiden shame upon the face, and the graceful shrinking attitude of the limbs, form a picture of perfect purity and loveliness. The guide turned the figure upon its pedestal so that we might catch the beauty of its curves and soft outline, and though the action seemed half profane, rudely disturbing one's semi-entranced admiration, I did not until [99] then catch the full beauty of "the statue that enchants the world." An almost living memorial of the "Age of Beauty," there seems in this one radiant figure to be enfolded the whole wealth of love and loveliness that distinguished so richly those times when—

"Human hands first moulded, and then mocked
With moulded limbs, more lovely than its own,
The human form, till marble grew divine."

Yet one other masterpiece of ancient art we eagerly looked for was the marble Faun of Praxiteles, around which the graceful genius of Nathaniel Hawthorne has woven such a delicate web of romance, the figure itself being inimitably described in the opening chapter. But this and other immortal works are made familiar to us by so many gifted writers, that I need but to mention their names to conjure them in all their beauty to the eye of the intelligent reader, who instantly recalls to mind some beautiful passage in poetry or prose, to which any words I could pen would be superfluous. "All men are poets by nature," but "adequate expression is rare;" and though a vivid sense of beauty and a passionate appreciation of the grand and sublime is open to all, yet to genius alone it is given to clothe the fleeting thought with words of haunting music, which shall live as long as the idea that gave them birth.

Close by the museum is the Church of Santa Maria di Ara Cœli, ascended by some 124 steps. Here we were reverently ushered by a monk into a little chapel, to see the Santissimo Bambino. [100] After opening the shutter, he approached the altar, and from an iron door in the top drew out a drawer, inside which was a box; from this he carefully lifted out, reverently crossing himself as he touched it, a doll of wax or painted wood, supposed to be an image of the Infant Jesus. The legend runs, that an angel appeared in the porch of the church at midnight, and, ringing the bell, flew back to heaven, leaving the image of the Sacred Babe to the care of the church, just as a poor child is dropped at the door of a foundling hospital. The doll is literally covered with jewellery, and diamond-rings, and other gems and trinkets, sewn into its dress, the offerings of its misguided devotees. It is said that the priests at the church "farm" this Bambino, and make a good income by exhibiting it, letting it out on special occasions for large profits. Leave the priests alone for their ability to work on the ignorance and credulity of the people! It is sometimes carried to the houses of the sick, being supposed to possess miraculous healing properties. After duly displaying this treasure, the monk carefully replaced it, locking it up with a profound sigh.

This is only one of the many wonderful relics that are shown, and absurd legends that are told, and one hardly knows whether to treat with pity or contempt the ignorant credulity shown by the lower orders of Roman Catholics and their priesthood.

Between the Capitol and the Forum is the Mamertine prison, where among other illustrious [101] captives were confined Jugurtha, Sejanus, and the Catiline conspirators; St. Paul, too, noblest of men, was here held in durance vile, and Popish tradition says St. Peter also. Passing through a little church, we were lighted down into a dark dungeon, and below this found another, communicating by narrow stone steps; but it is said the poor prisoners were *dropped* from the one to the other through a hole or trap-door. They were confined below until sentenced to death, when they were brought up the steps to the dungeon above, where they were executed, and their bodies thrown out for the satisfaction of the people thronging the Forum. There is a dint in the stone wall where it is said St. Paul's head was battered by his inhuman gaoler; this, though it sounds improbable enough, is gravely related as a fact. A subterranean passage extends to a considerable distance, which I penetrated as far as I was able, till a cold blast of air, evidently from the river Tiber, almost extinguished my candle, and the guide shouted to me to return.

It is remarkable how much lower that part of ancient Rome surrounding the Forum lies compared to the rest of the city—certainly from ten to fifteen feet. Modern or mediæval Rome seems in some instances to be partially built over the older portion. Why this should have been, it is difficult to say. New and interesting excavations are made continuously, and I could have remained here the live-long day, watching the gradual disentombment of the beautiful columns, [102] statuary, and other long-buried mementoes of Rome's past greatness—and, as her foundations were laid bare, rebuilding and repeopling, according to my own ideal fancies, this great temple of eloquence. "What men have crossed the shadows of these very columns! What thoughts that have moved the world were born beneath them!" Scene after scene rose to my mind which had been enacted in this very spot, one fair vision standing out like a star from the rest—Virginia, "the sweetest maid in Rome," in her white garments, as though prepared for the sacrifice, satchel in hand, tripping with "her small glancing feet along the Forum," and up the sacred street from the schools, the remains of which may still be seen cavernlike.

After all, what is left of Rome's greatness? A few broken columns only? Surely not. We are still as deeply moved as ever by the history of her mighty rise and fall; the world still acknowledges the governing wisdom of her imperishable laws, and is still benefited by the inspiring example of her noble men and virtuous women. But the true "Eternal City" must be looked for elsewhere than in the most powerful of pagan nations. This indeed must have solaced the little fraternity of Christians at ancient Rome, when so cruelly persecuted: and what a glorious triumph is theirs now!

We did not omit to pay a visit to the palaces of the Cæsars, which lie clustered above and about the Forum. It is rather difficult to understand how the Romans obtained sufficient light for their [103] dwellings, the rooms being generally small, and without external windows. What there was, however, usually came from above, as the courts were open; and also by radiation, the large marble tanks in these courts being filled with water, on which the descending light smote, and was dispersed around. There is a subterranean passage leading from the palaces to the Coliseum, which was made use of by the emperor and his suite for their transit thither; and a terribly anxious little journey that must often have been to the great Cæsars.

The grand old Coliseum still rears its crumpling walls proudly towards the skies, though almost two-thirds lie in ruins. The centre has been filled in with earth, so that we scarcely see the original bottom, but there is sufficient left to show clearly to what use this great amphitheatre was put. One intelligent guide points out the evidences of formerly existing hydrants, which had led to the Tiber, and thus flooded the lower part with water for the exhibition of mock naval engagements. Then, when the water was let out again, great scaffolding poles were inserted into stone sockets, and a platform suspended on a level with the dens, from which the wild beasts were let into the arena. And here the gladiators fought, and the Christians and criminals were torn to pieces, to make sport for the countless multitude sitting, crowded tier upon tier around, while the blue heavens looked down on the inhuman and bloody sight, and the poor martyr [104] Christians, fearlessly awaiting their doom, sighed upwards, "How long? how long?" We could also see the trap-doors from whence buffoons were hoisted on to the stage. To trace all this was interesting, though it saddened one to reflect on all the horrors that had been enacted here. Much of the brickwork had evidently been veneered with slabs of marble, most of which has now disappeared; but it rather puzzled me to see so many great chips made in certain parts of the marble columns. Our guide, however, informed me that they had bars of iron in the centre, and it was to obtain this iron for making into spear-heads for the defence of Rome that the marble was so broken and chipped at the joints—an inglorious ending truly for these witnesses of past splendour!

It has been said that Byron's celebrated description of the Coliseum is better than the reality; that "he beheld the scene in his mind's eye, through the witchery of many intervening years, and faintly illumined it with starlight instead of the broad glow of moonshine." Be this as it may, the noble stanzas are all too well known to bear further quotation. The reader may possibly be less acquainted with the fine lines on the subject, which Longfellow has put in the mouth of Michael Angelo, in the fragmentary tragedy of that name lately published in America:

"Tradition says that fifteen thousand men
Were toiling for ten years incessantly
Upon this amphitheatre.
Behold,

How wonderful it is! The queen of flowers,
The marble rose of Rome! Its petals torn [105]
By wind and rain of twice five hundred years;
Its mossy sheath half rent away, and sold
To ornament our palaces and churches,
Or to be trodden under feet of man
Upon the Tiber's bank; yet what remains
Still opening its fair bosom to the sun,
And to the constellations that at night
Hang poised above it like a swarm of bees.

"The rose of Rome, but not of Paradise;
Not the white rose our Tuscan poet saw,
With saints for petals. When this rose was perfect

Its hundred thousand petals were not saints,
But senators in their Thessalian caps,
And all the roaring populace of Rome;
And even an Empress and the Vestal Virgins,
Who came to see the gladiators die,
Could not give sweetness to a rose like this.
The sand beneath our feet is saturate
With blood of martyrs; and these rifted stones
Are awful witnesses against a people
Whose pleasure was the pain of dying men.

"Look at these walls about us and above us!
They have been shaken by earthquakes, have been made
A fortress, and been battered by long sieges;
The iron clamps, that held the stones together,
Have been wrenched from them; but they stand erect
And firm, as if they had been hewn and hollowed
Out of the solid rock, and were a part
Of the foundations of the world itself.
... A thousand wild flowers bloom
From every chink, and the birds build their nests
Among the rained arches, and suggest
New thoughts of beauty to the architect."

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[106]

CHAPTER X.

ToC

Trajan's Gate—The Appian Way—The English Cemetery—Catacombs of St. Calixtus—Reflections on the Italian seat of government—Churches—S. Paolo Fuori le Mura—Santa Maria Maggiore—S. Pietro in Vincoli—"Was St. Peter ever in Rome?"—Fountains of Rome—Dell' Aqua Felice—Paulina—Trevi—Rome's famous Aqueducts—Beggars—Priests.

Trajan's Gate, near the Coliseum, is a beautiful piece of architecture. No Jew can ever be prevailed upon to pass beneath it—at which we can hardly wonder, for it is like forcing them again to walk under the "Caudine forks," reminding them all too forcibly of their conquerors, the destruction of their beloved city, and the bitter humiliation they have ever since suffered.

After passing the Arch of Trajan, we soon reach the great high-road, paved with diamond-shaped blocks of lava stone, extending a vast distance, even beyond Naples. This is the celebrated Via Appia. It takes its name from Appius Claudius the Censor. How the mind travels back into centuries long past! How the imagination recalls the glory of ancient times! Like Milton, we seem to see—

"The conflux issuing forth, or entering in:
Proctors, proconsuls, to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state;
Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power; [107]
Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings;
Or embassies from regions far remote,
In various habits, on the Appian road."

The road, apart from itself, has many interests from the numerous relics and monuments of distant ages all along its way. First, we pass the tomb of the Scipios, just inside the Gate of St. Sebastian, and the Arch of Drusus; then the tombs of Augustus and Livia, and many others, mentioned by St. Paul as belonging to Cæsar's household; then, crossing the Aqua-taccio, is the old church Domine quo Vadis, or "Whither goest thou?" where, according to tradition, St. Peter, flying from persecution, met the Saviour, who caused him to return by asking this question. Then we come to the tomb of Cæcilia Metella:

"Standing with half its battlements alone,
And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
The garland of eternity."

The "stern round tower" looks little like a woman's grave. Many other tombs, all possessing more or less interest, we passed, and I must not forget the English cemetery, where—

"Like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread."

Here lie the remains of our two young poets, taken from us in the flower of their manhood, ere genius had fairly ripened, and ere, alas! we had learned to appreciate them at their true value.

At length we arrived at the Catacombs of St. Calixtus, the most extensive in Rome. We first [108] passed through the church of St. Sebastian, and then, following a monk with lighted tapers, were soon underground among dismal tunnels, with here and there an open tomb, or rather great shelves cut in the soft brownish rocks (*tufa*). In many places the sides of these tunnel passages were almost honeycombed with open graves. There were still in some of these little heaps of decaying bones: occasionally a name was roughly cut below, executed probably by one of the little flock of the faithful, and an inscription in Greek, for the early church was more Greek than Latin. These long corridors extend in every direction, and, in fact, surround the city on this side. It was a frequent custom amongst the Christians in Rome to pay visits on Sunday to the sepulchres of the martyrs, and especially to the Catacombs. When the sacred roll of martyrs had scarcely been closed, Jerome went the round with his schoolfellows, and speaks awesomely of the darkness and dread gloom of these crypts, deep in the earth, dimly lighted by broken gleams through shafts and holes. They were reached by a narrow entrance, down a long flight of steps, and through innumerable winding passages, all carefully concealed from the persecutors. How great a contrast to the glowing sunshine, and the light breezes, which whispered through the vine leaves on the hills outside! God's love and man's hatred! Our thoughts wandered away irresistibly to those times when the Christians lived here like moles underground, until they died, [109] and were laid by the loving and devoted hands of their comrades in these dark shelves of the rock. It is said that there are some seven million bodies buried in these Catacombs. True enough that all around the Eternal City is one vast tomb, especially in the direction of the Via Appia, recalling the prophecy, "He shall fill the places with dead bodies."

I have sometimes thought it a pity that Rome rather than Milan was selected as the seat of the Italian Government. I say Milan, because I think neither Florence nor Turin are suitable from a military point of view, as, if once the heights around were seized by a hostile army, the city would be lost. Now, Milan, as far as the eye can reach, stands in the midst of fine open plains, and an enemy could find but little shelter or commanding position. Rome seems almost polluted by these vast tombs surrounding her, and will require an immense amount of labour to render it healthy as a continual residence. Yet no doubt Nature, the never-resting, ever-working, irresistible evolutionary power, will assist in the coming changes. For "Nature," says Emerson, "is nascent, infant. When we are dizzied with the arithmetic of the savant toiling to compute the length of her line, the return of her curve, we are steadied by the perception that a great deal is doing; that all seems just begun: remote aims are in active accomplishment. We can point nowhere to anything final; but tendency appears on all hands: planet, system, constellation, total Nature, is growing [110] like a field of maize in July; is becoming somewhat else; is in rapid metamorphosis.... Says Nature 'I have not arrived at any end; I grow, I grow.'"

It was a great relief to gain the open air after the long and saddening exploration of the Catacombs. Some three or four miles on the road towards Ostia we passed some very old monuments and tombs, and also the ruins of ancient residences. All around is an uncultivated wilderness, a few fine but rusty iron gates alone remaining to show their past pomp and grandeur as suburban residences.

After passing these, we came suddenly on a splendid, newly built Cathedral. It was indeed surprising to find so large and handsome a structure far away from any town or village—completely isolated among the dead! It was the Basilica S. Paolo Fuori le Mura, which was built in 1847 in this uninhabited spot, on the site of a venerable and interesting church burnt in 1823, which had been founded by Constantine to mark the grave of St. Paul. The present edifice was rebuilt under the eye of Pius IX., who was to have been buried here. It is some four hundred feet long, and is divided into fine aisles and noble pillars of Baveno marble and granite in single blocks, two of which support an arch over the altar, dedicated to the sister of Honorius, who completed the former church, and whose design has been copied in the present one, which also [111] contains copies of the old mosaics by Giotto's pupils. The front is likewise a copy, and when completed is to be adorned by a great mosaic costing 30,000 scudi. The timber roof is richly carved and gilt; and the frescoes in the nave are ornamented with mosaic heads of all the popes, chiefly modern, from the government studios, but there are a few ancient ones among them. It seems as though the whole civilized world had united to do honour to this noble edifice and the great Apostle in memory of whom it was erected. The alabaster pillars of the high altar were presented by the infidel Pacha of Egypt; a detached altar in the transept was a gift from the heretic Emperor of Russia; the granite pillars in the nave came from the Emperor of Austria. Among them is the one celebrated by Wordsworth when it stood on the Simplon, and which Napoleon intended for the triumphal arch of Milan. Some noble-minded and generous Jew has bequeathed a large sum for the support of the church; and the King of Holland gave 50,000 francs for the same purpose—truly a world's acknowledgment of St. Paul's large-hearted, self-sacrificing, and noble life. Among other treasures it possesses a painting of the Conversion of St. Paul by Camuccini, the choir by Carlo Maderno, and a fine St. Benedict by Ramaldi.

An adjoining cloister, belonging to the Benedictine Convent, dates from the thirteenth century. It rests on fluted and twisted columns, and contains in its library a small collection of Christian [112] gravestones from A.D. 355. One bears the figure of an organ, with the words, "*Rustreus te vit, and Feci*." The atrium of the old church, which is the distinguishing mark of a Basilica, existed down to the seventeenth century, and is now replaced by a modern court. The plan of the former church was a duplicate of that of old St. Peter's. About twenty-four of its columns were taken from the tomb of Hadrian; and yet one other remarkable feature consists in its having been under the patronage of the English kings till the time of Henry VIII., when that fickle monarch broke allegiance with Rome altogether, for reasons of his own. Though this church always seems to have struck travellers with admiration, as combining in itself the last reminiscence of pagan Rome, and the earliest mementoes of the Christian world, it had nevertheless been so far altered by the processes of decay and whitewash, that many of its most striking peculiarities and beauties had been effaced, even before its total destruction by fire.

I admired the now existing church extremely, both for its noble proportions and the beautiful simplicity of its design and ornamentation. The stained glass windows are one of its distinguishing marks of beauty. "It is a woful thing, a sad necessity, that any Christian soul should pass from earth without once seeing an antique painted window, with the bright Italian sunshine glowing through it. There is no other such true symbol of the glories of the better world, [113] where a celestial radiance will be inherent in all things and persons, and render each continually transparent to the sight of all." The atrium, with its marble floor of almost spotless beauty, its lofty columns and noble simplicity of architecture, represented my beau-ideal of a Christian temple. There was not a single seat or chair—which I believe is the case with all Basilicas, the congregation standing and kneeling only—and this fact greatly adds to the apparent vastness of this noble structure, which forms a beautiful and suitable monument to the great and good St. Paul.

While on the subject of churches, I may mention two other fine edifices we visited, both full of interest, though of a diverse nature.

The Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, on the Esquiline Hill, near the railway station, is one of the four chief Basilicas of Rome, and well repays a visit. It gives one more the idea of what a Basilica was really meant to be than any similar edifice in Rome. The richly painted panels, the interior colonnade with its long harmonious rows of pillars, the clerestory decorated *en suite* with small pilasters and panels, and the beautiful panelled roof, all combine to give the building an air of lofty and noble magnificence. The high altar is very beautiful, with its decorations of marble, gilding, and precious stones: it is also interesting as possessing the crypt in which Pius IX. was interred. The tombs of Sixtus V. and Pius V. are also here; and in contrast to the S. Paolo Basilica, [114] which has no side chapels at all, this church possesses two very fine ones, the Borghese, and the Presigio, which are as rich in ornamental work as the rest of the building. The latter contains the supposititious cradle of our Lord; and the former has *in veritas* the beautiful tomb of a Borghese princess and high-born Englishwoman (Lady Geraldine Talbot). The altar of the Virgin is supported by four pillars of oriental jasper, agate, and gilded bronze; the image, which is said to have been the work of St. Luke(!), is richly adorned with precious stones. The church itself abounds in beautiful pictures, statuary, and tombs. The chapel of Santa Lucia is also very interesting, possessing many beautiful tombs, bas-reliefs, etc.

The other church we visited, S. Pietro in Vincoli (St. Peter in Chains), is considered the most ancient in Rome. It is a noble hall, supported by twenty columns of Parian marble, and has many fine and interesting monuments. It is always a debatable point this—St. Peter's presence in Rome. We have no actual proof that he was ever there, and yet the great number of places associated with his name and made sacred to his memory seem to point strongly to such a supposition. Yet it may be only the religious deceit of the priesthood, who thus couple persons and things with places, and insert monstrous legends and traditions for their own mercenary ends, and, considering the immense number of extraordinary relics, it is very evident that Mr. Shapira has had many predecessors in the art of manufacturing antiquities. [115]

One of the most pleasing features of Rome is its numerous beautiful fountains, generally to be found in the piazzas, sometimes surrounded by fine architectural and sculptural groupings. It seems as if the great men of every age in this city "have found no better way of immortalizing their memories than by the shifting, indestructible, ever-new, ever-changing upgush and downfall of water. They have written their names in that unstable element, and proved it a more durable record than brass or marble."

The Fontana dell' Aqua Felice, near the baths of Diocletian, has a fine statue of Moses striking the rock, by Prospero da Brescia, who is said to have died of mortification at the ridicule excited by the figure of the great lawgiver, in which a slight uncouthness is certainly perceptible. The figures of Aaron and Gideon have been added to the group by other artists. This fountain was celebrated by Tasso under the name of the Fontana di Termini. The Fontana Paulina on the summit of the Janiculum, near Porto S. Pancrazio, is like a triple triumphal arch. The Fontana di Trevi, situated near the Palazzo Poli, is the most famous in Rome. Its clear, sparkling water comes through the subterranean aqueducts from far beyond the city walls. The design of the fountain is by some sculptor of the Bernini school, and represents Neptune with his attendant tritons, Health and Abundance. "It is as magnificent a piece of work as ever human skill [116] contrived. At the foot of the palatial façade is strewn, with careful art and ordered irregularity, a broad and broken heap of massive rock, looking as if it might have lain there since the deluge. Over a central precipice falls the water in a semicircular cascade, and from a hundred crevices on all sides silvery jets gush up, and streams spout out of the mouths and nostrils of stone

monsters, and fall in glistening drops; while other rivulets, that have run wild, come leaping from one rude step to another, over stones that are mossy, slimy, and green with sedge, because in a century of their wild play, Nature has adopted the Fountain of Trevi, with all its elaborate devices, for her own. Finally the water, tumbling, sparkling, and dashing, with joyous haste and never-ceasing murmur, pours itself into a great marble-brimmed reservoir, and fills it with a quivering tide, on which is seen continually a snowy semicircle of momentary foam from the principal cascade, as well as a multitude of snow points from smaller jets. The basin occupies the whole breadth of the piazza, whence flights of steps ascend to its border. A boat might float and make voyages from one shore to another, in this mimic lake."

The great aqueducts, by which these fountains are supplied, are marvels of ingenuity and engineering skill, sometimes bringing the pure crystal stream from lakes and hills thirty and forty miles away. Dyer, the old eighteenth-century poet, has a graceful mention of them in his "Ruins of Rome":

"From yon blue hills
Dim in the clouds, the radiant aqueducts [117]
Turn their innumerable arches o'er
The spacious desert, brightening in the sun,
Proud and more proud in their august approach;
High o'er irriguous vales and woods and towns,
Glide the soft whispering waters in the wind,
And more united pour their silver streams
Among the figur'd rocks in murmuring falls,
Musical ever."

These noble aqueducts were the chief source of Rome's health and luxury, and were in charge of Curators or Prefects, who formed a kind of "water board." It is a system which might with great advantage be adopted by our own large cities, which are lamentably wanting in a good and liberal supply of fresh water—greedy monopolists charging what they choose, and giving us the precious fluid clean or unclean, when or how they like. The Government might do much to improve this state of things by constructing aqueducts after the ancient Roman style.

Another marked feature in Roman life we are *not* so anxious to see imitated in our own country, is the abnormal quantity of beggars one meets everywhere. They are of every sort and description, and swarm round you wherever you go. Some of them a most pitiful and distressing sight, only half clothed and seemingly starving. Their number is only equalled by the legion of priests, who come upon you at every turn, in all grades, from cardinals to novices. Of course, this is by no means to be wondered at, Rome being the one great focus and clerical seminary of the [118] Roman Catholic world. But the contrast between the starving squalid poor and the legions of well-fed priests is very painful.

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[119]

CHAPTER XI.

ToC

Papal Rome—Narrow streets—St. Angelo—Benvenuto Cellini—St. Peter's—Pietà Chapel—The Dead Christ—Tomb of the Stuarts—Anniversary of St. Peter's—Grand ceremonial—Cardinal Howard—The Vatican—Pictures—Pauline and Sistine Chapels—"The Last Judgment"—Pinacoteca—Raphael's "Transfiguration"—The Madonna—Christian Martyrs—Sculptures—Tapestries—Leo XIII.—Italian Priesthood—St. John Lateran—Marvellous legends and relics—Native irreverence to sacred edifices.

"The Papal City," says Howels, "contrives at the beginning to hide the Imperial City from your thoughts, as it hides it in such a great degree from your eye." I had often asked our guide what had become of this or that column or statue of ancient Rome, and he replied that the popes, jealous of the greatness of *Pagan* Rome, and the interest excited in the minds of the present generations, Catholic and Protestant, removed them as quietly as possible after their disinterment, lest the world should say that the glory and grandeur of the Pagans of old exceeded that of the Papacy.

We drove through a labyrinth of narrow, dirty, crowded streets, crossing the Tiber by the fine bridge of St. Angelo. The picturesque castle of this name was a very important fortress in the Middle Ages. It was commenced by Hadrian, and afterwards finished as a family mausoleum by [120] Antoninus Pius, and must always possess a romantic interest from the part it played in the life of that most whimsical and audacious of autobiographers, Benvenuto Cellini. The account he gives of his escape from its dungeons is quite Dumasesque in its thrilling details; and this is not the

only famous escape in the records of the fortress, Pope Paul III., who was confined there in his youth, having succeeded in making a secret exit.

Turning to the left through one of the narrow streets, we find ourselves suddenly in a very fine piazza, before the largest Christian temple in the world—colossal St Peter's. It stands proudly and grandly on the Vatican Hill, on the site of the earliest Christian church, built by Constantine the Great in the fourth century.

In the centre of the great piazza, which slopes upwards, is an ancient Egyptian obelisk brought from the circus of Nero, and surrounded by points of the compass let into the pavement. This is flanked by two immense fountains, from which the water rises in a sparkling column to the height of seventy feet. They are supplied by an aqueduct from Lake Bramano, some seventeen miles distant.

St. Peter's is approached from the piazza, by a long-graduated series of great steps. It is from the top of these that the Pope gives his blessing at Easter to the multitude in the immense court below. The piazza is environed by more than a thousand shops, which impede the view, [121] considerably foreshorten and hide the great dome of St. Peter's, and detract from its imposing grandeur; causing the façade to appear of an immense and disproportionate height. The whole stupendous structure—the cross of which, lifting itself literally to the blue skies, can be seen over the hills from the sea—occupied 116 years in building, and was continued during the reigns of eighteen popes. Leo X. was one of these, and his scheme of raising money for the work by the sale of indulgences, went far to produce the Reformation. Truly God's ways are wonderful, the almost trifling acts of a single person often bringing about the most mighty results and changes in the world!

"St. Peter's is less like a church than a collection of large churches enclosed under one gigantic roof.... One is lost in it. It is a city of columns, sculptures, and mosaics." So says the clever, versatile Willis, in his "Pencillings by the Way," and it would certainly take months to examine minutely all that is worthy of attention in this vast pile. Our time, unfortunately, was limited, and we were only able to notice some of the more celebrated and striking features. Of the plan of the building, and its architecture, external and internal, I will say nothing, for what can now be said that has not been said before, and far better than I could say it? Almost every one nowadays has formed his own idea of what this great church is like—of its exceeding vastness and extent, the [122] immensity of its over-arching dome, and its gorgeous and profuse decorations. Yet when they at length come to visit this preconceived and idealized vision, perhaps their feeling is almost one of vague disappointment. Like Hilda in the "Marble Faun," we at first prefer our own dream-edifice to the solid reality. It is, in fact, so immense that you utterly fail to take it in all at once; your gaze is arrested by ponderous columns and you must be content to see it in fragments. You yourself seem so lost in its immensity, that you find it impossible to take in its immeasurable vastness from any single standpoint, the mind utterly refusing to grasp it; but on a second and third visit, you gradually obtain a more comprehensive idea of its proportions.

"Thy mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal....

"Thou movest, but increasing with the advance,
Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,
Deceived by its gigantic elegance;
Vastness which grows, but grows to harmonize,
All musical in its immensities:
Rich marbles, richer painting, shrines where flame
The lamps of gold, and haughty dome which vies
In air with earth's chief structures, though the frame
Sits on the firm-set ground—and this the clouds must
claim.

"Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must break,
To separate contemplation, the great whole:
And as the ocean many bays will make,
That ask the eye—so here condense the soul
To more immediate objects, and control
Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart
Its eloquent proportions, and unroll [123]
In mighty graduations, part by part,
The glory, which at once upon thee did not dart.

"Not by its fault, but thine: our outward sense
Is but of gradual grasp—and as it is
That what we have of feeling most intense
Outstrips our faint expression; even so this
Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
Fools our fond gaze, and, greatest of the great,
Defies at first our nature's littleness,
Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate."

Mendelssohn says, "You strive to distinguish the ceiling as little as the canopy of heaven: you lose your way in St. Peter's; you take a walk in it, and ramble till you are quite tired. When Divine Service is performed and chanted there, you are not aware of it till you are quite close.... When the music commences, the sounds do not reach you for a long time, but echo and float in the vast space so that the most singular and vague harmonies are borne toward you."

The interior space is the more increased by the fact of there being no seats of any kind, and seems so immense that things of colossal size appear of only ordinary proportions. Thus, two apparently small cherubs, holding a vessel of holy water, are in reality six feet high; and other figures, almost insignificant in the distance, are really wonderfully large. The pen in the hand of St. Mark on the dome is five feet long.

There are about 134 popes buried here, and when looking at their grand and beautiful monuments, extending up the left aisle, one cannot but remember that these were the men [124] whose power was at times almost unlimited, who controlled the destinies of the world, and made emperors tremble; and the mind travels back into the dark ages of the past. But in these enlightened times, when the souls of men have shaken off the fetters of mediæval bondage, it is difficult to understand how our ancestors could have been so enslaved—worshipping the reigning pope, though even a Borgia, as a very God upon earth. Near the last column of the aisle is a colossal bronze statue of St. Peter, seated on a huge chair or throne. We noticed that every one (Roman Catholic) bowed before the image, and afterwards advanced and kissed one of the feet, the big toe of which is quite worn away with the friction of countless myriads of devout lips, and the general wiping of the sacred digit by each individual before venturing to kiss it. It would seem, alas! that the present generation is not so very far removed from the superstitions and absurdities of the past, after all!

In the Pietà Chapel is one of the most beautiful pieces of sculpture I have ever seen; it is Michael Angelo's *Dead Christ*. The Saviour's head rests on the knee of the Virgin Mother, whose face is full of the deepest pathos of holy love and intense sorrow. Truly a God-inspired work.

"Art is the gift of God, and must be used
Unto His glory. That in art is highest
Which aims at this."

How appropriate these words are, placed in the mouth of the great Buonaroti, we could hardly [125] imagine till we had seen this sublime work of art.

We felt greatly interested, in common with all our countrymen, in the tomb which contains the ashes of the last of the Stuarts. Canova's winged genii stand with reversed torches on either side of the door, which is now closed for ever.

I must confess that I was neither pleased nor edified by the services conducted in the gorgeous side chapels; they certainly seemed but a mechanical form of prayer, little less than sacrilegious; the bishops, priests, and choir hastening to get through the formula—those who were not yawning taking snuff. Indeed, there was a dreadful absence of real Christian humility and reverence. One day we arrived in time to witness a High Church ceremonial—it was the anniversary of St. Peter. Cardinal Howard officiated instead of the Pope, who had one of his frequent fits of the sulks towards Italy. He was supported by all the great dignitaries and potentates of the Romish Church, "a grotesque company of old womanish old men in gaudy gowns." The cardinal is a robust Englishman of the Friar Tuck style—the very antithesis to the spiritual, thoughtful, Newman type. He is, however, zealous in his duties, and much liked by the people. The principal part of the ceremony seemed to consist in the constant changing of the cardinal's gorgeous robes, accompanied by procession and prayer; and finally, when he left, the [126] people, more especially the women, rushed to kiss his hand. In spite of its incongruity in our eyes, it was rather a touching sight, and the cardinal seemed to realize almost painfully, as we did, the adoration of the poorer of his flock.

The music was instrumental and vocal, the former composed entirely of stringed instruments, and we were not at all inspired by it. It was not to be compared to the fine choirs of St Paul's, the Temple, or, Westminster Abbey; and for sacred music I think there is nothing like the grand, melodious swell of the organ. We found none of the grand Masses or other ceremonies of the Roman Church at St. Peter's, which could compare for a moment in reverential feeling with the solemn impressiveness of our own large churches during our beautiful and eloquent service, which is so full of deep and earnest feeling, and yet withal so simple that all can understand; and what more sublime than to hear a vast congregation singing, as with a single voice, one of our fine old hymns, such as the imperishable and soul-inspiring "Rock of Ages"? Yet even here I think there is sometimes too much of a secular character now introduced into church music.

The more one sees of St. Peter's the less easy it is to realize that so magnificent and wonderful an edifice has been constructed by man. Compare the stupendous structure with the puny attempts of the present day. Architecture seems almost a lost art. I think this is owing to want of [127] patience; the lack of doing all things thoroughly and well; the preference for mere show rather than durability and beauty; and the selfish gratification of our own generation rather than a patriotic pride and thought for future ages. If the nineteenth century has made great advances in the industries, science, and thought, it has also introduced a taste for meretricious imitation in every department of manufacture and art. This is essentially the century for contracts. Everything is done by contract, and not only is the matter of cost, but also that of time, made a strong point in the bargain. When St. Peter's was built, estimates of cost were not thought of, and no one ever dreamed of fixing a date for completion of so vast a work.

To gain admission to the galleries of paintings and sculpture in the Vatican, it is necessary to procure tickets. These may always be obtained of your hotel proprietor, while a pass to the Pantheon and to all exceptional ceremonies can generally be got by an early application to your Banker.

Next to the Vatican, the Villa Borghese, near the Piazza del Popolo, and the gardens of the Pincian Hill, has the most important picture-galleries in Rome. The Palazzo Doria, in the Corso, is also one of the finest in the city. There are three large fronts enclosing a spacious court, and this is surrounded by a piazza. There is a very handsome staircase, leading to the splendid series of galleries full of priceless works by the great masters—Correggio, Raphael, Titian, and others. [128] Unfortunately, we were obliged to hurry through, without seeing half of them properly.

It is necessary to provide yourself with a quantity of small copper coins, for every Usher who shows you anything, expects some payment in return, and they are quite satisfied with a few centissima.

The Vatican contains the richest, rarest, and most varied collection of art treasures in the world. This is not to be wondered at when we remember that it has been the work of more than a hundred popes, many of them princely patrons of art and genius, some very unscrupulous, and each in his day exercising almost uncontrolled power over nations, emperors, and kings, and commanding the moral, physical, and material resources of the civilized world. Here there is gathered, as in an immense casket, the chiefest of the art treasures of all ages, the works of antiquity, and the principal productions of the greatest men who have lived. The dimensions of the Vatican exceed those of Tuileries and Louvre put together. The very list of museums, galleries, and cabinets is bewildering, and I should think a thorough study of the whole would well-nigh occupy a lifetime; it is really daring presumption to rush through in a day or two, and then be content to say you have "done" these things, as so many tourists do.

Through these interesting rooms we wandered and wondered, longing for a fuller comprehension of their contents, yet unable to linger, and almost sated with the numerous beautiful objects demanding our attention on every side. Sight-seeing of this kind is the most [129] fatiguing pastime both to body and brain that any one can indulge in; it is only possible to note the more important objects. We were much struck by the Scala Regia, a fine staircase by Bernini, in the centre of which is a gigantic equestrian statue of Constantine, so placed that a fine ray of light falls on it from above. This probably is typical of his conversion to Christianity.

We visited the Pauline and Sistine Chapels, the latter of which contains Michael Angelo's awful and in some sense revolting picture of the *Last Judgment*; and many marvellous frescoes from scripture history by the same great master. Wonderful and magnificent as these pictures are in an artistic sense, I never see depicted these imaginary "heavens and hells" without thinking—

"What is the heaven our God bestows?
No prophet yet, nor angel knows;
Was never yet created eye
Could see across eternity."

While doing this great work, Michael Angelo was only too evidently under the bondage of the Papacy; for in this picture the Virgin Saint usurps the place of our all-sufficing, merciful, and loving Saviour. All must be saved (or lost?) only through Popes and Saints; no peace, even for the dead, without money payment! It is in the Sistine Chapel that the cardinals meet in conclave on the decease of a pope, to elect his successor.

Still we wandered on through miles of pictures and sculpture, wondering in amazement how [130] these great men could have performed so much in a single lifetime, remembering how little—how very little, we ourselves accomplish, one day like another repeating, alas! the same sad story of "Nothing done."

Perhaps the culminating centre of these galleries is the Pinacoteca, which contains the choicest works of all. Chiefest among them is Raphael's sublime and wonderful painting of *The Transfiguration*. "A calm, benignant beauty shines over all this picture, and goes directly to the heart. It seems almost to call you by name. The sweet and sublime face of Jesus is beyond praise, yet how it disappoints all florid expectations! This familiar, simple, home-speaking countenance is as if one should meet a friend. The knowledge of picture-dealers has its value, but listen not to their criticisms when your heart is touched by genius. It was not painted for them; it was painted for you—for such as had eyes capable of being touched by simplicity and lofty emotions." Transcendentalists do not often indulge in remarks on material objects, but when Emerson speaks about a picture it is worth quoting.

Only second to the *Transfiguration* is Raphael's lovely *Madonna*, so full of true womanly loveliness and purity of soul—a beauty that expands the heart, and makes one feel purer and happier for having gazed thereon. The inspired aim of these great painters seems to have been to show us the marvellous love of God, and the exceeding beauty of his creation. Many of the [131] pictures represent painful scenes of the sufferings of the early Christian martyrs. While looking at these dreadful conceptions, so truthfully portrayed, and also when visiting the Mamertine Prison, the Tarpeian Rock, and the Catacombs, I could not but feel ashamed at the miserable little sacrifices we present-day Christians are content to make for our religion. We can never be sufficiently thankful that we are no longer required to prove our faith in such a terrible and utterly self-denying way.

The sculpture-gallery came next. "Painting," says Hawthorne, "is sunlight; sculpture is

moonlight." Here group after group of beautifully chiselled marble claimed our attention. The *Minerva Medica*, *Niobe*, *Apollo*, the *Faun*, the *Torso Belvedere*, the *Apollo Belvedere*, and a thousand others; above all, that miracle of ancient art—*the Laocoon*:

"A father's love and mortal's agony,
With an immortal's patience blending:—vain
The struggle; vain, against the coiling strain
And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
The old man's clench; the long envenom'd chain
Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp
Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp."

By the way, both here and at St. Peter's much of the natural beauty of the nude figures is artificially covered, which certainly greatly detracts from the effect. This was done by the command of some prudish Pope, who was as surely wanting in right and pure feeling as in a proper comprehension and appreciation of art.

"The heathen
Veiled their Diana with some drapery; [132]
And when they represented Venus naked
They made her, by her modest attitude,
Appear half clothed."

The silk tapestries in the Vatican excited our wonder and admiration. They are most beautifully worked pictures, and cover the walls over an immense area. Unfortunately, we had a nonchalant guide on this day, who was only enthusiastic over his cigarettes, and whose purely mechanical utterances exasperated one in the same degree as do the solemn old Beefeaters in our own Tower, or the garrulous, conceited guide at Notre Dame, Paris. A good cicerone can invest the most trifling objects with interest, while a bad one simply irritates one's temper and wastes precious time.

The Vatican palace is a large, ugly, barrack-like building, painted yellow, and surrounded by high walls. Here "His Holiness" lives, a self-immured prisoner, on unlimited patrol. It is an immense place. There are two courts, eight grand, and a hundred smaller staircases, and upward of a thousand rooms. Indeed, the Vatican taken as a whole, with its extensive stables, etc., resembles a small town rather than the palace of a sovereign. So that, though a "prisoner," Leo XIII. is by no means shut up in a cloister. He is, I believe, a man of the highest culture, and leads a most unselfish and simple life: frugal in his own personal expenses—the cost of his table not exceeding that of an ordinary labouring man—he is filled with an earnest desire to exercise the [133] responsibilities of his position. One can well imagine, therefore, that the almost total deprivation from temporal power, and the neutralized allegiance of so many of his Italian subjects, must be most galling and heart-breaking to him. The Pope, indeed, is almost a nonentity at home; yet we cannot but feel that this alienation between Italy and her spiritual father is for the real good of the State. It has ever been the policy of the Papacy to keep the people in poverty and superstitious ignorance. The priesthood has shamefully failed to identify themselves with the aspirations and wants of the people, and consequently have lost all hold on their hearts. Other nations have freed themselves gradually from the yoke of Rome, so baleful in its influences to all vigorous strength and constitutional greatness. And now Italy has certainly a future before her, downtrodden in the dust as she has been for many years. Garibaldi's was the arm to raise her; his the voice to hail Victor Emmanuel with the proud title of "*Re d'Italia*." It is, therefore, significant of the times and of the future, that a people so susceptible of adoration and superstition as the Italians, should have lost faith in the efficacy of their priesthood, and have fairly had their eyes opened to the fact that the dignitaries of the Church have been well fed and prosperous, dwelling in gorgeous palaces, and wearing fine apparel, at the expense of the starving population, who have paid them for their prayers for the repose of their dead, for their confessions of sin, and [134] maybe for fresh indulgence in the same. Happily, their minds are now awakening from long darkness and ignorance, to view in its true light the degrading bondage in which they have so long been content to remain passive.

Yet this supremacy of the Roman Church, before it was so grossly abused, like all other remnants of the system of the dark ages, has been of use in its day. The priesthood combined with their religious duties those faculties now known as Law, Physic, and Literature, and also supplied the place of all charitable and scholastic institutions. The Church was the nursery of Christendom, and it is only since the world has progressed in education, and arrived at manhood, that it has renounced the leading-strings of its infancy. England, Germany, and all the other Teutonic races of the north, the elder children of Europe, did this long ago; they dated their coming of age at the Reformation, and united in revolt against the grossly abused power of their nurse and foster-mother, who still sought to control their actions and destinies. They laughed at the rod of excommunication, threateningly upheld; and this once defied, the Pope and his Cardinals were fain to turn their attention exclusively to those who were still content to be under their protecting wing. But now the time has arrived once more when these also desire to emancipate themselves from thraldom. Let us hope, then, that the manhood of Italy will be a noble one, and full of earnest faith and high endeavour.

The Church of St. John Lateran, in the Piazza di St. Giovanni (on the site of the house of [135] Plautius Lateranus, one of the conspirators against Nero), is one of the chief Basilicas. (This title of "Basilica" is only given to those churches whose foundation dates from the time of

Constantine.) The five general councils known as the "Lateran Councils" were held here. It is called "The Mother and Head of all the Churches of the City and the World," and takes precedence even of St. Peter's in point of sanctity. The portico and doors are very fine, and the interior possesses much of interest; it is divided into five aisles, resting on lateral arches and pilasters. Here, in 1300, Pope Boniface VIII. proclaimed the Jubilee from the balcony, Dante being present on the occasion. The Corsini Chapel is said to be the richest in Rome, some half a million sterling having been squandered on it. There are some very fine mosaics and paintings by Guido, Sacchi, and others. Like most of the churches, it has a great many legends attaching to it to enhance its interest. Among other pretended relics shown here are two pillars from the temple of Jerusalem, the well of Samaria, and the table used at the Last Supper. The Scala Santa, or holy stairs, on the palace side of the church, and detached from it, are composed of twenty-eight black marble steps, said to have belonged to the palace of Pontius Pilate at Jerusalem. Penitents ascend these steps on their knees (no foot being allowed to touch them), praying as they go, in order to visit a sanctorum at the top, which contains a portrait of the Saviour, painted, so the priests tell us, *by St. Luke at twelve years of age*. They descend by other steps, and thus they acquire so many days' or years' indulgence. An Englishman, a fellow-traveller, told me that he had ascended the steps as described, not being allowed to do otherwise, and he found it very sore work for his poor knees—and "Serve him right," thought I. In one of the adjoining chapels of this church an attendant sells pictures and relics. There is no real reverence here for sanctity of the House of God, as is shown by thus turning it into a house of merchandize, and also by the vile and unpleasant habit indulged in of spitting all over the beautiful mosaic and marble floors.

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The Borgo Novice is the finest street in this part of the city.

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CHAPTER XII.

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Excursion to Tivoli—Sulphur baths—Memories—Temple of the Sybil—River Anio—Lovely scenery—Back to Rome—Post-office—Careless officials—The everlasting "Weed"—Climate of Rome—Discomforts and disappointments—Young Italy—Leo XIII.—Italian Politics—Cessation of Brigandage—The new city—American church—*Italian Times*—Departure for Naples—Regrets—The Three Taverns—A picturesque route—Naples by night.

"'Midst Tivoli's luxuriant glades,
Bright foaming falls, and olive shades,
Where dwelt in days departed long
The sons of battle and of song,
No tree, no shrub, its foliage rears
But o'er the wrecks of other years,
Temples and domes, which long have been
The soil of that enchanted scene.
There the wild fig tree and the vine
O'er Hadrian's mouldering Villa twine;
The cypress in funeral grace
Usurps the vanished column's place;
O'er fallen shrine and ruined frieze
The wall-flower rustles in the breeze;
Acanthus leaves the marble hide
They once adorned in sculptured pride;
And Nature hath resumed her throne
O'er the vast works of ages flown."

One morning we took the steam tramcar to Tivoli. I think there was one first and one second-class carriage attached to the locomotive. We travelled at the rate of about nine miles an hour, Tivoli, some twenty miles off, situated right up among the beautiful distant hills, being reached in about an hour and a half. Here the wealthy Romans used to go to enjoy the beauty of Nature, and to rest after the cares of State.

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We first came to the great sulphur baths about half-way. The white sulphurous stream was employed to turn a wheel for cutting slate or marble, and thence flowed into large and handsome buildings to supply the baths. A few ladies got out here to enjoy the luxury, and await the return of the train to Rome. Then away we went again till we reached the next station, Villa Adriana, once a splendid palace of the Emperor Hadrian's, now an extensive circle of overgrown ruins. It embraced everything beautiful in art and nature which its founder had seen and collected in the course of his expeditions, and was altogether three miles long and one wide: it comprised a great

Lyceum, an Academy, an Egyptian Serapeon, a Vale of Tempe, several theatres, baths, barracks, hippodrome, etc., the sites of which can be pretty easily traced. The statuary and marbles found here are now dispersed among different museums. Two English ladies got out to sketch, sending their servants on to Tivoli to prepare their lodgings. We proceeded upwards, winding through groves of beautiful sombre olives, the light shining on their silvery-tinted leaves; and as we wound round the sharp curves we caught the full beauty of the great plains below, discovering every moment some new and lovely prospect over the Campagna; Rome lying far away in the [139] distance, and the mountains towering above our heads. The Romans were right in seeking this beautiful retreat as their summer abode. Yes, this is Tivoli—the ancient Tibur, the favourite resort of Scipio, Æmilianus, Marius, Mæcenas, and other great and eminent men. Augustus and Horace came here to visit Mæcenas; and here, too, Queen Zenobia spent a pleasant banishment.

At length we came to the end of our journey, and entered the Tivoli station, where there were plenty of carriages and guides awaiting us. We lingered at one gap in the mountains, through which there was a most magnificent view of the country around. Just below we saw some old ruins which had evidently been turned into a factory of some kind—the property, I believe, of the Napoleon family. Then we went to an hotel, high up on the brow of the cliff, on the ruined site of the ancient Sibyl's Temple. There are still some fine columns standing, under which we sat for a time to admire the lovely and romantic scenery, the beautiful grottoes in the abysses and glens below, in the valley of the Anio. Only ten of the eighteen Corinthian pillars of this temple now remain. Soane has imitated this architectural relic at the Moorgate Street corner of the Bank of England. Lord Bristol would have brought the original to London had he been allowed to remove it.

Around on the heights, one is told, "There was Mæcenas' villa, there Sallust's, and there [140] Horace's," but I believe the truth is doubtful, though the positions are such as might have been chosen for their commanding beauty.

Nearly opposite the Temple of the Sibyl, and across this romantic chasm, the river Anio tumbles over the cliffs in a magnificent volume of water, throwing out beautiful rainbows across the glen by its radiated vapour:

"The green steep whence Anio leaps
In floods of snow-white foam."

Lower down there is another smaller stream, and the two form tumultuous rapids among the rocks below, ultimately finding their way through a vast cavern-like opening to the plains of the Campagna, and probably at last find the Tiber. There is a zigzag pathway leading down to the deep valley, and we stood so close to the basin into which the water fell that we were covered with the spray and almost deafened by the roar. All around the sides of this glen, inside the numerous caves, and among the jutting rocks were most beautiful maidenhair ferns; and on the mossy terraces and banks, violets and lilies grew in luxuriant profusion. The violets were exceedingly large and full of perfume, and we found, on pulling some of them up, that they had immense bulbs; we took some of the delicate little ferns and violet bulbs away as mementoes of this lovely spot—[F]

"Where little caves were wreathed
So thick with leaves and mosses, that they seem'd [141]
Large honeycombs of green, and freshly teemed
With airs delicious."

We thought perhaps these violets and lilies were planted originally by the hands of some fair Roman maiden or matron centuries ago.

The Anio has most extraordinary petrifying properties. We saw whole trunks of trees petrified like rocks, and our guide gave me a mass of stones and leaves perfectly solid, but with every vein and stem beautifully defined and marked. This enchanting series of glens and grottoes was most probably the work of the distinguished Romans who resided here, and employed their leisure in improving the natural beauties of the place.

We had not time to visit the Cathedral and other buildings of interest. The former was built on the ruins of the Temple of Hercules, which once stood there. The Church of the Madonna di Quintiliolo is near the remains of the villa of Quintilius Varus, on a hill facing that of Mæcenas. Near the Roman gate are remains of an octagon temple or tomb, known as Tosse; there is a Roman bridge near Ponte Celio, also a fine old castle built by Pius II. Massive remains of the Claudian aqueduct are to be seen here and there. The tramcar train was ready to start on the return journey at about 3.30, so we were obliged to leave this beautiful and interesting place. We got back to Rome at about 5.30. This was a most enjoyable excursion, and we should have been glad to remain longer, but it was our last day in the Eternal City, which we were now leaving with [142] regret.

The Post and Telegraph Offices at Rome are beautifully situated; the walls are frescoed with Italian art, and overlook a square of tropical gardens. Altogether it seemed more like an Arcadian Temple than a post-office. I found by experience that this was so, for, although I had given the name of our hotel for all letters to be forwarded to me, I was greatly annoyed to find a large budget had been awaiting me for some days, especially as it included a telegram from London. I fancy that the everlasting "weed" has much to do with this dreamy forgetfulness of important duty. Even in the Government department the cigarette seems as necessary as the pen; from morning till night it is rarely laid aside.

Some of the hotels in Rome we thought very expensive; but the Hotel de Ville is moderate, comfortable, and altogether satisfactory.

We found the weather too chilly to be pleasant at that time of the year, and there was a fair quantity of rain, usually lasting about two days; but the atmosphere was generally fresh and healthy, and some days were warm, bright, and sunny. I should think February, March, and early April the most agreeable months to spend there. The mornings are the best part of the day: excursions to various places of interest should be accomplished by 4 p.m.

I fancy many travellers expose themselves to fever, and other ills, by neglecting to take proper nourishment at regular hours—in their forgetfulness of health—when occupied in "sight-seeing." [143] They should make it a rule to commence the day by a good substantial breakfast, instead of the French coffee and rolls in their bedroom, as is mostly the custom; at midday, always taking care to have luncheon at their hotel or the nearest *café*. Again, they cannot be too particular about overcoats and other warm garments; for the marble-paved, unwarmed churches are extremely chilling, and so are even the streets on the shady side, at this time of the year (January). There is little doubt that Papal and Old Rome, where most of the visitors reside, is over-crowded and badly drained, and hence subject to typhoid and other fevers. It is therefore to be hoped that they will prefer the more healthful and modern quarter of the city, New Italy, near the railway station. Under any circumstances, they cannot be too careful as to the water they drink being properly filtered.

The bulk of the inhabitants live closely packed between the Corso and the Tiber, some in fine palaces, splendid indeed, yet with little comfort, the rest in small and miserable dwellings. These latter, at least, will doubtless disappear in time as the population gradually become aware of the expediency of rebuilding this quarter of the city, some parts of which offer striking contrasts of gorgeous splendour and squalid misery. Whiteside, speaking of a traveller's impression on arriving at Rome, says, "Whithersoever he turns his eager steps he is alternately delighted and [144] disgusted: the majestic remains of a great antiquity he wishes to examine with accuracy, but he stands in the midst of inconceivable filth. He turns to the churches, sacred in the eyes of Christians, but not safe from defilement in the City of Churches. He notes on the map numerous piazze, which he imagines to be fine squares, clean, if not splendid; and he observes, with few exceptions, that they resemble waste ground reserved for the rubbish of a great city."

It is pleasant to turn to the long-deserted Eastern quarter of Rome, where an entirely new city is being erected since the Italian occupation. We may yet hope to see Rome worthy of her past greatness.

"His Holiness" Pope Leo XIII. has lately issued, from his small isolated world within the walls of the Vatican, a most extraordinary letter, addressed to Cardinal Antonius di Luca, John Baptiste Petra, and Joseph Herzenroether, in which he shows the world at large that he has no eye for anything but the claims of the Church, and would fain have mankind believe that the temporal government of the Popes has been an unappreciated blessing, and far superior to that of any other, and to the present government of United Free Italy under the constitutional sway of King Humbert, in particular. Since 1859 the Italians of what was once known as the States of the Church, have been deprived of this great blessing of the Pontifical rule, and with what dire results let us examine.

During the period between the expulsion of King Bombina from the throne of the two Sicilies by [145] the Garibaldians, and the evacuation of the Eternal City by the French in 1870, a brigand warfare was carried on, if not under the immediate auspices of the Pope and his Cardinals, at least with their secret support and connivance. Now, after little more than a decade of constitutional rule, brigandage has almost disappeared from the face of the land, and travellers are comparatively safe.

When Victor Emmanuel and the Italian troops entered Rome and took possession of it as the Capital of Italy, free from the Alps to Taranto, they found it a city of ruins, squalor, and hardly habitable in a sanitary point of view. Interesting, of course, to the traveller from its wealth of splendid relics of the past and vast treasures of art, but as undesirable for residence as the Upas Valley. Now what does the traveller see? A prosperous and happy population; a new city rapidly rising on the site of the ancient "Queen of the world," with all the conveniences, appliances, and luxuries of a modern European city. Magnificent new streets and boulevards, lined with buildings equal to any in Paris or London—streets traversed by tramways, and brilliantly lighted by gas; with shops and magazines, as in other great continental capitals. An energetic Government and municipality have planned and are carrying out vast improvements, that bid fair in a few years to render modern Rome not only equal to the Rome of the Cæsars in beauty and magnificence, but [146] as desirable a residence from a sanitary point of view as any other city of its size.

It is proposed to embank the famous old Tiber; and already the squalid quarter of the Ghetto has been invaded by the workmen, who are levelling the wretched dwellings that have for so many ages rendered its name a byword throughout the world, preparatory to the erection of new buildings. So greatly has Rome already improved, that instead of travellers paying it a hurried visit merely for the sake of its art treasures, and hastening away as from a plague-stricken city, great numbers of English and Americans make it their head-quarters for many months. Both countries have now their own churches, a fact above all others proving the vast change that has taken place since Italy has been free from foreign and papal yokes. King Humbert observed, that no greater proof of the faith England and America had in the stability of Italian constitution could be given, than the building of these churches. Not only have the Anglo-Saxons their churches in Rome, but their newspaper also; and the *Italian Times*, a weekly paper printed in English and

published in Rome, is another evidence of what Italian freedom now is. This paper, which is a staunch advocate of all improvements, especially to those relating to sanitation, boldly takes for its motto—"Independent in all things, neutral in none."

When all the contemplated improvements are carried out, there will be no more delightful or [147] healthy residence for six or eight months in the year than this poor unfortunate city of Rome, that has been for the last dozen years deprived of the blessings(?) of Pontifical and Cardinalite government.

Happy indeed would be the condition of our own poor unhappy Ireland could she also cast off the bondage and evil influences of the Papacy; for then her gifted people would become industrious, intelligent and loyal subjects, as the Protestant communities of Ireland are.

We found our nine days' visit all too short; it was but a race and scamper at best, and we regretted our inability to visit all the objects of interest in this city of museums and art galleries. The days at Rome are very short, as most places where there is an entrance-fee (and there are few without), are only open between the hours of ten and three. This may be a profitable arrangement for the doorkeepers, but it is difficult to see much in five hours.

The morning of our departure from Rome arrived at last, and we sighed at the thoughts of having missed so much, and seen so little.

"The grandeur of Rome
Could I leave it unseen, and nor yield to regret?
With a hope (and no more) for a season to come
Which ne'er may discharge the magnificent debt?
Thou fortunate region! whose greatness inurned,
Awoke to new life from its ashes and dust;
Twice-glorified fields! if in sadness I turned
From your infinite marvels, the sadness was just."

Ancient Roma and the remains of her past greatness will ever be impressed upon our memories. [148] An empire once so mighty, the Mistress of the World; then for so long desolate and entombed, a city of ruins; and now, phœnix-like, rising rapidly from her ashes, and preparing as "Young Italy" to take her place as a power among the other nations of Europe, many of whom have already welcomed her as a sister.

On the morning of the 26th of January we left Rome for Naples, some 163 miles by railway.

For many miles we travelled almost in a direct line, and on a level plain through the Campagna, close to one of the great aqueducts, and with the Via Appia always following in the distance, until we passed the first station, Gaimpino, when we crossed this fine old Roman road, and wound round the base of the hills. We saw an almost endless succession of ruins—the tombs of Pompey, Dominician, and many others of the conquerors and arbiters of the world in bygone times. Then through Albano and Curioli, from which Coriolanus obtained his famous surname. Among the hills we caught glimpses every now and then of the Campagna, bright with heather; and sometimes, also, of the blue sea beyond.

We next passed through Civita Lavinia, near the site of Lanuvium, the birthplace of Antoninus Pius. The Via Appia here strikes across the Pontine marshes. Velletri, the site of an old city of the Volscians, and the birthplace of Augustus, is picturesquely situated half-way up Monte Arriano in [149] the Alban Hills. Its raised walls were built by Coriolanus. Here the railway, leaving the old route towards the Naples frontier and along the Appian Way, strikes inland among the hills. Not far from this spot, on the old Appian coach road, is "Tres Tabernæ," or "Three Taverns," where St Paul met the brethren after his landing at Puteoli. This old road is so full of interest, that we hope to be able to travel by it more leisurely on a future occasion—especially as brigandage, once a common occurrence, is now a thing of the past, since Italy is under a strong and honest government.

The whole route is grandly picturesque, circling round mountains and hills, and through romantic passes; churches and towers finely pinnacled on the summits and situated here and there on the slopes. The ancient Romans made these places their summer residences, enclosing the wild and wooded parts as hunting-grounds, and the more beautiful spots near the shore as luxurious health resorts.

Travelling as usual second-class, and therefore by a slow train, the journey was rather long. *En route* we were allowed ample time for luncheon at one of the stations. In a former chapter, I mentioned how greatly wanting in necessary comfort the French railway stations were, especially for ladies. Here in Italy I think it is, if possible, worse still. It is really a scandal and disgrace that, while reaping so much benefit from the stream of visitors from every part of the world, proper [150] accommodation is not provided for them. This is really a great evil, and should certainly be attended to by the proper authorities without delay.

After eight hours' journey we came through a bold pass suddenly in full view of the sea coast, then wound round towards Naples from the south. In the dusk of the evening, we looked forth to see—

"How night hath hushed the clamour and the stir
Of the tumultuous streets. The cloudless moon
Roofs the whole city as with tiles of silver;
The dim mysterious sea in silence sleeps;
And straight into the air Vesuvius lifts
His plume of smoke."

FOOTNOTES

[F] Many of these are now flourishing with friends in North Wales.

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[151]

CHAPTER XIII.

ToC

Naples—Bristol Hotel—Via Roma—King Bomba's time—Deterioration of the Neapolitans—Museum—Churches—The Opera-house—English and Italian beauty—Aquarium—Vesuvius—Excursion to Pompeii—Portici—A novel mode of grooming—The entombed city—Its disinterment—Museum, streets, and buildings—Remarks—A cold drive.

The first thing we experienced on reaching Naples was the inveterate habit of begging and cheating among the lower classes. Our carriage-driver began by asking three times the amount of the usual fare for driving us to our hotel, and the whole of the way along never once desisted from trying to persuade us that we must pay what he had asked, and perhaps a little more. There was another fellow seated by him on the box, evidently a "hanger-on" and friend of his, who had come with the hopes that we should believe he had carried our luggage to the carriage, and was therefore entitled to something. These Neapolitan beggars are as importunate and persistent as a swarm of gnats, and it is almost impossible to get rid of them; however, on reaching the hotel, I requested our landlord to pay the driver the right fare, and so got quit of the nuisance for that time at least. It is a good plan, as a rule, for travellers to let the landlord of the hotel arrange for [152] their carriage hire.

We found "the Bristol" a very comfortable hotel, and happily secured a room on the third floor, with a verandah. The situation being on high ground above the town, on the Corso Vittorio Emmanuele, we had a fine view of the whole of the city and harbour below, the glorious bay beyond, and the great smoking Vesuvius on our left. There were several other hotels on the same heights, and also a comfortable pension establishment kept by a Scotch lady. I believe this is considered the healthiest part of Naples.

The weather opened finely the next morning; the sky a pretty pale blue, and the sea calm and beautiful. The bay stretching boldly round on either side; the city clustering on the shores and up the slopes of the hills, the busy harbour lying in the foreground, terraced gardens all around;—

"And yonder, see! as if in throes of death,—
Vesuvius wreaths her foul Plutonic breath."

Yet I must confess that on the whole I was disappointed. I thought of the lovely coast scenery around Monaco and Monte Carlo, and felt that they exceeded in beauty the famous bay before me. The fact is, some people rave about certain places without exactly knowing the reason why, simply because it happens to be the correct thing to do so. "See Naples and then die," is a common saying: we felt quite contented to "see Naples" and go on living. I cannot but think the [153] place has been overrated, though I will admit that we did not see it at its best, and that perhaps in the full glow of a summer sun it may equal the rapturous descriptions that have been given of it. Certainly the beauties of Nature are not appreciated by all alike, mind and sentiment influencing us differently.

The English church was a few hundred feet below us, across the road, through the hotel gardens. This road is a new one, and extends some miles along the slope of the hills overlooking the town, and leads from the extreme end of the city right round to the other side of the coast promenade. The principal street is the Via Roma, where there are some fairly good shops. I should say that lambskin gloves, which seem a speciality, cameos, and corals are the only things worth buying here. Some of the cameos cut on the natural shell are very beautiful and unique.

Naples was an exceedingly gay city in the time of King Bomba, and as long as it was the seat of government. It is still said to be the gayest city in Italy, and there certainly seems to be a great pursuit after pleasure. Excepting with those who have business to look after, life scarcely begins till about three o'clock in the afternoon, when the carriages roll about, up the Via Roma, and along the Riviera di Chiaja, by the sea, which is the Rotten Row of Naples. In the time of Bomba's despotism the people really had little else to do than to amuse themselves, for they had then [154] practically no voice or interest in the government of the two Sicilies, and so became careless, luxurious, and indolent—content to live idly on their hereditary means, smoke, gossip, sip their chocolate, eat their macaroni, roll about in their carriages, and wind up their monotonous and useless day at their earthly paradise, the opera, where they gossiped and flirted to their hearts' content. In consequence of this manner of life, the men have become effeminate, and the women have little left of that characteristic grace and beauty that once so distinguished the Neapolitans.

So far as I have seen, in France, Italy, and elsewhere, I am proud of my own countrywomen. In grace, dignity, purity, and beauty, they are pre-eminent, morally, mentally, and physically: an Englishwoman only fulfils my idea of—

"A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warm, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light."

It was, therefore, with surprise that I gazed upon the canvases and statues of the old masters, and wondered where they obtained their exquisitely lovely models. From history we know that the women of Greece and Rome were noble specimens of their sex, and worthy of imitation; but if in later times, Correggio, Titian, and Fra Angelico, took their models from among their own countrywomen, how lamentably the present race must have deteriorated since their time!

The Museum of Naples is a very interesting one, and well repays a careful examination of its [155] contents. Unfortunately it closes at four, but whenever we had an hour to spare during the day, we felt there could be no mistake in repairing thither. I believe it has not its equal in the world. Perhaps in statuary and painting the Vatican carries off the palm, but scarcely, I think, in other treasures. "Here are united the older and more recent collections belonging to the Crown; the Farnese collection from Rome and Parma; those of Portici and Capodimonte; and the excavated treasures of Herculaneum, Pompeii, Stabiæ, and Cumæ. These united collections now form one of the finest in the world: the Pompeiian antiquities and objects of art in particular, as well as the bronzes from Herculaneum, are unrivalled."

Here we saw the *Farnese Bull* group, the largest ancient piece of sculpture in Italy. We saw also the *Farnese Hercules*, a magnificent figure, and the *Gladiatorial Prize-fighters*; both groups are wonderful portrayals of animal strength and manly courage. The mosaics and frescoes are very beautiful; and there are some wonderfully preserved Egyptian mummies, which, in their double casings or coffins, after two thousand years, still defy the ravages of time, the teeth and nails in many cases being quite perfect. The Pompeiian collection was especially interesting to us, perhaps because, although so ancient, their discovery has been of such comparatively recent date. Many of the bodies of those who perished have been wonderfully recovered and preserved in the very posture in which death so suddenly overtook and entombed them some eighteen [156] centuries ago. Every little detail of dress and drapery has been preserved in a really wonderful manner by Florelli's process of pouring liquid plaster into the mould formed by the lava in which the body was encased, and which had retained every line and fold of face and drapery; as soon as the plaster hardened, the mould was lifted off with the greatest precaution, and on the lava and ashes being removed, a perfect cast of the living figure it had once contained appeared.

We regarded these painful figures with deep and mournful interest. There was one of a woman, apparently of the poorer classes, who had been overtaken by the deadly shower while endeavouring to save a young girl, probably her daughter; the coarse texture of their raiment is distinctly visible, and the smooth, rounded arms of the little maid may be discerned through the rent sleeves. Another stately figure, evidently a Roman matron, has gathered together her little treasures, with which she hopes to escape; her draperies, disordered and caught up at one side, display limbs of sculptured beauty. An aged man—apparently an invalid from the thin and shrunken extremities—rests with his head leaning on his hand exactly as he was overtaken by the fearful storm of pumice and lava. These and many others were buried while yet alive, their features plainly telling of the agonizing thoughts that flashed across their minds at the moment of death, and every detail about them telling of the hurriedness of their attempted flight. [157]

The collection of old coins in this Museum, is, I believe, the finest in the world, and the cabinets of ancient gems and crystals are exceedingly beautiful. Then there is the library of papyri—rolls found at Herculaneum, and a perfect model of the city of Pompeii. There are also many other rooms full of interesting relics of the two unfortunate cities—wonderful works of art in crystal, stone, and bronze, much of which cannot even be imitated in the present day. Altogether this Museum is a very temple of ancient treasure, and should make us humble in the knowledge that we now possess.

We visited the Aquarium, which is quite unique in its way, and one of the finest in the world. Here, in a series of great glass tanks, we saw collected all the marvellous wonder and beauty of the great deep, every branch and species of sea creature from the coral and the sponge to the highest form of marine life. The most wonderful thing of all, we thought, and certainly the most novel to us, was a kind of animated purple thread, which spun itself out to such an extent that

there was only a long cobweb left perceptible; this, floating about, after a time showed extraordinary muscular strength and energy, gathering itself together into a compact purple tassell or worm. The jelly-fish were also remarkably beautiful, with their graceful movements and purple glancing hues. This Aquarium certainly gave us a little comprehension of the marvellous beauty of oceanic life. [158]

Of the 250 churches at Naples, few possess a great amount of interest, though some of them are well worth visiting. The Duomo San Gennaro, in the Strada del Duomo, is a large and handsome Cathedral. It is built on the sites of the temples of Neptune and Apollo, and contains several tombs of great men. It is here that the supposed miracle of the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius is "performed" twice or thrice a year.

One evening we went to the grand Teatro Reale di San Carlo, paying sixteen shillings for a couple of *Pit* tickets. It is an immense house, supposed to be the largest in the world, gorgeously decorated, with six tiers of boxes, and capable of holding several thousand people. There was not a large audience, however, and as I looked round, eager to discover some of the living ideals of Italian loveliness, I was disappointed to find that but few of the Neapolitan ladies possessed any commanding grace or beauty, neither did their dress betoken much refinement of taste. As the theatre is the time and place for the fair sex to shine its brightest, I took this as a convincing proof that my previous strictures on Italian beauty were not unjust or uncharitable. The opera, which chanced to be "Lucia di Lammermoor," was very good, both vocally and instrumentally, and the dancing was clever and graceful, but to our English eye bordering on the immodest; the spectators, however, greatly applauded it, and probably they were the best judges. [159]

Vesuvius smoked continually during the day, and occasionally shot forth lurid flames into the darkness of the night. We had a capital view of his volcanic performances from our hotel windows, and found it interesting to watch his eccentric ebullitions. Most of our fellow-travellers made the ascent, but as we did not intend to make any stay in Naples—my wife being anxious to pay a long-promised visit to her sister in Malta—we decided to defer the expedition to some future occasion, particularly as we wished to make an excursion to Pompeii, the collection at the museum having greatly interested us and aroused our curiosity. Nowadays the ascent of Vesuvius is no great climb; its four thousand feet are quickly traversed by the funicular railway, which takes visitors nearly the entire distance.

Up to this time the weather had been just comfortably warm, but suddenly the wind shifted to the north-east, and blew bitterly cold. Unfortunately, it was the very day of our proposed visit to Pompeii, and as it was our last day in Naples, we were unable to defer it for more favourable weather.

The drive is some eighteen miles, and no amount of rugs and wraps seemed to protect us from the piercing wintry wind, and keep us warm.

Circling round the southern part of the bay, which is very crowded and somewhat dirty, the sloping shores being lined with macaroni manufactories, we soon passed through the ancient town of Portici, which was once a place of considerable importance, and possesses a royal palace built by Charles III., and adorned with pictures and frescoes from Pompeii, and a museum of statues, arms, bronzes, and furniture taken from the buried city. We next passed Herculaneum, and the town of Resina, which is built over it; Vesuvius and the hilly country on our left, and handsome suburban villas built on lava beds sloping down to the sea on our right. The road, being cut through the original stream of lava, was covered by the traffic with a thick white dust, which did not by any means conduce to our comfort, for the nipping wind blew it up into our faces in clouds, and the glare, caused by the occasional bursts of sunshine, was exceedingly trying to the eyes. We were not sorry to come to the end of our cold, two hours' journey, and find a cheerful wood fire blazing in the little Pompeiian restaurant by which to warm our half-frozen feet, and also something welcome in the way of refreshment. Our little wiry horse had certainly done his duty, and deserved our gratitude. We found the town pretty full of visitors who had driven up, and there were continual fresh arrivals. Therefore, we soon moved away to secure a guide to the erst entombed city. We had been much amused, watching the novel mode of refreshment indulged in by the active little animal that had so speedily brought us on our journey. He had been unharnessed and taken to a bare spot thickly covered with dark lava sand. This he seemed greatly to appreciate, for, after pawing the ground gratefully for a few moments, down he went, and commenced rolling himself over and over with great energy; by-and-by he rose like a giant refreshed, and fell to on his provender most voraciously. This scene reminded me of one I had often witnessed at the Cape of Good Hope, where sand is often similarly used as an excellent and economical substitute for grooming—the sand absorbs the perspiration, and is most refreshing to the poor beasts. [160] [161]

Passing up the hillside through a little plantation at the back of the restaurant, we soon came to the military station of specially selected soldiers, who have the care of the ruins and at the same time act as guides to the visitors. Fortunately, we chanced upon a very intelligent and obliging fellow, who spoke English fluently—a sergeant, who, without being loquacious, was sufficiently communicative to make an agreeable companion and cicerone.

Paying an entrance-fee of two lire each, we passed through the turnstile, and were soon quite absorbed in the ruins around us. The Italian Government, bearing all the expense of disentombing Pompeii, probably look to recoup themselves by the entrance-fees of the numerous visitors who flock to see the long-buried city.

We saw gangs of men and boys clearing away great mounds of pumice and dark lava mould from the ancient streets, which had not seen the light for eighteen centuries, and over which the

vine had been planted, and the corn had waved through many generations. It has been [162]
demonstrated by an examination of the older crater, that in the great eruption of A.D. 79 Vesuvius first threw up its superficial contents—and, in fact, the very crust of the mountain itself, which, being of a light friable nature, blew over to the more distant city of Pompeii, accompanied by showers of hot water—and it was after this first outbreak that a flood of molten lava poured in a torrent over the nearer city, and enfolded Herculaneum in a bed of rock. There is evidence that Pompeii had been warned of the impending disaster by an earthquake; we have no means yet of knowing whether Herculaneum received a similar warning, but the probability is that it was overwhelmed with awful suddenness.

Pompeii now reposes on an elevated grassy plain, partly encircled by fine ranges of hills, which on the eastern side stretch out towards Castellamare, and at the present time have one or two of their loftiest summits topped with snow. It is now some two or three miles from the sea, which is supposed to have receded at the time of the eruption, for Pompeii, when entombed, was a fashionable watering-place. It was here that Senator Livinius Regulus fixed his residence when banished from Rome in 59; and we learn from Suetonius, that the emperor Claudius had a villa here. He mentions it incidentally as the place where the Emperor's little son died in a singular manner: the child threw a pear up in the air, and caught it in his mouth, and, before any one [163]
could come to his assistance, died from choking.

Pompeii was rediscovered in 1748, by Don Rocca Alcubura, Spanish Colonel of Engineers. "Nearly seventeen centuries had rolled away when it was disinterred from its silent tomb, all vivid with undimmed hues—its walls fresh as if painted yesterday; scarcely a hue faded on the rich mosaic of its floors. In its forum the half-finished columns as left by the workman's hands, in its gardens the sacrificial tripod, in its halls the chest of treasure, in its baths the strigil, in its theatres the counter of admission, in its saloons the furniture and the lamp, in its triclinia the fragments of the last feast, in its cubicula the perfumes and the rouge of faded beauty—and everywhere the bones and skeletons of those who once moved the springs of that minute yet gorgeous machine of luxury and of life." The process of disentombment was not proceeded with very rapidly at first; it lingered on, in not too skilful hands, till Garibaldi appointed Alexandre Dumas as superintendent of the work in 1860. This, however, did not improve matters; the great novelist lived at Naples in first-rate style on the liberal income allowed him, and after one visit to the scene of operation, left the work to take care of itself. All was changed, however, under the *régime* of Signor Florelli, who united the most enthusiastic interest in the work to eminent skill and unwearied patience. Since he undertook the management, the excavations have been made on a scale, and with a care, that will soon exhaust whatever objects still remain buried under the [164]
ashes.

Our guide first took us into the Museum, where we saw under glass cases some of the Pompeiian corpses, so wonderfully preserved by the plaster of Paris process, described in our visit to the Museum at Naples; also many other most interesting mementoes of the buried city, too numerous to mention. From thence we roamed out into the deserted streets:

"I stood within the city disinterred;
And heard the autumnal leaves like light footfalls
Of spirits passing through the streets; and heard
The Mountain's slumberous voice at intervals
Thrill through those roofless walls."

The roofless state of the houses seems to have been caused, partly by the weight of matter which collected on them, and also from the fact of their being principally composed of wood, which was burnt by the red-hot stones that fell in showers from the burning mountain. There was, however, always sufficient of the building remaining to tell whether it had been a shop or a private residence, and, if the former, to distinguish what particular business had been carried on there: for instance, we found the bakers' ovens nearly perfect; while the wine-shops had great stone pitchers of the "Ali Baba" kind sunk into the counter, for cooling purposes, with the necks just showing above. The money-changers' shops were all marked by some such inscription as "Money is the thing worshipped here" (nothing new under the sun, thought I). Then there were the baths, arranged on the Roman principle (that which is erroneously known in the present day as the [165]
Turkish system), with rooms for graduated temperature, and all the conveniences for heating-places and niches for ointments and unguents, etc., to be used after the luxury of the bath. The private dwellings were most attractive, with their frescoed chambers, fountains, and open courts. Few of the houses had any windows; the light probably being admitted from the roof above, and reflected from the marble tanks of water in the centre of the court. But even under this hypothesis, I cannot help thinking the ancients had some other means of catching the light and diffusing it in their apartments, in some such manner as the Chappuis' reflectors we now use, though no certain evidence is yet forthcoming that they did so. There were places of amusement, and even places of vice, all distinctly noted: the Chalcidicum or Hall of Justice, the Street of the Tombs, Senate-houses, schools, Forums, and Temples, amphitheatres and coliseums—principally, of course, mere ruins, but still showing great beauty of design and finish. Most of the walls had evidently been veneered with marble about an inch or two thick; and there was, in some of the rooms, space left between the walls for heating purposes. It is said that at the time of the eruption Pompeii was still unfinished, indeed, that the preceding earthquake had interrupted the Romans in beautifying the city: there were pointed out to us several columns and buildings that had evidently been prepared for the veneering process, and never been completed. Many of the [166]
mosaic floors are in fine preservation, as are also the paintings and frescoes on the walls. One beautiful little shrine or grotto made of mosaics and shells is singularly interesting and unique.

The streets, which were all made on the slant for draining purposes, are very narrow, just wide enough for one carriage or chariot to pass up at a time. They are paved with lava stone, which is bleached white with the rain, and has been preserved so by its long entombment; here and there in the centre are raised oval stones, not interfering with the traffic, and affording convenient stepping-stones to foot-passengers during wet weather. When a chariot entered one of these streets, the word was quickly passed, to prevent another entering at the other end until it had gone through, and this was supposed to be the duty of the owners of the little shops on each side of the way.

On such a nipping day, it was impossible to help thinking how cold the place must have been with so much marble and cold water about; but the theory is, that the climate has very much changed since the days of Glaucus and Ione. When at Rome, our guide told us that even within his recollection the temperature there had altered considerably, and had become much colder.

It seemed a great pity to spend only a few hours among these most interesting ruins; but as we were obliged to get back to Naples by evening, to be ready for our departure for Sicily on the morrow, we did not stop at Herculaneum on our return, as had been our intention; it was really [167] so cold during the return drive that we were quite thankful when we sighted our hotel once more. We made a mental resolve, however, to pay a longer visit to Naples some day, and take our time over visiting the two buried cities and other places of interest that we were obliged to miss on the present occasion.

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[168]

CHAPTER XIV. ToC

Unprecedented cold of 1883—Departure from Naples—Virgil's Tomb—Journey to Messina—Italy's future—Scylla and Charybdis—Beautiful Messina—The *Electrico*—Malta—Knight Crusaders—Maltese society—An uncommon fish—An earthquake at sea—Journey to Palermo—Picturesque scenery—Etna—Among the mountains—The lights of Palermo.

There seems to have been quite an unprecedented winter in the Mediterranean this year (1883). Marseilles, Cannes, Nice, Mentone, Genoa, and other places, were all affected by the extreme and unusual cold—Stromboli, and even Etna, were quite capped with snow, while in the north of Europe the weather was comparatively mild. It was rather unfortunate for us that it should have been so; having travelled to escape the cold in our own island home, we had certainly not bargained for it pursuing us wherever we went. The residents, more particularly the poor of these semi-tropical places, were much to be pitied for the uncommon severity with which these bleak and cutting winds visited them. As a rule, Naples is considered tonic and bracing, not unlike Brighton, and is exceedingly pleasant in late summer and autumn, but in the early part of the year is trying to delicate persons. I do not think it is a healthy place for continual residence, [169] for the sewerage and water supply are both very defective, and the place is over-crowded by a population anything but clean in its habits. This, and the begging, cheating propensities of the lower classes, go very far to counterbalance its natural beauty of situation, and I was obliged to confess myself decidedly disappointed in the Naples of which I had heard and expected so much.

The hotel expenses are much the same as at Rome, and no matter how you try to economize and cut down expenditure, you will find, when you arrive home and tot up the figures, that the average amount per day, travelling included, is no less than £1 for each person. You may of course forego wines, etc., but in so doing you take your chance of being poisoned with the water, which is very bad here, and which no one seems to think of filtering or improving in any way. This is a great pity, and it is to be hoped that the matter will soon receive a due amount of attention, and that means will be taken to secure an adequate supply of pure water, without which no place can really be considered healthy.

We remained at Naples in all five days, and on January 25th left for Messina, from whence my wife was to make her journey to Malta, and remain with her sister, awaiting my return to the south, for I found my presence was required in London for a short time.

We felt genuine regret and compunction at being obliged to leave the "Queen of the summer [170] sea" without paying our devoirs at the tomb of Virgil, father of Latin poets. The last resting-place of the "dead king of melody"—he who, in his own words, "sung of shepherds, fields, and heroes' deeds" (cecini pascua, rura, duces)—lies "shadowed by the wild ivy," in the road leading from Naples to Puteoli:

"Ivy and flowers have half o'ergrown
And veiled his low sepulchral stone:
Yet still the spot is holy still,

Celestial footsteps mount the hill."

We had unfortunately been unable to make any excursions in this direction, owing to our limited time.

The railway journey to Messina is both tedious and expensive, we therefore secured berths in one of the Florio line of steamers. The day of our departure was enjoyably warm and sunny—though perhaps a little too warm to be pleasant in the dirty and crowded harbour of Naples, which is the chief lounging-place of all the idlers and beggars of the city; yet under this burst of summer sunshine Naples was in smiles again, and we saw something of her natural beauty.

By the time the crowds of boatmen had done quarrelling with one another to secure our fare, we were glad to get away from their Babel, and get on board the vessel—the boatman, of course, doing all in his power to charge us treble fare! There were some half-dozen passengers in the saloon, travellers like ourselves. Our departure was somewhat delayed by the steamer having to [171] carry a regiment of soldiers to Sicily, and we got off at six o'clock in the evening—only about an hour after the time of starting, which was very punctual for Italians.

Naples, illuminated, and gradually enfolded in the gathering shadows of night, is in truth a beautiful sight, and the occasional bursts of bright flame from Vesuvius added a touch of imposing grandeur to the scene we viewed from the deck, as we steamed away for the Straits of Messina.

Dinner passed pleasantly; we had a very agreeable captain, and the smoothness of the water enabled the ladies to enjoy it in comfort, and also to spend an hour or two on deck afterwards, in the full beauty of the clear moon and cloudless star-lit skies—

"Then gentle winds arose
With many a mingled close
Of wild Æolian sound and mountain odours keen:
And where the Baian ocean
Welters with air-like motion,
Within, above, around its bowers of starry green."

Who could be surrounded by such influences without thinking kindly and tender thoughts of the glorious land that owns such a sea and sky? I mused over Italy—her past, her present, and the bright future which I hope awaits her. The Papal star is growing dim; the pageantry of the Dark Ages is fading out, and the minds of men awakening. Slowly, but I trust surely, a more enlightened era is approaching; and perhaps the nineteenth century will see the last of [172] superstition, which has held the minds and hearts of men in such an iron grasp.

God has His own wondrous and omnipotent way of working, and man can but guess at the manner and means by which the problems that perplex him will be solved in the end.

"Great Spirit, deepest Love!
Which rulest and dost move
All things which live and are, within the Italian shore;
Who spreadest heaven around it,
Whose woods, rocks, waves surround it;
Who sittest in thy star, o'er Ocean's western floor!

* * * * * *

"Oh, with thy harmonizing ardours fill
And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone horizon
Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with fire—
Be man's high hope and unextinct desire,
The instrument to work Thy Will divine!"

The next morning we found ourselves close to the Stromboli group of islands. Nearly all were capped with snow, and, with the sea around and the blue sky above, formed a charming picture.

Soon after breakfast we were steaming through the beautiful straits, and passing the famous Scylla and Charybdis, the former a low dark cliff topped by an old castle, and with a little town nestling below. The sea varied its colour constantly—blue, green, brown, and even red, mingling and changing in the bright sunshine. As we neared Messina, we were struck with admiration at its exceeding beauty.

"Messina sits like a queen, her white robes sweeping the sea. Never was city so exquisitely poised between earth and sky! Very beautiful, with fair white face, the poetic lines of your [173] mountain drapery about you; the azure straits gliding past you in homage, and bringing the world's treasures to your feet! Very beautiful, but false and fickle and cowardly in every phase of your history, a ready victim for every invader, a facile prey, ever siding with the strongest!"

Thus a late writer, whose pen has charmingly described her life in this lovely island.

At noon we anchored in the finely sheltered harbour, the finest, indeed, in the Mediterranean. The commerce and shipping of Messina are most extensive, and make her quite cosmopolitan. The city undulates with a gentle rise, so as to present to the highest advantage every fine building, the exceeding purity and whiteness of which is thrown up by the dark green forest behind. In speaking of Genoa, I remarked that its situation was unequalled in its imposing

grandeur; and here in Messina we have a beauty equally unsurpassed, though of a different kind; perhaps as a bit of our English landscape would compare with the grander Scotch loch scenery—a soft, bewitching, and enticing loveliness. The style of architecture resembles that of Pisa.

We had only a few hours here, as the steamer for Malta was to leave the same evening. There was sufficient time, however, to take a walk through the town, which has fine and well-paved streets. There is but little of antiquity left in Messina, except the old Cathedral, which contains [174] some good mosaics and bas-reliefs; and perhaps a few mementoes of the gallant Knight Crusaders, who sorrowfully made this their temporary home about the year 1523, after surrendering Rhodes to the hated Moslem. The constant earthquakes, as well as the many vicissitudes of war it has passed through, has destroyed all other relics of the past.

The hotel charges and living generally were exceedingly moderate, more so than we had experienced since leaving England. I believe this is the case with all the hotels in Sicily, the soil being so prolific and productive. At 5 p.m. I saw my wife on board the Florio steamer *Electrico*, which carried the mails, and was due at Malta the next morning about six. It was a nice little paddle vessel, and her captain a very gentlemanly officer; the stewardess, though a Maltese, spoke English, and so I felt my wife would be comfortable and well cared for during the voyage. Unfortunately, however, the wind increased, and by morning there was quite a gale blowing, which made me a little anxious about her safe arrival.

I was pleased that my wife should visit this small but most memorable island, though I was unable to accompany her, as there are so many historic associations attaching to it. During my Naval career from the Crimean War days, I had myself often been to Malta, but to her it would indeed be a new world.

Malta, or Melita, is probably chiefly interesting to English people as their great Mediterranean stronghold and Naval Arsenal; to Christendom, for the glorious deeds of the brave and self- [175] sacrificing Knights of St. John, and as the place where the great apostle to the Gentiles was cast ashore and bitten by the viper, and where he preached so fervently and effectually. These are probably the best-remembered events touching the history of Malta. That it was originally colonized by the Phœnicians, and taken from them by the Greeks some eight hundred years B.C.; then captured by the Carthaginians, and afterwards by the Romans, Vandals and Goths, Saracens and Normans successively; and, finally, was attached to the Government of Sicily—few would care perhaps to go far enough back to remember, content simply to commence with its glorious and imperishable history in connection with the chivalrous Knight Crusaders.

Owing chiefly to the labours of the brave Knights, under their grand old masters, L'Isle Adam and La Valette, and their skill and heroism in defending it from the repeated assaults of the Moslem,—of the Crescent against the Cross, the fortifications are a marvel of almost impregnable strength and engineering ability, and, owing to its wonderful provision of underground granaries, etc., could stand a siege for years. These great mathematical, dazzling granite walls, bristling with big guns, and rising defiantly and almost abruptly out of the blue sea, form a proud sight to Englishmen when approached from seaward. And, then, glancing at its geographical position, almost in the centre of the Mediterranean, in proximity to three Continents, and taking into [176] consideration that other great stronghold (the door to the Mediterranean, of which Englishmen are even more proud), Gibraltar—and our interest in the East, one gets some idea of its great maritime importance to England. The harbours, the great docks (capable of holding the largest ironclads) and stores for the equipment of our fleets, the frowning ramparts rising tier upon tier above and around, amply confirm this impression.

But how different the Malta of to-day, with its marvellously cultivated soil; its teeming, peaceful, and prosperous population, great docks, fine city, and developed industries,—to the days when the valiant Knights of St. John, under their brave old Grand-Master, L'Isle Adam, almost sorrowfully took possession of it, as the permanent home of the Order, when, alas! all seemed nearly lost to them! Yes, it was then indeed but a barren, arid rock. Though wondrously fertile, considering the small quantity of soil, Malta is still little else than a huge fortress and series of sun-smitten rocks; and therefore, beyond the great docks and fortifications, not very interesting except for its history and mementoes of past glory—for there is little or no beautiful country to see, no undulating plains, hills, lakes, or forests, but endless rocks, stone walls, old palaces, guns, soldiers, churches, and priests.

On arriving, however, from the sea, it is a lively scene inside the harbour; the moles and creeks crowded with shipping, all trimly stowed in serried rows. Hundreds of gaily painted Venetian-like [177] boats dart off from the shore, with their picturesquely dressed boatmen curiously facing one another while pulling and pushing the boat along—for, says the legend, one day the man pulling stroke suddenly missed the bowman, and as he was never found, it was gravely supposed the devil had walked off with him (a little before his time, for the Maltese are great rascals, and are exceedingly superstitious), and ever since they have faced each other, for self-protection against another Diabolical surprise! Shoals of these boats dart off from the shore immediately on the arrival of a ship. The "bumboat," laden with delicious fruits and every kind of fresh provender to tempt the Blue jacket and hungry midshipman—in my own days, utterly sick of the "salt-horse" (salt meat) and weevilly biscuit; but now, alas! the sailor is a spoilt child and quite daintily fed, hence the bumboat is not so great a treat to him when coming from "blue water." Then there are legions of washwomen (much to the relief of the officers' marine servants, who in "olden times" had to do all their masters' washing when at sea), declaring, of course, that they have done your washing "ages ago." Hungry tailors and other tradesmen also besiege the ship, swarming on board to make the most out of the new arrivals. And oh, what a Babel-like jargon of tongues alongside—with a hundred church bells ringing and clanging around—and the fierce though

harmless quarrelling of the Maltese boatmen! Then, on landing at one of the quays, after having, [178]
of course, been cheated in the fare (for the Maltese will never lose an opportunity of robbing you, though, to give the creature his due, he will not let any one else do so if he can prevent it—you are his own sweet pastures, and his solely), we pass through the motley, swarthy crowd of boatmen and fishermen, and, holding our nose to exclude the rancid smell of fish, boiling oil, and powerful odours of garlic, commence the ascent of the dreaded endless series of stone stairs up to the city of Valetta. And, when under a powerful sun such as one can experience at Malta in, say, July, and before we reach the top, how often do Byron's truthful words occur to us:

"Adieu, ye joys of La Valette!
Adieu, scirocco, sun, and sweat!
Adieu, ye cursed streets of stairs!
How surely he who mounts you swears!"

A friend who had long resided at Malta, suggested a slight alteration in the above to—

"Adieu, ye streets of stinks and stairs!"

The reason for these wearisome steps was, I believe, owing to the following facts:—After the brave old knight, La Valette, had repulsed the Turks with great slaughter, and had consequently obtained a little breathing time, he set about re-fortifying the island and rebuilding the city, with the intention of levelling the rocky parapet for its foundation; but, owing to reports of another expedition of the Moslem being fitted out at Constantinople, for a still more powerful and [179]
revengeful attack on their fortress, the city had to be finished quickly, and so was built on the rocky slope in all haste—and hence the steep flight of steps leading up to the highest part of the city from the harbour.

Having taken breath, we move on and find ourselves in the stony narrow streets of the city, almost every other person met with being a priest or a nun, the church bells still clanging with utmost discord around. The houses, with their green painted jalousies, are all built of a kind of white limestone, and so reflect the dazzling heat and glare of the sun as to prove exceedingly painful and injurious to the eyes; hence, ophthalmia is rather prevalent at Malta. Never was there a place so priest-ridden and superstitious; everywhere in the streets, under the lamps at the corners, within niches cut in the walls, you see some painted image of a saint, bedizened with jewels, silver and gold and tinsel, grandly painted and decorated—the objects of abject adoration to the benighted poor people and other passers-by. Indeed, of late years some very serious disturbances have occurred at Malta, because our soldiers and sailors would not bow down before some superstitious priestly procession through the streets; and one feels ashamed to confess (no longer for an Englishman *civis Romanus*) that some of these men were punished for not doing so. Surely it should be enough that the Maltese are allowed full freedom to enjoy their own religious, or rather grossly superstitious, ceremonies!

In many of the palaces and churches in the city, there are very interesting mementoes of the [180]
gallant Knight Crusaders; and the pictures and tapestries are also very fine. Few edifices are more full of mediæval interest than the Church of St. John, with all its treasured relics of the brave, self-denying Knights of Malta. I scarcely think that we in this nineteenth century quite realize the service rendered to Christendom in their deeds of heroism and noble self-sacrifice. It was their indomitable power and courage alone, at one time and another, that prevented the Moslem from overrunning and devastating Europe and the Christian world, and the fair Mediterranean shores from becoming a prey to the hordes of merciless and cruel pirates which would have followed in their wake. One cannot look at the great forts of Malta without a glow of the deepest admiration for, and gratitude to, those valiant Knights of St. John, who held the place for so many months, all alone, against the whole power of the Moslem under the great Solyman. There at St. Elmo, a handful of brave Knights kept the army and fleets of the powerful Mustapha at bay, and hurled them back in assault after assault, the walls gaping with breaches; and then, when all had been done that brave men could do, and further resistance was hopeless, in simple obedience to the stern commands of their loved Grand-Master, La Valette, and to save the city and the other forts, these brave Knights preferred death at their posts, and that a cruel death, rather than dishonour. Wounded knights were actually wheeled on chairs to the breaches, and [181]
there died like heroes. And the Christian world, meanwhile, stood by with bated breath at such heroism, and awaiting the dreadful issue.

Then, when the victorious Moslem, mad with the blood of the St. Elmo garrison, threw their united forces against the other great forts, especially St. Angelo, where the brave Valette was in command, the gallant besieged, inspired by the undaunted courage of their chief, long resisted their impetuous assaults; and on the glorious 8th of September, 1565, compelled the shattered armies of the Turks to raise the siege (leaving twenty thousand of their dead behind), and leave them alone for ever. The Christian world once more breathed freely and was grateful. Ever afterwards—and I believe to this day—the 8th of September has been held in reverence by the Maltese, and kept almost as a sacred festival, in remembrance of their great deliverance, and of the brave Knights who fought and died so heroically.

The capital of Valetta, or rather Valette, founded in 1566, and named after the chivalrous Grand-Master, John de Valette, was subjected to such extensive and judicious improvements under the late governorship of Sir Gaspard le Marchant, as to compare with many a fine colonial city. An infinite amount of interest centres round the old Phœnician Città Vecchia, with its numerous catacombs, and the ancient palace of St. Antonio, where, within the last decade a little English princess, Victoria Melita, first saw the light. A very peculiar stone quarry-like appearance [182]

is given to Malta from the fact of its being much divided off into small gardens, surrounded by extraordinarily high and thick walls, in order to protect the valuable orange, lemon, and other numerous and varied fruit-bearing trees, from the tempestuous and destructive winds which frequently visit the island—by the name of scirocco, etc.—and from this cause little verdure can be seen until you are on a level with the plantations.

Though tradition says that most of the soil was originally brought to Malta in ship-loads, etc., from Sicily and other places, I am not very much inclined to believe it; still, there is comparatively little soil in the island, and it is therefore astonishing to see how the place abounds in vegetables and fruits, and almost every kind of flower, among which are some very rare and high order of orchids. It is said that even potatoes are exported from Malta to Greece, Turkey, and also to England, though the root was introduced into the island only forty years ago. What little land there is, is certainly marvellously cultivated, and speaks volumes for the thrifty industry of the Maltese; indeed, I have often heard that a Maltese could live luxuriously where even a canny Scotchman would starve. It is said that a greater number of people live in Malta than in the same number of square miles anywhere else in the world.

There is a fishing industry at Malta, some of the more extensive bays being completely interlaced with huge nets sunken perpendicularly. This kind of preserve extends some miles, and [183]
is, I think, used chiefly for catching the great tunny-fish. I shall not easily forget some little experience of these nets during my Naval career. Being caught in a fierce gale of wind outside Malta, we ran for a bay called Marsa Scirocco, lying on the lee side of the island, and to our great astonishment found ourselves firmly enmeshed in a gigantic net, parts of it entangling our screw propeller. Indeed, the ship could not be released until we had almost cut the net to pieces; for which our Government had to pay some hundreds of pounds sterling to the proprietors of the fish-preserve.

Vast quantities of mackerel and other fish are also caught, dried, and exported to the various adjacent Roman Catholic countries; but, I believe, excepting perhaps shellfish—prawns, lobsters, crabs, etc.—there is little or no fresh fish worth eating.

Maltese society is very proud and exclusive, and dreadfully reserved and jealous of the English community; indeed, little or no sympathy exists between them, which is much to be regretted. The nobility, so-called, are seemingly content to live almost to themselves, as it were in the past, amongst their ancient ancestry (putting one in mind of Mr. and Mrs. German Reed's entertainment of "Ages Ago") rather than in the present and with the people surrounding them. They are reputed to be excessively mean and close, but perhaps they have but a scanty allowance to support their nobility, and therefore, by necessity, it is half starved. A friend who has resided [184]
at Malta many years, related to me a little incident of his own experience. For once breaking through their usual reserve, an Englishman was invited to the funeral of one of the Maltese nobility; when, in accordance with the usual rites, a candle or taper is provided by the mourners, which is generally carried home by each as a memento, and perhaps as possessing some virtue from the priestly blessing. But the day after the funeral, much to his surprise and disgust, having simply taken it as a mark of respect to the family, he was requested to return the said candle, "*which had only been lent to him*."

There is, however, apart from the Maltese element, plenty of society at Malta, amongst the English community, governor, and Naval and Military officers. Indeed, in the season it is rather a gay place. There is, or used to be, a very good little opera-house, where some of the most eminent *prima donnas* (Spamezi and Pareppa, etc.) made their *debût*; for the society at Malta is supposed to constitute rather a critical audience; and if an *artiste* once succeeds in winning its approval, she may go to England without fear and trembling.

Malta is, I believe, considered one of the most favoured of health resorts (especially since our good Queen Adelaide resided there), and particularly for chest complaints. But, from my own experience and that of many others (Europeans) who have resided there a long time, I can [185]
scarcely reconcile this to fact. It is exceedingly hot and oppressive in summer, the glare from the rocks and stone buildings being very injurious to the eyes, and the heat retained by the limestone during the day making the houses very close and sultry in the night. Towards autumn and winter there are violent atmospheric changes, and it would appear that the spring-time of the year and early autumn are really the only seasons in which the weather is agreeable.

I remember about December, in the year 1855, after returning from the Crimean War, being a whole fortnight in a dreadful gale and hurricane outside Malta. There was a tremendous sea, sometimes vivid forked lightning, thunder, and heavy rains, the skies as black as ink. Indeed, it was a grand and extraordinary scene, the sea in a wild and curious commotion, rearing up around us as it were in little mountains, and breaking in upon us in all directions,—washing away some of our boats, and tumbling the vessel about in a most eccentric and exceedingly uncomfortable manner, almost as if the bottom of the sea were sinking beneath us. One night was particularly dreadful and awfully grand; the forked lightning cutting the black clouds asunder, the winds howling terribly, and occasionally an outburst of flame,—or rather the reflection of it, from the far-distant Mount Etna splendidly lighting up for a moment the black sky. It was a strange and wonderful sight, bringing home to me the truth of the Psalmist's words, "They that go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters; these men see [186]
the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep," etc.

Having at last put safely into Malta, we were not much surprised to hear that while we were at sea there had been violent earthquakes felt at Malta, and nearly all round the Mediterranean. At Malta there was great consternation; the houses were almost rocking, the church bells clanging

to drive away the supposed evil spirit, and the people sitting up with lighted tapers.

As regards the reputed healthfulness of Malta, I think it is a mistake, for I believe the sanitary arrangement and sewerage system are extremely faulty, especially in the old part of the city, where the wells are absolutely contaminated and unsafe to use without boiling and filtering the water. There is also a kind of bad and dangerous intermittent fever at Malta, like that at Gibraltar —endemic, I should think. My wife has recently lost a very dear sister (who resided in this island), chiefly, I believe, from these last two causes, and hence I speak rather earnestly on the subject.

Altogether, what with fever, ophthalmia, etc., one can scarcely call Malta a healthy place. The fact is, in that latitude, with so over-crowded a population, the natives most unclean in their habits, and with faulty and inadequate sewerage system, one could not expect otherwise.

In February, March, and a part of April, when my wife was there, the weather was unsettled, [187]
stormy, and cold nearly all the time.

Strada Reale, where the great public square and governor's palace are, I believe, is (or used to be) the principal street, and the shops there are very attractive, especially the jewellers', with their exquisite silver and gold filagree work; and also the places where the beautiful Maltese lace is sold. Strada Zecca, a peaceful, shady, and silent retreat, used to be the street of the Government offices; and we see here many of the old palaces and houses of the Knight Crusaders, some of which are rather peculiarly constructed inside. There are the overhanging shading roofs, as at Genoa and other places; but the Knights, not being permitted to marry, had no families, and so did not require many sleeping-rooms: therefore, in most of the houses of Valetta the reception-rooms and courts are spacious, lofty, and handsomely decorated, and occupy by far the larger portion of the building, while the sleeping-rooms are narrow, confined, and limited in extent.

Sliema and St. Julian's Bays, three or four miles off, are the little Brightons of Malta, whence the residents change the sultry heats of the city for the cool and refreshing sea breezes, healthful sea-bathing, and *something* in the shape of verdure and green fields. These places, St. Paul's Bay, and the adjacent Island of Gozo, are the chief resorts for excursions, picnics, etc. At Valetta nearly the only country walk used to be to the (so-called) Gardens of St. Antonio; and it was [188]
rather melancholy to see the stream of poor human beings almost confined to this one walk, like invalids at some water-drinking health resort, or a moving mass of regimental ants.

The industries of Malta consist chiefly of its exquisitely made silver and gold filagree work, and its rich and Spanish-like lace, which find ready sale on the continent; its further exports being principally dried fish, luscious oranges and fruits, and vegetables.

Labour is remarkably cheap, the Maltese living on a mere nothing. A little rancid oil, shark, or any other half-putrid fish, a few olives, sour wine, and bread, and they are well feasted. Hotel expenses are not higher than on the Riviera; but amongst the best resident classes living is rather expensive, especially in the matter of clothing, nearly every article of which is imported from England. In my days, *gloves* used to be remarkably cheap, so much so that we could indulge in a fresh pair every evening for the Opera, and the gloves, with admittance, did not exceed the cost of an ordinary pair of gloves alone in England. The opera was our chief delight, and we could sympathize with the Italians in this pleasure.

One great drawback to visiting Malta is the fear of quarantine. Very recently a young friend of mine, an Oxford man, experienced the bitter disappointment of going all the way there, only to be "imprisoned" in the lazaretto, and was only able to talk to his friend from a distance of four yards, with a gen d'arme between them. Unfortunately, his time was too short to allow of his seeing [189]
Malta after his release from durance vile.

Having seen my wife off from Messina, I had arranged to go by steamer on the following day to Palermo, but the stormy weather had delayed the arrival of the vessel from Reggio, so I decided to go by rail instead, and hurried to the station in a violent storm of rain and hail.

The route was so full of interest, and the views so enchanting, that I did not regret the change in my plans. The coast scenery was grand and beautiful. For miles, while circling round great Etna, we were passing over vast fields of lava—the land tumbled about like the waves of a tempestuous sea, as if recently thrown up by some mighty earthquake, and all sombre-coloured and sulphurous, as though we were traversing some part of the nether world. It was a most striking contrast to the lovely scenery we had already passed, and also to that we were approaching—Aci Reale and Catania, in particular, comparing even with Monte Carlo and Monaco; groves of orange and olive trees and picturesque vineyards adorning the fine coast heights, and the blue sea beyond. The fine expansive plains around Etna brought to mind England's great naval hero, Nelson, for here was situated the territory of his Dukedom of Brontë, which in those days yielded good crops of Marsala wine. I was really sorry not to be able to spend a few days at Catania, and view more closely the lovely region around Aci Reale; but it was just [190]
here that we suddenly branched off to the west, and plunged into the heart of the island. Away we went up the mountain heights, the night closing in, and a glorious moon uprising. Sometimes we were on the mountain-tops, then again descending into the valleys beneath, only to rise like eagles, and mount to the summits once more; the moon circling round the peaks, occasionally

hidden, and then appearing as if again rising in silent majesty over the beautiful landscape. About midnight we approached the coast and proceeded along by the shore once more, the great waves dashing almost up to the train as we rushed swiftly by. Soon I saw the semicircular lights of the harbour of Palermo, and in a short time the train steamed into the station.

I think this was the grandest and most interesting railway journey I ever made, and I shall not soon forget the impression I received.

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CHAPTER XV.

ToC

Palermo—Oriental aspects—Historical facts—Royal Palace—Count Roger—The Piazzi Planet—The Palatine Chapel—Walk to Monreale—Beauty of the Peasantry—Prickly pears—The "Golden Shell"—Monreale Cathedral—Abbey and Cloisters—English church—Palermo Cathedral—Churches—Catacombs of the Capuchins—Gardens—Palermo aristocracy—The Bersaglieri—Sicilian life and characteristics—Climate and general features.

Palermo, formerly Panomus or All Port, and originally a Greek settlement, is situated in a beautiful fertile valley, and presents much the appearance of a magnificent garden. The approach from the sea is splendid, as a full view is then had of its beautiful bay, spacious harbour, bold headlands, high cliffs, and the great mountain ranges in the distance, which form so grand a background.

There is a very fine sea-wall, with a drive extending some two or three miles along the coast, and from this the Corso Vittorio Emmanuele extends right through the city, crossed about the centre by another fine road, the Via Macqueda, and these, the two principal streets, divide the city into four equal parts. The most frequented promenade is the Marina, opposite the sea, where the Hotel de France is situated. Here I found very comfortable quarters overlooking the semi-tropical public gardens. The houses and buildings generally resemble those at Naples, and the churches are second only to those of Rome in their magnificence. One might almost fancy one's self in the far East, there are so many surroundings of a Moorish and Saracenic character, and many of the names are quite oriental. The cactus, palm, and citron trees, tropical flowers and sunny skies, carry out the impression. There is no matter for wonder in this, however, as the Saracens made Palermo the capital of their Sicilian territories for more than two centuries, when the Normans in their turn took possession. From 1806 to 1815, it was the residence of the court of Naples; and in 1860, was captured by the troops of the brave liberator of Italy, Garibaldi. In the same year, the university, founded in 1806, was freed from the direction of the Jesuits. Altogether Palermo has seen a variety of governments, and many changes and scenes of historic interest. It has always been a rich commercial port, and well advanced in the refinements of civilization. I think the inhabitants are far more agreeable than at Naples; more hospitable to strangers, and less inclined to "spoil" them as Egyptians. They are especially courteous to the English, probably in recognition of the substantial sympathy England so freely showed them in the time of their struggle for freedom.

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The Royal Palace is situated on the site of the Saracen Al Kasr, and within a short tramway drive of the Hotel de France. It is an unpretentious, castellated building, well worth a visit, not so much for the beauty of its interior decoration, its paintings and frescoes, in which it only resembles other palaces in Italy, but for its interesting history; for it was here the good Count Roger Guiscard (Roger II.), the first Norman King of Sicily, resided, and did so much to encourage art, science and the industry and prosperity generally of the island. Our own lion-hearted Richard landed here on his way to Palestine in 1170; and it was here, in the observatory of the palace, that Joseph Piazzi discovered, in 1801, the planet to which he gave the name of Sicily's mystic goddess—Ceres, and subsequently many other minor planets some 230 in number. Attached to this palace, and under it, is a small but unique Palatine Chapel in the Gothic style, built by King Roger in 1129. It is a perfect gem in its way, the walls and ceiling covered with beautiful mosaics, fine porphyry, and marbles, but it is too dark to be seen to advantage. The only way to obtain any idea of the real beauty of the mosaics is to go into the darkest corner, and so accustom your eyes to the deep gloom, when it becomes radiant with its beautiful scriptural mosaic pictures.

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After viewing the Palace and Chapel, I had a most delightful and invigorating walk up the road which led directly to the beautiful country and suburbs beyond the city. The tramway ran up to the base of the hills in the distance, but I preferred to walk, for it was a lovely summer's day, though very early in February. The road led up to the ancient town of Monreale, about four miles distant to the south-west from Palermo, standing upon a fine commanding height overlooking a most lovely and fruitful valley, between the two mountain ranges that rise behind the city. It was

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through this valley that Garibaldi marched with his troops, thus avoiding the fire from the forts on the heights around. As I ascended the hill, I passed the remains of many ancient mementoes of the past. I was struck by the grace and beauty of the peasantry—the men, active, swarthy, and handsome, with finely cut features; the women tall, beautifully shaped, and with long dark hair and magnificent eyes. Their picturesque dress and the character of their occupations added to the effect of their appearance.

By-and-by I reached the large Benedictine Convent of St. Martino, where I stopped to take breath and look round. It was a very hot day, and, feeling thirsty, I was glad to see a Sicilian peasant selling prickly pears, a most delicious tropical fruit. The man soon cut a few open for me, and I found them truly refreshing. To any one who has not yet tasted a prickly pear, there is yet an epicurean luxury in store. The fruit grows plentifully in the East, where you will frequently see an uncouth, impenetrable, cactus-like plant growing by the wayside hedge in a dry, rocky soil, its great succulent leaves bristling with long, formidably sharp thorns, and around the edges and upon these thick leaves are attached most delicately an oval reddish-yellow fruit, which is also [195] covered with myriads of minute prickles. The camel munches the immense thorn-clad leaves with impunity, deriving a great deal of nourishment from them. It is necessary to handle the prickly pear with extreme care, lest the infinitesimal prickles should get into the hand, the saliva of the camel being almost the only thing that will effectually remove them from the flesh. The fruit is dislodged from the plant by means of a knife or cloven stick; then, when a deep gash is made from top to bottom, and another across, the luscious, ice-cold, crimson fruit is ready to be extracted. The taste is a pleasant sweet acid.

Having thus refreshed myself with a few deliciously cool mouthfuls, I proceeded on my way. Right ahead of me, perched upon the rocky heights and facing a fine range of mountains, was the ancient Cathedral of Monreale. It overlooked a broad and fruitful valley literally covered with orange, lemon, and olive plantations, their tints contrasting bright and sombre, and their wealth of fragrant blossoms filling the air with perfume; far away to the left, and parallel to the road by which I had come, stretched the rich, verdant vegetation, through the bluff headlands to the blue sea beyond, where Palermo glittered in the sun, like a queen in her splendour. No wonder she was named of poets, "Concho d'Oro," the Golden Shell! I lingered for some time, perfectly fascinated by the beauty of the scene.

Passing through the crowded little town of Monreale—probably a city in the times of the [196] Greeks and Romans—I gained the piazza where the beautiful Cathedral, with Benedictine Abbey attached, was situated. I had expected a Cathedral here as a matter of course, for no Italian town, however small, is without one, but I was scarcely prepared to find it so large and so beautiful. It was founded in 1174, by William II., surnamed the Good; the front is enriched by two bronze doors by Bounanno of Pisa, and is further ornamented with mosaics and arabesques.

On entering, I was filled with admiration. The magnificent edifice, which is some 315 feet in length, is divided into three aisles by pillars of granite and different-coloured marbles; the pavement of tessellated marble; and the whole of the ceilings and walls, down to the very capitals of the Corinthian columns, a grand series of beautiful mosaics representing Scriptural subjects, separated by, and intermixed with gold and parti-coloured arabesques. Over the altar, a colossal figure of Christ in blue and gold mosaic. When the sunlight streamed through the windows, these beautiful arabesques looked like the finest silk tapestries, and presented a form of decoration only equalled by that of St. Mark at Venice; there are also some very fine and interesting monuments.

I next visited the Abbey, and some of the most beautiful cloisters I think I ever beheld. Hundreds of delicate columns of white marble, filagreed and inlaid with gold and mosaics, and [197] with exquisite capitals, rose before me on all sides, which, with the fine tracery of the Gothic windows, formed a vista of perfect classic loveliness.

Afterwards, by the kind invitation of one of the monks, I visited the Convent refectory above. There were some good oil-paintings here; and I was pleased to see, by the number of schools within the building, that good work was being done by this wealthy Convent—now probably under the supervision of the Italian Government.

On returning, I had magnificent panoramic views of the valley and Palermo constantly before me. I was much amused, on my way back, to see the peasant women plaiting their daughters' hair outside their houses, on the high-road, and doing their best to beautify it by unblushingly introducing long artificial tresses! This was rather disappointing to my day-dreams, as I had so much admired Nature's rich dark clustering head-dress on the heads of the handsome Italian peasant women.

There is a nice little English church at Palermo, near the Street of Palms, and I quite enjoyed the service, everything was so bright and peaceful. There was a goodly gathering of English folk assembled within its walls.

Near the Royal Palace, in the Via Toledo, is the Cathedral, a fine Gothic pile of very striking appearance, standing well back in the piazza, its rather quaint Campanile separated from it by a narrow street arched over. The principal porch is in the form of a very beautiful arch; the interior [198] in the Corinthian style, and chiefly interesting for the beauty and richness of the high altar. In one of the chapels are the tombs of Roger II. and the Emperor Frederic, and those of their respective families.

There are several other churches in Palermo well worth a visit. St Domenico, which is built in the Doric style, is one of these; but perhaps the most interesting of all is the ruined church of St.

Giovanni, erected by King Roger in 1132, and which was evidently in the style of a Byzantine Mosque, with its numerous arches, low roof, and domes. On leaving this building, and thanking the keeper for explaining its antiquities to me, I found he belonged to one of the most ancient Eastern orders of the Masonic craft—a gratifying proof to me of the wonderful ramifications of this powerful charitable fraternity. The Church of Martorana is in a semi-Gothic and Saracenic style of architecture, and was built by one of King Roger's admirals in 1113-1139; it has some very beautiful mosaics. Some of the palaces of the nobility are open to visitors, and contain much of an interesting description.

Within an easy walk, towards the Monreale road, are the catacombs of the Capuchin monastery, which is situated a little off from the high-road, and looks an unpretentious kind of building. A monk guided me through the clean, well-lighted subterranean passages, and it was not without some feeling of dread that I saw on each side of me tiers of the decaying skeletons of [199] monks, suspended against the walls, and looking down upon me with their poor hideous mouldering visages. I almost feared the ropes round these skeleton bodies would give way, and that the bones would come tumbling down upon me. The Capuchin, with a somewhat humorous smile on his worn, kindly face, reassured me, and said that when at last they fell to pieces, the remains were carefully collected and religiously locked away within an iron door in one of the walls. There were several lively cats jumping about from coffin to coffin, and these were looked upon with a most compassionate and friendly air by my good monk, as assisting him to preserve the bones of his comrades from moth and mouse—whether the old Sicilian superstition with regard to the sacredness of the feline species had also anything to do with it, I cannot say. There is a saddening sort of feeling in entering these homes of the dead—

"To see skull, coffin'd bones, and funeral state;
Pitying each form that hungry Death had marr'd,
And filling it once more with human soul."

After going through some hundred yards of this vast tomb, I felt glad to return to the sunlight and pure air of the living world.

On the road to Monreale there is an interesting botanical garden, where I saw some very fine specimens of plants entirely new to me—camphor, coffee, castor oil, and others. There are many beautiful gardens in Palermo, besides the delightful public one known as the "Flora," which [200] afforded such a charming and refreshing outlook from the Hotel de France, where I was staying.

The great cross-roads afford one of the principal drives of the *élite* of the town, and at about three o'clock in the afternoon these thoroughfares are crowded with the carriages of the Palermian aristocracy. The circus, where the two roads meet and intersect each other, forms a large open space called the "Ottangolo," from its octagonal shape; each of the eight sides is formed by a beautiful building or fountain. This place is a favourite lounge for soldiers and idlers generally, who come here simply to enjoy their cigarettes in the open, sunlit air, and in the hope, like the ancient Athenians, of hearing "some new thing."

The Bersaglieri regiment, in their shining black hats, with flowing cocks' plumes, cut a great dash. I often wondered where all these feathers came from, as the cock seemed quite a *rara avis* at Palermo. Perhaps, after all, one fact explained the other, and I had been mixing up cause and effect. The military were evidently proud of themselves and their past exploits with Garibaldi; they had certainly proved that there was plenty of sturdy pluck about them. They are in general a small, swarthy, handsome set of men, but with rather too much of a swagger for soldiers who had seen service. The ladies are graceful and dignified; a trifle too pale, I thought, but I have since learnt that this pallor is studiously acquired—I suppose, to give more sentiment to the [201] expression: in other countries, ladies seem inclined to go in for a *little more* colour. The nocturnal-like existence of the Sicilian ladies, however, should be quite sufficient to produce the desired pallor, without any artificial aid. Their evening commences at 10.30, when tea is served, and you are lucky if you can contrive to get away by 2 a.m. As a matter of course, they are invisible during the morning, and are seldom seen before three o'clock in the afternoon, when they drive out to gain fresh vigour for their nocturnal existence.

From January to May, I believe Palermo is considered a very healthy place for invalids. It is not subject to changes of climate, and being on an island is perhaps the cause of its advantage over other places on the Italian coast, and especially those situated more inland, and on a river, such as Rome, Pisa, and Florence; for these rivers are generally the receptacles of the city sewage—dirty, muddy, and polluted streams, and most unhealthy during the warm season. Yet, strange to say, these river-sides are frequently selected as chosen places of residence, as witness the Lung Arno of Pisa and Florence.

One of the features of Palermo is the number of reservoirs, which are generally situated at the corners of streets, and every house in the city accordingly has an abundant supply of water. This must also be a great source of cleanliness and healthfulness.

For a tour of a few weeks, I can fancy no place more interesting than this fair island. The enchanting Straits of Messina, Catania, Mount Etna, and lovely Aci Reale; the ancient Girgenti [202] and Syracuse with their Greek and Roman ruins; Marsala and Palermo. It is also close to the interesting island of Malta, and is the highway for steamers to all parts. The place is healthy, and, finally, the living is good and moderate in price. Travelling, too, is convenient and cheap: the tramways run quite round Palermo, and the carriages are better and cheaper than in any other city in Europe.

Although travelling in Italy has its drawbacks, I have found more pleasure in moving amongst

the Italians than the French. There is an evident respect and grateful sympathy felt by the former towards England, while the French take no pains to disguise their antipathy. Yet we were blindly intent on making the Channel Tunnel, foolishly supposing it would convert our sullen neighbour into a sincere friend and commercial ally.

I could not but notice in Palermo, the vigorous efforts of the Italian Government to suppress brigandage. I constantly saw some of the plumed Bersaglieri posted in the most out-of-the-way places, commanding the various passes, in order to surprise any attempt that might be made.

Before leaving Sicily, I cannot refrain from recalling that perfect avalanche of stirring incidents that took place in 1860—incidents that far eclipse all other events recorded in the momentous history of this lovely island; and, as the death of the patriotic Garibaldi is still of somewhat recent [203] date, and the subject is one of universal interest, I shall, in the following chapter, briefly sketch these thrilling events, with certain particulars of the part taken therein by the English which have not been publicly known before.

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CHAPTER XVI.

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Annexation of Nice and Savoy—Garibaldi's protest—A desperate venture—Calatafimi—Catania—Melazzo—Entry into Naples—Gaeta—The British Contingent—Departure from England—Desertion—Arrival in Naples—*Colonel* "Long Shot"—Major H—— 's imaginary regiment—Dispersion of the British Contingent.

On April 1st, 1860, of all days in the year, was consummated the annexation of Nice and Savoy to France. Napoleon III. had liberated Lombardy from the Austrian yoke, and handed it over to Victor Emmanuel. As the "honest broker," he required his fee, and, much against the will of the majority of the inhabitants, Nice and Savoy became French territory. Certainly a *plébiscite* was taken on the question, but the whole affair was "managed," and the birthplace of one of modern Italy's greatest men was handed over to France.

Giuseppe Garibaldi loudly protested against the annexation, and never forgave it.

For some time during the early spring of 1860, the Sicilians had been in a state of intermittent rebellion against Ferdinand King of Naples—Bombina. At the end of April, Garibaldi determined to make a strenuous effort to aid the patriot insurgents, and collected around him several of his [205] old companions in arms, among whom were Nino Brixio, Colonel Turr, the Hungarian, Count Teletri, and Sistari. With these were a number of brave men who had survived the siege of Rome, and the slaughter by General Oudinot's troops. In three days after determining on action, everything was prepared for one of the most daring and hairbreadth expeditions of modern times. Supplies of arms and stores were procured and held ready at different points of the coast near Genoa; several steamers were "arranged for" (it was stated, at the time they were seized); and on the night of Saturday, May 5th, some two thousand stern and resolute volunteers of all classes of society, and all ages from sixteen to sixty, including about two hundred of the best marksmen of the Società del Tiro Nazionale of Genoa, were on board the steamers, *Piedmonti* and *Lombardo*, belonging to the Genoese Rubatino Navigation Company, and *La Sardigna*. The embarkation, which took place at Foco and other places on the coast, was witnessed by five thousand spectators, who wished the brave fellows God-speed. The Sardinian Government, *sub rosâ*, was fully cognizant of the whole affair, but dared not give it either countenance or recognition of any sort. Shortness of time alone prevented Garibaldi going to the king who was at Bologna, and telling him of his plans.

The *Piedmonti* was under the command of Garibaldi himself, and Nino Brixio took charge of the *Lombardo*. Both were experienced sailors. It was generally rumoured that they intended landing [206] on the coast of the Roman States, and the *Piedmonti* did call at Telemone for water, as the vessel that carried her store had been seized. From Telemone Garibaldi addressed a letter to Signor Barline, which served as the *pronunciamento* of his expedition and intentions, *i.e.* to free Italy from the Bourbons. On May 7th the vessels and their gallant crews, recovered from the effects of the very stormy passage from Genoa, set forth again; and on the 11th the whole party disembarked at Marsala, in the teeth of two Neapolitan frigates, who opened fire on them just as the last boat was leaving the *Piedmonti*, which vessel they afterwards *gallantly* captured, there being no one on board! The *Lombardo* was sunk by the Neapolitan guns, and the other vessels made off as best they could, after landing their men. The whole took place in full view of Admiral Mundy and the officers and men of the British fleet.

No sooner were the Garibaldians landed than they marched on to Calatafimi, quite unfettered in their movements by any superabundance of baggage. Here they at once attacked and defeated the royal troops, four times their number, and, raising the whole country on their route, pushed on towards Palermo. At the battle of Calatafimi, Menotti Garibaldi, the son of the general,

received his first wound.

With all Europe looking on, amazed at the sheer audacity of the deed, Garibaldi showed himself as prudent and as skilful as he was bold. His red-shirted army, daily increasing in numbers, made [207] one of the most wonderful forced flank marches on record, pushing the way along mere goat-tracks over the mountains, and with such rapidity that General Lanzi, the commandant of the royal army in Palermo, was awakened in the middle of the night to hear that the dreaded Garibaldians, whom he supposed to be at least twenty miles away, were actually forcing their way into the city, and driving the soldiers of Bombina before them. Being driven out of Palermo, Lanzi shelled the city from the forts, in spite of the remonstrances of Admiral Mundy, who had moved the British fleet round the coast to watch proceedings. Outside Palermo, at a place called Catania, Garibaldi engaged and defeated the royal army so badly that General Lanzi was fain to ask the aid of the British admiral, to negociate terms between himself and the filibuster Garibaldi, for his withdrawal from, and surrender of, Palermo to the national army. Had it not been for the generosity of an American captain, who supplied the red-shirts with ammunition, they would have exhausted their last cartridge before the battle of Catania was half over.

Garibaldi was not the man to remain idle one moment, and after establishing a provisional government at Palermo, and recruiting his small forces, he set out towards Messina, and again attacked the Royal army at Melazzo, on July 24. Here was one of the severest struggles of the war. Melazzo was a hard-fought battle, but victory remained with the patriots, and the result [208] placed Messina in the hands of Garibaldi, and with it the whole of the fair island of Sicily. It was at the battle of Melazzo that, watching some English sailors, who had obtained leave from their ships and volunteered their services in the cause of freedom, and were very skilfully managing some pieces of artillery, the idea occurred to Garibaldi and some of his staff, to invite the services of England by the formation of a volunteer legion.

Shortly after the news reached London of the battle of Melazzo, agents were at work enrolling volunteers to join the standard of Garibaldi—no longer the revolutionary fillibuster, but the victorious general.

When at Messina, Garibaldi received a letter from Victor Emmanuel, forbidding him to make any attempt to cross the Straits of Messina, and carry the war on to the mainland; but he heeded it not, or, what is perhaps most probable, he read between the lines, that having succeeded so far, greatly to the surprise of all the wiseacres among European diplomatists, he was to follow up his good fortune, and "go ahead." He did so, and, in spite of the Neapolitan fleet being in the Straits to prevent his passage, he crossed in the night and landed at Melita August 20th, and at once commenced the task of driving out the detested Bombina from his kingdom.

In informing his Government of the fact, Admiral Mundy, who had brought the British fleet to [209] Messina, said, "If the royal troops are staunch, he must be annihilated in a week." But he knew neither the rottenness of the Neapolitan government nor the terror with which the red-shirted Garibaldians were regarded by the royal troops; for with scarcely any fighting the victorious Garibaldi advanced, driving the king's army before him like sheep, and entered Naples, on the 7th of September.

His progress from Messina to Naples was unlike any military advance recorded in history. The Bombini government was paralyzed. The king sent to him, and offered fifty millions of francs and the surrender of the whole Neapolitan navy, if he would halt his men and stop the invasion. He knew little of the man who had sworn never to sheath his sword till Victor Emmanuel was King of Italy!

Ferdinand remained in Naples while Garibaldi and General Coyenzi entered it in an open carriage, followed by the chief officers of his staff. The air was rent with the shouts of the people, who thronged in thousands to hail their deliverer. The Neapolitan police—the hated Sbirri—looked on in sullen silence. The guns of the fortress of St. Elmo commanded the road by which the cavalcade advanced, and were all loaded, the gunners standing ready with lighted fuses waiting for the word to fire. The order was given to clear the streets with grape shot, but the artillerymen stood amazed at the sight of the approaching carriage, in which Garibaldi stood erect, with his hand on his breast, giving orders to the coachmen to drive slower and slower, in a [210] voice that was heard above all the din of the "vivas" of the populace. Three times the officers gave the word to fire; but the gunners were now under the actual majestic influence of Garibaldi's noble patriotism and unflinching courage, and, throwing down their matches, they flung their caps into the air, and joined the people in their cries of "Viva Garibaldi! Viva Italia!"

The king left the city and fled to Gaeta, and, having collected what troops he could, returned to Volturino, the whole of his army amounting to thirty thousand men. He had not long to wait before Garibaldi, who had been proclaimed Dictator in Naples, attacked him with about five thousand really fighting men, and a herd of Neapolitans who were of no earthly use. The king made most desperate efforts to crush the red-shirts, who fought as only men can fight who do so for country and liberty. After seeing many of his best men fall, and among them some of his dearest friends, and passing through many personal dangers—for he was ever in the hottest part of the battle—Garibaldi drove the royal troops back, and they never stopped or showed face again till they were safe within the lines of Gaeta, where, after making a decent show of resistance, and standing a siege by the troops of Victor Emmanuel, they surrendered, and the Bourbon dynasty disappeared from Italian soil for ever.

The whole campaign, from the landing at Marsala to the last defeat of the Neapolitan army at [211] Volturino, occupied but 122 days, in which time a mere handful of determined patriots, who were regarded as banditti at the outset of the undertaking, and who were at no time decently supplied

with what are deemed by military men the ordinary and necessary equipments for warfare, beat a well-organized army in four regular engagements, besides innumerable skirmishes, and conquered a kingdom.

History records how nobly Garibaldi acted, and how scurvily he was treated. On October 24th, having handed over to Victor Emmanuel the kingdom of the two Sicilies, and made him King of Italy, he retired from Naples, to his island home at Caprera, and, after having at his command the treasury of Naples, was compelled to borrow £20 from a friend to defray his private expenses, and embarked with less than twenty francs in his pocket.

No wonder every Italian glories in the name of Garibaldi! Such men are few and far between.

I have mentioned the formation of a British volunteer legion. Probably there have been few more mismanaged affairs than this British contingent, from the first conception of it on the field of Melazzo to the disbandment of the remnants of it after the surrender of Gaeta.

In the summer of 1860, a gentleman, calling himself Major S——, appeared in London, as the accredited agent for the formation of the British Garibaldian Legion. An office was opened in Salisbury Street, Strand, for the enrolment of volunteers, and a committee having been formed, [212] met daily in a room over the shop where a gentleman, better known among Free-thinkers as Iconoclast, sold his own and other unorthodox books of a similar character in Fleet Street. Here a Captain de R—— became the practical man, while a Major H—— assumed the character of the dashing dragoon officer. A legal opinion was obtained as to the best way of evading the several Acts of Parliament bearing on the points of foreign enlistment and equipment of armed forces in time of peace.[G]

The great volunteer movement having sprung into existence during the previous year, there was a vast amount of military ardour floating about among young men of all classes, and recruits offered themselves faster than funds were subscribed for their equipment.

About ten or twelve hundred young men of all classes enrolled themselves in the legion, and officers of more or less experience were not wanting to command them. An offer was made to take the whole force out to Naples in a large screw steamer, the *Circassian*, which had formerly been employed in the Transatlantic service, and belonged to an eminent Greek firm. The offer was, to take the regiment out to Naples, and to feed and provide the men with all necessaries, on exactly the same scale and manner as English troops had been accommodated on board vessels that had taken out the army to suppress the Indian Mutiny. Captain de R——, the practical man [213] on the committee, advocated the acceptance of this offered contract, but there were other influences at work. Commissions were offered, and "*pickings*" were to be obtained if the men were sent out at a cheaper rate in another way, and the consequence was that, instead of the whole force going together in one large vessel, with ample and comfortable accommodation, they were sent out in two parties, in two miserable little vessels totally unfitted for such work, and quite incapable of berthing more than half the number packed on board. The first ship to start was a small screw boat, re-christened for the occasion the *Melazzo*, after the late Garibaldian victory. The men were huddled on board anyhow at Thames Haven, in the night. No sooner had she got to sea than discomfort begat discontent. There were only sleeping-berths for half the number on board, and consequently the poor volunteers had to take it in turns to sleep; it was turn out one lot, and turn in the other. The vessel called at Plymouth, and a large number of passengers left her, some to find their way out on their "own hook," and join the force in Italy; and others, having had enough of such discomfort, deserted altogether. The remainder sailed on board the paddle-steamer *London*, a vessel quite as unsuited for the purpose as the *Melazzo*. The men assembled at midnight at Fenchurch Street station, making the surrounding neighbourhood echo again with their patriotic songs, and a special train took them down to Southend, where the [214] *London* was lying. Arrived on board, a very unseemly dispute arose between some of the officers, resulting in Captain de R—— turning Major H—— out of the ship. The *London* did not call anywhere going down Channel, strict orders having been given to her captain not to do so, in consequence of the number of desertions from the *Melazzo*. However, on touching at Gibraltar, several of the men had experienced discomfort enough, and some of those who had the means of reaching home left the ship there.

Arrived at Naples, a greater mistake than any that had yet occurred took place. The regiment, when assembled together, mustered about eight hundred very presentable young soldiers, well fitted in every way to give a good account of themselves, and such as any English officer would have been proud to lead into action. The question was, who would be the lucky English officer to whom the command would be given?

During the campaign of 1859, when the united French and Italian armies wrested Lombardy from the Austrians, Garibaldi had commanded a body of men who did excellent service, and obtained great renown as the Chasseurs des Alps—men who were now fighting with him in Sicily. Wherever Garibaldi went he was accompanied by an eccentric Englishman who was an excellent long shot with the rifle, and whose delight it was to "*pot*" off Austrians at incredible distances. He became famous for his skill in picking off Austrian officers, and was known as "Garibaldi's [215] Englishman." When success attended Garibaldi's expedition to Sicily, his long-shooting Englishman joined him, and when the English volunteers were ready to leave Naples and take the field at the siege of Gaeta, *Colonel* "Long Shot" was placed in command—a man of execrable temper, and totally unfitted in every way to command anything, let alone a body of half-drilled, high-spirited young Englishmen. About the same time Major S—— was placed under arrest, and accused of having kept irregular accounts of the regimental monies that had passed through his hands.

Arrived at the front, the British legion were neglected in every way by the Italian troops. The Garibaldians were treated badly enough, but the Englishmen fared worse, and, being dependent upon the Italian commissariat, they came badly off. They were pushed well to the front to do the fighting, and did what little there was to do with credit to themselves and their country, but when supplies were wanted they were almost ignored.

Major H——, who had been turned ashore from the *London*, found his way to Naples, where, in the most resplendent of uniforms, he figured at the *cafés* and *casinos* as colonel and commander-in-chief of an imaginary regiment of cavalry, which never reached more than himself and his orderly. After rendering himself the laughing-stock of all Naples, and giving rise to much unfavourable comment upon Englishmen in general, and himself in particular, he disappeared [216] from Naples, and went no one knows where, leaving behind as mementoes of the celebrated cavalry regiment various unpaid accounts.

After the fall of Gaeta, and the end of the war, the remains of this unfortunate British legion melted away, leaving many of their comrades behind, either having died in hospital or fallen beneath the enemy's fire.

Among the ranks of the British Legion was a young artist, who has since done good service for some of our illustrated papers in depicting battle scenes all over Europe. Mr. Vizitelli was that artist who received a wound in front of Gaeta, and who is one of the unfortunate band that accompanied Hicks Pascha to the Soudan, and about whose fate much anxiety now exists.

FOOTNOTES

[G] See Appendix.

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CHAPTER XVII.

ToC

Floods in France—London—Back to the South—Marseilles—Italian Emigrant passengers—A death on board—French *impolitesse*—Italian coast scenery at dawn—Unlimited palaver—Arrival in Leghorn—The *Lepanto*—Departure—"Fair Florence"—The Arno—Streets—Palaces—San Miniato—The grand Duomo—The Baptistery—Ghiberti's Bronze Gates.

We had a very rough passage to Marseilles, and arrived five hours after time. I only stopped here one night, and hurried on through Paris to London. The lowlands of France were still under water, and the weather in England much the same as when I left it six weeks ago. After a sojourn of some weeks—

"In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow
At once is deaf and loud,"

during which time the weather continued anything but agreeable, with bitterly cold winds and frequent rain, I started for the south once more, having arranged to meet my wife at Leghorn. I had hoped that Malta would have been mild and pleasant at this time of the year, but, as in most other places, the disastrous floods and phenomenal weather generally of 1882 had extended to March, 1883, even here, and she was not particularly sorry to leave the island, hoping to find an [218] improvement in the climate on a second trip into Italy.

Crossing the Channel in fairly smooth water and with a clean sky, I began to hope a favourable change had really set in at last. Paris was very bright and pleasant. A political demonstration was expected here on the Sunday following the day of my arrival; but this was the greater reason for my hurrying away on the morning of that day, March 18th. It opened bright and frosty. The usual tedious journey of fifteen hours to Marseilles was quite pleasant, and without event. I was glad to hear that the day had passed over peaceably at Paris.

At Marseilles it was warm and sunny; and on Monday I embarked on board the Transatlantic steamer for Genoa. Knowing the little sympathy and friendly feeling there is on board French vessels for the English, I was glad to find two or three of my countrymen among the saloon passengers. The time of sailing arrived, but there was no sign of our leaving, and at last I found we were waiting for some three or four hundred Italian returning emigrants, whose vessel had come from the Brazils, and which was not yet released from quarantine. This prospect of waiting

for some three or four hundred poor, dirty, sickly emigrants was not very lively, and this was rather disappointing, as it would probably interfere with my arrival at Leghorn at the time arranged. However, some four or five hours later their vessel came into the harbour, and they were brought alongside in several large barges—men, women, and children, with all their worldly [219] goods, most of them returning poorer than when they had left their native land. They had a medley of souvenirs with them, parrots and other birds, and all kinds of gay garments—those land-sharks the Jews not even sparing these poor, pitiful emigrants, but doing their best to make them part with their little store of hard-earned savings, by offering them these gaudy articles of apparel, to cover or replace their own poor warm clothing. The long sea-voyage from the Brazils must have been very trying to these forlorn creatures, whose hopeless condition it was impossible to avoid sympathizing with and pitying. They appeared most eager to reach the shores of their own dear Italy once more—a fond hope and dream in foreign lands, now almost realized.

There was one poor old man, upwards of seventy years of age, who sat very still during all the exciting confusion of getting on board the steamer. He looked very ill, and I felt quite grateful to the fine, robust young man (whom I afterwards discovered was a perfect stranger to him) who most kindly took charge of him, and assisted him to climb the ship's ladder, which seemed to give him intense pain—indeed, he appeared scarcely able to move for agony. That night, while we were steaming away over the moonlit sea towards his native land, the poor old man entered on his long rest in a happier home above.

The rest of the emigrants seemed happy enough, though herding together like sheep—men, [220] women, and children lying about the deck asleep. I thought it would have been as well to have separated them, and made the men strip, and given them the hose of cold water in the early morning, for they had evidently not removed their soiled and tattered garments for weeks; but probably the water would have proved too cold. I was the more fully convinced of the necessity of this cleansing process when, tired of the crowded confinement of the deck-space allotted to them, these poor emigrants gradually encroached on the precincts of the saloon, and a certain painful irritation of the skin unpleasantly reminded me of the fact. It was a pleasant sight, however, to see them enjoying their hot coffee and biscuits after their night's rest, and a more substantial breakfast later on in the forenoon. They were certainly well fed while on board.

We had a tolerably fair passage, which was fortunate, as I believe it would have been next door to impossible to have had proper control over our motley crew of passengers if any danger had arisen; moreover, the boats would have been utterly insufficient. Yet, although so fine, most of the passengers were obliged to leave the dinner-table, and return to their cabins. I was then a witness to the ill feeling of the French towards us, as adduced by their selfish neglect of my two English fellow-travellers; the doctor paid not the slightest attention to them, though it was clearly his duty to do so. I was glad, therefore, to be able to do what I could for them, and ordered one or [221] two tempting things from the dinner-table to be set aside for them, which I afterwards took to them myself, incurring thereby the decided disfavour of the French officers, who churlishly resented what they considered my interference. Possibly it might have been against the rules of the vessel; still, I felt it to be only a simple and natural act of humanity towards my sick countrymen, since no one else appeared willing to trouble themselves in their behalf.

It was a lovely moonlight night as we coasted along the shore, and I walked the deck till long past midnight.

The next morning I was up at six, and awoke my companions, that they might share with me the beauty of the coast scenery, which we were passing in the early daylight:

"'Tis morn, and Nature's richest dyes
Are floating o'er Italian skies;
Tints of transparent lustre shine
Along the snow-clad Apennine."

It was all we could desire—a glorious sun, clear atmosphere, and genial, bracing air. How fair is Nature at this hour! "One drinks in the air by long draughts; the eyes seem to be intoxicated with the sun, the very soul to bathe in the glory of colour!"

Meanwhile, we have passed Fréjus, Nice, Villafranca, Antibes,—the old castle at Mentone projecting out into the sea; and now lovely Monte Carlo and Monaco are in view, nestling amidst [222] terraces of orange and olive trees,—graceful palms lifting their heads here and there to the blue sky. Then a sterner and more imposing series of views, the coast-line more rugged and broken, as we gradually near the mountain ranges of the Alps and the Apennines, and approach the harbour of that magnificent city unrivalled indeed in the commanding grandeur of its situation—"Genova la Superba." I now quite realized that this glorious coast scenery must be seen from the sea, to understand and appreciate its special beauties.

As I had anticipated, the fussy and over-punctilious Italian sanitary officers demurred at admitting us to Pratique, and were about to put us in quarantine on account of the death of the poor emigrant, though it was clearly evidenced that he died from some organic disease. The poor emigrants were longing to get on shore and seek their homes once more, and I was most anxious to catch the train to Leghorn, to receive my wife on her arrival from Malta. Still, officer after officer came on board, and it was useless to chafe with impatience; they persisted in going through the whole of their tiresome, circumlocutory inquiries, and having their talk out: this aggravating palaver evidently being extended to magnify their office.

At last they came to the conclusion that we were entitled to a clean bill of health, and released us. I hurried on shore, and arrived at the station just ten minutes after my train had started. This [223]

was most provoking, but fortunately I found a little steamer of the Rubatino line, going to Leghorn that night, and at once engaged a passage in her. I found another Englishman on board, and as the little vessel rolled about in the trough of the sea, and there was therefore evidently little sleep to be got in our small cabins, we did our best to walk the deck till midnight; and then, with a "*Good night*," crawled into the confined cabins allotted to us, exercising, of course, the full privileges of Englishmen in a growl at the scanty accommodation.

Arriving at Leghorn the next morning at six, I found myself in rather an anxious predicament, for, having *planned* to arrive at Leghorn before my wife, I had not named any special hotel for our meeting; but owing to my having missed the train at Genoa, she had arrived before me, and where she had gone I knew not. However, trusting to her good sense and courage, I began my search with a light heart; and, after two unsuccessful attempts, was rejoiced to find her all safe. Like myself, she had experienced rather rough weather on her passage from Malta; but had appreciated the little breaks in the voyage afforded by the vessel stopping at Catania, Messina, and Naples.

On exploring the town a little after breakfast, we caught a glimpse of the great ironclad *Lepanto*, which the Italians had just launched, and a great unwieldy monster she looked.

Leghorn is a dead and alive sort of place, and we had no inclination to remain there; so took the [224]
10.45 train to Florence, at which city we arrived safely in the evening, and proceeded at once to the Hotel de Russie.

I had always had a great longing to see Florence, the home of Italian genius:

> "Florence! beneath the sun,
> Of cities fairest one."

Rain had fallen pretty freely here as elsewhere, and for the first few days we had to take advantage of every gleam of sunshine to obtain an outing.

Florence is divided into two parts by the Arno; the northern side is the oldest part, and contains the best hotels and restaurants. From one window we saw the yellow river rushing tumultuously over the artificial weirs that are built to prevent its unhealthy stagnation. Across this *unpoetical* river are several stone bridges; the central one, which is something like old London Bridge, is almost covered with houses, chiefly small jewellers'. Artists consider that this adds to the picturesqueness of the river, but I would have preferred a clear view up to the mountains at its head. It is a very interesting city, with its narrow streets, quaint buildings, piazzas, and monuments of ancient glory. There are two or three rather fine streets leading from the railway station, and culminating in the Cathedral Piazza. These contain several noble palatial residences of the ancient nobility, massively built of great rough-hewn stones, attached to which are large [225]
iron rings with holders for torches, and at the corners antique iron frames to hold lanterns, showing how the city was lighted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was curious to notice the great overhanging roofs, probably intended to give shade to the passers-by. As at Genoa, these buildings usually have the coronet and arms of their noble owners over the porch. The principal streets are sufficiently wide to allow of two carriages passing, and yet leave room for pedestrians; but, properly speaking, there are few regular foot-pavements. The shops are all one can wish, the *cafés* and restaurants being particularly conspicuous.

Crossing the river to the south side by one of the suspension bridges, we had some very pretty peeps at the valley; then, mounting up to the well-planned and finely terraced Boboli Gardens, and up to the interesting church and cemetery of San Miniato, we obtained magnificent views of the whole city, and the beautiful valley and plains in which it reposes. The interior of San Miniato is now used as a kind of Campo Santo, and has frescoed walls and an exquisitely wrought screen and pulpit; there are also several paintings attributed to Spinello Aretino.

The Cathedral is of course the centre of life, as in all Italian cities, and this reminds me of a beautiful thought in reference to this grand and splendid duomo of Florence: "It was designed by the Republic to be the largest and most sumptuous building that could be invented, in order that it might correspond with a very great heart—because originated in the mind of most of the [226]
citizens united together in one will." This was indeed a noble and Christian sentiment!

It is in the Italian-Gothic style—a great casket of black and white marble, beautified by many exquisite traceries and statues. The noble dome is finely proportioned, but looks almost small amidst the great pile of buildings around it, and by the graceful square Campanile rising proudly beside it. The porches have arches most curiously but daintily traced and twisted, the outline of the building putting one in mind of some exquisite Indian work of ivory, inlaid with silver. Altogether it is a strikingly handsome Duomo, and when the façade is completed, I doubt if there is another in Italy of the kind to compare with it, always excepting the beautiful and unique St. Mark's at Venice. It is, however, somewhat too closely surrounded by shops and other buildings. The interior is vast, grand, and impressive, but very cold and gloomy. The choir is octagonal, enclosed by an Ionic colonnade, and corresponds in shape with the dome above, which is double, one dome within another; the inner one is painted with frescoes by Vasari and Zacchero. From the pavement to the top of the cross it is 380 feet. The beautiful Campanile tower is encased with strips of differently coloured marbles, adorned with bas-reliefs and statues. It is 269 feet in height, being ascended by some 415 steps. The view from the top is very extensive. The adjacent Baptistery is on the site of the Temple of Mars. It is an octagonal building of the thirteenth [227]
century, and is chiefly remarkable for the beauty of Ghiberti's great bronze gates, representing scripture scenes.

"Ghiberti left behind him wealth and children;
But who would know to-day that he had lived
If he had never made those gates of bronze
In the old Baptistery—those gates of bronze
Worthy to be the gates of Paradise?
His wealth is scattered to the winds, his children
Are long since dead; but those celestial gates
Survive, and keep his name and memory green."

There are also some very fine mosaics in the interior, but unfortunately the darkness prevents their being properly seen. The only way to see anything of them is to go into the darkest corner, shutting your eyes, and then, opening them, look up at the dome suddenly. All the children in the city are baptized here, the water being blessed by the bishop twice a year. There is much of ancient interest around this old Baptistery; indeed, in all places where the Romans have been, one cannot but feel the presence of a mighty nation. So also with the Greeks; they leave traces of a refined intellect behind them which centuries cannot entirely efface.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

ToC

Santa Croce—San Lorenzo—*Day* and *Night*—Picture-galleries—The Tribune—*Venus de' Medici*—Excursion to Fiesole—Ancient Amphitheatre—Aurora *Café*—Climate of Florence—Heavy hotel charges—Departure—Bologna sausages—Venice.

The church of Santa Croce—the Westminster Abbey of Italy—possesses great interest to every classical student and lover of art and genius. It is situated within a few minutes' walk of the Cathedral in its own piazza, in the centre of which stands the striking monument and statue of the intensely thoughtful Dante, by Canova:

"In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
Even in itself an immortality.
Though there were something save the past, and this
The particles of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos:—here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his
The starry Galileo, with his woes;
Here Machiavelli's earth returned to whence it rose.

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
Might furnish forth creation:—Italy!
Time, which hath wronged thee with ten thousand rent
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
And hath denied, to every other sky
Spirits which soar from ruin:—thy decay
Is still impregnant with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray;
Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day."

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The façade of Santa Croce, like that of the Cathedral, is finely encased with marble; but it is the interior that excites such deep interest in the mind; the many fine monuments, and the beautiful sculptures on the tombs of the great and illustrious men whom Italy has had the honour to call her children. In this she is indeed rich among nations. The church contains a great number of chapels, some large, some small, but all possessing paintings, sculptures, mosaics, and monuments of interest.

In the Church of San Lorenzo are the stately mausoleums of the Medici. The Capella dei Deposite, or Chapel of the Buried, was designed by Michael Angelo, on purpose to contain his two celebrated statues of Giuliano and Lorenzo di Medici. At the feet of Giuliano rest the recumbent figures, Day and Night; of the latter, the great Angelo wrote—

"Grateful to me is sleep; to be of stone
More grateful, while the wrong and shame endure
To see not, feel not, is a benediction;
Therefore, awake me not; oh, speak in whispers!"

The other and more imposing statue of Lorenzo, grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent, is a truly

wonderful study. The figure is seated in a perfectly natural attitude, one hand supporting the head, which is covered by a kind of helmet; the shadowed face is full of intense thought, and the stone almost seems to breathe beneath your gaze. The statue is worthy of the master mind which designed it. Allegorical figures, representing Morning and Evening, are recumbent on either side.

There are many other churches to visit in Florence, but although they may well repay the [230] trouble, I think, as a rule, that visitors waste much time and money in making a point of seeing every individual church and chapel in each place they stop at. The hotel-keepers, who make the objects of interest as numerous as possible, derive by far the greatest benefit from it.

Florence is truly wonderful in picture-galleries, and nearly every antique shop is worth stopping at, to look at the copies of great works, though there is too frequently a doubt as to their genuineness; for there is great difficulty in obtaining permission to copy some of the most celebrated of the old masters, therefore the demand for these copies far exceeds the supply, and the shopkeepers resort to unscrupulous means to satisfy their customers and fill their own pockets. Many a British householder has pictures hanging upon his walls with which he is so well pleased, that it would be a pity to question their genuineness and undeceive him.

The chief and most important of the Art Museums are, the Uffizi or National Gallery of Florence, and the royal Pitti Palace. These two buildings, although on opposite sides of the river, are connected by a picture-gallery some seven hundred yards long, which extends across one of the bridges of the Arno. It is impossible to view separately, or form a very connected after-idea of, all the various treasures gathered here—a collection which equals any other in the world. The chief and most universally admired paintings by the old masters are contained in one room called [231] the Tribune—here are also five of the most beautiful of antique statues—the Wrestlers, the Dancing Faun, the Apollino, the Slave, and lastly, the famous Venus de' Medici. Of this last I may truly say, with Hawthorne, "It is of no use to throw heaps of words upon her, for they all fall away, and leave her standing in chaste and naked grace, as untouched as when I began." It is very, very beautiful, but not to be compared with that perfect *chef d'œuvre* of sculpture, the Venus of the Capitol, of which it is supposed to have been a copy.

The statues are hardly seen to the best advantage, as the paintings behind them, and the many beautiful art treasures in the room, distract the attention and weary the eye. In fact, in visiting all these celebrated galleries in Italy, one is really unable to devote to each the attention and admiration it deserves, and which we should naturally accord were we not simply overwhelmed and dazzled with such profusion of treasure; the mind refuses to store away all the beautiful and tender thoughts that crowd into it in wild confusion—they pass away almost as swiftly as they come, leaving our after recollections in a sadly fragmentary state, with a feast of undigested mental food.

It is said that both painting and sculpture are almost lost arts at the present time in fair Italy; and that the former has emigrated to England, and the latter to Germany.

Besides paintings, there are some very beautiful mosaics, representing scenes from Roman life. [232] One room also contains a very rich collection of gems, priceless relics of the Medici family set in jewels.

"Precious stones, never grow old."

There are some cabinets wonderfully inlaid and adorned with the smallest possible miniature paintings, representing Scripture scenes in infinitely minute compass; they are exceedingly curious and beautiful, and must have occupied years of patient toil and persevering talent. There was noble and appreciative patronage in those days! Some of the tables in the different rooms are marvellously inlaid and studded with precious stones, the subjects being very beautiful in harmony of colour. One great table, said to be worth £30,000, was sent, I believe, to the exhibition of 1851.

The Pitti Palace was originally built by a rich merchant of that name, and afterwards sold to the Medici; it now belongs to the King of Italy. The gardens at the back of the palace are well worth walking through, chiefly on account of the fine views of Florence obtainable from the upper terraces.

One of the most enjoyable trips outside Florence is to Fiesole (the mother of Florence), the ancient Fiesula, an Etruscan town, older even than Rome. It is situated in the mountains some thousand feet above the valleys. We took a carriage thither, winding our way up the hillsides, and passing many a picturesque-looking villa. One of them, Villa Mozzi, is the property of an English [233] artist, Mr. William Spence; another, the Villa dei Tre Visi—celebrated in one of Boccaccio's tales—belongs to the Earl of Balcarres. This site is much esteemed for the views it commands of the beautiful plains and valleys by which fair Florence is environed. Many of Italy's men of genius have retired to these peaceful abodes, to recruit their health and meditate on those imperishable works of art and literature which are now the admiration of the whole world, adding greatly both to its pleasure and instruction.

In about half an hour we reached the quaint little village at the top, having enjoyed our drive exceedingly, and having bought some pretty, quaintly shaped straw baskets from the peasant women *en route*. After passing into the Cathedral—there is no town or village in Italy too small to

boast of its Duomo, or Cathedral—we mounted still higher to the little chapel on the site of an old monastery, and here we had a magnificent view of the valley of the Arno, for nearly half its extent. Florence, with her great Duomo reposing in the centre of a beautiful plain, and numerous convents, villas, and villages lying here and there around, some in the glens and valleys, others on the hillsides, the whole encircled by the fine chain of mountains which formed a circular boundary-line to the landscape. We found, a few minutes' walk from this spot, the remains of a half-circular Etruscan amphitheatre, in fairly good preservation. Wherever I have seen these [234] coliseums and open-air theatres, I have always found them most admirably situated for grand and extensive views of the country beyond, and this, I think, must have greatly added to the impressiveness of the performance, and perhaps dignified the cruel and barbarous exhibitions that took place there, as the silent and solemn forest scenery raised the superstitious sacrifices of the ancient Druids to acts of veneration and worship.

We found here a very pleasant restaurant called the *Aurora Café*. It is owned by the artist I before mentioned as the proprietor of one of the charming villas. We partook of some refreshment, and I was offered sundry coins and antiques, supposed to have been dug up from the amphitheatre, or the still more ancient Etruscan village. I selected an iron coin, with a fine superscription.

On descending the hillside, we met an English coach and four, and our Italian driver fully shared in our enthusiastic admiration of the fine "Hyde Park" turn out, and the skilful manner in which the horses were handled on these mountain heights. Late in the evening we met the same team, admirably coached through the narrow and crowded streets and lanes of Florence.

We found the climate of Florence bright and pleasant, bracing and healthful, but it was rather too dear a place for those with a limited income. We had heard that it was an expensive city, and so indeed we found it, for with all our efforts to be economical our bill at the Hotel de Russie was [235] astonishingly high; nor were we alone in this experience, our fellow-travellers averring that it was quite necessary "to cut down your hotel bill, and not to pay quite all that was demanded, as you were always overcharged," and we all remembered what the "Innocents Abroad" had to say on the subject. As far as I have seen of Italian travel, it is a system of "spoiling the Englishman," whenever there is a chance, and the traveller might save himself the trouble of ever taking his hand out of his pocket. As a specimen, we were actually charged a franc each for four small mutton cutlets, and three francs (*2s. 6d.*) for a cauliflower! Of course I complained, and got one or two francs knocked off. I believe most of the landlords are fully prepared to reduce their bills, but Englishmen as a rule pay the exorbitant prices charged, contenting themselves with a hearty growl at the same on departure. I told the landlord plainly myself, that the English seldom objected to pay liberally, but hated extortion. The charge of two francs a day for attendance is a snare and a delusion, for it is well known that this does not in the least exonerate one from feeing the waiter, chambermaid, porter, boots, and even the omnibus tout. It is a system of blackmail throughout, and I think something should be done to abolish it, for it is undoubtedly one of the greatest drawbacks to foreign travel. At present there seems a private understanding among the servants, that one and all are to establish some sort of claim on you, thus:—you ring—the [236] chambermaid appears; you ask for candles—she withdraws and sends the sommelier with them; and every trifling duty is performed by a different personage, instead of one servant taking the entire attendance, to whom you might feel some satisfaction in giving a remuneration. I think that, under the present *régime* there is little doubt that the visitors pay the servants wages rather than the landlord, and therefore the item of "attendance" charged in the hotel bill is simply a fraud.

Then, at the railway stations you have a regular chain of porters for your luggage, as formidable as the array of officials who receive and show you into your hotel, one and all expecting a fee for the service of *welcome* (?) they have rendered. Hence, it is far cheaper to travel by Cook's Tickets; and if you decide to remain a week or longer at a place, it is a good plan to select a *pension*, where you will be charged so much a week *inclusive*.

Such is the system of extortion in Italy, that if you purchase anything at a shop—mosaics, jewellery, or what not—you are held in contempt if you at once pay the price that is demanded, the shopkeepers naming a sum perhaps three times as much as what they finally take and consider as a good bargain.

The 29th of March, the morning of our departure from Florence, was as bright and bracing as a real old-fashioned English May morn, and we felt it to be truly enjoyable as we sped over the [237] well-cultivated and sunny plains of the Florentine Basin, the outlines of the distant scenery charmingly developing in the clear Italian atmosphere. Indeed, it is this atmosphere which renders Italy so beautiful, every feature displayed to the best advantage, and the eye allowed to roam from one object to another; whilst in our London, for instance, during one half the year, the view too frequently presents a blurred mass, little really to be seen with distinctness, the buildings and great edifices looming darkly through a half fog—no dimpling lights and shadows, giving life, warmth, and animation, quickening one with admiration and rapture. It is like an

otherwise beautiful woman spoiled by a bad complexion.

We passed through fine open plains, then a series of tunnels, rocky defiles, over mountain streams and fertile valleys, until we reached Pracchia. We had been steadily ascending to higher ground, and were now nearly at the top of a mountain range, a wild defile and stream on the one side, a mountain road on the other. Then craggy cliffs, waterfalls, and snow-capped mountains follow in grand succession; sometimes a deep valley, with a mountain torrent plunging far, far into the depths below, the water hanging from the rocks in long petrified icicles. Men and women, like specks in the distance, toiling up the steep hills and winding paths, laden with faggots. We seemed to have been circling round two great mountains whilst having these enchanting glimpses of ever-varying scenery, with no end of intervening tunnels. At last we [238] appear to have passed through a final one, and, emerging quite into daylight, find we have attained the topmost part of the mountains at a station called Pittachia, where we found a good buffet. We here encountered a great many little country maidens, offering bunches of beautiful primroses and violets—veritably a sweet refreshment!

Now we swiftly descend, a mountain stream chasing us on the right, gradually swelling into a river, the Reno. In one part was the wreck of a stone bridge which had evidently been carried away during the inundations of December and January. Many parts of the river-bed were silted up by the action of wind and water on to the great overhanging sandstone mountain, enormous landslips in some places blocking up the river and changing its course. We thus saw how the sand is carried down to the mouths of the rivers into the sea, and how the great sand-banks are formed, such as those on which Venice is built. Everything in Nature is done progressively, never hasting, never resting.

At Bologna we had an opportunity of tasting the famous sausage-meat, and found it exceedingly good, the flavour being somewhat like spiced beef. The dogs of Bologna were, I believe, once a celebrated breed, which is now almost extinct. I do not mean by this remark to induce any uncomfortable reflections with regard to the sausages, but I really was surprised that nothing in [239] the shape of a dog made itself visible in this town.

Journeying round from here, I could not help thinking what a total contrast the scenery now presented to our view. It was one monotonous level, a lagoon-like plain, partly swamped with water, the only features in the landscape being the stunted trees, to which, at regular intervals, the vines were symmetrically trailed and spread. Yet in the far distance we caught the outline of the Apennine range, their snowy summits almost disappearing in the warm blue-grey sky. Slightly in the foreground the darker outline of the nearer hills bounded the basin of the level plains.

At Monselise the scenery improves, and we saw some very picturesque castle ruins, conical-shaped hills lying round; and on approaching Padua we again obtained a fine view of the snow-clad Alps, with the huge mound of hills at their base. We did not stop at Padua, having decided to do so on our return. It is only an hour's journey from Venice, which we were now rapidly nearing, and we eagerly scanned the horizon ever and anon to catch the first glimpse of the wonderful city —the "eldest child of liberty." We had the sea on our right, from whence blew a most refreshing breeze; but soon it spread ahead and to the left, and then we caught sight of little glittering minarets in the midst of the waters, and then Venice, fairy-like disclosed herself to our admiring eyes, rising slowly from the sea, and strangely bringing to mind Tennyson's description of the [240] magic city of Camelot:

"Fairy Queens have built the city,
They came from out a sacred mountain-cleft
Toward the sunrise, each with harp in hand;
And built it to the music of their harps."

Gradually the marble city took form, the slim towers and great domes forming a lovely outline against the clear and cloudless beauty of the evening sky.

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[241]

CHAPTER XIX.

ToC

Arrival in Venice—The Water City—Gondola traffic—Past glories—Danieli's Royal Hotel—St. Mark's Piazza—The Sacred Pigeons—St. Mark's—Mosaics—The Holy Columns—Treasures—- The Chian Steeds—The modern Goth.

Arriving at the station, our luggage was quickly carried to the canal-side, where there were numbers of gondoliers awaiting us with their hearse-like gondolas, which, as Byron describes in one of his letters, "glide along the water, looking blackly just like a coffin clapt in a canoe, where

none can make out what you say or do." (There is no name in either past or present times more sadly and inextricably associated with Venice than that of George Gordon, Lord Byron.) It was indeed a change from the usual noise and confusion at the end of a railway journey, and it seemed strange not to see the usual array of omnibuses. "The means of arrival in Venice, indeed, are commonplace enough, but, lo! in a moment you step out of the commonplace railway station into the lucid stillness of the water city—into poetry and wonderland." The gondoliers are quite as clamorous as the liveried omnibus legion. However, we soon found a representative of the [242]
Hotel Danieli with a handsome gondola waiting to receive us. We stepped in quickly, though most carefully—nay, even solemnly, and were soon gliding over the silent water. There was a momentary tremor and hesitation at first entering the long, slender, black craft with its funeral-like hood or canopy; but the inside was luxuriously easy, and the black cushions and drapery so comfortable that we speedily dismissed our gloomy ideas, and began to enter into the busy moving scene around us with the greatest delight and interest.

The gondolas were originally put into black by the order of the State, as a rebuke to the lavish magnificence of the Venetians: they look now as though they were in mourning for the past glories of the city. The dress of the gondoliers was fortunately not included in the statute; and the fine, stalwart fellow, who was quite winning our admiration by his graceful movements in propelling our gondola, was attired like a Venetian sailor, with a blue scarf round his waist, trimmed with silver lace. These gondoliers, for the most part, are a light-hearted and obliging race. They certainly hand you to your seat with a very solemn politeness, giving you somewhat the impression of being handed into your grave; but such thoughts are but for a moment, and soon disappear as a smile flits over the bronzed, sailor-like countenance, and as the boat glides rapidly between rows of great houses and marble palaces, which rise out of the water on your right and left, "Giacomo" obligingly pointing out the objects of interest as you pass along. [243]

The aqueous road to our hotel lay for some distance down the Grand Canal, and then turned aside into some of the numerous narrow lanes of water which branch off in every direction; and it seemed truly marvellous to us how skilfully the rectangular corners were turned, the gondolier uttering a brief guttural shout of warning as we shot round, in case of another gondola approaching from an opposite direction. As it was, we had several very narrow shaves, and more than once stood in danger of colliding. We were amused at seeing some of the hotel gondolas that had preceded us from the station, stopping at the water-side post-office for letters—woman, the true letter-lover, generally being the most conspicuous applicant. And now we reach the steps of our hotel, and are soon comfortably housed.

I feel we are at last really in Venice, and the memory of all her former glory and greatness flits through my mind as we come under the fascination of her magical influence. First comes a faint echo from distant ages, of those ancient Veneti, who were powerful almost a thousand years before the present Venice came into existence; then a vision of the old Paduans, fleeing from their once wealthy city before the devastating conqueror Attila. Driven from the land, they seek the sea, and take refuge on the long spits of sand lying in a vast lagoon beyond the mouths of several rivers. Settling down on the Rivo Alto (Rialto), they commence to build a city, henceforth [244]
to be the wonder and admiration of the world. Then a thousand years of glorious and active life. There is a thrill almost of amazement at the magnificent courage and audacity of this wondrous city, risen like Aphrodite from the sea, and a shudder at the crimes that stain her annals—crimes as unique in their matchless horror as any other part of her singular history. Lastly, the gradual decay of her power, and the final catastrophe of her fall.

Since leaving the train, we had almost been in dreamland, wandering in the dark ages; but we were very suddenly brought back to bustling nineteenth-century life, when the dazzling lights of the hotel broke upon our visions, and we caught a glimpse of the numerous visitors thronging the staircase—old men and matrons, young men and maidens, all ascending to *table d'hôte* in the great dining-room with an air of pleasing interest and excitement.

Danieli's Royal Hotel, which, I believe, was originally one of the Doge's palaces, is situated on the quay opposite the harbour, its side entrance being in one of the narrow canals. In the evening, after dinner, a band of musicians came into the inner court below, and serenaded the visitors with Venetian love-songs.

We enjoyed a peaceful night's rest after the fatigues of travel, fully anticipating a delightful awakening in this wonderful city.

The morrow came, with a lovely blue sky and bracing atmosphere, and after breakfast we took [245]
our first walk in Venice. Crossing the quay and certain of the little marble bridges that span the canals, and turning to the right, round the Doge's Palace, we found ourselves in *St. Mark's Piazza* —a great square, with colonnades of shops and *cafés* running round three sides of it; the apartments of the royal palace rising some three stories on one side, and at the other end the beautiful Byzantine Temple of *St. Mark's*, with its antique mosaic arches, surmounted by the famous bronze horses and quaintly hooded domes, rising in exquisite outline against the clear blue sky. Around and above us flitted soft-hued pigeons in narrowing circles, alighting on the pavement in flocks to be fed by the visitors and children, not unfrequently perching on the hands of those who scattered food among them; and then flying off once more to "nestle among the marble foliage of St Mark's, mingling the soft iridescence of their living plumes with the tints, hardly less lovely, that have stood unchanged for seven hundred years." These little feathered beings are supposed to have some mystic influence over the welfare of Venice, and are believed by the legend-loving people to fly three times round the city every day.

At the entrance of the piazza towards the sea are two solitary columns, supporting the mighty

emblems of St. Mark.

"The spouseless Adriatic mourns her love;
St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood,
Spared but in mockery of his withered power."

The first step taken towards seeing Venice was to ascend the great tower. Though its size is [246]
imposing, being some 320 feet high, it is an ugly structure, but commands most splendid views. The ascent is most easy—no tiresome steps, but simply inclined planes with brick-work flooring. On arriving at the top and looking down, I saw Venice flooded with the noonday light—"a golden city paved with emerald," stretching before me like a realized dream; the innumerable canals running up from the sea at right angles, while around and beyond lay the Adrian Gulf and the great sea, dotted with tiny islands covered with buildings;—the whole one vast lagoon or delta formed by the alluvial soil washed down from the mountains and deposited by the rivers. The city is built upon thousands and thousands of piles, the hard and costly wood for which was brought with vast expense from the East, and driven down into the earth and sand below. It was at such cost that the Venetians obtained so admirable a position, and were enabled to command the commerce of the world. The harbours were full of well-protected shipping, the narrow passages of deep water by which alone large vessels could pass, being marked by piles. It was strange to see the city, with its large and solid buildings and churches, floating as it were on the water:

"Underneath Day's azure eyes,
Ocean's nursling, Venice lies—
A peopled labyrinth of walls,
Amphitrite's destined halls,
Which her hoary sire now paves
With his blue and beaming waves."

When I descended the tower, I felt, as when on the Capitol of Rome, that I now understood more [247]
of the position of the city than many books could have told me.

Of course, it was not long ere we passed under the portal of St. Mark's, though we lingered long outside, admiring its beautiful proportions, described by Ruskin in a burst of pure poetry as "a multitude of pillars and grey-hooded domes clustered into a long, low pyramid of coloured light: a treasure-heap, it seems, partly of gold and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaics and beset with sculpture of alabaster, clear as amber and delicate as ivory—sculpture, fantastic and involved, of palm leaves and lilies, and grapes and pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together in an endless network of buds and plumes; and in the midst of it the solemn forms of angels, sceptred and robed to the feet, and leaning to each other across the gates, their figures indistinct among the gleaming of the golden ground through the leaves beside them, interrupted and dim, like the morning light as it faded back among the branches of Eden, when first its gates were angel-guarded long ago."

This description of the great art-master, I of course accepted as from a highly cultured æsthetic source; but fear that, from want of true poetic light and art culture, I did not quite appreciate or realize it in the interior, though to me the exterior outline and architecture were always soft and [248]
beautiful. Unfortunately, one is greatly pestered outside by a voracious band of touts, miscalled guides, some of them mere uneducated-looking, parrot-like roughs, and whom it is laughable to suppose could have any pretensions to refined knowledge and art history—irreverent monsters who have no sympathy with, or appreciation of, anything, except what you may have in your pockets.

The interior of St Mark's reminded me more of an Eastern mosque than a Christian temple, with its heavy arches, arcades, galleries, colonnades, and Protean gloom. "A grave and dreamy structure," says Dickens, "of immense proportions; golden with old mosaics; redolent of perfumes; dim with the smoke of incense; costly in treasures of precious stones and metals, glittering through iron bars; holy with the bodies of deceased saints; rainbow-hued with windows of stained glass; dark with carved woods and coloured marbles; obscure in its vast heights and lengthened distances; shining with silver lamps and winking lights; unreal, fantastic, solemn, inconceivable throughout."

When the eyes have grown accustomed to the darkness, the soft rainbow colours of the mosaics come stealing out to view one by one. Nearly the whole of the interior, more especially the vaulting, is beautified by these millions upon millions of tiny cubes of coloured and gilded glass, arranged with infinite labour and skill, and wonderfully illustrating the most beautiful and [249]
impressive parts of Holy Writ, with reference to the history of mankind, from the creation. To blend these soft, harmonious colours must have been the work of ages, especially those portions which necessitated the patient artist working on his back, while fixing each tiny cube into its proper place in the ceiling. The antique pavement, undulating from sheer age and tread of multitudes of worshippers in the past, and also probably from a sinking of the foundation, is likewise tessellated with all the colours of the prism, arranged in mystic symbols and intricate figuring. But it appeared to me, at least, that this wonderful, Mosque-like building only wanted great groups of monster idols, to complete a perfect resemblance to some vast Hindoo temple of a dark bygone age, when the people's conception of the Deity was of a being rather to be feared than loved, rather to be dreaded than trusted.

Various services were going on in the numerous little chapels; and when the principal morning

service at the chancel was over, we ascended the steps of the high altar in order to examine and admire the ancient twisted red alabaster pillars, said to have been originally a part of Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem; for nearly every stone in St. Mark's has its history. The bronze folding doors came from the Mosque of St. Sophia at Stamboul; the pillars at the entrance of the baptistery were part of the booty of Arre; while there are three red flagstones on which Barbarossa knelt to do reverence to St. Peter, in the person of the Pope. The guide held a lighted [250] taper on one side of the column, that we might observe its glowing transparency. I could well enter into the feeling of noble triumph which must have animated those great and powerful Doges of past times, in thus being able to beautify their own Christian temple in Venice at the expense of the unbelieving, barbarous Turk, whose usurpation of these sacred relics and of the Holy Land was righteously considered a scandal and a shame to the Christian world.

We visited the Treasure Chapel, and saw the precious things of the temple—offerings of princes, potentates, and devotees, collected from all ends of the world. Each apartment was secured by no end of bolts, bars, and locks. Among other curiosities we were shown a cover of the books of the Gospels, embellished with gold and jewels, from the Church of St. Sophia, Constantinople; a crystal vase containing the blood of the Saviour (!); a silver column supporting a fragment of the pillar at which Christ was scourged; a cup of agate containing a portion of the skull of St. John; the sword of the Doge Morocini; cuneiform writings from Persepolis; an episcopal throne of the seventh century, said to have been St. Mark's; and many other things, the genuineness of which to try and believe was of course next to impossible; and one could only marvel at the credulity of many good men and women, who must have dearly liked to be deceived, and who almost worshipped these lying relics, and would only look at them devoutly on [251] their knees. One heartily wishes that a valiant Luther had arisen amongst them in those days, to set them free from this miserable bondage, and teach them that Christ's atonement was surely enough for them.

On leaving the chapel, we were allowed as an exceptional privilege to ascend the galleries round the interior, and look closely into the beautiful mosaic-work, most of which is in a wonderful state of preservation, though some of it is much defaced and decayed by damp. The mosaics now being used in the restoration are made on a new principle, being glazed over to preserve the surface and colour from the effect of the air. We next went out into the open façade gallery, overlooking the great Piazza, and stood between the famous bronze horses, whose Arab-like symmetry we greatly admired.

"Before St. Mark's still glow the steeds of brass,
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun."

I hardly recognized the justice of Goethe's observation, of their appearing to be somewhat heavily and clumsily modelled on a close survey, considering their slender elegance when seen from below.

We found a great many masons and workmen employed, both inside and outside St. Mark's, on the restoration and repairs. Fragments of the beautiful mosaic were scattered about in heaps, which it seemed almost desecration to tread upon. I swept them carefully together, and called the attention of the workmen to the neglect of such precious bits of antique workmanship. I [252] believe these restorations are greatly exciting the anger of lovers of art in England, by the imputed Vandalism of the committee who are employed in directing the work. As this outcry is principally raised by many eminent artists, who look on St. Mark's as a perfect gem of antiquity, there must be some good reason for this righteous anger, which, however, I much fear will be ineffectual to stay the hand of the Goth.

I must confess, though with secret misgiving as to how such heresy will be received, that as a whole, and apart from its antiquity and interesting historical associations, and the exquisite mosaics, so rich in colouring and design, I was rather disappointed in St. Mark's. Certainly the exterior is beyond praise in its beautiful curving outlines; but the interior is so exceedingly dark and heavy, that the radiant beauty of the mosaics can only succeed in very partially relieving the deep gloom. As a perfect specimen of the dark ages, commend me rather to that little ancient Mosque beside the new Cathedral modelled from it at Marseilles, with its low-arched domes and roofs, and "dim, religious light."

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CHAPTER XX.

ToC

A water-excursion—The Bridge of Sighs—Doge's Palace—Archæological Museum—The Rialto—The streets of Venice—Aids to disease—Venetian Immorality—The Arsenal—Nautical Museum—Trip to Lido—Glass works—Venetian evenings—The great Piazza—Scene on the Piazzetta—Farewell to Venice.

Stepping into a gondola one sunny day, we glided past the marble palaces, at the landing-stages of which Venetian "water-carriages" were moored. We sped down the Grand Canal, passing under the great Rialto with a thought of the early Venetians who had settled there nearly two thousand years ago; then round by the narrower and more shaded canals of the silent city, and presently in one of the narrowest parts we passed beneath a covered marble arch—the fateful Bridge of Sighs, with a sympathetic shudder of pitying remembrance. We breathed more freely as we emerged from these shadowed water lanes, and caught a glimpse of the bright blue sea fronting us.

On another day we visited the Bridge of Sighs in more orthodox fashion, so that we might quote with due veracity Byron's ever recurring lines—

"I *stood* in Venice, *on* the Bridge of Sighs,
A palace and a prison on each hand;"

and treading in the footsteps of generations of friendless and oftentimes guiltless criminals, we [254]
passed over from the Hall of Justice in the Doge's Palace, through secret passages, to the Piombi, or state prison, and thence to the Pozzi, a series of gloomy rock-hewn dungeons, where the air felt heavy with the breath of *murder* dignified by the name of judicial punishment, and where many a hopeless wretch had sighed out his love, his hopes, and finally his cruelly persecuted life.

Our visit to the Doge's Palace was full of the deepest interest. Mounting the beautiful fretwork marble staircase, just at the rear of St. Mark's, we entered the great colonnade, and ascended to the rooms above, which are all heavily decorated and adorned on wall and ceiling with paintings by the great masters. The Hall of the Great Council is esteemed one of the finest rooms in Europe. It is indeed a magnificent apartment: but perhaps a more particular interest centres in the Sala del Consiglio dei Dieci, or Hall of the Inquisition, as it was sometimes appropriately called. Here the chairs of the terrible Ten still remain, as though for some impending solemn conclave. Awful pictures of bloodshed and death frown down from some of the walls in this Palace of council chambers, and in one hall may still be seen two slits in the wall, once lions' mouths, where secret information was lodged against conspirators, or those suspected of being so, and by which the lives of innocent people were sworn away. But there was a painful contrast [255]
between the gorgeous chambers above and those noisome dungeons below.

We were greatly interested in the Archæological Museum, especially in the library, which contains 120,000 volumes, and some 10,000 valuable manuscripts, among which are many rare and beautifully illuminated literary treasures: Cicero's "Epist. ad Familiaries," the first book printed in Venice, 1465; a Florence "Homer," on vellum, 1483; Marco Polo's Will, 1323; a Herbary, painted by A. Amadi, 1415; Cardinal Guinani's Breviary, with Hemling's beautiful miniatures; and the manuscript of the "Divina Commedia,"—are only a sample of the treasures here contained, over which we could have lingered with great enjoyment for a far longer time than we could well spare. Many of these books were the loving work of devoted monks, who lived before the age of printing, and wished to hand down to posterity the books they themselves had loved. Such was their idea of the value of these religious books, and more especially of the New Testament, that they were bound in costly covers, adorned with precious stones—the labour of transcribing and illuminating them being almost incalculable. The invention of machinery, alas! in these latter days has banished for ever such conscientious labours of love, and neither books nor anything else are impressed with men's minds, hearts, and handiwork as they used to be. It is an age of mechanism, sensational, æsthetical, and artificial devotion, and very little is sacred but Self. Though it is good, in one sense, that sacred books have been thrown broadcast on the world; [256]
it has, to a certain extent, divested them of much of their peculiar value in the minds of the multitude. This was strangely exemplified to me some few years ago, when engaged in the suppression of the slave trade, on the east coast of Africa. There was a sale of European effects at Zanzibar, and amongst other articles was an Arab Bible—*i.e.* the Koran, translated into English. British residents bid high for this prize; but the Arabs, determined that their sacred book should not fall into the hands of those whom they deemed as infidels, bid still higher, and eventually carried it off. By-and-by there was an English Bible put up, and, in a spirit of tit-for-tat, the Arabs bid high for this, supposing the religious zeal of the British would have compelled them to bid still higher. They, however, did nothing of the kind, and it was knocked down to the disgusted Arabs, who now considered us a nation of infidels indeed. It may be, that even in this way it was a good thing that a copy of our Bible should fall into the hands of the zealous Mohammedans.

The Rialto is a graceful double bridge of white marble, which by a single span bridges the Grand Canal, leading from the bustling market-place to the opposite side, which is almost as busy. Like old London Bridge, it is crowded with little hucksters' shops; and I fancy there is little real change in the scene it presents from the time when the immortal Shakespeare drew his [257]
Shylock and Antonio from life. The Hebrew is still a prominent figure in the thronged thoroughfare; but his victim, let us hope, is conspicuous by his absence. Humanity is somewhat softened since those days of yore.

Although there are no wheel-vehicles in Venice, and horses are still as scarce as in Byron's time (when there were said to be only eight horses in the city—four on the top of St. Mark's, and four

in his lordship's stables), it is easy to walk from one end of Venice to the other when you once know your bearings, which are rather difficult to obtain, unless you carry a pocket-compass, as all the places are so much alike, and it is as easy to lose your way as in a forest. The streets are narrow and crowded with shops, being connected by small bridges spanning the canals at all points. Some of these smaller canals are in anything but a wholesome or odorous condition, receiving, as they do, foulness of all kinds from the houses. They must certainly render the city far from healthy during the summer, when canal malaria and fever are prevalent. Indeed, being almost tideless, they have to be occasionally dammed up and cleaned out. Many of the narrow streets are also singularly unsavoury; and though a foreigner should always be slow to judge of the moral condition of a city by mere casual observation, the presence of a very decided immorality is forced on one's notice in many ways in Venice; it is impossible to doubt that not a few of these streets contain perfect dens of filth and iniquity, judging by the brazen-faced, [258] abandoned-looking females who peer down at one from the windows. It is hardly to be wondered at if this is so, pent up as the population is between labyrinths of stone and water, streets and houses. We know its condition in Byron's sad and reckless days, and it does not seem to have improved much since.

I believe it is possible to walk nearly two-thirds round Venice by the quays. It was in this way, only crossing the necessary bridges, that we one day walked to the Arsenal, and visited the ancient Venetian ship-building yard. We were particularly interested in the Nautical Museum of the Italian Admiralty, just within the dockyard gates. Here there is a very fine collection of models, from the historic gondola "Bucentoro," on board which the Doges performed the singular ceremony of "wedding the Adriatic," and the ancient war-ships which had met and defeated the Turks, Greeks, and Genoese in many a tough encounter,—down to the great ironclads of the Italy of to-day. We also saw a variety of armour such as was worn in the ancient days of Venice, and a very quaint old gun or mortar used in the days of her glory: it was entirely of leather, and fired a large stone shot. On the poops and forecastles of the ancient galleys were several guns on the modern mitrailleuse system, to sweep down the slaves and criminals—who sat manacled by the feet, while pulling the oars—in case of rebellion or disobedience. There are many such sad [259] mementoes at Venice, of an age of cruelty and tyranny, when men were condemned unheard, to death or a life of slavery. But in spite of these blemishes on a great name, Christendom is eternally indebted to Venice, and her terrible but valiant Doges, for was she not—

"Europe's bulwarks against the Ottomite"?

Among our pleasantest days in Venice must rank that on which we took steamer to Lido, one of the narrow islands lying between the Adriatic Sea and the lagoon of Venice, which acts as a kind of natural breakwater to Venice. It was quite a treat to set foot on *terra firma* once more, for here we did find real land, and at least a horse and carriage to convey us if needed.

The public gardens on the Lido were a gift to the Venetians from Bonaparte, who pulled down a great many buildings, not even sparing those which were consecrated, in order to give them a public promenade. It was laid out in 1810 by Giannantino Selna, and though nothing very grand, affords real delight and refreshment to the people, who enjoy many a frolicsome dance here on summer nights. We had our luncheon outside the *Café*, where we enjoyed the sight of the bright waves which tumbled in so briskly at our feet, and the breath of the fresh breeze which blew off the Adriatic Sea facing us. After our brief rest, we had a glorious walk on the sandy shore, where "little trembling grasses" grew on the edges of the sea, and shells lay scattered about in infinite [260] profusion and variety. Our spirits rose with the invigorating freshness of the scene, and we returned to Venice by the evening steamer as delighted as children, with handkerchiefs full of sea-shore treasures.

We also made an interesting expedition one morning to the Venetian Glass and Mosaic Works on the Grand Canal. We here saw how the beautiful mosaics are designed and adjusted, and how the delicate, rainbow-tinted glass is blown and spun into any imaginable design one might desire. I brought away a fanciful little souvenir in the shape of a large head or top of a pin, on which my initials appeared in divers colours, interwoven with flowers by the intelligent workman.

We visited several palaces and churches, but found nothing of particular interest save some very beautiful silk tapestry, studded with precious stones, which covered the altar in the church of the Jesuits.

I do not think I should care to spend a very long period in the moated imprisonment of the Sun-girt City, especially during the summer, when canal malaria and fever is rife; and should certainly never think, like Shelley, of forming any plans "never to leave sweet Venice." I must, however, confess that for a certain time there is an irresistible attraction and fascination in the unique kind of life one is forced to lead here. The evenings are peculiarly enjoyable. The light blue sky of day deepens gradually through twilight into night; the stars shine out of its soft depths with a brilliant [261] though cold effulgence, reflected glimmeringly in the surrounding waters, which flow in quiet stillness on every side. There is nothing around to disturb the silent eloquence of night, and the flow of thought and meditation.

After a long and tiring day of sight-seeing, and a re-invigorating dinner at the hotel, it is deliciously Venetian to rest in the evening, with windows open to the star-lit skies, and listen to the sweet serenading of a boatful of singers, who float on the waters near the hotel till a late hour at night, their gondola prettily illuminated with coloured lamps, and the soft liquid sound of their voices filling the air with melody.

The great place of resort is the *Piazza of St. Mark's*. Here, sipping our coffee and ices at

Florian's, and listening to a good band of music, we saw a little of Venetian society, and had an opportunity of admiring some of the beautiful and dignified patrician dames of the city, who otherwise were scarcely ever visible. It was decidedly disappointing to find they had almost invariably discarded the graceful and becoming lace head-dress and mantilla, and adopted the French costume. We were much pleased and amused at the gaily dressed nurses, who, with their quaint silver head-dresses, and broad streaming ribbons, looked so good tempered, and showed such pride and pleasure in the lovely dark-eyed babes they carried; and we always looked out for the beautiful and picturesquely attired flower-seller, who presented her tiny bouquet with so [262] charming a grace, and further bestowed a sweet smile on us in return for our franc. Flocks of the soft-plumed and ever-hungry St. Mark's pigeons would greet us, espying us from afar, circling round and almost burying us in their midst, delighted to perch on our hands and peck the grain we brought to throw them.

There was always a busy and moving scene in the adjoining piazzetta; swarms of gondolas awaiting your pleasure, under the gay sunlit skies, the gondoliers shouting, "*Gon*-dola! *gon*-dola!" in almost ceaseless strain. It is a good plan, when going on an excursion, to carefully select your gondola the night before. After breakfast, you will find it awaiting you handsomely decorated, its owner smartly dressed, Venetian sailor fashion, with blue and silver scarf; and, taking with you a basket of good things in the way of refreshments, away you glide for a day's genuine pleasure.

I am afraid the romance of the gondola days will be sadly invaded by the number of little "Citizen" steamers, which ply from pier to pier; but, as they will necessarily be confined to the traffic of the Grand Canal, the smaller canals will still be sacred to the sombre, silent gondola.

The day of our departure at last drew near, and we felt we must bid a reluctant farewell to—

"The marble city by the silent sea."

On the whole we had not found it a very dear place. The charges at Danieli's were moderate, and the hire of gondolas far cheaper than carriages elsewhere. There is also far less inducement [263] to spend money than at Florence, Rome, and other places, for the shops are in a decided minority, and sight-seeing the order of the day. We spent our last evening in storing up in our minds all the pleasant memories of the past week, and—

"The following morning, urged by our affairs,
We left bright Venice."

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CHAPTER XXI.

ToC

Leaving Venice—Hervey's Lament—Scenery *en route*—Padua—Associations of the past—A brief history of Padua, and the House of Carrara—General appearance of the town—Giotto's Chapel—His beautiful frescoes—Character of Giotto's work—The Cathedral—Palazzo della Ragione—The Wooden Horse—St. Antonio—The Hermitage—The Fallen Angels—The University and its students—Ladies of Padua—Situation of the city—An old bridge—Climate.

The silvery-voiced bells of Venice chimed sweetly over the waters as we left her, bidding us a tender farewell, almost reproachful that we could leave her so soon. Siren-like, she would fain entice us to remain with her, but the old charm-power has departed with her past glory; and we echoed Hervey's beautiful lament as we watched her domes and minarets disappear slowly one by one in the distance.

"And where art thou, with all thy songs and smiles,
Thou dream-like city of the hundred isles—
Thy marble columns, and thy princely halls,
Thy merry masques and moonlight carnivals,
Thy weeping myrtles and thy orange bowers,
Thy lulling fountains 'mid ambrosial flowers,
The cloudless beauty of thy deep blue skies,
Thy starlight serenades to ladies' eyes,
Thy lion, looking o'er the Adrian sea,
Defiance to the world and power to thee?
That pageant of the sunny waves is gone,
Her glory lives on memory's page alone;
It flashes still in Shakespeare's living lay, [265]
And Otway's song has snatched it from decay.

But ah! her Chian steeds of brass no more
Shall lord it proudly over sea and shore;
Nor ducal sovereigns launch upon the tide,
To win the Adriatic for their bride!
Hushed is the music of her gondoliers,
And fled the glory of a thousand years;
And Tasso's spirit round her seems to sigh
In every Adrian gale that wanders by!"

The journey to Padua is over a level, well-cultivated, and fertile plain, intersected by many small canals. To the north, and on the left, the snow-capped Tyrolese Alps form a grand relief to the monotony of the surrounding country.

Padua is now a very quiet unimportant little city, with only about forty-five thousand inhabitants; and very greatly changed from the time when it was so justly famed for its University.

"In thine halls, the lamp of learning
Padua, now no more is burning;
* * * * * *
Once remotest nations came
To adore that sacred flame."

When Galileo, Fallopius, Fabricius, and other celebrated men were professors at this university, it could boast of numerous students from all parts of the world: Tasso and Columbus were educated here. Shakespeare bears witness to the respect in which its learned doctors were held, in his immortal "Merchant of Venice."

Livy was born here 50 B.C., dying in his seventy-sixth year. He is supposed to be buried here, [266]
and his tomb is shown; but that his bones lie beneath the stones is certainly like too many things in Italy—a fable. Here, by-the-by, also dwelt the shrewish Katharina—

"Renown'd in Padua, for her scolding tongue."

Padua, once Patavium, is of very ancient date, and is said to owe its origin to Antenor, the brother of Priam, King of Troy. Dryden, in his translation of Virgil, says—

"Antenor founded Padua's happy seat,
And gave his Trojans a secure retreat;
There fixed his arms, and there renewed their name,
And there in quiet rules; and crown'd with fame."

"In 452 Padua suffered severely from the invasion of Attila; and in 601 was burnt by Agilulf, King of the Longobards. In the Middle Ages it was one of the towns which struggled most successfully against the Imperial rule. In 1164 it joined the Lombardy league, and instituted its free government. The town was then extended, and the Palazzo della Ragione built. In 1222 the University of Padua was founded, in consequence of the dissolution of that at Bologna. As a Guelphic city, Padua fought against the detested tyrant Eccelino; and upon his fall, in 1259, the town rose to great power. This time was marked by the building of the grand Church of St. Antonio.... In 1337 Marsiglio da Carrara became an independent prince. The Palazzo dei
Princepili was built, and the town greatly adorned under his government. His successor, [267]
Marsiglietti Papafava, was murdered by Jacopo da Carrara (the friend of Petrarch), who was in his turn murdered in 1350, after which his brother Jacopino ruled five years. He was succeeded by his nephew, Francesco da Carrara, who was celebrated for his wars against the Venetians, and afterwards against the Milanese under the Visconti. An alliance between Venice and Milan ended in the total defeat of the Paduans in 1388, and the temporary fall of the House of Carrara. The story of the imprisonment and after adventures of the Carraras is one of the most romantic of the Middle Ages. Francesco Novello da Carrara and his devoted wife, Taddea d'Este, escaped from the castle where they were immured by the Visconti, and after a series of almost incredible adventures they reached Florence. With assistance obtained from Bologna and Fruili, Francesco once more presented himself before his native town, with a banner bearing the arms of the House of Carrara. He called upon the Milanese governor to surrender, and was received with derision; but he swam the Brenta by night, crept into the town, and was welcomed with joy by the citizens, who rose suddenly and successfully against the Milanese, and proclaimed Francesco Novello sovereign lord of Padua on Sept. 8th, 1390. He ruled till 1405, when a succession of wars with the Visconti and Venice ended in the treacherous capture of the town by the Venetians. Then brave Francesco Novello da Carrara and his sons were strangled, after having endured
imprisonment in a cage eight feet long by twelve feet broad. Henceforth Padua shared the [268]
fortunes of Venice."

For this brief historical account I am indebted to Mr. Augustus Hare, who has written so ably on the Northern and Central cities of Italy.

As we intended to resume our journey and reach Verona the same evening, we only remained

in Padua a few hours. We put up at the Croce d'Oro, where we found such comfortable quarters, that we almost regretted our visit was to be so short. However, there was a decided air of melancholy about the old city; the narrow streets with their arcaded walks were unnaturally silent. These arcades afford shelter from both the sun and rain, and one finds but little use for the English umbrella. The walks are sometimes bordered by chestnut trees, and there are pleasant gardens surrounding the quaint and noble old palaces. In Italy every residence with an entrance for carriages is entitled a palace palazzo.

Not far from our hotel is the Church of S. Maria dell' Arnea, so called from its standing near the ruins of an old Roman amphitheatre. It is a plain Gothic building, designed by Giotto when quite young, and contains his wonderful frescoes. Dante was living with him at this time.

The interior of the church—often called Giotto's Chapel—is somewhat cold and bare at first sight; but the beauty of the paintings, which are in a very fair state of preservation, considering their age, speedily dispels this idea. The frescoes represent the history of the Virgin from the [269]
rejection of Joachim's sacrifice to Mary's bridal procession. Ruskin says, "It can hardly be doubted that Giotto had a peculiar pleasure in dwelling on the circumstances of the shepherd life of the father of the Virgin, owing to its resemblance to that of his own early years."

The Annunciation, the birth, and youth of the Saviour, and the events of His ministry up to His driving the money-changers from the Temple, form a second series; and afterwards the story of His passion and crucifixion. They are most tenderly and beautifully dealt with, conveying deep impressions of this painter's wonderful power, and the concentrated thought and labour he must have bestowed upon his work. There are also allegorical frescoes, representing very appropriately the virtues and vices. The female figures of this artist are singularly graceful.

"The works of Giotto," says a modern writer (Lindesay), "speak most feelingly to the heart in his own peculiar language of dramatic composition; he glances over creation with the eye of love, all the charities of life follow in his steps, and his thoughts are as the breath of the morning. A man of the world, living in it, and loving it, yet with a heart that it could not spoil nor wean from its allegiance to God—'non meno buon Christiano che excellenti pittore,' as Vasari emphatically describes him. His religion breathes of the free air of heaven rather than of the cloister; neither [270]
enthusiastic nor superstitious, but practical, manly, and healthy."

One needs go again and again to do full justice to this interesting church, but being exceedingly cold, it is difficult to avoid taking a chill. It is a great pity that all the churches throughout Italy are allowed to be so cold and damp, to the injury of the valuable works of art they contain.

We paid a hasty visit to the Cathedral, which claims Michael Angelo as its architect. Here we admired a beautiful missal in vellum, printed at Venice in 1498; it is full of miniatures. We also saw Rinaldo's bust of Petrarch, who was a Canon of this church.

The Piazza delle Erbe and the Piazza dei Frutti, the quaint-looking vegetable and fruit markets, are situate on either side of the Palazzo della Ragione, celebrated for its vast Hall, with great vaulted ceiling, said to be the largest in the world unsupported by pillars. It measures ninety-one yards in length and thirty in breadth, and is seventy-eight feet high. The inner walls are adorned with frescoes. At the end of the hall is a gigantic wooden horse, built in sections, supposed to have been the model of Donatello for his bronze statue of Gattamelata, or one of the horses of St Mark's at Venice. At one time it was covered with skin to resemble life.

We scarcely did more than catch a glimpse of that ugly pile St Antonio, where the bones of Padua's patron saint repose—the good St. Anthony.

In the Hermitage Church are the tombs of the Carrara family; and in the old Sacristry there is a [271]
very beautiful picture of St. John the Baptist, by Guido; also some frescoes and other paintings, but very much spoiled by the damp.

At the Palazzo Trente Papafava, through the kindness of its noble owner, we saw Fasolata's most beautiful piece of sculpture, the Fallen Angels. It is a solid block of white Carrara marble about five feet high, and represents the angels cast out from heaven, a group of sixty-five to seventy figures. "They are in all attitudes that the human form could take in such a headlong descent, and are so animated in appearance that they are almost flying. Each angel is separate from the rest, but the whole are twisted and twined together in a complicated manner, and are most exquisitely chiselled, even in the minutest part. The wonder is how the sculptor reached the inner portion of the group. The archangel Michael forms the top of the pyramid."

This wonderful and unique piece of statuary took Fasolata twelve years to accomplish; it was the first work he had ever done. He was afterwards induced to visit England in order to execute a similar piece, but he died, it is said, of home-sickness, poor fellow! I was greatly pleased to have seen this great work, which, I think, is one of the most beautiful and wonderful I have ever beheld. It is of priceless value.

In this palace are also Damini's frescoes.

We regretted we had not time to visit the university, which as late as 1864 had over a thousand [272]
students. Howells, writing some years ago, says, "They were to be met everywhere; one could not be mistaken with the blended air of pirate and dandy these studious young men assumed. They were to be seen a good deal on the promenade outside the walls, where the Paduan ladies are driven in their carriages in the afternoon, and where one sees the blood horses and fine equipages for which Padua is famous."

Talking of ladies, I noticed with pleasure that all the women in this town wore the graceful and

picturesque lace head-dress of the country, which I thought significant of their conservative good sense.

Padua is situated near the junction of the rivers Brenta and Bacchiglione, amidst gardens and vineyards; behind rise the Euganean Hills, among which Shelley wrote his beautiful "Lines":

"Beneath is spread like a green sea
The waveless plain of Lombardy,
Bounded by the vaporous air,
Islanded by cities fair;
* * * * * *
Many-domed Padua proud
Stands, a peopled solitude,
'Mid the harvest shining plain,
Where the peasant heaps his grain
In the garner of his foe,
And the milk-white oxen slow
With the purple vintage strain
Heap'd upon the creaking wain."

We crossed an old bridge, on which was the following inscription:—

"Here Novello da Carrara with forty-two hero friends went down the stream, attacked the bridge, routed the Visconti; and in glad triumph was received again by the people as their lord. June 19, 1390." [273]

Padua is considered a healthy place for invalids, and many, are ordered thither from other Italian towns. The cost of living is, I believe, more moderate than in any other city of Northern Italy.

The people complained bitterly of the cold and unseasonable weather they had experienced; and more especially of the incessant rains and destructive inundation of the winter of 1882.

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CHAPTER XXII.

ToC

Journey from Padua—The great Quadrilateral—Historic Verona—Hotel due Torri—Recent inundations—Poetic Verona—House of the Capulets—Juliet's tomb—Streets and monuments—Cathedral—Roman amphitheatre—Shops—Veronese ladies—Departure—Romantic journey—Lake Garda—Disenzano—Brescia.

The route between Padua and Verona was not particularly interesting, until nearing the latter, when we were able to form some idea of the vastness of its military works. This city, combined with Peschiera, Mantua, and Legnano, formed the great Quadrilateral, which was considered impregnable, and from which it was supposed no army once shut in could ever escape without total defeat. During the last war of Italian Independence, when France was allied with Italy against Austria, the army of the latter country was here enclosed within its own strong fortress, and ultimately had to succumb, after which Verona in 1866 was restored to Italy.

The city of Verona is of very ancient date, having been founded by the Rhœtians and Euganeans. It was made a Roman colony about the year B.C. 89. It has been the birthplace of many of Italy's brightest geniuses—Catullus, the special poet of Verona, as Virgil was of Mantua, Cornelius Nepos, Æmilius Maca, Vitruvius, Pliny the younger, Scaliger, Sanmicheli, Paul Veronese; and it also possesses great historical interest, and many antiquities and remains of ancient buildings. It is still a considerable town, with some 60,000 inhabitants. [275]

We arrived late in the evening, and drove at once to the Hotel Royal Barbesi (Due Torri), which I should fancy, in the palmy days of the city, was the grand hotel. At the present time it has a desolate, old-fashioned look about it, as though it had not kept pace with the times. It has a great courtyard open to the sky, round which the rooms range in storeys, very cold and dimly lighted. However, when the somewhat elderly chambermaid brought candles and hot water, and the

waiter lit up the dining-room, things began to have a more cheery appearance, and we sat down to our very late dinner, feeling more comfortable. The head waiter became quite animated, and, after a little difficulty, induced the Dutch stove to give out some warmth. I ceased to wonder at the desolate appearance of the place, when I heard that it had scarcely recovered from the disastrous effects of the floods during the preceding December. One night it had rained heavily, and the next morning, to the landlord's consternation, the courtyard was found to be some six or seven feet deep in water; the cellars and lower rooms and offices were completely swamped, and the horses had to be brought up to the first floor. The visitors, some forty or fifty in number, were [276] quite unable to leave the hotel; and, owing to the incessant rain, this pleasant state of affairs continued for a week. Many of the churches, houses, and shops were eight feet under water, and ruin and destruction seemed inevitable. Meanwhile gondolas and other boats were employed as much as possible for the conveyance of food, etc., but the rush of the water from the higher to the lower parts of the town was so great, it was difficult to use them. It was not surprising, therefore, that the town made a chill and dismal impression on us. We felt quite aggrieved at thus being defrauded of Dickens' "Pleasant Verona." "Pleasant Verona," says our delighted humorist, "with its beautiful old palaces, and charming country in the distance, seen from terrace walks; and stately balustraded galleries. With its Roman gates still spanning the fair street, and casting on the sunlight of to-day the shade of fifteen hundred years ago. With its marble-fitted churches, lofty towers, rich architecture, and quaint old quiet thoroughfares, where shouts of Montagues and Capulets once resounded:

"And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave beseeming ornaments
To wield old partisans.

With its fast rushing river, picturesque old bridge, great castle, waving cypresses, and prospect so delightful and so cheerful! Pleasant Verona!"

Verona is situated on the sides and at the base of a circle of hills, in a bend of the river Adige, [277] by which it is divided, so that when the river is flooded by heavy rains, the low-lying parts of the town are soon under water.

The name Verona brings a delicious flavour of romance and poetry with it. If Shakespeare had only made it the birthplace of his "Two Gentlemen," and the scene of Julia's sweet constancy, it would have been enough to cast a halo over it; but all other associations pale before the memory of the "star-crossed lovers," whose names rise to the mind at the mention of Verona as readily as those of Portia and Shylock are recalled at Venice. Doubtless, there are being enacted around us events fully as interesting, as amusing, as sad, and as tragic as those depicted by our great dramatist, for the world is ever the same—human nature varies little, be time and fashion what they may; lovers love as truly and passionately as ever did Romeo and Juliet; and selfish ignoble feelings mar the beauty of mankind as of old. Yet, surely the world is improving—the sun of Christianity has long been struggling behind the dark clouds of the past, and we now surely begin to see its glorious silver lining, and find the world bursting into nobler, higher, and better life.

Our first impulse, on the morrow of our arrival, was to go in search of Juliet's home, and see the balcony where she confessed her love in the moonlight, all unconscious that he of whom she spoke was an eager listener to the outpourings of her fervent soul:

"O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father, and refuse thy name; [278]
Or if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet."

The house was easily found. In the Via San Sebastiano (formerly the Via Capello) are many high, dull-looking houses with overhanging roofs, once the residence of the Veronese nobility. They are built, for the most part, of dirty brick, and are not very picturesque save for now and again a Gothic window, or a fragment of iron lattice grating, rusty and broken, which lends a certain dignity, as though they were yet pervaded with the spirit of the past. One of these houses, somewhat larger than the others, was once the house of Shakespeare's youngest heroine. Over its archway is still the hat, or "capello," which represents the arms of the family of the Capulets. We were greatly disappointed at the gloomy appearance and inappropriate surroundings of the scene of one of the tenderest and saddest love-tales that have come down to us from ages past. There is a balcony certainly, but too high, I think, for even the ardent Romeo to have climbed; there were, however, evident signs of another balcony lower down, which had been removed, possibly to prevent its incontinently falling on the head of some unfortunate pedestrian. The house, which is known by the name of the Osteria del Capello, has long been used as an Inn. It may perchance have been a flourishing hostelry—say a century ago, but at the present time its fortunes have reached a very low ebb, and only the lower portion of the building is used for that [279] purpose. The remaining storeys within the spacious courtyard are let to artisans and others of the lower classes. They all have balustraded balconies, on some of which we saw clothes hanging out to dry. Within the courtyard is a well, from which the women draw water for household purposes, and the Vetturini clean their carriages. The place was swarming with children, not over clean; and, in fact, the whole locality was so dirty we were glad to get away—it was impossible to indulge in poetic memories in view of such desecration.

We now made our way almost to the other end of the town, in search of Juliet's tomb. After passing the workmen's quarter, we presently came to a large wooden door, and on knocking

were admitted to the garden of an old suppressed convent. Crossing the grounds, we reached the building itself, where, next to the outer wall, we were shown a large open sarcophagus of reddish stone, the sides about four or five inches thick, and partly broken. The inside was strewn with visiting-cards—travellers from all parts of the world paying this tribute of respect to the memory of the unfortunate girl-bride. There were even some photographs, one of which I especially noticed of a young lady, who had written on the card a few lines of sympathy for poor Juliet's faithful and devoted love. Although there was something touching in this veneration of a past romance, I think it was carrying sentiment a little too far to leave visiting-cards and photographs [280] in a desolate and deserted tomb, which we have no positive proof ever contained the remains of La Giulietta, as the Veronese call her. For my part, I think it far from probable that it was ever the scene of the tragic end of these unhappy lovers.

"But wherefore all this wormy circumstance?
  Why linger at the yawning tomb so long?
Oh for the gentleness of old Romance,
  The simple plaining of a minstrel's song!
Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,
  For here in truth it doth not well belong
To speak:—O, turn thee to the very tale,
  And taste the music of that vision pale."

The streets of Verona are, in general, narrow and paved with rough stones very fatiguing to walk on: the Corso Cavour is the finest thoroughfare. Our hotel was situated in a quiet side street, from whence, turning to the left, is the Piazza dei Signori which has in its centre a statue of Dante, who, after his banishment from Florence, lived longer at Verona than at any other place, but died and was buried at Ravenna.

"Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
 Fortress of falling empire! honour'd sleeps
 The immortal exile."

There is also a beautifully built town hall in the Byzantine style, with statues of some of the most eminent Veronese—Maffei, Catullus, etc. Then there are the law courts, the old castle of the Scaliger family, and the vast brick Campanile, some three hundred feet high. Close to this piazza is a little church, also in the Byzantine style, where, enclosed by a wonderful network railing of [281] very curious design and beautiful workmanship, are the finely sculptured sarcophagi of the Scaligers, the founders of the city.

Emerging from the piazza, we found ourselves in the quaint and busy market-place, the Piazza delle Erbe, reminding me of a huge open Covent Garden, only that here the healthy, robust market-women sit under immense umbrellas, whilst vending their fruits and vegetables. All around are houses of different size and form, painted in various colours, the whole making a bright and picturesque scene. In the centre there is a very ancient fountain; at the top are stone columns, which once supported the winged lions—the token of Venetian rule—thrown down on her emancipation. This market-place was the Forum in ancient times.

The Cathedral contains little worth seeing save the fine painting of the *Assumption*, by Titian. In the foreground the Apostles are standing beside the empty grave, looking upward at the figure of the Virgin, who is borne aloft upon the clouds by the usual attendant angels. The effect of this is very beautiful. The façade and porch outside are very fine. There are two figures in red marble, of Roland and Oliver, on either side, which are considered proof of a rather doubtful tradition that this church was built by Charlemagne.

At the Capuchin Church we saw a *Dead Christ*, by Paul Veronese, one of his best works. Santa [282] Maria della Vittoria contains a *Descent from the Cross*, by the same illustrious artist, many of whose finest pictures are in the Pinacoteca, in the Palazzo Pompei, of this his native city.

We visited the churches of San Stefano and San Zeno. The former was once the Cathedral of Verona, and contains the tombs of most of the bishops who were buried there. The latter is very fine from an architectural point of view.

One of our most enjoyable expeditions was that to the ruins of the great amphitheatre. It is constructed of red marble from the Veronese quarries, upon basements of Roman brickwork. No other amphitheatre can be compared with this for costliness of material; nor I believe, for size, it having contained some fifty to sixty thousand spectators at a time. It is somewhat oval in form, being 546 feet by 436 feet across; the circumference is 1476 feet. The outer circuit once consisted of seventy-two arches, but only four now remain. The height from the pavement is 106 feet. Inside, the great flight of marble steps or seats rise tier above tier, and when at length we gained the top, we had a magnificent view of the whole city, and of its strong fortifications. The outer wall of the amphitheatre, all rugged and overgrown with weeds, seemed like the side of some huge cliff. There, far below in the piazza, people were passing backwards and forwards, outside the *cafés* loungers sipped their chocolate and smoked their cigarettes. The city lay before [283] us, with all its palaces, churches, vineyards, picturesque towers, and forked battlements, divided by the swiftly flowing river, which curved round like a flash of light; and beyond lay the circling landscape, crowned with convents and villas; and in the far distance the Euganean Hills, with their blue and purple tints, and the snowy peaks of the Tyrolese Alps. It was indeed a lovely and an interesting scene.

The amphitheatre, as it now stands, is in excellent preservation; I believe a large sum is

annually devoted to the purpose of keeping it so. It is a noble specimen of the gigantic works of the indefatigable Romans. These great Coliseums give one some idea of the immense populations of the cities in those times. We were very pleased with the fine echo in this Veronese amphitheatre.

The fortifications of the city are remarkably fine. Sanmicheli, the Italian engineer who planned them, was certainly a great architect; the Doric gate, Porta Strippa, Porta Nuova, and many of the buildings and palaces in Verona, were designed and built by him, and are good examples of his remarkable powers.

The shops here are fairly good, the town, as usual, abounding with *cafés* and confectioners. Oil and wine appear to be the principal products now, but at one time there were some ten thousand hands employed in the silk trade. There were evidently some very enjoyable excursions to be made in the country surrounding the city, but our short sojourn did not allow of our undertaking [284] any pleasure trips.

The people looked healthy, but I did not find much to praise in the beauty of the Veronese ladies, who, less wise than those of Padua, discarded the graceful and becoming head-attire of black lace, and adopted excruciating and deforming Parisian fashions.

It was a beautiful, bright, clear day when we left Verona in the forenoon of April 5th, for Milan. Passing through the suburbs of the town, we realized to the full the beauty of its situation, nestling in the valley of the Adige, with undulating plains, well cultivated and dotted with villages, and the splendid amphitheatre of hills in the background harmoniously blending with grey blue sky, altogether making one of the finest bits of river and hillside scenery I have ever seen. Every commanding point bristled with fortifications. This part of the famous quadrilateral is evidently exceedingly strong, but it would require an immense force to garrison the forts alone. These recent acquisitions of Italy, and her ambition to be a first-class naval power, must very greatly increase her national debt, and probably another large loan will soon be wanted. However, the Italians appear quite alive to the dignity and responsibility of the position they have been suddenly brought into since the Crimean War, and they seem determined to be equal to it.

It was interesting to witness, close to the train, on a very fine camping ground, the exercises of [285] the cavalry and artillery as we passed.

At Peschiera, distant about a quarter of an hour's railway journey from Verona, we came in sight of the beautiful Lake Garda, the snow-clad mountains rising almost precipitously from its blue waters. A tiny vessel, with green and red sails like wings, floated peacefully along; the verdant fields and never-ending fortifications in the foreground. Then, as we changed our course, the lake slowly expanded, disclosing the soft, harmoniously tinted hills sloping upwards from its shores, a warm mist blending their outline with the sky above. Every moment opened new scenes of loveliness to us—little nestling villages of dazzling whiteness; a narrow strip of plain, with clumps of cypress trees; and presently a small island in the bosom of the lake, seemingly a tiny city with castellated tower resting on the blue waters; great mountain peaks rising grandly in the background. This island of Sirmione which is connected with the mainland by a stretch of sand, contains some old ruins said to have been the villa of Catullus.

At 11.25 we arrived at Desenzano, the station of which overlooks the lake, but the town itself is at some little distance. It seemed so lovely here, I quite regretted we were to continue our journey to Milan. After Desenzano, which possesses a picturesque little castle with turreted walls, the railway passes on to higher ground, affording more commanding views of the lake scenery. Then the land intervened, and we quite lost the lake. The weather was delightfully [286] warm, the air bracing, and the sky cloudless. The sunny hills, flooded with soft purple light, reflected from the red soil in the foreground, added greatly to the beauty of the scene. The olive and the vine seem to love this richly coloured earth, and always flourish splendidly on it. Pizzato is finely situated at the foot of the great Carrara marble quarries. Thousands of hands are employed here. There were consignments of marble columns and blocks for building purposes at the station, ready to be despatched, probably to all parts of the world; for the hard and beautiful white marble dug out of these stupendous Alpine quarries is greatly in request for monuments, tombs, etc. After this we lost sight of the snow-clad hills for a time, but at Brescia they reappeared.

The castle and fortifications of Brescia are boldly placed, overlooking the city. The Cathedral Dome, and red serrated hills, add a picturesque grace, with the purple mountains in the background. Up to this point our journey had charmed us with its beautiful and varied landscapes, but the remainder of the route appeared tame and uninteresting. It was our first taste of the beautiful Italian lake scenery, and we were spoiled for anything less lovely. Much of the ground we passed over in this journey from Verona to Milan was full of historic interest, having been, from its important central and strategic position, one of the great battle-fields of Europe both in ancient and modern times.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

ToC

Arrival in Milan—Railway station—Tram carriages—History and present condition—The Cathedral—Irreverence of Italian Priests—The Ambrosian Liturgy—Sunday school—S. Carlo Borromeo—Relics—A frozen flower-garden—View from the tower.

Arriving at Milan shortly before dusk, we drove at once to the Hotel de France, where we had been assured we should find cleanliness and moderate charges. It is very conveniently situated at the head of the Corso Vittorio Emmanuele, near the Cathedral, and it was certainly cleanly; but if I ever go to Milan again, I should give the Hotel de la Ville the preference.

Catching a glimpse of the public gardens on our way, and passing up some of the principal streets, we saw something of the greatness and attractiveness of the city. The station is quite a busy terminus, like Euston, or the Midland—a fine building, and brilliantly lighted up at night by electricity, two lamps outside illuminating the park-like piazza. The tramway omnibuses (which are not propelled by steam, as at Florence), move about as briskly as in London; they are, however, more neatly and comfortably appointed than ours.

Milan, anciently called "La Grande," still looks like the capital of a great kingdom, although, [288] like Turin, it has been deserted in favour of Rome. It has fine buildings, well-lighted streets, beautiful public gardens, and brilliant shops. It is, moreover, very clean for an Italian city, and gives the idea generally of wealth and progress, for it is full of gay and busy life; yet it is a small city in comparison with our own great capital, being only about seven miles in circumference, and with a population of 320,000. Owing to its central position in Lombardy, Milan has always been prosperous, and is one of the richest manufacturing towns in Italy, silk and woollen goods being the chief commodities. Since 1859, when it was incorporated into Italy, it has also risen to the first rank in the fine arts, and, I believe, has wonderfully progressed as an educational centre generally.

It must have been a proud and glorious day when, after the peace of Villafranca, Victor Emmanuel and the French Emperor, with the leaders of the allied armies, marched in triumph through Milan. Bouquets and garlands of flowers were strewed in their way; the wounded of both sides were brought in, and tenderly nursed by the Milanese ladies. It was Italy's first day of real free national life; she had at last cast off the oppressive yoke of Austria for ever! But she had still one other adversary to conquer—the enslaving Papal power; and this she also nobly accomplished a few years later, as all the world knows. The Italians have a grateful remembrance [289] of the sympathy shown and influence exerted by England at the time of their emancipation.

Our hotel being so close to the Cathedral, we saw just enough of its external beauty and grandeur on the evening of our arrival, to anticipate with the greatest eagerness our visit on the morrow to this magnificent structure of white marble, which stood so majestically outlined under the blue, star-lit sky, its graceful spires and peaks seeming interminable:

"And high on every peak a statue seem'd
To hang on tiptoe."

It is regarded by the inhabitants as one of the wonders of the world, and is certainly unique in its style, which belongs to no school. "From the beginning," says a modern writer on architecture, "it has been an exotic, and to the end of time will probably remain so, without a follower or imitator of the singular development of which it is the only example.... It has all the appearance of having been the work of a stranger, who was but imperfectly acquainted with the wants or customs of Italian architecture, working to some extent with the traditions of his own native school before him, but at the same time impressed with a strong sense of the necessity under which he lay, of doing something quite unlike what he had been taught to consider necessary for building in his native land.... There is a constant endeavour to break up plain surfaces of wall, unlike the predilection for smooth surfaces of walling so usual in thoroughly Italian work." [290]

Early the following morning, immediately after breakfast, we proceeded to the great open Piazza in which the Cathedral stands. It is of almost dazzling whiteness in the bright sunshine, and I could not but think what a contrast it offered to our great St. Paul's, so buried in the heart of the city, amid the roar and din of commerce. And how different the smoky atmosphere in which the great Dome is enshrouded, to the clear, bright air of Milan, where every delicate spire, every graceful projection with its play of light and shadow, is seen to perfection, and the pure whiteness of the marble is unsullied by the soot and dirt which form, alas! a complete veil to our own Cathedral! What aspect, I thought, would the fairy-like Dome of Milan present after a winter in our city of fogs? The lights and shades of Wren's great work appear to be made up of smoke, which has been partially washed off by driving winds and rains.

The roof is adorned with a hundred turrets, and more than a thousand statues of angels, saints, and men of genius. On the topmost spire towers a gilt figure of the Virgin Mary, to whom the church is dedicated.

"An aërial host
Of figures human and divine,
White as the snows of Apennine
Indurated by frost.

"Awe-struck we beheld the array
That guards the temple night and day,
Angels that might from heaven have flown
And virgin saints—who not in vain [291]
Have striven by purity to gain
The beatific crown;

"Long-drawn files, concentric rings,
Each narrowing above each;—the wings—
The uplifted palms, the silent marble lips,
The starry zone of sovereign height,
All steeped in this portentous light!
All suffering dim eclipse!"

With the exception of the façade, it is in a pseudo-Gothic style. It was founded about the year 1386, by Gian Galeazzo, Visconti Duke of Milan—probably somewhat after the model of the Cologne Cathedral; and in 1805 Napoleon added the tower over the Dome. A very large sum of money was left for keeping the church in repair—a deed stipulating that a certain amount must be expended annually on this object, I believe, something at the rate of £2000 a month! The marble used is of an unusually soft nature, hence its decay and cost of repair. But these constant patchings certainly disfigure and spoil the beauty of the surface architecture, especially at the Eastern end, and afford a convincing instance of how a man may mar his own object by want of judgment.

The first view of the interior is very striking, the vaulting being supported by fifty-two exceedingly lofty clustered columns, dividing the church into a nave and two aisles each side. These columns have most beautifully sculptured capitals, formed of figures within niches. They greatly impede the light, however, and the view within the church generally, and from the [292] pavement the canopies of the capitals have somewhat the appearance of outspread parasols, which lends a slightly grotesque air. The vaulting itself also being panelled, to resemble elaborate stone fretwork, rather detracts from the general beauty of the building, being but a meretricious kind of ornamentation, and quite unworthy the building. There are three stained glass windows above the choir—

"Through which the lights, rose, amber, emerald, blue,"

stream upon the pure marble and golden pulpits.

"Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd and traced,
Would seem slow flaming crimson fires
From shadow'd grots of arches interlaced,
And tipt with frost-like spires."

Thus Tennyson in his "Palace of Art," with which this beautiful edifice at Milan may fully compare. Some of the windows illustrate the life of the Saviour, and the Revelations of St. John at Patmos. The whole Cathedral impresses the mind greatly with its beauty and solemnity, so essentially different to the too frequently tawdry decorations of most of the Roman Catholic churches.

"It seems as if the ancient spirit of religion, such as dwelt in Milan in the days of St. Ambrose, loved to linger here. The inscription, which is conspicuous on the rood aloft, 'Attendite ad Petram unde excise estes' (Look unto the Rock whence ye were hewn), pointing to Christ, not St. Peter, as the true Rock of the Church, is very significant." The great charm of this church is the [293] impressive feeling that steals over one on entering, that it is indeed the House of God. There is a certain simplicity in its grandeur that is infinitely refreshing, after seeing so many temples desecrated as mere places of theatrical display.

In Italy one soon tires and becomes disgusted with the glitter of tinsel. I have visited some of the churches when in a state of preparation, when the priests, with their assistants, have fussed about as it were behind the scenes, and got the pageantry and scenic displays ready. Gilded wooden candlesticks are brought out from behind some altar or secret cupboard; a shabby, painted image of the Virgin or some other saint is produced from the sacristy, which is hastily draped in gorgeous finery, a necklace of beads adjusted round its neck; artificial flowers dusted and arranged in gay-looking vases; the candles are then lighted, and—up goes the curtain!

The utter irreverence of these proceedings has often made me shudder, and from the bottom of my heart I have pitied the poor abject creatures who swarm in to worship they know not what. The confessionals are open, and some forlorn woman enters therein, and, having unburdened her conscience, perhaps with bitter tears, she goes her way, still in the dreadful dark, still the same miserable, sin-laden creature—no word of real comfort has been whispered to her sorrowful heart, no fresh hope lovingly instilled into her darkened soul. But the priest has pocketed his fee, [294] and that, alas! is all that concerns him. He has no pity for the ignorance and misery of the men and women around him; the tale of sorrow poured into his ear touched not his heart—he is too

accustomed to the outpourings of these sinful souls. Human nature is human nature, he would tell you; it will go on sinning. Is it not enough that the sin has been confessed (*paid for*, rather)? The sinner has gone away, rejoicing at having cleansed his conscience so easily; and he, the priest, has pronounced absolution, has received his fee for so doing, therefore his duty is over, and he comes forth from the confessional box, grossly expectorating on the Cathedral floor—even this action showing how little he respects his calling, and the place which he above all others should honour. This to me has been utter desecration of soul and temple, and I have gone away sick at heart. Alas! how sad to think of a man presuming to forgive sin—perhaps a far greater sinner himself than the unhappy penitent who seeks spiritual consolation! Italians, after centuries of deception and soul-bondage, have at last discovered their blindness; they now see that *money* is the aim of their Church and her priests. Money is paid for forgiveness of sins, for fresh indulgence in the same, for their souls to be delivered from purgatory when they die, for everything which God gives His children freely and lovingly, and this for the sole and especial benefit of the priesthood.

I believe, however, that the Milanese are the least priest-ridden people even in young Italy, and [295] they keep Sunday with far more reverence and quietude than elsewhere, and in France. The Ambrosian Liturgy, which the Pope has never been able to suppress, is a standing proof of the independence of the Milanese Church. Priests who use the Roman ritual are not allowed to officiate, except on very urgent occasions.

I noticed that after morning service in the Cathedral, screens were erected in one of the aisles, and on returning in the early part of the afternoon, I saw this part full of children, who were being taught their catechism, and other religious knowledge. I thought this was rather a happy use of churches between the services, and wished I could see it more often practised at home.

The credit of this Sunday school is due to the Archbishop St. Carlo Borromeo, who was a very excellent man, and, as far as wide views of charity and advanced thought are concerned, might have fitly adorned the present generation; for in his own day he was certainly "centuries before his time." He gained the hearts of his people by mingling among them, working for them, and ministering to their many necessities, during the infliction of the terrible plague. I think there is no objection to the custom of canonizing such men,—that is, in reverencing them (but not worshipping them as saints) as noble examples of self-sacrificing holy life, and so preserving the memory of their good deeds to posterity. The resplendent gold and silver shrine of this holy man [296] is one of the most interesting objects in the Cathedral. His body is preserved below the altar, dressed in his pontifical robes, sparkling with diamonds—the head reposing on a richly gilded cushion; the face, dead and shrivelled, which is the only part exposed, presents a sad contrast to all this splendour. He was the nephew of Pius IV., and was canonized by his successor; but (shame to such an age!) it cost his family so large a sum that they declined a similar honour for his cousin, Cardinal Federigo Borromeo, celebrated by Manzoni in the Promessi Sposi.

With all its religious freedom, this Cathedral draws on the credulity of the people by its supposititious relics—such as a nail of the true cross, which is carried in procession every third of May; the cradle and swaddling clothes of the infant Christ; part of the towel with which He wiped His disciples' feet; four thorns from His crown; parts of the reed, the sponge, the spear, and the cross; a piece of Moses' rod; two of Elisha's teeth; and many other such profane make-believes. The tombs and bronzes, especially the bronze tabernacle by Brambilla, and the choir by Pellegrini, which has seventeen beautiful bas-reliefs, are all worth study. On the right-hand side of the choir is a wonderfully executed statue of the devoted martyr, St. Bartholomew, carrying his skin on his arm—anatomically, a perfect masterpiece.

I heard one or two services here, and thought both organ and acoustics very fine, the noble vaulting carrying back each note, grandly swelling, to the entrance porch. Such is the magnitude [297] of the interior, that on week-days, when gangs of workmen are chipping away at the columns while service is being performed, there is no unusual noise to be heard. But the frequent interruptions by people moving about during the service is very irritating to a people who are accustomed to quiet devotion such as we invariably find in the mighty congregations at St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey.

Paying my twenty-five centimes (about 2½*d.*), I ascended from the right-hand transept, and, mounting numerous steps, at length reached the roof. Here a wonderful and magnificent sight met my admiring gaze. All around me nothing was to be seen but the most exquisitely chiselled figures in white marble. It was like a snow scene in a forest, for there were thousands of beautiful little sculptured columns, representing every known flower; in fact, it is called the "Flower-Garden," and the more I gazed the more I realized the truth of Goethe's beautiful simile —"Architecture is frozen music." Crossing the roof, I ascended by a spiral staircase to the central tower, getting occasional glimpses of spires and statues, alternating with peeps of the blue sky. At last I reached the topmost pinnacle of the temple, and a truly glorious scene it was that lay on every side. A sea of dazzling white marble beneath, and the fair city stretching far and wide beyond; this, again, surrounded by silvery rivers, green fields, cultivated plains, and distant towns and villages. On one side, breaking the horizon, the view is bounded by a great towering [298] mountain barrier—the majestic snow-clad Alps, some of the peaks lost in the misty clouds above. First, on the extreme south-west, Monte Viso, then Mont Cenis, between them the less lofty Superja; near Turin, Mont Blanc, the great St. Bernard, Monte Rosa most conspicuous of all; to the left of these last, the Matterhorn, then the Cima de Jazi, Streckhorn near the Mischabel, Monte Leone near the Simplon; away to the north the summits of the St. Gothard and Splügen, and in the distant east the peak of the Ortler. In the south the Certosa of Pavia is visible, and sometimes the towers and domes of the city itself, with the Apennines in the background. This,

perhaps the grandest view in Europe, can only be seen to perfection on favourable days. I myself only saw a part of the great Alpine range, the rest was enshrouded in mist. On the day I made this ascent, the wind was very strong, as it was on my visit to the Capitol in Rome. On descending, I took one more view of this mighty Cathedral, of which an American writer, Nathaniel Willis, gives the following true and beautiful description:—

"It is a sort of Aladdin creation, quite too delicate and beautiful for the open air. The filmy traceries of Gothic fretwork; the needle-like minarets; the hundreds of beautiful statues with which it is studded; the intricate and graceful architecture of every window and turret; and the frost-like frailness and delicacy of the whole mass, make an effect altogether upon the eye that [299] must stand high on the list of new sensations. It is a vast structure withal, but a middling easterly breeze, one would think on looking at it, would lift it from its base, and bear it over the Atlantic like the meshes of a cobweb. Neither interior nor exterior inspire you with the feelings of awe common to other large churches. The sun struggles through the immense windows of painted glass, staining every pillar and carved cornice with the richest hues, and wherever the eye wanders it grows giddy with the wilderness of architecture. The people on their knees are like paintings in the strong, artificial light; the chequered pavement seems trembling with a quivering radiance; the altar is far and indistinct; and the lamps burning over the tomb of St. Carlo shine out from the centre like gems glistening in the midst of some enchanted hall."

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CHAPTER XXIV.

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Milan social and charitable—How to relieve our Poor—Leonardo's "Last Supper"—Condition of churches in Italy—Santa Maria delle Grazie—La Scala Picture-galleries—St. Ambrogio—Ambrosian Library—Public gardens—Excursion to the Lakes—Monza—Como—Lake scenery—Bellagio—American rowdyism.

One soon becomes attached to Milan, it is so bright and clean, and the air so pure and bracing; the country around abounds in beautiful lake scenery, most enjoyable for trips and excursions. The means of moving from place to place are convenient and moderate in charges, and the living good and inexpensive. There is an air of welcome and hospitality to visitors and strangers among the people not so readily shown in other cities of Italy,—the highest families opening their doors to all with very slight introduction. There are, I believe, a great number of wealthy people here; and, judging from the scarcity of beggars—that importunate plague, so universal in Italy—I should think the poor are not neglected by them. This may also be proved by a visit to some of the many charitable institutions. The Spedale Grande, for instance, is one of the largest hospitals in Europe: its façade measures nine hundred feet, and it accommodates upwards of two thousand patients. Like most of the Italian hospitals, there are separate apartments for those who can [301] contribute towards their maintenance. The asylums for the insane are also admirably managed. I have heard that the plan for relieving the poor is much better systematized here than in England. Well! I fear, and I say it with shame, that it could not be much worse or more bungling anywhere. Our wretched system of miscalled *Work*houses or Unions is utterly unworthy of us; some of these places, in fact, are abominably demoralizing and degrading. We clothe the poor in a dress of shame, and then wonder at their want of self-respect! Many of our unions are utterly unfit for the respectable poor and (we seem to forget that there is such a class)—I was nearly saying, are places of seething vice; no wonder, then, even starving people, who have a spark of true pride left in them, prefer to die rather than go there. Poverty and distress are inevitable in every great city, and one can no more help being poor than being born, and there is no shame in this lack of riches; yet it is sad to see, in these philanthropic days of clerical energy and individual benevolence and charity, the number of dreadful courts and alleys almost leading out of the finest squares, a frightful contrast between abject poverty and superfluous wealth.[H] The only effectual way to relieve and diminish this misery is by assisting the poor to help themselves; then [302] indeed this would produce gratitude instead of sullen discontent, which, I fear, is the general feeling in our workhouses. A well-managed system of out-door relief, aided by providing employment and well-organized emigration to our own colonies (the natural destiny of our surplus population), is the only efficient method; but this must be done in a thorough, liberal, and judicious spirit, not in the grudging manner in which some charities are doled out. It is much to England's credit that energetic efforts are being made to educate the poor; but I think some help in that direction should also be extended to the middle classes, and those between the two, to *prevent* their becoming indigent. The advantages of education cannot be too highly esteemed, but each class should be fitted to the sphere it is likely to occupy in life; the same training does not suit all alike. I fear at the present time we are inclined to run to the other extreme, and over-educate those who would be far happier and altogether more useful members of society, were we content with teaching the three great rudiments—reading, writing, and arithmetic. These, with good *religious* instruction and a trade, would enable them to support themselves in a decent and

comfortable manner, and to become respected and respectable citizens; nor would it in any way prevent their improving and raising themselves to a higher condition, should they be the fortunate possessors of genius or talent of any kind, for these more energetic intellects usually [303] show such indications at a very early age, and proper provision should be made, enabling them to pursue those studies which might perhaps be the means of making them men whom England would be proud to acknowledge. But these highly endowed minds are few and far between, compared with the medium, fairly intelligent thousands of men and women who run great risks of starvation by being lifted out of their proper sphere; the market for the employment of such is already over-crowded, while good artisans, workmen, and servants are in great demand. Yet at present we afford no training to supply this want, and by over-educating the masses and spoiling them for their proper vocation, we unconsciously increase the difficulties which go far to fill our cities with those unfortunate beings, to whom life is one long struggle to keep body and soul together. The evils of this system having now become apparent, it is to be hoped a change will soon be made. There is no doubt that both our Poor Law and Board Schools stand in urgent need of reform. But the greatest and most necessary reform of all should be in making a religious education the foundation of all true and useful knowledge; mere secular education will but probably tend to make a poor lad more cunning and maybe a more clever rogue; but not necessarily a good, industrious, and loyal citizen, as religion must do; then poverty even might be borne with contentment and some sense of happiness. A single reflection on the present [304] condition of irreligious France should be warning enough.

In the Refectory of the old Dominican Friary attached to the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, we saw Leonardo da Vinci's famous fresco of the *Last Supper*. It is on the wall of a large, bare, whitewashed room, this celebrated work being almost the only furniture and decoration. Although in a very bad state of decay and dilapidation, it is yet sufficient to draw hither artists from all quarters of the world, who are always busily copying the great work, aspiring to fill up the flaws of decay and age in the best way they can imagine the master's hand had originally painted it. But, in truth, there are few parts that have not been retouched at different times, and sometimes by far from skilful brushes; yet the painting bears, and will bear to the end, the divine and ineffable touch of genius given by the inspired mind which so carefully, lovingly, and thoughtfully designed it. It is very probable that the fame of this unique work will ultimately have to depend upon the fine copy in mosaics at Vienna, executed at Napoleon's command, and supposed to be the largest and finest mosaic in the world. The expression in the faces of the apostles is said to be most admirably preserved.

The painting itself, which took the great Leonardo twelve years to execute, was unfortunately painted in oils, and the plaster of the wall not being properly prepared, the paint flakes off from exposure to the damp. It retains just enough to show the emotions the artist wished to express, [305] and which the best copies fail to produce. The *motif* of the work is most beautifully and pathetically represented. Amidst the loving peace of that last evening meal, Jesus sorrowfully bows His head, saying, "One of you shall betray Me." Then all are filled with the deepest agitation and dismay. Two of the disciples, Peter and James, I think, reaching behind the dark form of Judas, who clutches the bag, make signs to John to ask the Master who it is. But the silent, downcast attitude of the Saviour, the expression of heavenly resignation, seems but too truly to confirm the mournful words—"One of you shall betray Me."

I must here repeat my lamentation at the unfinished condition of the exterior of many of the cathedrals and churches of Italy, which I consider disgraceful, containing as they do so much that is beautiful in sculpture, painting, and art-treasures beyond value, which can never be replaced, and yet are allowed to gradually sink into oblivion and ruin. Little care is taken to preserve them, or prevent decay: often have I seen the damp saturating the walls on which were the most admired frescoes of the greatest masters, slowly but surely becoming spoiled and effaced. It must be more than the want of funds which prevents the people from properly finishing the buildings they took so much time to construct and decorate—some senseless superstition must attach to it in some way, I should think.

Santa Maria delle Grazie, adjoining the Friary, is an Abbey Church of the fourteenth century, [306] and, with Gothic nave and picturesque cupola added by Bramante, is considered one of the best architectural specimens of its class to be found anywhere.

Passing through the glass-domed arcade by the Cathedral, we find ourselves in the *Piazza della Scala*, where there is a fine statue of Leonardo da Vinci by Naqui, in Carrara marble. The figure of the great painter, which is larger than life, stands alone on a lofty pedestal, his fine features full of concentrated thought, while below stand four of his pupils, as though in the act of catching a glow of inspiration from their master: the expression on all their faces is excellent, and wonderfully executed. The base of the pedestal is adorned with copies of the great painter's principal works in *relief*.

Here, too, is the famous Teatro la Scala, next to San Carlo at Naples, the largest in Italy, and capable of holding 3000 spectators. The highest ambition of an Italian *artiste* is attained when he or she has sung at this theatre, for it is a guarantee of success, and, having gained the suffrages of an audience on the boards of La Scala, they are certain of laurels on any other stage in Europe. This is the principal evening *rendezvous* of the Milanese, both high and low classes assembling for several hours, paying, however, less attention to the opera than to conversation, flirtation, gambling, and eating ices. The theatre has quite recently been lighted by electricity.

The Arnea, in the *Piazza di Arni*, built by the French, is dedicated to the populace for their [307] open-air amusements, such as balloon ascents, rope-dancing, fire-works, races, shows, etc.: it contains seats for some 30,000 spectators. The *Arc de Triomphe* is considered the best of the

kind in Europe.

The great picture-gallery at Milan, the Pinacoteca, in the *Via di Brene*, at the *Palazzo delle Scienze e delle Arte*, contains some six hundred paintings by celebrated artists, among them Raphael's *Sposalizio*, said to be the gem of the collection; Guercino's *Abraham and Hagar*; and a copy of Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*, which, however, is in a very bad condition. The Archilogio and other museums also contain paintings and other objects of interest; but having already traversed so many galleries in Rome, Florence, Naples, etc., we were disinclined to visit many of those at Milan. The Palazzo Reale is principally worth seeing for its fine ball-room, decorated with silk tapestries of the sixteenth century.

We visited the church of St. Ambrogio, in the Piazza of the same name. It was founded by St. Ambrose in the year 387. It was here that he baptized St. Augustine, and burst out with the grand *Te Deum Laudamus*, ascribed to him. In one of the naves is a gigantic pillar, with a bronze serpent. It is said to be the one put up by Moses in the wilderness, despite the evidence in Scripture of its complete destruction! Among other remarkable things there is an ancient pulpit; a splendid shrine of silver adorned with inscriptions and reliefs in honour of St Augustine's life; [308]
the Ambrosian Liturgy in vellum; a curious chapel behind the choir; and many interesting tombs, paintings, and frescoes.

The Ambrosian Library is in the Contrada della Bibliotheca, near the church of St. Sepolcro. It was founded by Cardinal Borromeo, and contains some 60,000 volumes and 15,000 manuscripts. Among the latter are many treasures: a Latin translation of Josephus, by Rufinius, on papyrus, supposed to be eleven centuries old; a copy of the Gospels in Irish, some seven centuries old; Petrarch's copy of Virgil; and autographic letters of Ariosto, Tasso, Galileo, Cavour, Garibaldi, and many others. The place is rich in objects of antiquity and paintings. It contains many of Raphael's cartoons, portraits by Leonardo da Vinci, Correggio's *Christ*, and the *Mater Dolorosa*, Raphael's *Christ washing the disciples' feet*, and others.

The Public Gardens afford a refreshing change from the city. They are not very extensive, and seem mostly monopolized by gaily attired nursemaids, with great spreading silver head-dresses, which give them somewhat of a conceited air. They strut about as if they were nursing the little kings and queens of the future. Around these Gardens is the fashionable drive, which is thronged on Sundays, when the people assemble to criticise the *élite* in their carriages.

The ladies of Milan are handsome, carry themselves gracefully, and dress remarkably well—no small praise in these days of pinching, deforming, and demoralizing French fashions; but it is [309]
strange how many men—young men especially—one sees at Milan, bent, stunted, and weak-kneed.

Milan is surrounded by a delightful country, and is most conveniently situated for excursions to the beautiful Italian lakes.

One morning we took train for Como. It was a most interesting journey, through fertile plains, luxuriantly clad with mulberry plantations for the propagation of silkworms; for silk is one of the principal commodities of Milan, and the plain silks of Lombardy are still considered the best in Europe. Nature is very kind to these rich and beautiful plains; it is still—

"Fruitful Lombardy,
The pleasant garden of great Italy."

I should think there are few places where vineyards exist so abundantly, yet wine-making seems an industry little understood in modern Italy; or has the flavour of her grapes undergone a change? Who can forget the famous Falernian, quaffed by the emperors of Rome? At the present day, Italian wines, cheap and abundant as they may be, are certainly poor in quality. One would think wine-making was a lost art—at least, as understood by the ancients.

But to return to the landscape scenery through which we were passing. The plains and valleys are cooled and invigorated by numerous streams and canals. Monza is the first station stopped at, a small town with some 15,000 inhabitants. Its Cathedral is built on the site of a church [310]
founded by the Lombard Queen Theodolinda, dedicated to St John the Baptist. Monza has a Town-hall, and a royal summer Palace, both possessing ancient interest. From here there is a line going to Lecco, a point somewhat higher than Como, almost at the extremity of the eastern fork of the lake Como, being situated at the extremity of the larger western fork. The wedge-like point which separates these two branches, called Bellagio, is charmingly situated, commanding the most lovely and extensive scenery; it is, therefore, one of the most frequented spots in the lake district.

After Monza, we pass through more than one tunnel, and several villages and small towns of Roman foundation. Not one of these places seems to have been overlooked by the ancients. They worked hard for the glory of their great empire, and sought these quiet and beautiful spots so favoured by Nature to recruit their strength and energy. But, as at Tivoli near Rome, we see all along the shores, and on the way to these Italian lakes, the proofs of their persevering activity and genius, employed in the adornment of their summer retreats, leaving, after centuries of time, sufficient to excite our wonder and admiration; and to satisfy us that these great men of old knew both how to work and how to enjoy themselves.

Como is quite an ideal little town, rich in reminiscences, and full of life and beauty. The Cathedral is, next to that at Milan, the finest in Northern Italy. It is severely Gothic; indeed, there is a certain severity in most of the architecture of the town. There are some fine paintings, chiefly [311]
by Guido and B. Quini. On either side of the porch are the figures of the two Plinys, who used

often to make the Villa Pliniana their residence, writing many of their celebrated works there. In the gardens of the villa is a fountain of which Pliny the younger made frequent mention in his letters.

The Villa d'Este, some three miles from the town—built by Cardinal Pompeo Galleo, who was born near Como and which afterwards became the retreat of poor Queen Caroline of Georgian memory—is now annexed to the well-known inn, the Regina d'Inghilterra. There are numerous other beautiful villas, interesting both on account of their own merit and the famous names associated with them.

The steamer leaves Como three times daily for excursions to various parts of the lake. Carriages are also available to all points of interest, and the rail goes straight to Bellagio. We preferred going by water, and were soon steaming up the lake, crossing occasionally from shore to shore to take in passengers. At first the morning was a little dull and cold, giving a somewhat sombre tone to the scenery; but after a time the sun shone out brightly, chasing away the shadows and lighting up the wondrous beauties of the Alpine landscape, bringing forth glints of coloured light from the dazzling waters, which reflected the blue sky overhead—a charming and fairy-like change, as if the wand of some good genius had been waved around, effecting a complete transformation. [312]

The lake is some thirty miles in length, and its greatest width is about two and a half miles. The depth in some parts is profound—some 1900 feet, and all around are the great lofty mountains. The fact of the two shores being seen so distinctly add, I think, not a little to the impressive grandeur of the scene. The mountain slopes are beautifully wooded. Sometimes a great chasm intervenes; and, nestling picturesquely here and there in bowers of green, or poised gracefully, commanding the finest points and curves of the lake, or again scattered around the shores, are the summer residences of the Milanese aristocracy. Winding in and out, crossing from shore to shore, there is an ever-varying panorama, delightful and unexpected surprises continually opening out to the enraptured gaze. At each little station we come to a boat puts off from the shore, bringing a few fresh passengers, and the mails and parcel traffic of the lake; returning with the same, and such passengers who desire to land.

At last we reach Bellagio, where the lake divides. Here one would fain linger, it is so grand, so beautiful, so still,—the snow-capped mountains rising in sublime majesty from the deep blue lake to the paler blue of the sky, their sternness broken by the forests on their slopes, and the brilliant colouring of the trees,—the tender green of the fresh spring foliage contrasting finely with the grey tints of the sombre olive—the whole, with its moving lights and shadows, mirrored faithfully in the bosom of the lake below. [313]

"Sublime, but neither bleak nor bare,
Nor misty are the mountains there—
Softly sublime, profusely fair,
Up to their summits clothed in green,—
And fruitful as the vales between,
They lightly rise,
And scale the skies,
And groves and gardens still abound;
For where no shoot
Could else take root
The peaks are shelved and terraced round."

The only thing that disturbed the dream-like enjoyment of the moment was the presence on board the steamer of three rowdy Americans, who preferred to be "funny," and caricature the sublime splendour around them, rather than enjoy it with grateful admiration. Their foolish conceit prevented them keeping this so-called fun to themselves. Happily, it is not often one travels in such disagreeable company, though one too frequently meets with those whose sole object in coming to these beautiful spots is the *ambitious* one of being able to say on their return home that they have "done" Italy. I am obliged to admit, however, that these are mostly my own countrymen.

After luncheon at the Grand Hotel at Bellagio, which we enjoyed in the verandah, with a magnificent view of the lake spread before us, we took a stroll on the shore, and looked at the little shops, where we saw in process of manipulation the Italian pillow-lace, of which, as a matter of course, my wife longed to make purchases. [314]

The hotels are charmingly situated about the shores of the lake, commanding the most beautiful views of the grand scenery around; they seem to be comfortable, and are reasonable in their charges. Certainly a more pleasant place for a short stay could not be found; the hill-climbing excursions would be delightful. Towards evening we returned on board the little vessel, and steamed quietly down the lake, calling at the different stations on our way, and thoroughly enjoying the beauty of the evening shadows, the sombre mountains sinking into peaceful repose, and the water no longer mirror-like, but calm and dark.

"All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most,
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep;—
All heaven and earth are still. From the high host
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain coast,
All is concentr'd in a life intense,

Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence."

The train from Switzerland was awaiting us on our arrival at Como, and we were soon speeding away to Milan, having greatly enjoyed our trip to this lovely Italian lake.

FOOTNOTES

[H] Thanks to the author of "The Bitter Cry from Outcast London," there is now a noble stream of generous sympathy flowing from West to East—from those in affluence to their fellow-creatures in distress; and the words of the Psalmist are at last being realized, "The poor shall not alway be forgotten."

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CHAPTER XXV.

ToC

Climate of Milan—Magenta—Arrival in Turin—Palazzo Madama—Chapel of the Holy Napkin—The lottery fever—View from the Alpine Club—Superga—Academia delle Scienze—Departure—Mont Cenis railway—The great tunnel—Modane—Farewell to Italy.

Before leaving Milan, I should like to say a word on its healthfulness. An eminent medical man, recently writing on the subject, says, "On account of the neighbourhood of Milan to the Alps, its climate in winter is cold and damp, and occasionally foggy. The irrigation of the rice-fields, with which Milan abounds, is a fertile source of fevers of all types, which, together with thoracic inflammation, phthisis, rheumatism, and affections of the digestive organs, are the most prevalent diseases." The same authority gives Como a scarcely less baneful character. For my own part, I can only say that, whatever may be the condition of Milan in the winter time, in the month of March, when we were there, the climate was most enjoyable, the air pure and bracing. All the hotels, however, are not equally healthful in their sanitary arrangements, one of my friends having been subjected to a serious illness from this very cause; and the Italian doctor (a [316] Milanese) who attended him did not hesitate to condemn the sanitary condition of the hotel where he was staying at the time of his illness. The hotels in the Corso Vittorio Emmanuele are, I believe, without reproach in this respect.

After leaving Milan, we passed through Magenta, situated amid fertile corn-fields and plantations of mulberry trees. This was the scene of one of the greatest battles in the war which gained Italy her freedom from the hated rule of Austria. Close to the railway station is a huge pyramidal monument, indicating the spot where the brunt of the battle was borne, and erected to the memory of the brave French who fell in the contest. All along the route are mementoes of the late war. Casting our eyes over the level plains, occasionally broken by the river Ticino, and undulating towards the hills, it was interesting, though sad, to imagine the desperate conflicts of which it had so recently been the scene—these now peaceful plains and valleys saturated with the blood of valiant men, whose bones lie beneath the green sod and waving corn! The result, however, was glorious—a People's Freedom! Very different to the selfish ends and aims of the insatiable Napoleon!

Reaching Turin, we found the station, like that at Milan, an imposing structure, standing in a fine open space planted with trees, the Piazza Carlo Felice. This is surrounded by a colonnaded square—from which runs the Via Roma, one of the principal streets—and extends as far as the Piazza Castello. The streets, which are long and straight, like those of an American city, in some [317] cases seem to run right up to the circling foot of the snowy Alps; and, looking up these streets towards the north, one gets most lovely vistas of the grand Alpine range, and feels their majestic presence by the dazzling light reflected from their snowy slopes, and the cold air from their icy peaks, to which the fair blue of the sky above forms a beautiful canopy.

Turin seems to have been badly treated; the removal of the seat of government from her to Milan, Florence, and ultimately to Rome, caused the value in land, etc., to fall considerably. The city was extended, great piazzas and streets lined with handsome shops, tramways laid down in all directions, theatres built on a large scale, and all preparations for making it the capital of Italy; and this expenditure proved, after all, a needless outlay, for soon the city was comparatively deserted, so far as fashion and gaiety are concerned, and these go far to make the vigour and wealth of a rising town. It is, however, busy and industrious in its trade and

commerce, and alive with factories; yet recent events have left very distinct traces in Turin, almost more so than in any other Italian city.

Turin, or *Torino*, was founded by the Taurini, a Ligurian tribe, and was destroyed by Annibal about the year 218 B.C. It was ruled during the Middle Ages by its own dukes. The House of Savoy continued to hold it from the middle of the eleventh century until the late disturbances in [318] Italy. Most of the streets of Turin converge into the Piazza di Castello, in the centre of which stands the Palazzo Madama, a weird-looking, half-ruined building overgrown with ivy, with a gloomy look about its desolate towers. It is a fine and picturesque old place, especially on a moonlight night—a unique relic of the Middle Ages. Near it are the Royal Palace and the Duomo. The former is not unlike a barrack externally; but it contains a noble staircase and fine banqueting and reception rooms, the ceiling and floors being especially worthy of admiration. From the palace chapel, which is entered from the great hall, you can look right down to the Cathedral adjoining. This chapel of the Santo Sadano (or Holy Napkin) was built in 1648, to receive one of the folds of the shroud in which the Saviour was supposed to have been wrapped by Joseph of Arimathæa. This relic is contained in an altar under the cupola. One cannot help feeling anger and amazement at these miserable impostures on the ignorance of credulous devotees. We were actually shown by one of the priests an oblong frame, about thirty inches by twelve, containing a tracing, probably photographed, of this holy napkin, which, having been pressed against the Saviour's face, retained the imprint of His features; and so this piece of old linen was duly worshipped, and has probably brought a comfortable income to the priests from the pockets of the superstitious and easily beguiled multitude. There is no end to the so-called marvels in these Romish churches.

The Cathedral is built on the site of a Lombard church of the seventh century, but does not [319] contain anything of much interest. Indeed, among the hundred churches at Turin, there are really few worth a visit; perhaps the Consolata Church, including a chapel of the tenth century, is the best of these. Canon Wordsworth quotes an incident relative to this church. "A poor man prayed to the Madonna to reveal to him some lucky numbers for the lottery. He had a dream, in which, as he imagined, she suggested a trio of numbers. He made his purchases accordingly, but they turned out blanks. In revenge for this delusion, he attacked the image of the Madonna della Consolazione, when borne in procession through the city to the Superga, and mutilated it with a hatchet. The mob was enraged, and would have torn him in pieces had he not been rescued by the soldiers, and he was conveyed as a madman to a lunatic asylum." These lotteries are a means of ruin and demoralization in every Italian town, the lottery offices, where the winning numbers are displayed, being only less plentiful than the *cafés*. I believe many of the poorer people invest their savings in these "official" gambling-places, and the majority are much the worse for so doing. But the State evidently profits by this infatuation for gaming, just as the pope and the priests enrich themselves by the blind superstition of the ignorant and foolish. The suppression of these Lotto banks should be among the first reforming acts of Italy: far wiser to substitute a State [320] savings-bank, on the lines of our Post-office system. Bearing to the eastward of the Castello, up the Via di Po, we came to the Ponte di Po, a fine bridge across the river, which greatly resembles the Arno, but is rather cleaner in colour. Crossing the bridge, we mounted the rather steep hill to the Capuchin Church of Del Monti at the top. This hill has been of great military importance in a strategetic point of view, commanding, as it does, the town, river, and valley. A little higher up is a kind of observatory; and on ascending the stairs, we found ourselves in the Alpine Club of North Italy. Here is an interesting little Museum, with a very good and instructive collection of Alpine plants, minerals, maps, etc. From the balcony outside we had a most glorious and impressive view. Immediately below, the river Po, pursuing its rapid course towards the sea, watering the valleys on its way,—rich plains stretching far and wide, and the city of Turin lying in a grand mountain hollow, spread like a map before us; beyond, like an impenetrable barrier, and arranged in a mighty semicircle, towered the great Alpine range. On the left, the Maritime Alps; then the Cottians, with Monte Viso, Mont Cenis, and the Grand Paradis, the Pennines to Monte Rosa, and the Lombard Alps. I looked up at this mighty barrier, its summits deep in misty clouds and vapour, the bright sun glittering on the thick snow, and the blue sky reflecting all manner of lovely hues on the white slopes and beautiful plains beneath:

"Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls [321]
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The Avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man
below."

It was indeed a sublime and impressive sight—one of the grandest views of the Alps to be obtained in Italy. The early forenoon is the time to see it to the best possible advantage, which we were not fortunate enough to do, the heights being frequently enveloped in mist. Away to the south is the great hill called Superga, some 2000 feet above the sea. From thence there is probably a much more extended view from west to east, but the Alps would be seen from above—to my mind a far less majestic and imposing sight; moreover, it occupies some three or four hours to climb the Superga, whilst the observatory of the Capuchins is but half an hour's walk. Yet this hill is decidedly worth a visit if time be no object, not only for the noble extent of landscape

surveyed from its heights, its convent, and church, but as the mausoleum of many of the royal family of Italy. The best views are, I believe, to be obtained from the gallery of the college.

The *Academia delle Scienze*, in the Piazza Carignano, should not be missed, as it contains a very interesting Museum of natural history; Egyptian, Grecian, Etruscan, and Roman antiquities; and a fine gallery of paintings, including some of the best works of Vandyke, Raphael, Paul [322] Veronese, Guido, Titian, Rembrandt, Guercino, Carlo Dolci, and other of the great masters.

Turin appeared to me to be a particularly quiet city, especially after business hours. The evening delights and amusements would seem to consist of the underground concert-rooms, where the long and silent drama is enjoyed over wine and tobacco. A peep into one of these places showed the evident disfavour in which the priesthood is held, a nun and a priest being introduced on the stage for the exposure of the laughter and hisses of the audience.

Although leaving much unseen in Turin, we did not regret our departure, as we were anticipating our journey on the morrow, by the Mont Cenis railway, through the magnificent and sublime scenery of which we had heard so much. It is said—and I can well imagine the truth of it—that, owing to the circle of mountains around it, Turin is exceedingly cold in winter, and very hot in summer, and therefore to be avoided during these seasons. The autumn is considered the pleasantest time for a visit. However, we fortunately found it bright and bracing during our brief stay.

We left Turin on April 12, by the 8.50 a.m. train.

It was a fine, bright morning, and we had a capital and comprehensive view of the whole of the glorious Alpine range; the peak of Monte Viso towering majestically to the clouds, and in the [323] foreground the deep purple tints of the nearer hills contrasting finely against the white slopes in the distance, the green fields relieving the eye from the dazzling loveliness of the snow. Passing Alpigano, and entering a gap in the line of hills, the train left the plains, and commenced the ascent. San Ambroglio is soon passed, with its octagonal church; in the distance, on the top of Mount Piecheriano, is the old monastery *Sagra di Michele*. It is said that in the tombs of this Abbey, owing to the peculiar nature of the soil and atmosphere, the dead bodies are preserved perfectly mummified. Crossing the river Dora, and passing Borgone and Bassolemo, we now really commence the Mont Cenis railway. On the left is the old castellated fortress Bruzolo, picturesquely perched on the hilltop, a little village with a large church at its base. Recrossing the Dora, we pass some beautiful chestnut woods, through several tunnels, and thence on to Susa, the valley expanding, cultivated with terraced vineyards and gardens. We now obtain grand retrospective views of the beautiful valley below, with glimpses of ancient Roman ruins and aqueducts; the arch of Augustus peeping out of the magnificent scenery, and reminding one of the great spirits of the Latin race, with their eye ever open to the beautiful and the grand. The old Mont Cenis road winds prettily up the hill; the snow-clad Alps on the right and left, the great Roche Melon and Roche Michel soaring to the clouds. The valley then contracts and winds round [324] a great rocky chasm (the Wild Gorge), where the hills are veritably rent asunder, passing through which one involuntarily shudders, and dreams of being in the land of some Titanic race, whose rocky thunder-bolts are ready to fall upon and crush the small, fragile creatures who have ventured to their mountain fastnesses.

After passing through several tunnels, with occasional glimpses of the scenery between, we at last emerge into the more peaceful plains near Chiomonti, the white-tipped mountains still soaring high above us. Now we once more plunge into the bowels of the earth, fitfully emerging into the bright sunshine, and skimming by splashing mountain streamlets and picturesque waterfalls, now and again gliding between banks of primroses and bluebells. At Saibertrand our two small engines are replaced by one of equal power. Here we have the snow lying in patches on the ground around us, and a fine rushing mountain stream fed by the many springs and rivulets from the mountain slopes, the Alpine range on our left beautifully timbered with fir forests. Now come another series of sparkling streams, flowing through the alluvial deposits carried down from the mountains, and so on to Casa No. 69. Passing a rushing mountain stream, spanned by an iron bridge, we leave the snowy Alps behind us, only one bold peak appearing at the end of the valley—where a little town is nested—almost filling up the gap with its wintry summit, and making a beautiful outline against the blue sky. And now we stop at Onyx, a station of some [325] importance. Here we find the Hotel Gozie, a nice-looking building, close to the great Mont Cenis tunnel, and evidently intended for the convenience of Alpine climbers. Here we are apparently locked in by a little circle of hills, grand Alpine peaks forming a crescent on our left. The atmosphere is now much colder, for we are nearing the snowy hills. Another engine is attached to the train, and we are soon winding round and between the mountain barrier, then through a short tunnel, the fir-clad, rocky hills towering up on our left, great snow-drifts and icicles hanging down the gorges and slopes. One more short tunnel, and we wind round past Stazione 89 and stop at Bardonnecha, the line abruptly ascending. Now a little town appears, and conspicuous in its square is the statue of some eminent citizen, surmounted by an outspread eagle; and then we penetrate the snowy mountains; and at last, when expectation is almost spent, we enter the great Mont Cenis tunnel, at first getting little intermittent flashes of light, and then indeed entombed within the great mountains, like frogs in granite.

Here indeed—minus the dreaded sea above us—was an experience of the horrid discomfort of

the insanely wished-for Channel Tunnel, and I heartily prayed the scheme might never be accomplished. We entered the tunnel at about 12.7 p.m., and emerged at about 12.35, having been about half an hour in going through. Yes! we have really pierced the great Groge range of [326] the snowy Alps at a height of some 8000 or 9000 feet, and can form some faint idea of the God-given power of Man over Nature. Hovering on the outskirts of this thought, there comes a far-off glimpse of the infinite greatness and goodness of God; and where indeed could such a reflection more fitly come than here, amid the grandeur and beauty of these mighty, snow-clad hills, rearing their icy summits to the skies; the wild passes, with their solemn rocky chasms and narrow defiles; the rushing torrents and sparkling cascades; the cloudless blue sky; and the innocent bluebells and primroses lying so trustfully at the feet of the great frowning rocks above —all working together like the moving light and shadow in such perfect majestic harmony?

One feels—

In beauteous vale, on Alpine snow-clad heights,
In splendours of the days or glories of the nights,
In frowning rocks o'erhanging depths below,
On mossy banks where sweet flowerets grow,
We see God's power and love infinitely wide—
"Thy Truth, most mighty Lord, on every side."

As a tunnel, Mont Cenis is of no very extraordinary length; but, being composed of almost solid rock, the boring operation for so great a distance must have proved exceedingly difficult, the width being twenty-six feet, and the height nineteen feet. Some 2000 men were constantly employed at each end for nearly nine years. The steep ascent, of some 8000 feet, is another marvellous feature. The total cost was, I believe, about three millions of pounds sterling. The [327] boring machines were worked by compressed air. The men who accomplished this great work should not be forgotten—their names were Sommellier, Grandis, and Grattoni.

Before leaving the tunnel there was an evident feeling that we were already descending, and when at length we emerged a grand and wonderful panorama burst upon our view, all the more beautiful and refreshing after our late dark imprisonment, which made us dread the very thought of a Channel Tunnel. The great snow-capped mountains were still on our left and behind us; while beneath, almost buried in the valley, lay a little town, Stazione 86. Yet once more we are engulfed in a long tunnel, almost seeming to fly down the rapid descent. We now leave the great Alpine range circling in our rear; and now precipitous mountains tower on our right hand, the fir-tree forests with which they are clothed evidently a source of great profit to the good people here, who are felling, cutting, sawing, and evidently preparing to send the timber away. And now, at 12.45 p.m., we reach Modane, are past the Italian boundary, and once more in *la belle France*.

Here there is a good buffet, and a French breakfast ready for those who wish it.

And now farewell to fair Italia! Her loveliness of Nature and beautiful works of art; her magnificent Cathedrals and splendid Palaces; her treasure-filled galleries and wonderful [328] museums; her noble monuments and queenly ruins—fit emblems of her glorious past; and to her generous and patriotic men and women a reluctant adieu and tender farewell.

Alas, that there should be any reverse to such a picture! that there should still linger in her churches and religious life the fluttering rays of a blighting superstition! that there should be a want of true modesty and cleanliness in the habits of her people! that an ignoble love of ease should still characterize her upper classes, while the lowest orders generally are steeped in ignorance and importunate mendicancy! and that enervating and dirty habits should be engendered in her people by their inveterate indulgence in the cheap wine and tobacco of the country!—though, in common fairness, I should add that it is as rare to see drunkenness in Italy as, unfortunately, it is common in our own country.

There are things in fair Italy, as doubtless there are in fair England, to which there is no reluctance on our part to bid adieu, and among them, to descend to smaller grievances, are the exorbitant hotel charges; disgusting railway station accommodation; and dirty railway carriages, owing chiefly to the national habit of persistent smoking, and the difficulty of keeping the smokers to their own compartments.

Yet with all these drawbacks, one cannot but feel that Italy is springing into a noble national life. I believe she has a great heart and a great future before her, which will prove worthy of her past nobility and glory, and of the generous sympathy felt for her—perhaps most unselfishly so by [329] England. I think we are justified in feeling a greater sympathy for Italy than for France, for I believe she truly reciprocates it; while the French show towards us a dislike almost verging on jealous antipathy, while in themselves they are entirely given to frivolity and caprice—a hopeless scepticism and impudent immorality: their naturally great powers seem exclusively devoted to selfish objects, and the worship of Fashion and Pleasure!

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CHAPTER XXVI.

ToC

From Modane to Paris—Lovely scenery—St. Michel—St. Jean de Maurienne—Epierre—Paris—Notre Dame—French immorality—La Manche—"Dear old foggy London"—Reflections and conclusion.

After a thorough examination of our luggage by the French authorities, we leave Modane for Paris, a very powerful engine taking us in tow. At Modane the scenery is very grand: fine waterfalls, rocky mountains with great pine forests, and their slopes sometimes enlivened by the pink blossom of the almond tree—a capital place for Alpine climbers.

In consequence of the immense masses of loose overhanging rock, we had to advance slowly and cautiously, and we frequently looked up with some dread lest they should fall upon and utterly crush us. It was interesting to see the congealed waterfalls among the fir-crowned heights above, and some of the great romantic ravines filled with masses of frost-bound snow; while here and there we came upon small wooden crosses, marking the grave of some too adventurous climber or poor peasant guide. By-and-by we pass through a series of short tunnels, great care being necessary, as works are constantly going on to support the weight of the great mountain [331] boulders and to prevent the tunnels falling in; for the water drainage saturates and loosens the masonry. One now obtains some idea of the enormous expenses of the line, and the difficulties contended with it. Descending, we lose for a time the snow-clad hills, which have been our companions for so long; the rivulets join and increase to a rushing, tumbling stream, following madly after us, until we stop at St. Michel, the first station after leaving Modane. Here a great mountain close to us completely covered with snow rendered the air around intensely cold. Continuing our route down into the valley, still accompanied by the lively, chattering stream, now widening into a roaring river, we have a great mountain range on either side, and pass through a lofty narrow gorge. Looking back, I could scarcely discern the cleft in the rocky barrier through which we had come.

And now we see a pretty homely scene among these snow-clad hills. At St. Jean de Maurienne, close to the railway, was a road leading to the valley down which troops of school-children tripped merrily along, led by Sisters of Mercy in their quaint, white winged caps, the healthy, joyous faces of the little ones evidencing to the kindness and care of these good women. What indeed would the inhabitants of these wintry mountain regions, so far from the civilization of great cities, do without their clergy, and the noble sisterhood who devote themselves to a life of usefulness and charity?

Later on we passed through another rocky defile, where we saw a little octagonal chapel [332] perched upon a hilly promontory, overlooking a bridge across the river. Here the great mountain peaks were quite lost in the clouds, and the ruggedness of the scenery was grand in the extreme. Some of the immense pinnacles and jutting rocks were most fantastically shaped, like the residence of some fabled giant, in contrast to the little ruined castles we frequently saw, adding a touch of old-world romance to the landscape:

"The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets been
In mockery of man's art."

The valley between the mountains now widens, showing in the distance fertile plains, and now and then a picturesque little village, and other signs of human life and energy. Then again the scenery varies, magnificent snow-clad mountain peaks rising some 7000 or 8000 feet above us. Mont Blanc lies behind this range to the right, but is lost in the clouds—we making our way down to the valley of the Rhone, alone with the rushing stream, nothing else disturbing the silence of the sublime grandeur around.

Almost suddenly we descend to Epierre, where there is a pretty little iron bridge spanning the foaming river. Here the hillsides slope down gradually more and more, and every inch of ground is thriftily cultivated, the industry of the French far exceeding that of the Italians, who are for the most part a careless, easy-going race of beings. At Acquebelle we stopped. The marshes in the neighbourhood render it very unhealthy. At Mont Melian the route lies through fertile plains, the [333] snowy Alps being now almost left behind. The landscape towards Chambery and Viviers is something like the Italian lake district. Passing Aix-les-Bains, we run along the borders of the long narrow lake Bourget, a fine coach road lying between us, affording a very beautiful drive. Aix, the popular watering-place, is celebrated for its sulphurous springs and vestiges of ancient Roman baths there. This was a refreshing change of scenery, but the lake seemed somewhat monotonous after the beauties of Como. At the end of the lake is a small promontory with a castellated building, commanding a fine view of the distant Alps.

The route after Culoz is considerably elevated. We pass several beautiful waterfalls, and at length cross the Rhone, through whose lovely valley we wind with just sufficient daylight to see its beauties.

"All the hues,

From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:
And now they change: a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the Dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone, and all is grey."

Travelling through the night, we reach Paris at early morn (April 13th), and are sharply reminded, by the severe cold, of the difference in temperature we have lately been accustomed to in sunny Italy; the vegetation and all else is covered with silver frost.

Paris—the gay, beautiful, busy Paris—is as brilliant as ever; every one seemingly bent on [334]
pleasure, light and volatile as the air they breathe. In this city life hovers April-like between a tear and a smile! Visiting the great Cathedral of Notre Dame, we witnessed an impressive funeral service. The coffin in the centre of the nave, near the transept, was covered with flowers, and lighted candles were placed around it. The friends and relations having assembled, several priests, deacons, and acolytes appeared, and the service commenced. So far as the priests were concerned it was very mechanical, even to the elevation of the Host, and the sprinkling of the coffin and friends of the deceased with holy water; but the dirge-like chanting in and between the service was very beautiful and solemn. Many coffins were brought in and conveyed to the different chapels within the Cathedral during this service. It would appear that the length of the ceremonies depend upon the amount of money paid for them: but, as in the confessional, the priests profit more, I fear, than either the dead or the living.

On another occasion, we were present at a preparation for the Holy Communion in one of the chapels. Some twenty or thirty young girls, robed in white, with long veils, were sitting together, their friends and relatives seated at some little distance on the other side. The priest having read and lectured, some fine chants were sung by the young maidens, and they were dismissed with a blessing.

While in Paris this time, I was struck with the number of indecent photographs by no means to [335]
be confounded with works of art, in the windows of shops in the Rue de Rivoli, and indeed almost everywhere; such photographs, as we should never allow to be exhibited in London, yet here nothing was thought of it. Even ladies stopped to examine them without a blush. Indeed, it appeared to me that such is the impudent immorality and impurity now in Paris, that such an expression as an innocent blush would be difficult to detect, more especially as the conscience—that delicate sympathy of the mind which would cause it to shrink from all that was not perfectly pure and beautiful—is made to retire and give place to reason and materialism. The pleasure and satisfaction of the senses seems to be all that they consider worth living for. Pleasure is God, and both the soul and body bow before it. Poor France, after so much suffering and national disgrace, still fondly hugs the filthy rags of Irreligious Reason, which she sadly calls *liberté*, *equalité*, and *fraternité*.

Next morning (April 14th), we crossed the Channel in delightfully smooth water, and arrived in London safely once more. Dear old London, with all thy fogs I love thee still! Every true Englishman, even after travelling in climates more genial than his own, ever feels a tenderness in returning to his own island home once more. Taken as a whole, there is no city like London; no country or even climate like that of England. Although we have no majestic snow-capped Alps [336]
around us, nor the eternal blue skies and sunny climate of Italy, nor the classical and ancient mementoes of Rome and Greece,—yet we have wild mountain scenery, beautiful lakes, lovely undulating and richly timbered landscapes, dimpled by happy homesteads where the silver stream flows sweetly by; and there are our magnificent coast headlands and beautiful seaside resorts, great populous cities, with their splendid public buildings and fine parks. And as a rule, I believe, there is no country so healthy, no life so pure as ours, whatever may be said to the contrary.

In the travels of the last few months, we have seen much of the sublime majesty and loveliness of Nature; the wealth of art treasures in painting, sculpture, and architecture that adorns fair Italy; the inspired works of the gifted men of past ages, so eloquently telling their noble thoughts, expressive of reverence and love for the beautiful—proofs indeed of their great and magnificent genius, and that fair things cannot die. We have also seen something of the wondrous yet sad mementoes of the mighty Pagan nations entombed in their once great cities—vast sepulchres of a splendid past; those Titanic minds which governed in their time the whole of the known world; a few beautiful but crumbling columns, all that is now visible of their glory and conquering power. On such ground we tread lightly, reverencing the great and mighty dead. From these we turn to the young and vigorous Christian nations planted in their stead, and in thus contemplating the [337]
past and the present, and the wondrous power and goodness of God, one cannot but be struck with the truth and beauty of the ninetieth psalm, and also exclaim, as did the psalmist, "Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him?"

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APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

THE LONDON GARIBALDIAN EXCURSION VOLUNTEERS.

The following, printed on Red Cards, was issued throughout London and many of the larger towns:—

"*Card of Membership.*

"EXCURSION TO SOUTH ITALY.

"A select party of English Excursionists intend to visit South Italy. The Excursionists will be furnished with means of self-defence, and, with a view of recognizing each other, will be attired in a picturesque and uniform costume.

"General Garibaldi has liberally granted the excursionists a free passage to Sicily and Italy, and they will be supplied with rations and clothing suitable for the climate. Information to be obtained at Captain Edward S—— 's offices, 8, Salisbury Street, Strand, London, W.C.

"All persons desirous of joining the excursion, or willing to aid the same with their subscriptions, are requested to communicate immediately with the Committee of the Garibaldi Fund, at 8, Salisbury Street, Strand, London."

"*Circular issued in reply to Applicants.*

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NOTE B (p. ix., Preface).

The following is from a Leading Article of the *Daily Telegraph*, March 10th, 1884:—

"Another suicide, occasioned by losses at the gaming-table, is reported from Monte Carlo, and, commenting upon the sad occurrence, a local newspaper makes the alarming statement that since the 1st of January nineteen similar cases of self-destruction have taken place upon the same spot, the victims having, without exception, been ruined by play. It will be remembered that on the 15th of last month Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice was asked, in the House of Commons, whether the attention of her Majesty's Government had been drawn to the frequent suicides of which the Principality of Monaco had recently been the scene, and whether any remonstrances had been addressed by the Foreign Office to France and Italy, urging those Powers to suppress the last public gaming-tables existing in Europe. The Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs gave the stereotyped answer that no representations had been made by Lord Granville to foreign Powers upon this subject, and there the matter ended. Since the middle of last month the catalogue of suicides at Monaco has been swollen by the addition of five or six further victims to the Moloch of play; nor can it be wondered at if under these circumstances a loud demand that the Casino at Monte Carlo should be forcibly closed has been made, not only by many public writers in France and Italy, but still more by permanent residents upon the Mediterranean Riviera. Thus we read in a powerful article contributed by M. Edmond Planchut to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*—an abridged translation of which has just appeared in one of our monthly magazines—that the inhabitants of Nice, Mentone, Cannes, Marseilles, and Genoa, and the more respectable members of the foreign colonies scattered along that beautiful coast, are entirely agreed upon two points:

First, as to the necessity of protesting without intermission against the immunity conceded to the ever-open gaming-tables at Monte Carlo; and, secondly, as to the expediency of petitioning France and Italy to put a stop to this flagrant scandal. 'It would, indeed, be monstrous,' adds M. Edmond Planchut, 'if it were found impossible to suppress in one of the smallest States of Europe a blighting evil which has been extinguished by the Governments of more important Powers.'

"In April, 1882, many petitions, urging the suppression of the Monte Carlo tables, were presented to the French Chamber, which, in M. Planchut's words, 'passed to the order of the day, after hearing M. de Freycinet's remarks in opposition to the prayer of the memorialists.' A month later the French Senate sent these petitions back to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, with a more or less outspoken endorsement of their prayer. If, indeed, the Governments installed at Paris and at Rome were of one mind upon this subject, there can be little doubt that the fatal Casino at Monte Carlo would not long be permitted to exist. 'And why,' asks M. Planchut, 'should there not be perfect accord between Italy and France on this topic? It is not a question whether France exercises a kind of protectorate over the Principality of Monaco, or whether the House of Savoy still regards the Prince of Monaco as its vassal, despite the circumstance that in 1860 Italy [343] abandoned her rights over his little domain. France and Italy should be animated by one paramount desire—the extinction of these infamous gaming-tables; and, if France believes herself to possess the right of speaking with more respectful firmness than her neighbour to Prince Charles III., it is simply because Monaco is surrounded on all sides by French territory.' The bitter experiences of the season which is now in full swing at Monte Carlo render the present moment peculiarly propitious for demanding the abolition of an establishment which is the head-centre of vice, infamy, and ruin in one of the most exquisitely lovely spots upon the face of the earth. Who that has ever read Lord Brougham's description of what he called 'his discovery of Cannes' can have forgotten his enthusiasm when recounting the myriad charms and attractions of that delicious coast? They had already been recited by Dr. Arnold in a well-known passage from one of his 'Lectures upon Modern History,' which expatiates upon the horrors of the siege of Genoa, and contrasts grim-visaged war with the divine natural beauty of the scene in the midst of which it was carried on by Masséna, who was himself a native of Nice. 'Winter,' observes Dr. Arnold, 'had passed away, and spring returned, so early and so beautiful, upon that garden-like coast, sheltered, as it is, from the north winds by its belt of mountains, and open to the full rays of the bountiful southern sun. Spring returned, and clothed the hill-sides within the lines with its fresh verdure. But that verdure was no longer the mere delight of the careless eye of luxury, refreshing the citizens with its liveliness and softness when they repaired thither from the city to [344] enjoy the surpassing beauty of the prospect. The green slopes were now visited for a very different object. Ladies of the highest rank might be seen cutting up every plant which it was possible to turn to food, and bearing home the commonest weeds of the roadside as a precious treasure.' During that memorable blockade, maintained by the Austrians on land and by the British fleet under Lord Keith at sea, Masséna and the French troops held on grimly to the besieged city of Genoa, until twenty thousand of its innocent inhabitants had perished by that most awful and lingering of deaths, famine. It would be no extravagant estimate to believe that during the fourscore years and more which have since elapsed, the demon of play, enthroned along the whole of the Riviera, has caused as much misery to its hapless victims as the fatal siege of Genoa, which Dr. Arnold selected as exemplifying the direful horrors of which war was the author in 1800.

"M. Planchut has little difficulty in showing to what an extent the cities and resorts in the neighbourhood of Monte Carlo are suffering from their proximity to that pernicious spot. Of its seductive attractions there is no need to speak in detail. The visitors find at its Casino all the best newspapers and magazines of civilization laid out for their amusement, to which are added an excellent theatre, an unsurpassed orchestra, and—'pour comble de malheur'—open tables at which any stranger can play at roulette, or at trente-et-quarante, upon presentation of a card of address. Mentone, says M. Planchut, which is the nearest resort to Monte Carlo, is neither rich, populous, nor luxurious. 'While there has been a surprising increase in the population of Ems, Wiesbaden, and Hombourg since the abolition of their tables, the population of Mentone has [345] scarcely increased by two thousand souls since its annexation by France. Mentone will not be possible as a winter residence for invalids until the tables have disappeared from the littoral.' Nice also suffers, says this caustic French censor, from its proximity to Monte Carlo. 'Unfortunately, people play at the Masséna and Mediterranean clubs in Nice as much as at Monaco. The passion for gambling has permeated all ranks of society at Nice, until it has infected the very tradespeople—has even descended to the humblest poor of its port. Walk round the town on a fête day, and you will see in the old quarters, upon the quays, and in the open air, roulette tables in full swing.' The Masséna Club, anxious to detain wealthy strangers at Nice, and to keep them away from Monaco, finds its gambling-rooms too small, and is extending its accommodation. The result is that the owners of the lovely villas, the luxurious hotels, and the abounding apartments at Nice, Cannes, and many other similar resorts are bitterly complaining of a want of tenants and guests. Prudent fathers of families are naturally slow to take young sons to a city where play rules supreme, and from which Monte Carlo is accessible by trains which never cease running. Still less do they care to expose their daughters to mingling with that crowd of questionable females, coming from all parts of the world, and constituting what M. Planchut calls the 'monde interlope,' which assembles every winter at Monte Carlo and Nice. The inevitable consequence is that 'the value of land increases in proportion to its distance from the Principality of Monaco.' M. Planchut does well to base his demand for the suppression of Monte Carlo upon arguments pointing rather to political economy than the public morality. In England, [346] however, we are bound to remember that within fifty hours of our shores an open gambling-house exists, to the destruction of the peace and happiness of many English families. 'Never,'

says the writer of an excellent article based upon M. Planchut's contribution to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 'has the French Government more freely sanctioned lotteries, tombolas, and the opening of tripots disguised as artistic and literary clubs than at present; never has it so completely resigned its control over betting, whether in gambling-houses or the racecourse.' To such a Government it is obvious that arguments founded upon the pecuniary advantages rather than the morals of its sons and daughters should be addressed. How many more suicides will have to take place at Monte Carlo before France and Italy will make up their minds to improve its gambling-tables off the face of the earth?"

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Typographical errors changed:

Page	xi	changed Musquitos to Mosquitos
Page	xii	changed Smollet's to Smollett's
Page	xii	changed Stephano to Stefano
Page	xii	Canalia probably should be Canali
Page	xiii	changed pieta to pietà
Page	xiii	changed Pinacotheca to Pinacoteca
Page	xvi	changed Guarda to Garda
Page	xvi	changed Caro to Carlo
Page	xvi	changed Ambrogia to Ambrogio
Page	66	changed proprietaire to propriétaire
Page	76	changed facade to façade
Page	76	changed Corregio to Correggio
Page	83	changed Stephano to Stefano
Page	83	Canalia probably should be Canali
Page	86	changed Bapistery to Baptistery
Page	86	piu possibly should be più
Page	87	changed Bapistry to Baptistery (twice)
Page	94	changed Venizia to Venezia
Page	100	changed Santissime to Santissimo
Page	110	changed Furoi to Fuori
Page	111	changed Giotti's to Giotto's
Page	111	changed Cammaceini to Camuccini
Page	111	changed Moderno to Maderno
Page	114	changed jaspar to jasper
Page	115	changed Briscia to Brescia
Page	115	changed Pancrozio to Pancrazio
Page	119	changed Pieta to Pietà
Page	119	changed Pinacotheca to Pinacoteca
Page	124	changed Pieta to Pietà
Page	125	changed Buonarotti to Buonaroti
Page	130	changed Pinacotheca to Pinacoteca
Page	131	changed Belvidere to Belvedere (twice)
Page	142	changed agreeeable to agreeable
Page	144	changed piazzi to piazze
Page	148	Gaimpino might possibly be Giampino or Ciampino
Page	179	changed opthalmia to ophthalmia
Page	183	changed emeshed to enmeshed
Page	191	changed Vittoria to Vittorio
Page	196	changed tesselated to tessellated
Page	198	changed Cominico to Domenico
Page	198	changed Marborara to Martorana
Page	202	changed Palmero to Palermo
Page	204	changed Guiseppe to Giuseppe
Page	205	changed Societa to Società
Page	206	changed Mennotti to Menotti

Page 221 changed Frejus to Fréjus
Page 227 changed Baptistry to Baptistery
Page 229 changed Guliano to Giuliano (twice)
Page 231 changed d'oevre to d'oeuvre
Page 232 changed Medicii to Medici
Page 241 changed inextricately to inextricably
Page 249 changed tesselated to tessellated
Page 253 changed Piazetta to Piazzetta
Page 254 changed Deci to Dieci
Page 256 changed Mahommedan to Mohammedan
Page 262 changed piazetta to piazzetta
Page 265 changed plesant to pleasant
Page 267 Princepili probably should be Principi
Page 270 changed della to delle
Page 270 changed della to dei
Page 274 changed Guarda to Garda
Page 278 changed san to San
Page 280 changed Guilietta to Giulietta
Page 280 changed Signoni to Signori
Page 282 changed Pinacoleca to Pinocateca
Page 295 changed Guarda to Garda
Page 285 changed Sermoine to Sirmione
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Page 315 changed della to delle
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Page 319 changed delle to della
Page 320 changed Pont to Ponte
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Page 344 changed beseiged to besieged
Page 364 changed minature to miniature (twice)
Ad Page 34 changed Allighieri to Alighieri

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