to face the Title

Map of SWITZERLAND, &c. from the VALLEY OF TRAVERS to the Lago Maggiore.

British Statute Miles
10 0 10 20 30

Engraved for a Walk through Switzerland

by J. SMITH, N° 1 Clements Inn Strand.

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A WALK

THROUGH

SWITZERLAND,

IN

SEPTEMBER

1816.

"Long, long, be my heart with such mémories filled!"

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1818.

THESE LETTERS WERE ADDRESSED TO

MRS. C . . L . . ;

THEY ARE NOW COLLECTED AND INSCRIBED

TO HER,

AS A TESTIMONY OF

RESPECT AND ESTEEM,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

A WALK

THROUGH

SWITZERLAND.

Neuchatel; Sept. 11.

THE VALLEY OF TRAVERS.

YOU have been told of the *maladie du pays*, but did you ever hear of the *maladie de voyager?*—such was the disorder that afflicted me when I quitted England. How inveterate this disease was, you may conceive, when you remember that I looked impatiently for the arrival of that hour which should transport me from those en-

joyments which had been as dear to me, as necessary to my existence as the light of heaven to direct my steps, or as its warmth to animate my frame;—yes, I anxiously desired the arrival of that hour when I should quit, without regret, the society of friends and relations; that hour which should bear me from the kind pressure of the hand—from the eyes which gave a welcome with the voice—from the smiles of friendship, or of a feeling more interesting still: that I should abandon these, and the hopes and fears which agitate our frail being—that I should fly from those local attachments which make a wood, a dell, or a village, so enchanting, that the agitation of delight can alone indicate the intensity of our feelings—sufficiently proves the malignity of this intellectual disease, which clung around me

like the atmosphere that I respire: it deprived me of rest, it occupied my dreams.

When I last bade you farewel, I was on the frontiers of this wonderful country. I informed you that it was my intention to traverse Switzerland *en pélerin:* this project I did not abandon.

From Pontarlier, a winding road conducted us through a valley, which did not resemble any scenery we had yet beheld, although many views in Franche Comté partake of an Alpine character; and, after passing the Verrières de Joux, the last village of France, we entered the first of Switzerland, called the Verrières Suisse. The frontier is indicated by a tree on the right-hand side of the road, and by a parapet of stone, which runs up the mountain on the left. Perhaps a hundred and fifty yards do not

divide these villages, yet are the residents of them separated, as wide as the poles asunder, by sentiments and by religion—the Catholic being the form of worship of the Verrières de Joux, and the Protestant that of the Verrières Suisse. How incontrovertibly does this prove that the religion of an individual is not adopted as the result of wise and mature deliberation, but that it originates in birth, prejudice, or accident! Although the residents of a valley, where every object is calculated to exalt and humanize, yet do they hate each other with the consistent and becoming cordiality of Protestants and Catholics. We breakfasted at the Verrières Suisse; and here it was that our hostess acquainted us with the existence of these feelings, so amiable, so wise, so just, so orthodoxical! But I will here men-

tion a more remarkable fact. The town of Echallens is situated on the road leading from Iverdun to Lausanne, and may be ten miles from the latter place. It consists of a long and wide street, one side of which is in the *Pays de Vaud*, and the other in the canton of Fribourg. The residents of the west side of the town are Protestants, *of necessity*, and those of the east, Catholics, *of course*: they will give you the best proofs conceivable for adopting the opinions which they are prepared to maintain at no mean sacrifice. The man of Fribourg is the son of a Catholic, and born in a Catholic country, and how can he be a Protestant?—and the native of Vaud is the offspring of a Protestant, and born in a Protestant country, and how can he be a Catholic?—the one exercises self-punishment by abstinence or

scourging; the other is more rigid, and subjects his mind to the pangs which a consciousness of error inflicts: the one acknowledges, the other denies, the infallibility of the Pope: they are neighbours, and they have the misfortune to discover that their religion tells them they cannot be friends: they love, but waste their affections in pining and in hopelessness, for they may not be united: the chasm which separates them is wide, dark, and impassable!

I listened with pleasure to our hostess when she abandoned the religions of the Verrières to acquaint me that she had been a resident of the valley of Travers nearly half a century—that she had a perfect recollection of Rousseau, who was once a visitor of these delightful scenes—that he had often

frequented her house—that he would enter it sometimes, and hastily desire to be shewn to a chamber where he could remain undisturbed; and that she conducted him, upon these occasions, to a room, the door of which she opened as she spoke: in this chamber he often wrote, or rested himself during his rambles.

As we advanced into the valley, the wildness and irregularity which characterised the precipitous ascents on either side, disappeared; the sides of the mountains became smooth and verdant; dark woods of spruce-fir hung on them, or covered their summits on our right; and these, excepting the hardy juniper, were their only decorations; but the opposite side of the vale, which is exposed to a southern aspect, and a milder atmosphere, was, for the most

part, richly adorned with ash, beech, maple, hornbeam, and hazel.

The scenery, as we continued our route, underwent but little variation until our near approach to St. Sulpice, when the valley almost closed, and a narrow winding road only was left between the mountains, which here became rocky and almost perpendicular, and assumed forms of peculiar wildness. The trees which accompanied us were few and small: scarcely any thing but underwood broke the ruggedness of this ravine. We seated ourselves on some pieces of rock, which lay on the side of the road, and contemplated this scene of savage nature.

A peasant now passed;—we requested him to direct us to the source of the Reuse, which we had reason to believe was not far distant: in a few minutes we deviated from

the road by a precipitous descent on our left. The dashing of the water indicated our approach to the object of our curiosity, and we soon beheld the Reuse rushing into its foaming bed from the base of two precipices of entire rock, of immense magnitude. The sight and sound communicated a new feeling—deep—delicious—intense: since I have become a wanderer of the mountains, I have discovered that my love of nature, however ardent, was but a childish affection, compared with the maturity of passion which now transports my existence. The Reuse and the mountain-pass were the first objects which deeply affected us on entering Switzerland.

The valley now reassumed its verdure and beauty, and we passed the pretty village of Fleurier, on our way to Motiers, where

Rousseau lived during three years of his eventful life: it was from this retreat that he was driven by the malice and persecution of the minister, Montmollin, and those villagers who "professed and called themselves Christians," in consequence of the sentiments contained in the *Léttres écrites de la Montagne.* The situation of Motiers is delightful; I do not wonder that "the man of nature and of truth" selected it;—in doing so, and in publishing his *Léttres de la Montagne*, he proved himself worthy of this appellation, and his sincerity cost him almost his life. It must have deeply afflicted him to quit this valley—all sounds, all objects, here, are quiescent and beautiful! How frequently must language fail when we are traversing mountains, forests, and torrents! how frequently must interjec-

tional exclamations intrude, and prove that the lips and the pen are powerless when they attempt to describe scenes like those of the Valley of Travers. On reading what I have written, I feel so conscious of the colourless descriptions which I have attempted to picture, that I almost regret the promise which I had the rashness to make you in person;—how unwise, how presumptuous, was I when I trusted that admiration would generate capacity, and that, by my sketches of Alpine scenery, I could make you, in imagination, the companion of my route!

We had only to mention the name of Rousseau—the descendants of his cotemporaries are well acquainted with the former residence of the philosopher: we were conducted to it. The house has nothing to distinguish it: it is at present the residence

of an *accoucheuse*, who is highly respected throughout the valley, as much on account of her skill as for the benevolence of her disposition: her name is Bossu.

It is not easy to express the feelings which I experienced on beholding the once cherished residence of Rousseau. Its appearance is as unobtrusive as the rest of the humble dwellings of this village: it is a corner house, and the ascent to that part of it which Rousseau inhabited is by a flight of covered stairs, raised against one side of the house: at the top of the staircase is the entrance to the apartments of Rousseau. The first room was appropriated to culinary purposes, and that adjoining the kitchen, to the right of the entrance, was the chamber of the *gouvernante*, Therese. Opposite the door of entrance

is the room in which Rousseau slept and studied, and in which were composed some of his most celebrated productions: in this chamber is preserved the desk, consisting of a deal board, suspended by small hinges to the side of the room, at which he used to stand and write. The chamber, which had been left almost unaltered, even in its furniture, since Rousseau's decease, has been lately white-washed; and the recess near the window, (described by Coxe, who visited this house in 1785,) which no one was permitted to enter, has been removed. At the top of, and opposite, the covered staircase leading to the apartments, is a gallery, where Rousseau used to promenade; and at the extremity of it a bench, erected by himself. From this gallery was seen, to the left, a cascade, mentioned by Rousseau, I believe,

in one of his letters; the view of which is now intercepted by a house, not long since erected; and to the right, half-way up the mountain, is seen a favourite spot, where the philosopher used to walk and meditate: adjoining this is a wood of firs, called *bois Rousseau*, from the frequent visits paid to it by this enchanting visionary.

While I was making such inquiries of Mad. Bossu as were suggested by my situation, an aged woman made her appearance at the top of the gallery-stairs—it was Babet Perrin, the washerwoman of Rousseau! Although I am an admirer of the unequalled talents of Rousseau, I do not feel a very profound respect for the man; you will not, therefore, be surprised that I did not throw my arms around the neck of this interesting damsel of fourscore, because she had seen

the most extraordinary being of his species every week during three years, and perhaps (more interesting still) had felt the touch of his fingers' ends almost as frequently. Yet I considered myself fortunate in meeting her, and made inquiry relative to Rousseau's habits, dress, and general conduct towards the villagers; but particularly concerning the persecution which he experienced from the natives of Motiers. The villagers, it appears, are anxious to remove the disgrace which rests on the memory of their fathers; and, although I call to mind some instances of the extraordinary caprice and suspicion of Rousseau's mind, and particularly his conduct towards David Hume, I am yet disposed to believe that he was indeed driven from his dwelling by the villagers, at the instigation of Montmollin, and the other

ministers of the Valley of Travers: the outer door of his house was forced, his windows were shattered to pieces, and, but for the timely arrival of some military who were in the village, the life of this injured man would have been sacrificed to their senseless fury. So active, so unrelenting, is the spirit of persecution, that neither reason, truth, justice, the authority of the council, nor the interference and decrees of the King of Prussia, could protect him.

The name of the present proprietor of Rousseau's former residence is Jirardier: he is twenty-one years of age, an officer, and in the service of the present king, Frederic William, who is the protector of the canton of Neuchatel.

If my memory were less tenacious, or had the scenery of this valley transported

me less, I should be enabled to confirm my promise; I would then attempt to describe all that I beheld—all that I felt. And must then these delightful hours be confined to memory alone? must I pass from one extreme to its opposite? yes, I feel that I must. Compared with what I saw and felt, a cold itinerary is all that I can offer you. I can only say that we continued our route through Couvet, Travers; that we passed the Clusette at Noiraigue, and spent the night at the romantic village of Brot, and at the house where Rousseau used to sleep when he visited Colombier, the summer residence of Lord Keith, at that time governor of Neuchatel; that in the morning we resumed our walk, and, after passing the villages of Rochefort and Corcelles, arrived about noon at Neuchatel.

This must be written without comment: the first of painters, the greatest of poets, would worship Nature here, and pass on; they would not expose the utter incapacity of painting and of poetry to picture scenes like these.

Lausanne, Sept. 13.

PAYS DE VAUD.

I DID not acquaint you in my last that severe indisposition had confined me two days at Neuchatel. The unusual exercise which I experienced in my walk through the Valley of Travers had induced intolerable thirst. The crystal mountain-streams falling from rock to rock—their silvery waters playing upon my sight—their gentle dashing or tumultuous reverberation striking upon my ear, invited me to partake of a gratification which I did not resist: but moderate indulgence not only failed to allay my thirst, but rendered it at length ungovernable.

Do you remember that scene in the Honey-moon in which Balthazar surprises his hostess and Lampedo? While I was lying in bed, I could not but fancy that I was about to take a part in a similar drama; and phlebotomy, draughts, pills, and bark, began to swim upon my sight. It proved otherwise; and it is with feelings of gratitude and respect that I acknowledge myself indebted to M. Hubert, of the Sauvage, for his honesty, skill, and kindness.

We crossed the lake at Neuchatel, and disembarked at Port Alban, in the canton of Fribourg. To pay for experience is the lot of all, and he who does not pay too dearly may be considered fortunate: the latter was our case on quitting Port Alban—the people of Fribourg would not receive the money of Neuchatel: it has been put into

our *valises*, and there it will remain until our return to England. We shall in future be circumspect, and dispense the local currency of Switzerland with the least possible delay. French money appears to be everywhere coveted; it is to be preferred; for, in addition to the intrinsic value of the *demi-franc*, the *franc*, and the *ecu neuf*, the numeral system of the coins of France, which is decimal, is preferable to that of any country of Europe.

We soon entered the *Pays de Vaud*, and, after passing Payerne and Moudon, arrived at Chalet de Gobel. The country lying between the lake of Neuchatel and Chalet is for the most part level and uninteresting. We had not long quitted the latter place, on our approach to Lausanne, when such a view of Alpine magnificence burst upon our

sight, as even the wonders of the Valley of Travers had not prepared us for. Having no definite conception of what we were to behold, we gazed on the objects around us with doubt, and a disbelief of our senses. I have fancied that the unsubstantial visions of sleep were real—here I imagined that the substantial forms of things were visionary. For the first time in my life I beheld the clouds floating beneath the summits of the Alps. It was noon—the heat was oppressive, yet we beheld these mountains covered with snow; and that sun, whose intensity enfeebled, and almost drove us to the first shelter that might present itself, was resting on these beds of eternal ice,—his rays apparently as powerless as those of the moon. When I gazed upon the wild and craggy summits of these mountains,

towering above those clouds which are supposed, by the majority of our species, to be the limits of all that is earthly,—when I looked from their summits to their base, and contemplated their stupendous and oppressive magnitude, I shrunk from the daring speculations of imagination, which would picture that period of mundane convulsion when these mountains were heaved into their imperishable forms. I have always been a lover of Nature; I have made myself familiar with her various charms; I have struggled through her closely-embowered recesses, which coyly resisted my intrusion; I have reposed on her verdant uplands; I have bathed in her delicious streams—she has been my mistress, and I have loved her with inconceivable affection; but here she was no longer the same being

—I beheld her, but I could not approach her; a new feeling took entire possession of my heart; I had been before her lover—I now became her worshipper.

What delightful emotions of contemplative abstraction are engendered by these sublime objects! they are not always in connexion with the scenery, but they resemble it in their exalted and impressive character. The scenes of Switzerland make us feel our superior rank—our undivided empire over the animal creation—our intellectual alliance, although it may be remote, with the Great and Good of beings framed like ourselves. If I have not deceived myself, if such are the natural effects of Swiss scenery on the heart and understanding, is it not devoutly to be wished that principles of virtue and wisdom could be propounded

to the youth of all nations amid scenes like these? Could this be realized, the period which precedes intellectual maturity would be a long bright morning of unbroken happiness. How much is it to be deplored that the buoyant expectations of ingenuous youth, the delightful visions of boyhood, the days sacred to truth and virtue, should be embittered by the cold, the cautious, the calculating apophthegms of the wise and experienced—of those who, although they have not been contaminated by, are yet skilled in, the practical knowledge of human vices. Such men generate suspicion when they should inspire confidence; and, instead of cherishing the vigorous and aspiring efforts of intellect, which would make the sapling the monarch of the forest, they cut down its hopes and expectations, and

leave it, like the pollard, to yield only that which is convertible to vile uses.

Does this speculative train of thought amuse you? Perhaps not: I have lately conducted you above the clouds: you will not, therefore, feel surprised that I have taken you yet higher, and placed you in "a castle in the air."

I will now attempt to describe the transporting scenery which lay around us as we proceeded, and particularly as we descended the heights above Lausanne: and I consider myself truly fortunate in addressing one whose vivid imagination will fly to my aid when I need its friendly assistance.

The lake of Lausanne lay perhaps eight or nine hundred feet below the ground on which we stood, and on its opposite borders rose the line of Alps which separates Swit-

zerland from Savoy: to the left we beheld the termination of the lake, and the vineyards and villages which lie on its north side; to the right, the forest of Sauvebelin, and beyond it the Jura chain of mountains bounding the western horizon. Such, too, is the situation of Lausanne, which is built mid-way on the mountain-side, and four hundred and fifty feet above the level of the lake. You may form some idea of the picturesque appearance of a large town erected on such a spot; but what heightens this effect is, that the ground on which it stands is extremely irregular and hilly. The house at which Gibbon formerly lived is now the residence of M. Delarue, a banker. I was informed that the pavilion, at the extremity of the terrace, to which Gibbon was so attached, has been long neglected, and is in

a state of ruin. You have probably seen a drawing of it in his memoirs of himself. We passed this house on our way to Ouchi, which is below Lausanne, and on the borders of the lake. It is a delightful village; we walked to the extremity of its almost miniature pier. Here we had a nearer view of what we beheld from the heights above Lausanne. The irregular outline of the borders of the lake, with its numerous bays and promontories, enchanted us; it lay all around us; its bosom was almost still; it presented only that regular and gentle undulation which distinguishes sleep from death. The evening was most beautiful.—From Ouchi we rambled in the direction of Morges, through lanes delightfully shaded. It was dusk when we began to retrace our steps, and dark before we entered our hotel.

With the delightful scenery of the Leman lake, it is impossible not to associate the remembrance of the distinguished literary persons who have resided on its borders; and perhaps it is this association of splendid talents with the loveliest scenes of Nature, which has rendered it peculiarly attractive to the polite and accomplished of every nation of Europe: as we ramble among these scenes, we feel that Lausanne and Gibbon, Copet and De Staël, Ferney and Voltaire, Geneva and Rousseau, are inseparable: we expect to meet with dignity, elegance, and loveliness—with that high cultivation of the arts and accomplishments of life—those *deliciæ et elegantiæ vitæ*, which give an inexpressible charm to polished society. The pages of many esteemed writers of ancient and modern Italy appear to have ren-

dered the Italian lakes exclusively classic; yet the lake of Lausanne is, beyond dispute, more magnificent, though perhaps less beautiful than any of them: and, if the residence of great men on its borders, and their unwearied eulogium of its unequalled charms, can render it classic, it must henceforward be ranked with those that are trans-alpine. The visions of happiness which floated for ever on the brilliant imagination of Rousseau, were chained to this place; it was on the borders of this lake alone that he could imagine the possibility of their realization; nor were they irrational. "When my imagination is the most transported," he says, "it bears me to the delightful scenes of this lake: give me here an orchard, a true friend, an amiable wife, a cow, and a little

boat, and my happiness will be perfect!" Yet it was not that Rousseau loved these scenes for themselves alone; it was the love of those who had wandered among them which consummated his rapturous admiration; for the *Pays de Vaud* was the birth-place of Madame de Warens, the place of his father's residence, and that of Mademoiselle de Vulson, "*qui y eut les prémices de mon cœur*," as he informs us: it was the many parties of pleasure which he had there enjoyed during his boyhood, "*et ce semble*," he continues, "*de quelque autre chose encore plus secrète et plus forte que tout cela.*"

We arrive at the consummation of the purest happiness which our frame is capable of enjoying when tears start into our eyes, but sensations so exquisite cannot long endure: our transport dissolves with our tears.

Music sometimes distributes this flood of convulsive pleasure through the frame, and the scenes of Nature have the same magic influence. How exquisitely has Rousseau pictured these feelings in the account of an excursion which he made to Vevai! "*Je m'attendrissais, je soupirais et pleurais comme un enfant. Combien de fois, m'arrêtant pour pleurer plus à mon aise, assis sur une grosse pierre, je me suis amusé à voir tomber mes larmes dans l'eau.*"

It is amusing to contrast the opinions of two distinguished writers in relation to the inhabitants of the *Pays de Vaud.* If we are to credit Rousseau, we shall believe that the natives and the scenery are as remote from congeniality as the torrid and frigid zones: "the people and the country," he says, "are not made for each other."

Gibbon, who became a resident at Lausanne at no distant period from that at which Rousseau resided there, after speaking of some distinguished foreigners who had visited it, concludes by saying,—" but, in general, Lausanne has appeared most agreeable in my eyes when we have been abandoned to our own society." From what I hear, I am disposed to believe that Gibbon's opinion better harmonizes with the present state of society at Lausanne, than that of Rousseau.

When we consider the characters of these individuals, whose opinions are so much at variance; when we recal to mind the early life of both,—their habits, their temperament, their education, their views of society, we shall cease to consider this difference of opinion very enigmatical. Gibbon appears

to have considered himself a link in the chain of human society: Rousseau burst that chain, and buried himself in solitude. Organized for the enjoyment of intense happiness, he yet never beheld objects to realize his aspirations: he seemed like a fallen angel, to picture the joys of another and a happier planet, and, when he was not dreaming of happiness, he was watchful to be miserable.

Adieu! I shall write to you from Villeneuve, which is the last village on the borders of the Lake.

Villeneuve ; Sept. 14.

It is night—I have just arrived at this village. We quitted Lausanne between eleven and twelve o'clock this morning: a pure sky was expanded throughout the hemisphere. Another day of sunshine and of joy has passed, leaving such vivid traces of the delicious intensity of my happiness that my remembrance of it will be as inerasible as the wild and stupendous scenes through which I have passed. A current of transport has coursed my veins throughout the day. I have sighed, I have been motionless, I have been speechless with joy. I did not suppose that the human frame was capable, for hours in succession, of enjoyment so exquisite; and I feel confident,

that the scenery of Switzerland alone can generate such emotions: even while I write, recollection realizes my transports, and my eyes are filled with tears of joy: may these sensations visit my frame in after years, when age shall rob my limbs of their vigour, and circumscribe the feeble efforts of exercise to a garden, an orchard, and its adjoining copse!

Our route lay on the borders of the Lake; its gently-agitated waters were expanded before us, glittering in the sunshine. Beyond the Lake rose the rugged Alps of Savoy, towering to an immense height; their sides, for the most part, veiled in shade, and partially covered with snow: not a trace of vegetation decorated their craggy summits. On our left, rich vineyards clothed the sides of the mountains,

and were extended as far as our eyes could trace them.

We passed Lutri, Cuilli, and St. Saporin, on our way to Vevai and Clarens, which, you may well believe, we were most anxious to arrive at, however delighted we were by every object which lay around us. My mind was for ever occupied with the recollection of that master-work of genius, which is not the less delightful because it is fictitious: yet why do I call the Eloise a fiction? It must not be called a work of imagination;—it is so perfect a copy of an original, it is so pure a reflection of human feelings and actions, that we exclaim involuntarily—" Rousseau is not indebted to his imagination for this, but to his heart."

We had heard of the magnitude and impetuosity of the Vevaise, which rises in

the Gruyere mountains, and flows into the Lake at Vevai. We listened as we advanced, and expected that the hoarse voice of the river-god would salute our ears long before we approached his presence. We entered the town; we stood on the centre of the bridge, and beheld the bed of the Vevaise. How surprised were we to find that a feeble current only marked the course of the river; yet all around this current, this playful stream that lives only in quiescence and sunshine, this offspring of the river-deity, we beheld traces of the power and impetuosity of the parent—of the mountain-torrent, whose voice appals—whose strength is irresistible!

I traversed the town; my mind was filled with the recollection of the sentiments, which no lips but those of an Eloise and a

St. Preux could breathe. I thought of them only; of beings whose frames were agitated by feelings the most wild, yet the most refined, delicate, and intellectual: of those who had pictured to themselves an existence, whose joys would for ever partake of meridian intensity: for it is only in the morning of life when our sensations have the untiring activity which novelty begets, when the frame is verging towards a maturity of strength and beauty, when the blood seems to gush through the veins with the velocity of light, and its "rapids" hurry our imagination through regions of enchantment, that we picture to ourselves that visionary unbroken happiness, the offspring of inexperience, from the pursuit of which we at length turn with languor, dejection, and despair, when we discover the alloy

which is inseparable from unregulated fruition.

As I gazed around me, I could not but exclaim, "On such a spot, surrounded by luxuriant vineyards; the quiet and delicious scenery which the opening between the mountains presents; a widely spreading and quiet lake, bounded by an outline presenting the reverse of all these—the craggy inaccessible Alps;—here the language of enthusiasm is that of truth and nature."

We entered the great square, the south side of which opens upon the Lake: here we beheld the rocks of Meillerie, from which the unwearied gaze of St. Preux was fixed upon this spot. How fortunate was he that distance prevented him from distinguishing the particular object which he

endeavoured to behold, since more was left to the visions of imagination.

The heat became intense as we approached Clarens: had my existence been merely animal, I should involuntarily have sought shelter at Vevai, but excessive happiness thrilled me—my heart bounded within my breast: what I beheld excited joy; but imagination hurried me from these objects to its own mysterious regions of beatitude: an indescribable transport, before unfelt, undreamt of, pervaded every artery of my frame. We entered Clarens, more memorable for its bower, where the imaginary St. Preux was surprised by a bliss surpassing perfect happiness,* than for having been at one time the actual residence of

* See the Eloise—Letter 14.

Rousseau: such is the magical power of genius!

We had not long quitted Clarens when we met an old Swiss, whom we found intelligent and most willing to communicate all that he conceived we should be interested in knowing: he was pleased by our eager inquiries, and our humble mode of travelling proved that we had visited, *con amore*, his native woods and mountains. He directed our steps to the village of Montreux, on the mountain-side, and particularly to a bridge thrown over a mountain-torrent: he pointed to the snow-covered heights, among which, he said, the *chamois* is hunted; and spoke of a valley among the mountains, not far distant, where some plants are found which are no-where else discoverable but on the summits of the Alps. In this valley has

resided a race of beings who, from sire to son, have never quitted the scenes of their nativity: knowledge has not, by inflaming their imaginations, generated the desire of change. They are fortunate, indeed, who are incapable of conceiving a state of happiness more perfect than that which they enjoy: transported, as I now am, I almost envy those whose lives are so fixed, so quiescent, so insulated. In a letter to a friend, Jean de Muller describes this country in the following manner: "We took the route to Gruyères, and, after passing some of the most beautiful mountains in the world, a multitude of cascades, and meadows which realized our ideas of Elysium, arrived at Oesch: we continued to follow the windings of this enchanting valley, inhabited by a free and

happy people, and soon found ourselves at Rougemont."

We proceeded to the bridge of Montreux, and from its summit looked down upon the torrent; it was roaring and foaming as it rushed impetuously through its rocky bed, at a fearful depth below us. The height on which I stood, and the wildness of the current, made me shrink from the fixed attention to that which I afterwards returned to contemplate, not with less emotion, but with less dread. I could not trace it far up the *baie*, or deep fissure through which it dashes; for it was concealed by an almost perpendicular wood, which hung on the side of the mountain. Never shall I forget the sensation which I experienced when I first bent over the parapet of the bridge; I glanced at the torrent,—my eyes shrunk

from its overwhelming volume, and clung to the rich underwood which lay on its banks: a mixed feeling of dread and delight convulsed me: you may have felt the same, but never so intensely.

We did not resume the road which we had quitted, but continued our walk to Villeneuve, through the church-yard of Montreux, and by a slanting path-way cut on the precipitous declivity of the mountain-side. Beneath the rock on which the church is built may be seen a grotto, filled with stalactites. This track conducted us through orchards, meadows, and fields of India wheat. I could not have conceived the possibility of the cultivation of uplands so fearfully oblique, had I not beheld the peasantry making hay; had I not seen the closely-mown orchard, with its trees bend-

ing with fruit, and beheld the ripened wheat drooping and threatening parturition. Among these scenes, we frequently beheld the self-planted beech spreading its thick and impenetrable branches, and the light ash, with its thin and sunny foliage. The orchard appeared to be separated from the corn or hay field, by irregular traces of rich underwood, which were

> "Hardly hedge-rows, little lines
> Of sportive wood run wild;"

for, although the effects of cultivation lay all around us, yet there was so little art, so faint a shew of violence in the control of Nature, that she still appeared to be almost unlicensed in her liberty.

The sun was declining as we wound among these enchanting scenes, but his

slanting rays lighted up the rich verdure of the grass and the luxuriant foliage of the trees with unusual brilliancy. The murmuring of a thousand cascades, "above, below, and all around" us, some crossing our path, others sparkling through rich underwood, or rippling at its side; the gentle dashing of the waves of the Lake, whose sound was "by distance made more sweet;" and the song of the grass-hopper, sometimes at our feet, at other times so far removed as to be almost inaudible, yielded delicious music: for these unregulated sounds—differing, yet not uncongenial,—were to me most musical.

Through the trees we saw below us the dark towers of the insulated castle of Chillon, reflected on the bosom of the Lake: these objects awoke a train of painful

reflections, and proved how entirely our happiness is out of our power, and that we are wholly the creatures of circumstance. I thought of that sanguinary era, when the ardor of religious reform violated the laws of justice and humanity—when the residents of the borders of this Lake became infuriate with the unchristian zeal of persecution—when this castle was the scene of pining and of hopelessness. I thought of that period when the meek, the philosophic, the enlightened, Michael Servetus, became the victim of the crafty, cold-hearted, and blood-thirsty Calvin. When will men discover that religion does not consist in the belief of that which surpasses their comprehension, and in the persecution, or hatred at least, of those who do not believe, yet court conviction? When will they perceive

that its divine essence consists in kind-heartedness, in generosity, in high-minded-ness, in the cultivation of intellect, in promoting the happiness of a community if we possess genius, and that of our family and friends if we have it not?

During the time that the foregoing reflections were occupying my mind, the shades of evening were deepening on the Lake, and enfolding in their embrace the objects immediately on its borders; while the Alps, which tower above it, were enveloped in tints of purple light. Rousseau has faithfully and beautifully described, in his Eloise, this effect of the setting sun on the mountain summits. This is, indeed, a region of enchantment; it presents objects not embraced by the most sublimated fictions of poetic genius! I looked towards the Jura

mountains; the sun had just sunk below their summits. We walked on, scarcely a word passed our lips; we were too much delighted to converse, for we despaired to communicate, and feared to disturb our happiness: how could we communicate

"Thoughts which lay too deep for tears?"

The approach of night, that concealed those charms which had so transported us from our eager and ungratified gaze, could not deprive us of the delight which the sight of them had created. Never—never did I experience—never can I hope again to feel, such heart-boundings: never was I so purely delighted.

Adieu! Adieu!

Bex; Sept. 15.

We were about to sit down to supper last night when the compliments of a gentleman were brought, with a request that he might be permitted to join us: on enquiry, we found that he was a *pelerin à pied* like ourselves, but alone; and it was the conjecture of our acute hostess that he was an Englishman; this hypothesis appeared to originate in the quality of the words of which he made selection, which were not of the best, and of his pronunciation, which was decidedly of the very worst. He proved to be a German, who was about to traverse the Valais and the Alps. On separating for the night, we felt that our new acquaintance would prove, what new acquaintances rarely do, an acquisition.

Between five and six o'clock this morning, our dreams had abandoned us to the enjoyment of realities only less transporting than themselves; and we were preparing to leave Villeneuve: shortly after six we were quitting the borders of that beautiful Lake which may never again delight me.

Had not my mind been diverted from this painful reflection by the enchanting effects of early morning, which were assailing every sense with irresistible gentleness, and also by the magnificent and beautiful scenes around me, I should have been wretched.

To resist happiness which lies within our control, to avert our eyes from the sight of that which delights us, to repulse that form with our hands which we could enfold with tenderness—perhaps with transport—in our arms, is impossible; but how disproportioned

is enjoyment with the grief which succeeds the loss of it! however intense, however exquisite, our happiness may be, is it equitably counterpoised by the deep, the wasting grief which it sometimes leaves in our hearts? Yet how can we economise those enjoyments which, being pure, are approved, and therefore become irresistible? It is only when the rude hand of experience has brushed away the bloom of our most coveted joys—when we have passed the meridian altitude of possession, that our pleasures are to be controlled and economised; and this, so evidently, so exclusively, due to time and the course of events, we arrogate to ourselves, and meanly boast of our philosophy and self-denial. The cold and massive pressure of the hand of grief or disappointment would gradually wither the very

sources of life, if a hope of the re-existence of past enjoyment, or of the possession of happiness which shines in remote perspective, did not at last beguile our sorrow of the poison which it bears: it is the too-sensible experience of the dreadful extremes of deep delight, and the cheerless isolation and languor which the loss of it leaves, that makes me at all times shrink from the fruition of that enjoyment which I desire the most fervently. I am at this moment wisely occupied in persuading myself that very few summers will visit the transporting scenes through which I have passed, before I am again a wanderer among them; and I should think that man my worst enemy who would rob me of that consolatory faith.

The most enchanting scenery now pre-

sented itself; we appeared to be travelling through a valley, perhaps, three miles wide: here we first perceived groves of chesnut-trees of great age and magnitude; and such was the unchecked luxuriance of Nature, that the field and the forest appeared mingled together;—yet was there no forest; it was the wild growth and irregularity of the trees which presented this delightful intricacy. Surmounting these, and on an insulated rock to the right, we saw the ruins of the castle of St. Tryphon; and, towering above this, a snow-encrusted craggy mountain, called *la dent du midi.*

As we continued our route, I had occasion to notice that our German acquaintance stopped frequently to observe the rocks on our left, with the scrutinizing eye of one who thought of that which was lying be-

neath their surface. I found that a quarry, or even a heap of stones, was an object of deep interest to him: we had indeed a mineralogist in company, one who could see "sermons in stones," but neither myself nor my friend could avail ourselves of the knowledge which was readily and bounteously proffered to us. The induction to knowledge is dull, even to those who devote their lives to it; but how much more irksome would it have been to one who had long and successfully cultivated the science of mineralogy,—who was intimate with every ramification of the theory of it, and who was travelling for the purpose of associating theoretical with practical information! I could not, for one moment, think of imposing the painful service which the politeness of our friend dictated.

About ten o'clock we stopped to breakfast at Aigle.

It might have been two o'clock when we quitted the road to cross the country in the direction of the salt-mines of Bex. Our first visit was to the house of crystallization: we afterwards inspected that enclosing the machinery by which the soft quality of the saline water is distributed: this is effected by filtration through bundles of thorns, raised tier above tier, until the water, sufficiently impregnated with salt, is finally precipitated into conduits communicating with the house where it is crystallized: the residence of the director of the mines is nearly opposite these buildings, and the place is called Bevieux. We now ascended the mountain by a steep and rugged path-way, until we arrived at the entrance of the mine: this

entrance of the *souterrain* is distinguished by the appellation of *saline aux fondement*. Here each enveloped himself in the dark cloak of a miner, and, taking a lamp, entered the regions of eternal humidity, to traverse an extent exceeding three thousand feet, excavated in the solid rock. The gallery, from its narrowness, can admit only one person at a time: the miner led the way, the man of science followed him, I was the third, and my friend the last, that entered. The German had studied a plan of the mine before we entered it; and his frequent pauses to observe, with the uplifted lamp, the succeeding strata of minerals, and the conversation which this inspection gave rise to between himself and the miner, had nearly exhausted the patience of my friend. I was much amused by ob-

serving the diversity of taste and feelings as illustrated in my companions: it appeared to me, as we continued to penetrate the shaft leading to the saline sources, that my friend was the disciple of Health, and our associate was that of Science; that the latter had travelled from Berlin to Bex to view this mine, and that he was now amply repaid for expense, time, and fatigue, by the inspection of that which affected my friend with feelings the reverse of those which he was enjoying; with fears for his health, arising from subterraneous damp, the respiration of noxious exhalations, and the sight of objects repulsive to his nature.

How entirely our thoughts and feelings may become perverted is amply illustrated by the infatuated attachment of the miner to his gloomy and life-consuming avocation.

Our companion, who had visited many mines in Germany and elsewhere, informed us that the unfortunate victims, who are doomed to premature inhumation, are not merely resigned to their melancholy destiny, but that they are satisfied with the occupation to which they for ever condemn themselves; that they would not quit their dark and cheerless labour to partake of the vigour and cheerfulness which air and sun-shine inspire: like Jaffier, these men are enamoured of ruin.

When we contemplated the works around us, we paid an involuntary tribute of wonder and admiration to the genius which conceived and directed these prodigious labours;—galleries of fatiguing extent, hewn in solid rock to the centre of the mountain; a wheel, thirty-six feet in diameter, revolv-

ing in the heart of it, while, from the narrowness of the shaft, we wonder by what means its massive materials can have been introduced; immense reservoirs of brine; a well three hundred feet below, a shaft for the admission of air five hundred feet above, us. When we reflected that we were standing in the centre of the mountain, affected by mephitic effluvia, in a gloomy excavation, where the blackness of midnight is broken only by the lamp of the ghostly miner, we could not but feel deeply affected by our situation,—we could not contemplate the objects around us without emotions of dread.

It is curious to reflect that the actual source of the brine should not yet have been discovered, although the first gallery was excavated in 1684. That which is called

the cylinder, and from whence the water flows, is enclosed in the centre of the mountain by grey rock; it is easily separable, and is of an argillaceous quality: it has been penetrated in many places, as exhaustion required, and the latest source is worked at a depth of some hundred feet below the spot at which the first excavation took place. Another shaft is now in process; it is twelve or fourteen years that the miners have been working it, and as many years must pass before the shaft will reach the cylinder. It is the opinion of Haller, who was during six years director of these mines, that, as the sources of acids have always continued vinous, as the sources of brine have always remained saline, as the sources of warmth have always retained their power, so these qualities derive their

origin from immense subterraneous reser-
voirs, which are congenial to them, and that their diminution is insensible.

It is impossible to survey the interior of a mine without feelings of deep interest; but these feelings were but remotely allied to pleasure in my breast, or in that of my friend, for it was with emotions of delight that we approached the entrance of the mine, and beheld again sun, sky, mountains, trees, shrubs, and rippling streams.

As we wound down the mountain side in the direction of Bex, my mind was occupied by contemplating the most healthy sources of happiness; it led me to conclude, that the love of Nature is the most pure and exalted, and the only inexhaustible source of mental enjoyment. With what fidelity and animation has Wordsworth de-

picted the love of scenery, in speaking of his early years. The preference of Nature to Books is beautifully expressed!

"The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colors and their forms, were then to me
An appetite: a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrowed from the eye."

You remember, no doubt, that sentiment of Shakspeare, in which he speaks of finding—

"Tongues in trees,
Books in the running brooks."

That Rousseau was an ardent lover of Nature, and that he preferred her society to that of books, is proved by innumerable passages of his writings, but in none more strikingly than in the following quotation from his Rêveries: it is taken from the

account of his short residence at the island of St. Pierre, on the Lake of Bienne.

" *Le précieux* far niente *fut la première et la principale de ces jouissances que je voulus savourer dans toute sa douceur; et tout ce que je fis durant mon séjour ne fut, en effet, que l'occupation délicieuse et nécessaire d'une homme, dévoué à l'oisiveté.*"

* * * * * *

" *Un de mes plus grands délices etoit, surtout, de laisser toujours mes livres bien encaissés et de n'avoir point d'écritoire.*"

It is this pure affection for Nature which has led many Englishmen to study the means of domesticating her most enchanting scenes, without violating their characteristic wildness or beauty. The pleasure-grounds of many of our nobility and men of fortune prove the happy accomplishment of this

endeavour ; and, from the writings of those who have treated of landscape gardening, may be framed a system to satisfy the most jealous admirer of Nature's charms. As I write, the delightful productions of Bacon, Orford, Uvedale Price, Payne Knight, Mason, Gilpin, and Repton, occur to me. The Abbé de Lille is, I believe, the only French writer who has written on this delightful source of happiness; and his poems are, I conceive, better understood and more deeply loved in England than in France.

Have you ever associated the possession of pleasure with pleasure anticipated? how seldom do circumstances produce this combination! I remember such a period, but I must not dwell upon it: my transports are engendered and bounded now by the delightful objects around me. If I look into

the perspective which reflection presents to me, I feel that I am one whose life has passed its meridian, and that every succeeding object will present a shadow which must lengthen as life advances, until it is lost in the deepening obscurity of age or premature decay. I cannot define the feelings with which I have uttered the following lines:

TO FRIENDS FAR DISTANT.

Never did weary pilgrim rove,
By travel and by suffering faint,
With heart more tranced by holy love,
To kneel before his patron saint,
Than I would fly your smiles to view:
When will it be my happy fate
To make a pilgrimage to you
And bend before your cottage-gate?

On arriving at the base of the mountain, I observed that *la dent du Midi* which we

had been approaching the entire of the day, was nearly opposite to us.

Before we reached Bex, darkness had almost succeeded twilight; and, shortly after our arrival, we found an excellent *table d'hôte* prepared. The inn at this place, which was esteemed one of the best in Switzerland half a century since, when de Saussure visited the Alps in this neighbourhood, still merits the eulogium which it then received. Travellers, commanding more leisure than ourselves, would find a few days' residence at this place very delightful.

Martigny, the Valais, Sept. 16.

VALLEY OF THE RHONE.

WHEN we entered Bex, the evening had so far advanced as to veil the delightful scenery of its environs entirely from our view. I do not now regret this—an unclouded atmosphere presented to us this morning a profusion of enchanting objects. The Rhone was before us; on its opposite banks rose *la dent du Midi:* on the Bex side, and to our left, our attention was directed, more particularly, to a mountain called the *Morcle*, which we had scarcely noticed before: it is not so lofty as the *midi* mountain, but is more remarkable in its form, for its highest part seems to shoot perpendicularly into the atmosphere, in the

form of a tower: this, as well as *la dent du Midi*, is capped with snow and ice, which have, perhaps, never dissolved since its formation. The bases of these, each of which has its accompanying chain, seem to descend into the waters of the Rhone, and to close the country before us. Between Bex and the river, the scenery is luxuriant in flowers, meadows, copses, and trees of the brightest verdure, particularly the chesnut; add to these, the sound and sparkling of numerous rivulets, and the Avençon, which flows through Bex, and I am led to believe that the most fertile and restless imagination will find no object to sigh for.

From a mountain in a neighbouring bailiwick, was taken, in a fossil state, a lobster, which is still, I believe, in de Luc's cabinet at Geneva. This circumstance arrests at-

tention in the most forcible manner—it challenges reflection; and, surrounded as I am by objects whose forms and magnitude are as wonderful as they are vast, I pause, and my mind turns involuntarily upon itself. I endeavour to recall the theories of terrestrial convulsion and of deluge, and can rest on none with entire confidence and satisfaction. Yet it appears to me that the era is approaching when the researches of geologists, whose progress during the last twenty years has been gigantic, will have arrived at an *ultimum*; and when the rays of human perspicacity will penetrate those dark regions in which the mysterious operations of Nature lie concealed. What an interminable source of wonder is presented to the imagination of him who reflects on the structure of the earth, and of those

external traces which indicate the deepest internal convulsion! to the mind of him who loves Nature, and worships her mysteries! He endeavours to picture to his mind immense caverns of sub-marine and subterraneous fire: the war of elements—of fire with earth—earth with ocean—ocean with tempest and hurricane; each disputing the sovereignty! In pursuing his conjectures on the operations of this "wreck of matter," he endeavours to present to his mind a suspension of the rotatory motion of the earth; the destruction of the obliquity of the poles; perhaps the earth's assigned revolution round the sun on the verge of yielding to an excess of centripetal or centrifugal force; the earth, a being, as it were, of the solar system, stretched on the rack of universal convulsion, and its bones, as

the mountain-rocks have been emphatically called, broken and displaced!

Such, we have reason to believe, may have been the effects of three mundane revolutions, which geologists have traced, and as they are exhibited by the primitive, the secondary rocks, and alluvial deposits; but, to give these convulsions an habitation, even in the "mind's eye,"—to place in idea the sublime appearances of universal earthquake, universal hurricane, and universal deluge, is beyond the power of the most sublimated imagination! The theories of Newton and La Place have conducted us through infinite space: the laws and operations of the whole frame of the universe are embraced by our transported imaginations, yet is the theory of the earth a profound mystery, for we are as well satisfied with

the fanciful hypothesis of Kirwan, who informs us that Noah's house was built on one of the Andes, or elsewhere on the borders of the Pacific Ocean, from whence he saw the great abyss, or South Sea, open: as with the sagacity of Bishop Burnet, who imagines that the earth was a large ball of water, enclosed in a crust of granite; and that the bursting of this ball was the opening of the *great deep!* Perhaps it may be conjectured, that, so long as philosophers think it necessary to reconcile the theory of the earth with the Mosaic account of the deluge, so long must a succession of opake solutions emanate from their imaginations. Let the inquiring mind throw off the trammels of sect and system, and submit to the test of reason and experience: I speak of entire freedom in application to the pursuit

of science. There always has been, and I fear there always must continue to be, an *esoteric* and an *exoteric* doctrine: the frame of society would be disorganized without it.

On proceeding towards the bridge which connects the *Pays de Vaud* with the Valais, our progress was arrested by two or three *gendarmes*, who desired to examine our passports: this was the first application of the kind which had been made to us since we passed the frontier near Pontarlier.

The view from the bridge of St. Maurice, which is said to have been built by the Romans, while this town was called Agaunum, will check, for a few minutes, the progress of the traveller. The appearance of the town and of a chapel that hangs above it, is truly and singularly picturesque:

St. Maurice appears to be built in a frame-work of rock, as it were, excavated from the base of *la dent du Midi.*

Between this town and Martigny, it is said, that the Thebæan legion was twice decimated, and afterwards wholly destroyed by order of Maximian, because the soldiers refused to march against the Christians; and a speech, as remarkable for baseness of vassallage as of enthusiastic self-devotion, has been attributed to the martyred soldiery. It is pretended that this town takes its name from that of the commander of this legion, Maurice. Writers have endeavoured to invalidate the whole story, because the valley between Martigny and St. Maurice is not, they say, sufficiently large to contain 6000 men, the number of the legion, and the army of Maximian that murdered them.

Yet let it be remembered, that the event was a massacre, and not a battle; that an army, which would suffer itself to be twice decimated without insurrection, might be massacred by a small number. But that this story is a fiction rests on satisfactory grounds; for we may reasonably presume that the whole was a *pia fraus* of Eucherius, a bishop of Lyons. The knowledge of this extensive massacre did not, it appears, transpire at the time; it was not heard of until three generations of bishops (who must have consigned it to each other as a profound secret,) had passed away; for this event, which is said to have taken place during the latter part of the third century, was not disclosed until the middle of the fifth; while the execution of Maximilianus, Marcellus the centurion, and others, who

were, about this period, the willing victims of their passive prejudice, or active zeal, is related with circumstantial minuteness. The order of St. Maurice, instituted by the Dukes of Savoy, and the erection and dedication of the abbey at this place by Sigismond king of Burgundy, cannot be matters of surprise either to the sceptical or credulous of the nineteenth century, since events, which serve to increase the doubts of the philosopher, are not calculated to render the faithful less dogmatical.

The valley which we now entered, sometimes called the valley of the Pennine Alps, is the longest and widest in Switzerland; and the Rhone, from which it also takes its name, is the largest and most rapid of its rivers: from its source, in a mountain called the *Fourche*, a few miles west of

St. Gothard, to the lake of Geneva, it flows through an extent of eighty miles. This valley is one of the deepest in Helvetia, for its lowest part is scarcely raised above the level of the sea, while the mountains which command it, as Mont Rose, which is above 14,500 feet, and others, are among the loftiest elevations of Europe: it unites all climates and all seasons at the same time. The villages in the vicinity of Martigny produce wine of a quality strong and delicious: here we can gaze, in the same minute, on the aloe and fig-tree of the torrid, and the rhododendron of the frigid, zones;—in the morning we can pass a track of country where Nature languishes from excessive heat, and in the evening we may cross on foot the never-dissolving snows which surmount it!

Martigny ; Sept. 17.

In this valley are found persons called *Goitres* and *Cretins:* the disorders of both are considered endemial. The former are distinguished by swellings of the neck, so large as to render them hideous: this disease does not materially diminish the number of their days, although it has some effect on their general health. The *cretins* are the most powerless, the most loathsome, the most unlike human beings, yet bearing the human form, that I ever beheld; they are so baneful, that my nature chills even at the recollection of them. They are born idiots; they never attain a maturity of form or of intellect; their youth, their middle age, their latter years, are the same—a

heavy, an unchangeable, a leaden trance, locks up the sources of physical and mental energy. They possess the appetitive organs, yet enjoy neither sights, nor sounds, nor odours, nor sensations; but hunger, hunger approaching voracity, appears to supply the darkness of the other senses. They are sunk beneath the lowest grade of animated beings: they are incapable of the blind attachment of brutes: they have not loco-motion, for a cretin of twenty-five years cannot stand, but lives in a cradle, or in the arms of the wretch whose destiny it is to preserve its existence. Add to this, maturity of years, contracted features of face, a head partially covered with hair, bearing the dark hue of manhood, eyes weak and scarcely unclosed, and lashes so clotted with thick moisture as to deform,

rather than ornament, the lid; flesh devoid of elasticity, with the discoloration of death;—picture all this, and you may think that you behold the creature that has no parallel. Yet this being, fallen as it is below the vilest of the brute species, bears the human form! the form of man, in whom is sometimes beheld a shadowing of those attributes which are assigned to the Deity! But, let me hasten to draw a veil before this picture of loathsome imbecility; and ought I not to apologize for having dwelt so long on a subject which must distress you? I do so, and beg to assure you, in mitigation of my fault, that my mind was haunted by this afflicting subject, as we are troubled with a frightful dream, which clings to our diseased imaginations.

It is some relief to the feeling mind to

know that this malady, which we have reason to believe has always afflicted the Valaisans, has been of late years greatly alleviated; yet a traveller cannot enter far into this valley without being afflicted with the sight of goitrous persons employed at their avocations, or cretins inactive and insensible, reclining in chairs, or in the arms of their parents.

In considering the sources of these disorders, Mr. Coxe appears to offer a theory for the first only. The seat of this disease is on the fore part of the neck between the trachea, or wind-pipe, and the skin, and occupies for the most part what is called the thyroid gland. It is believed by him that the introduction of certain calcareous particles of water, called *tuf*, so minute as to be impalpable, by means of

the blood into the glands of the throat, produces goitre: it appears that the structure of the gland so affected is favorable to the deposition and *detension* of stony particles carried into it by the blood, for it is supplied with four arteries uncommonly large, in proportion to the size of the gland, and has no *excretory* duct through which any substance, once deposited, can pass. Hence, a very inconsiderable deposition of *tuf* might be sufficient to produce, by irritation, such an abundant secretion of viscid fluid, as to distend the capsules, or cells, of which the gland is composed, and thus produce goitre. Although this disease is more prevalent in mountainous countries, yet it appears to be well known in various latitudes of Europe, Asia, and Africa, at the basis of Alps and Andes, and on the plains of Lom-

bardy. The places in England where goitres are found, are near Matlock, in Derbyshire, and the vale of Pewsey, in Wiltshire. Mr. Coxe met, at the baths of Leuk, in the Upper Valais, a surgeon who had demonstrated the truth of this opinion, by extracting concretions of *tuf-stone* from several goitres: dogs and cats have been affected by similar tumours.

I will quote a fact in support of Coxe's opinion, which has been communicated to me by a gentleman, many years a resident of Geneva, and the *Pays de Vaud*.

The family of a vine-dresser named Poteau, who died about seven or eight years since, is now residing in a village called Rouvenat, close to Vevai. Besides their cottage, this family possess a meadow and orchard, which skirt the torrent-stream Ve-

vaise. On the higher ground near the cottage runs a canal, over which have been built several mills, and *chamoiseries*, or houses, for the dressing of chamois skins.

One morning a stream suddenly appeared flowing through the meadow; it was clear and beautiful; the family drank of it, and were glad to be dispensed from the trouble of bringing water from a considerable distance, which they had hitherto done. At the end of six months, every individual of the family was affected by goitre; and the father, not doubting but that this was induced by the water, ceased to drink of it, as well as his family, and made use of external application, and such beverage as was calculated to soften the asperity of the humours, for the purpose of removing this glandular enlargement. The remedy proved

efficacious with respect to the greater part of Poteau's family, but his eldest daughter did not benefit by its virtue. Her sister was more fortunate,—for so successful was the remedy, that the disorder was almost wholly dissipated by it. Were we acquainted with the constitutions of the sisters, the cause of this stubbornness of the disorder might be explained. May we not believe that the fibres of the elder sister were, by constitutional debility, more relaxed than those of the other, and that the glands of the throat were therefore rendered more susceptiole of the adhesion of these impalpable depositions of the water? And might not the use of different and stronger remedies have succeeded?

Rouvenat is on the north side of the Leman lake, which, at this place, is nearly

five miles wide : you will naturally conclude that there is here a free circulation of air, and that this situation cannot be unwholesome. I am informed that this was a solitary instance of goitre at Rouvenat.

Coxe has adopted a long-prevailing opinion; de Saussure, however, is not among its advocates, for he attributes the local affection—called goitre, and cretinism—a disorder pervading the system, to the same cause; namely —the extreme heat of the sun, which, by being confined in valleys whose extremities do not open upon plains or tracks of country where the air circulates freely, generates a species of corruption, the nature of which is not precisely known. This impure atmosphere, acting upon the tender frame of infants, causes that relaxation not only productive of the goitrous swelling, but of

a general atony of the system, which is indeed the distinguishing characteristic of both disorders.

In tracing the scale of this disorder (to admit de Saussure's theory), from *cretinism* down to *goitre*, we observe, as he remarks, that some can utter only inarticulate sounds; others, with painful hesitation, stammer out a few words; some, without the exercise of reason, partake of the domestic labours of the house, not from instruction, but from imitation only; while others marry, and sustain the duties of parents, and their rank in society, with no inconsiderable share of respectability.

The opinion that cretinism is attributable to impure atmosphere has long prevailed among the natives; for they send their offspring to be nursed on heights, which are

supposed to be removed from the impurity of the valley; and it does not unfrequently happen that the *accouchements* of the Valaisans take place among the mountains. A portion of intellect, little exceeding instinct, would dictate this;—they observe the health, strength, and perfect forms, of those who are born on lofty situations, and, comparing them with the loathsome disease, or, at best, the imperfect health which invariably attends their own offspring, a conclusion naturally follows: the cause is mysterious, but the effect must have been observed from generation to generation.

In support of his opinion, that idiocy is induced by heated and impure atmosphere, de Saussure asserts that cretins are not seen on mountains, or even in the lofty valley of

mountainous countries; and he adds, that, if a person possessing only a superficial knowledge of physiognomy were to visit Martigny on a fair-day, when the natives of the valley and of the heights above it are assembled, he might, by inspecting their countenance and forms, decide with confidence on the altitude at which each individual was born.

The opinion of Coxe may be well founded so far as it relates to goitre, but he imagines that cretinism is attributable to the same cause, and endeavours to maintain this opinion, by conjecturing that the impalpable particles of stone may penetrate by means of the blood into the glands of the brain, and affect that organ by forming concretions: it is a well-known fact, he adds, that earthy matter is frequently

found in the pituitary gland, situated in the cranium.

It appears to me that facts will prove this theory to be inconclusive, for it can be proved that persons arrived at the decline of life, who are affected by these guttural tumours of a monstrous size, are not afflicted by an increasing debility of intellect, which necessarily must be the result of an accumulation of *tuf-stone*; and it can be demonstrated that the intellect of cretins, whose goitrous enlargement is not larger than a walnut, has been, from their birth until their death, enveloped in the deepest shades of fatuity.

The theories of de Saussure and Coxe may be both well founded, if they did not attempt to prove too much, by conjecturing that both disorders may be traced to the

same source : you, therefore, perceive it is my opinion, that they are both right and both wrong, and that I am disposed to divide the palm between them.

I like to propose doubts, they are the tests of science and wisdom. "*C'est du frottement des idées que sort la lumière*," says Jean de Muller ; yet some persons consider the action of ideas not a little dangerous, and therefore preach up "*non-resistance*" most intolerantly. The tenacious adherent of system is, in my estimation, a species of bigot ; temerity and cowardice are most paradoxically united in him—he has the hardihood to assert that his opinions are true and incontrovertible, yet has he the cowardice to shun discussion ; and, associated with these, we invariably meet with loss of temper, which is indicative of shame and

defeat. Would that the spirit of academic philosophy were engrafted in all hearts!

How refreshing was it to turn our eyes from Meville, where we had been gazing on an object in whom were united the years which border on manhood, with the helplessness and mental non-existence of infancy, and behold the magnificent and beautiful Salenche falling, as it were, from a mountain-summit into the vale before us! The all of this river, called, *par excellence*, I presume *Pissevache*, unites the extremes of beauty and sublimity. To be seen to the greatest advantage, the traveller should approach the base of the mountain on the north-west side of the cascade; from this point of view it appears to descend from the pure ether that surmounts it: its immense volume, dashing in the descent from

its bed upon the rugged shelving of rock, produces an appearance the most singular and enchanting. The effect of reflected light on its far-spreading foam, which is wafted like clouds into the valley, gives existence to the rainbow, and presents every colour and combination of the prism; but this diversity of refraction is to be witnessed about sun-rise only. In consequence of the violence with which the river falls on the projecting rock, it rises into the atmosphere in a variety of shapes, too various and too extraordinary for the memory to retain—sometimes in the form of sky-rockets, which the eye traces for a time, until they lose their first form, and soon afterwards vanish from the sight: such too was the appearance of the distant spray, which seemed to fade away like ex-

halation, while the foam, with which the person of the traveller is surrounded, makes him fancy that he is enveloped in a shower of liquid silver. You cannot conceive with what delicious abandonment I gave loose to my imagination; the visions of faëry were never more beauteous than the sights which all may behold here, but those especially which Fancy, with her piercing eye, her soft voice, and busy finger, assisted me in discovering.

The course of this river is through a deep ravine, so perpendicular that one might conjecture that the bed of it had been made by the labor and ingenuity of man, were the undertaking less than gigantic: the cascade appears to fall from an elevation perhaps two-thirds of the height of the entire precipice; it has been conjectured that the

river might, ages since, have rolled from its summit, but that the magnitude and impetuosity of the torrent have from time to time decreased its elevation—and this conjecture is almost confirmed by an accumulation of earth, stones, and rock, which lies at the base of the cliff.

This stream which rises among the Pennine Alps, acquires in its course a volume which would have conferred on it fame and honour if it watered a region more habitable than that where Nature has placed it; yet how magnificent is its termination!—from an elevation exceeding two hundred and fifty feet it falls with a tumultuous sound, and displays a brilliancy and sublimity in death that the majestic Rhone, which receives its almost lifeless remains, no-where presents.

The only object that arrested my attention, before we entered Martigny, was the mouth of the river *Eau Noire*, or *Triant*, at the village of Verrerie: this river rises near Valorsine, and dashing through a deep, rugged, and gloomy chasm, flows sluggishly into the Rhone: its dark course, its passive and unpicturesque termination, are strikingly contrasted with the lofty bed, and the brilliant and impetuous fall of the Salenche.

Martigny; Sept. 18.

THE VALLEY OF TRIANT.

I ADDRESS you again from the Octodurum of the Romans. Here the roads from the Upper Valais, the Pays de Vaud, the valley of Chamouny, and the great St. Bernard unite: here it was that, in the spring of the year 1800, Bonaparte remained during some days, while the French army defiled before him to pass the St. Bernard; and it was from this place that he addressed the subjoined lines to his brother Lucien:—

May 18, *at Night.*

"I am at the foot of the great Alps, in the midst of the Valais. The great St. Bernard presented many obstacles, but they have been surmounted. A third of the artillery is in Italy: the army is descending by forced marches. Berthier is in Piedmont. In a few days all will be over."

How much is the interest attending great

events increased when we visit the scenes where they have once had being! I pictured to myself the army transporting its *materiel*—its cannon, caissons, forges, &c. dismounted and conveyed piece-meal to the mountain-summit; the massive artillery-pieces removed from their carriage and bedded in the trunks of trees, hollowed for that purpose, and dragged through ice and snow by companies of one hundred men, each company yoked to ropes for that purpose; the rest of the army bearing arms, provisions, &c. every individual trailing a burden of seventy or eighty pounds. But what will not the thirst of glory accomplish, whether that feeling be kindled by the legitimate love of liberty, or the unlicensed passion of conquest? Perhaps a more splendid display of talent, of physical energy,

and unbounded enthusiasm, was never witnessed! Marmont, Lasnes, Berthier, and Murat, were the springs that put that vast body in action, which, like a hurricane, swept the plains of Piedmont, and in three weeks decided the fate of Italy.

The only town which lies between Martigny and the base of the mountain, is St. Pierre. The road leading to it is pleasantly shaded by chesnut, pear, and other fruit tres: beyond it, the country is richly ornamented with woods, and copses, and with meadows, whose uniformity of verdure is occasionally broken by isolated pieces of rock: through these, flows the rapid Drance.

At a short distance beyond St. Pierre the road separates, the left branching off towards the great St. Bernard, and that to

the right towards Triant and the Col de Balme.

We soon began to ascend the mountain by a rugged footway, the steepness of which continued to increase, until our hitherto moderate exercise was succeeded by extreme difficulty and such exertion as put our passion for mountain-scenery to the test. The frequent jagged projection of rock, the loose stones which for ever turned under our feet, and retarded our progress, and the repercussion of the sun, whose rays lay on the mountain side, at length exhausted us, and we quitted the path, from time to time, to drop on the rich verdure which clothed the mountain-side: sometimes we stretched ourselves beneath the shade of a luxuriantly spreading beech, at other times by the side of a stream, whose rippling

had long cheered our labour and invited us to approach it, and whose delicious coolness now allayed our thirst. The peasantry of the mountain, and of the valley of Triant, towards which our course was directed, frequently overtook and passed us: daily habit had so familiarised these sturdy mountaineers, men and women, to the route which we were travelling, that our unpractised exertions afforded them some little amusement: they needed not that enthusiasm which animated us, and without which we should have retraced our steps, and returned to the valley. Our conversation led to some local and personal information: we sought acquaintance with them; that which interested them led to the development of their characters, and our object was obtained. Among other subjects, we were informed,

that a revolution in England had caused emigrations from that country to an amazing extent, and that this was the cause which occasioned the appearance of so many English in the Valais. I could with difficulty persuade them that they were in error; that a continental war of twenty-five years had prevented a rising generation, of very many thousands, from gratifying idle curiosity, or of allaying the unquenchable thirst which is excited by the acquisition of knowledge.

As we continued to ascend, we saw on the right of the path-way an oratory; it was, I believe, the first which we had seen. We examined its interior, and read an inscription inviting any persons, devotees or criminals, (for extremes meet, it is said,— and this inscription confirms the adage,

since it promises an equal privilege,) to repeat a certain number of *Ave-marias* and *Pater-nosters*,—no matter how rapidly, or in what frame of mind. For doing this, they are to enjoy a certain number of days of indulgence; in other words, they are invited to take out a license, as it were, for the commission of crime—*mirabile dictu* —with impunity! for I have always understood that an "indulgence" meant a dispensation from the wholesome discipline of good sense, and the exercise of self-control. It may be presumed, that Nature prevails over the folly and insanity of the priests, for I do not find that the Valaisans are cruel or dishonest, or revengeful, or avaricious, or incontinent; in short, they do not avail themselves of this worse-than-senseless invitation. Patience only is to be exercised

in obtaining this grant; the church of Rome has not always been so disinterested in the distribution of "indulgences."

We continued to ascend until we approached the Col de la Forclaz, which is about 4,700 feet above the level of the sea: here the prevailing trees are fir and beech. We paused at this spot to survey the scenery; it was almost evening. The difficulty of the ascent had so retarded our progress, that we were four hours in walking, perhaps, nine miles. The partial view of the valley of the Pennine Alps, from this place, and of the Rhone, flowing through it, is superb. Many towns and villages are seen; but Sion, in consequence of the comparative magnitude of its buildings, although one of the most distant, is yet the most remarkable. The Rhone can no-

where be viewed to so much advantage; but the serpentine course of this majestic stream, so gratifying to the eye, is to be deplored, for it has rendered a considerable part of this magnificent valley marshy, and incapable of cultivation.

A few paces brought us to a precipice, commanding a view of the valley of Triant, which lay, perhaps, five hundred feet below us; and the effect which the sudden view of the extraordinary scene beneath us produced, can never be forgotten. And now, while I recal each object which I there saw, and endeavour to place it before your eyes, I feel that my efforts are hopeless: my imagination calls, as it were, into existence, colours and combinations which the pencil cannot command; and I am consoled only by the hope that my attempts may

generate a wish to behold charms which language cannot picture, or, at most, reveal so partially, as to excite, rather than to subdue, curiosity.

About the middle of the valley, which is, perhaps, a quarter of a mile in width, lies the half-civilized village of Triant: the residences are huts, consisting of one or two rooms, constructed entirely of wood, even their roofs; of these, some are not fastened, but are secured from the effects of high wind by the pressure of large stones. In this manner are the *chalets* constructed, which are mere hovels, affording shelter to herdsmen, and are formed only on the tops of those mountains which yield pasture.

Triant valley is accessible only to foot-passengers, or those who travel on mules: so sudden and precipitous was the descent,

that it lay beneath us like a map. The village is not divided by a centre way, and the huts have been erected with the utmost irregularity. Pathways lead from dwelling to dwelling, and each hut has its little field, or plantation of oats, or other grain; or, perhaps, it yields a scanty supply of the most hardy plants of common and domestic use.

At the western extremity, the valley is apparently closed by masses of black rock; they form a chasm, at the bottom of which flows the Triant, dashing and foaming from rock to rock: this spot is called the *Tête Noir.* Above the chasm, and on a fearful eminence, is the route to Chamouny, which is more circuitous than that by the Col de Balme.

To the east the valley is terminated by a

glacier, which, Bourrit says, no one has yet ventured to cross. From this flows the torrent of Triant, and during the whole of its course it continues to struggle through a bed of broken granite, which lies sometimes in pieces, sometimes in large masses, throughout the valley. We attempted to approach the glacier, and this was the first occasion which I found to notice, in a particular manner, the deceptive appearance of mountain-scenery, occasioned by the magnitude of objects, and of the pure atmosphere through which they are beheld. In mentioning one of the earliest ascents of Mont Blanc, Bourrit says—"*Ils entrérent dans la region des glaces et des neiges: c'étoit une plaine qui leur parut n'avoir q'une demi lieue de longeur, mais qu'ils ne traversèrent qu'en y employant trois heures,*" &c. You re-

member, no doubt, St. Preux's short banishment to the Valais; and, perhaps, already recal an apposite passage, descriptive of that to which I have just alluded. "*Ajoutez,*" he says, after describing the fecundity of nature in the valley of the Rhone, "*les illusions de l'optique, les pointes des monts différemment éclairées, le clair-obsur du soleil et des ombres, et tous les accidents de lumière qui en résultoient le matin et le soir, et vous aurez quelque idée des scenes,*" &c. "*La perspective des monts étant verticale frappe les yeux tout-à-la fois,*" &c. It appeared to us, as we advanced towards the glacier, that we could approach it in a few minutes, but twilight surprised us with its presence, while the interesting object before us appeared almost as distant as when we quitted the village. Mortified and disappointed,

we returned to the only place where travellers are accommodated: it is the residence of Mad. Suzanne, the ancestors of whose husband have been the residents of Triant time out of mind: so say the oral traditions of the valley.

The village had been laid under contribution on our arrival, and six eggs were all that could be procured. Those who purpose remaining in the valley during the night, would do well to take provisions with them.

Our guides informed us, that, to this sequestered and savage valley, a part of the famishing Austrian army, in the year 1815, directed its steps: like an army of locusts, they swept this inhospitable region of every species of nutriment congenial to man; nay, famine had almost wrought a

change even in their organization, for the poor wretches were seen to devour the wild herbs which grew in the valley and on the acclivities above it.

On retiring to rest, we desired our guides to awake us some time before day-break, as we were anxious to see the sun rise from the Col de Balme: they chose rather to deceive us, and brave our anger, than to risk self-reproach by endangering our lives, and the day was dawning before we rose from our beds.

Martigny ; Sept. 19.

THE COL DE BALME.

On resuming the ascent to the *Col*, or lowest part of the ferrule of the mountain of Balme, (*la frête*, as de Saussure calls it,) we were informed by the guides that we had between four and five miles to walk before we should arrive at the spot which we were about to visit.

We soon quitted Triant valley, and began to climb the mountain by a serpentine foot-way, through a forest of firs, hanging on a declivity more precipitous than any which we had yet ascended. This passage to the Col de Balme is, during the months when snow lies on the ground, dangerous in the extreme ; so much so, that persons travel-

ling from Martigny to Chamouni almost invariably take the more circuitous; but safer, route of the *Tête-noir*. You may form some conception of the steepness of the mountain which we ascended, when I inform you, that the pathway winds upon itself between thirty and forty times. On our right lay a deep and slanting ravine, which separates the mountains between which we were ascending; through this, dashes a torrent that flows from the snow and ice which lie on the sides and summits of the mountains, and unites itself to the *Eau-noir* of Triant valley. The hardy "rose of the Alps" lay partially around us, and, with its beautiful blossoms of dark red, offered a delightful contrast to the rugged and cheerless scenery which now began to present itself on every side.

As we continued to ascend, we saw before us beds of snow and ice, lying in the furrows of the mountain side; these we crossed, and soon afterwards arrived at the *chalets*, which are sheds erected for the temporary shelter of herdsmen, and for the milking of cattle;—they were deserted. Nature all around us wore a solitary, silent, and desolate, appearance; neither animals, nor birds, nor trees, nor alpine shrubs of stunted growth, were to be seen; gusts of wind only broke the stillness. Here I paused to contemplate with feelings of dread and commiseration the fate of the good and enlightened Escher, of Zurich, who fell from a rugged elevation near the summit of the mountain on which I was looking. This spot overhangs the deep ravine of

which I have spoken, and looks down upon the valley of Triant.

Bourrit, the intimate friend of Escher, has described this melancholy event in a manner so interesting, that I cannot forbear to attempt a translation of it. Bourrit, who had not leisure to accompany Escher and his companions to the Col de Balme, walked with them from Bex, of which place he was, at that time, a resident, to St. Maurice. "It was not without feelings of regret," (he says,) "that I here bade them farewel. From Martigny they ascended to Triant, and afterwards on mules to the Col de Balme. Here they encamped themselves, and gazed with admiration on the scenes around this interesting spot. From this place they beheld the famous Mont Blanc, and the beautiful valley which lies

at its base. For one of them it was the promised land, an entrance to which had been forbidden by Destiny. Escher quitted his friends to range among the regions around him, and scaled that rock, the account of which had deeply interested him: it was on this spot, among the broken ground which lies on the summit of its cone, that his foot slipped—that the earth and stones sunk under him,—that, in struggling to defend his life, he tore his hands—that his arms were broken—his desperate exertions proved unavailing: from this place he fell. Escher is no more! he who was the hope of his friends, his family, his country, is dead!—the letter of his friend and companion, Alberg, is before me: each line, each word, of it, is blotted with his tears.

* * * * * *

"Three weeks after the occurrence of this dreadful event, the elder brother of M. Escher went from Zurich to Geneva, and ascended to the Col de Balme from the valley of Chamouni: he visited the scene of his brother's death—of one so beloved, that he had yielded to him his privileges of birth and seniority. From the Col de Balme he came to visit me. I conducted him to the tomb of his brother, and witnessed the tears of anguish which fell on his grave."

The interest which must always accompany the knowledge of this event, was to me heightened in a peculiar degree, for I was looking upon *l'Aiguille d'Alier*, the place from which M. Escher fell, as the guide was narrating the event. He directed my eyes to a shelving of rock, perhaps five

hundred feet beneath this spot: to this the body fell before its progress was arrested, and here it remained during the night. On the following day, by the courage and skill of Cachet *le Géant*, (as he was commonly called,) Jean and Joseph Créton, and others, whose lives were greatly endangered by their enterprise, the body was removed, but not until it had been rolled from the place on which it was lying, to a level, some hundred feet below it; and from this place the hardy mountaineers bore it.

The following lines are written by Bourrit: they are engraved on the tomb which marks the spot where the remains of Escher lie in the churchyard of Bex.

Aimé de ses amis, digne d'un meilleur sort,
Escher auroit sans doute honoré sa patrie:
Au désir de s'instruire il consacra sa vie,
Et ce désir causa sa mort.

It is with some reluctance that I return to conduct you to the Col de Balme, and to describe the wonders which are beheld from it, for I not only feel that want of confidence which always accompanies success, but I apprehend that the continuation of my letter will be very deficient of interest after your perusal of the melancholy event which I have just related: if you are of the same opinion, fold it up, and do not again open it until to-morrow. In the interim, domestic avocations and sleep may, perhaps, dissipate that frame of mind which is not congenial with the minor interest which accompanies the description of Alpine scenery.

We were ascending the central chain of the mountains of Europe: we arrived at the Col of the mountain of Balme, and here

the most gigantic features of Nature burst upon our sight! In front towered the Monarch of Mountains, wrapped in a mantle of snow, whose ample folds covered a considerable portion of his majestic form. The mountains which constitute a portion of the chain connected immediately with Mont Blanc, are viewed in profile from this place. Mount Breven, and the Needles, as they are called, which bound the opposite side of the valley, are seen in profile also. At the base of these, and at a fearful distance beneath us, lay the valley of Chamouni. To the right are *le Buet*, and the chain of mountains which overlook Valorsine, as far as *la dent du Midi*, of which I have already spoken. Behind us, and to our left, are seen Mounts St. Gothard, Fourche, Grimsel, Gemmi, and Diablerets. The Col de Balme

appears to be the stupendous barrier of two valleys—that of Chamouni, in Savoy, and that portion of the valley of the Pennine Alps which is seen from Martigny to Sion, and beyond it. From this commanding spot the eye ranges over a succession of Alps, with snow-encrusted summits, to a distance of ninety or a hundred miles.

My attempt to describe the Alps is infinitely surpassed by a magnificent view of the scenery of Savoy and Switzerland, sketched by the graphical pen of Bourrit; it is with this that he appropriately commences his "*Itinéraire de Chamouni, de Valais,*" &c. He says, that the most extensive and sublime view of the Alps which he ever beheld was from the summit of *la Dent de Vaulion*, a mountain of the Jura chain, situated near the lake of Joux. Such

is its commanding situation, and the magnitude of the objects, that the eye embraces a tract of country four hundred miles in extent; commencing at the mountains of Dauphiné, and terminating at those of the Grisons. Of this vast expanse there are three remarkable points of distance:—Mont Blanc is seen to the right, Mont Rose in the centre, and St. Gothard bounds the left extremity of this magnificent chain. De Saussure and Bourrit inform us, that, from the summit of Mont Blanc, they could glance from the plains of France to those of Piedmont in an instant.

The most enlightened naturalist that any age or country has produced, the great Humboldt—who visited, during five years, the most stupendous scenery of the Andes —passed, in lat. 1° 33′ S. the limit of perpe-

tual congelation, which is 15,700 feet above the sea, and, consequently, the boundary of vegetation; for lichens, which he found at a height of 18,203 feet, cannot be considered even a remote link in the chain of vegetation, since they have neither roots, stems, nor leaves: these also he passed, and reached an elevation of 19,400 feet on Chimborazo; nor did he terminate his enterprising and unequalled efforts until he trod the verge of that region which is hallowed and unapproachable. Amid these trackless regions of intense silence—unvisited but by the ethereal and unearthly airs of heaven, or the noiseless drifting of snow-flakes—the condor, the giant of the birds of prey, (a being so organised as to enjoy an isolation and singleness of existence, which we cannot contemplate without feelings of awe and

admiration,) is beheld towering until vision can no longer embrace it. Over these regions it appears to possess an uncontrolled and god-like dominion: it soars so infinitely beyond the chain of animal and vegetable life, as to generate a doubt whether our hemispheres have given it existence.

The mind labours to form a definite idea of these objects of oppressive sublimity: if it fail in doing so, how can it hope to frame to itself that giant of mountains, Dhawalagiri, the loftiest of the Asiatic Alps, which towers to a height of nearly 27,000 feet, almost twice the elevation of Mont Blanc? From the summit of Chandraghiri, a mountain in the valley of Nepaul, the landscape possesses unequalled grandeur. Colonel Kirkpatrick informs us, that the scenery rises gradually to an amphitheatre, and suc-

cessively exhibits the cities and numberless temples of the valley below, the stupendous mountain Sheoopoori, the still super-towering Jibjibia, clothed to its snow-capped peak with pendulous forests; and, finally, the gigantic Himmaleh, forming the majestic back-ground of this wonderful and sublime picture.

As I gazed on the stupendous features of creation before me, I recalled to memory the unsubduable enterprise of one who is without parallel, if we except the great Columbus. On the south side, and about six or seven miles from Mont Blanc, is the passage of the mountains to which Hannibal came when he invaded Italy: it is now believed that he passed the Alps at the Col de la Seigne, N. W. by N. of the little St. Bernard, in lat. 45° 32′ N.

and long. 6° 56′ E. and that he entered Piedmont by Aosta and Ivrea, and not by the Col de Servières, as laid down in the map illustrative of Rollin's History, in lat. 44° 50′ N. and long. 7° 4′ E. It is said, that, for the knowledge of this interesting fact, we are indebted to General Melville, who explored the route of Hannibal, directed by his minute and philosophic historian Polybius, the friend of Scipio. Polybius is, beyond dispute, most circumstantial in his account of the events which occurred during the passage of the Alps; but it does not appear to me that he is so particular in his description of the towns, rivers, or scenery, as to guide with certainty any one disposed to trace the route of Hannibal. He speaks, indeed, in a particular manner of one place at which Hannibal arrived, called the Island,

which conjecture placed at the confluence of the Rhone and Soane, but which was subsequently believed to be the place at which the Isere unites with the former river. After this, we are informed by Polybius, that he defeated the Allobroges, into whose country he was advancing, and possessed himself of one of their cities, probably Grenoble (Gratianopolis), which lies in a valley, and at the defile of the mountains. It has been long believed that, on quitting this place, he directed his course towards Briançon (Brigantio), and that he passed the Cottian Alps at the Col de Servières; and a gentleman, many years a resident of the department of the Hautes Alpes, informed me that, near the little village Abessée, between Embrun and Briançon, is shewn a considerable cavity in the rock, which is

believed to be that calcined by heated vinegar. Yet, if we are to be guided by the motives which are supposed to have directed Hannibal's march, and if we believe that he was anxious to evade the Roman consul Scipio, on his descent upon the plains of Italy, we shall reject the long-received opinion relative to the passage of the Alps; for the direct route from Grenoble to Briançon was not at that time practicable, and he must, therefore, have marched south from Grenoble, and, by the circuitous windings of the valleys, by Gap and Embrun to Briançon and the Col de Servières, and thence to Suza. D'Anville informs us, that there were anciently three gorges of the Alps: —our conclusion then must of necessity be, that, having passed the second, on advancing from Grenoble by the borders of the Isere, he

approached the third by Conflans and Mous-
tiers, between the Col de Bon-homme and the little St. Bernard; and that he entered Italy by the gorge of the Grecian Alps, at the Col de la Seigne.

It occurred to me, as I gazed on Mont Blanc, that the eyes of the great Carthage-nian commander had been once fixed upon it, as mine at that moment: it appeared to me that 2000 years had wrought no change on the stern features of this mighty alp. Among these scenes, the exterior only of the forms of Nature undergoes that tempo-rary change which the elements dictate—the splendid outline of her works remains unchangeable:—yes, the mountains with their rugged and spiral summits are the same as those on which Hannibal gazed; the beds of the Rhone and the Isere, whose

banks were trodden by Hánnibal so many centuries since, are the same; neither has tempest riven nor time wasted their gigantic features; neither has the dissolving breath of the south wind, nor the intense heat of noon, exhausted the icy beds of the glaciers —they are eternal:—yet these rivers, which continue to flow, which never pause, even for an instant, have flowed for centuries—the imagination cannot conjecture a period when they did not flow, or when they shall cease.

On the icy summits which lay all around me, the stillness of midnight and the blaze of noon were united. Nature, on these exalted regions lies in a trance; her features are fixed and unchangeable: the deadening, massive, and unrelaxing embrace of ice is entwined around her for ever.

The beneficial effects of mountain-atmosphere have been often contemplated, not so much by the disciples of Æsculapius and Galen, as by those philanthropists who are skilled in physical knowledge. You may remember the amusing speculation of Rousseau on this subject. Are enthusiasts the monsters of our species? or should we become monsters but for their visitations?—Yet other enthusiasts besides Rousseau have assured us that the senses of those who visit mountain-summits are peculiarly susceptible: they say that the alloy of our nature there sinks, and that its etherial part is, from its purity, susceptible of unmixed and intense enjoyment. It is said that to such the stars appear brighter, and that they scintillate with unwonted brilliancy; that the heart beats with sensations

of delight which have no analogy to the tumultuous emotions of anticipated and evanescent gratification; that the deep respiration which always accompanies intense enjoyment is occasioned here, not only by the intellectual elevation which is experienced, but by the etherial atmosphere which is respired: it is even said that the boundless yet quiescent enjoyment which the feelings partake of would generate in the mind of the most abject slave of reason, the most cheerless victim of scepticism, a faith in that which even the believer in the revelation of the Deity has been sometimes known in his humility to doubt. Are we to congratulate ourselves that we cannot decide upon the truth or fallacy of these speculations? From experience, I can assure you, that my gratification was intense. As

I rambled on the Col de Balme, the wild thyme which I struck with my feet threw up a delicious fragrance, which seemed to pierce my nerves with unusual keenness. I was enchanted by the wild flowers which lay around me: mine was "love at first sight;" I felt an instinctive—a magnetic affection for them:—how little was I disposed to envy that gradual attachment which is founded upon a long, a studious, and perfect knowledge of their exquisite organization. How blindly did I love them! I plucked them from their beds—I dropped them into my hat and bore them away—not with the pride of a botanist, but with the joyous exultation of a school-boy. They shall be my companions to England.

It may perhaps be said, that, as fanaticism is a certain indication of ignorance, so this

ardour, which appears to slight the science of the botanist, is a little tainted with the arrogance and presumption which distinguish uninformed minds. Yet do not judge me thus severely—at another time, and in another place, when my enjoyments are more calm, and the powers of reflection are unimpaired by emotion, I may—I cannot fail of acknowledging, perhaps with feelings vitiated by envy, that I desire to be familiar with this delightful science. I enclose a list of alpine and sub-alpine plants, for which I am indebted to de Saussure and Bourrit. The names of some of the flowers which are in my possession were told me, but I have forgotten them: my information on this subject resembles that superficial and unconnecting knowledge of individuals and of names which we acquire by casual association; and

yet this imperfect acquaintance may ripen into friendship: Is it in your power to promote this intimacy?

ALPINE PLANTS ON THE COL DE BALME.

Astragalus montanus.
Carex juncifolia.
..... *bellardi.*
..... *prostrata.*
Cherleria sedoides.
Cnicus spinosissimus.
Chrysanthemum alpinum.
Erigeron alpinum.
Gentiana acaulis.
..... *nivalis.*
..... *purpurea.*
..... *rubra.*
Juncus alpinus.
..... *jacquini.*
..... *lutens.*
..... *spicatus.*
..... *trifidus.*
Phyteuma hemisphærica.
Plantago alpina.
Polygonum viviparum.
Salix herbacea.
Sempervivum arachnoideum.
Senecio incanus.

Silene acaulis.
Trifolium alpinum.
Veronica alpina.
..... *aphylla.*
..... *bellidioides.*

SUB-ALPINE PLANTS:

IN THE VALLEY OF TRIANT, AND ON THE COL DE LA FORCLAZ.

Astrantia major.
Cacalia alpina.
Carduus eriophorus.
Gentiana lutea.
Hedysarum onobrychis.
Phaca alpina.

The letters of a wanderer cannot be otherwise than desultory, but I really did not expect that this would have been so digressive as it has proved. Imagination is sometimes personified with wings, but so rapid has been the flight of mine, that the velocity of light would scarcely accompany these *égarements de l'esprit.*

Sierre ; Sept. 20.

In the account of my ascent to Triant valley, you may perhaps remember that I spoke of the view of the country between Martigny and Sion, as beheld from the Col de Forclaz; this we began to traverse soon after six o'clock this morning: the valley of the Rhone is here very wide. We had the satisfaction of finding fields and vine-yards of great beauty: the vine, indeed, grows here with Italian luxuriance: it is terraced, and raised on walls or wood-work, erected for its support and preservation; and many of the trees appear to be of great age.

The weather still continued oppressively warm, and it was with no common-place

feelings of pleasure that we entered Sion to rest and to refresh ourselves.

This city—the capital of the Valais, and the Sedunum of the Romans—is built on a commanding, though not lofty, site; and that which has rendered it desirable as a seat of strength to the conquerors of the world, has made it also a delightful place of residence. It is seated between the Upper and Lower Valais: the town lies for the most part between two hills. On the heights above the city have been erected three castles: one is the residence of the bishop of Sion; that called Tourbillon is now a heap of ruins—it was destroyed by fire. The council of state formerly held its sittings in this edifice; and here it was that the coronation of the bishops of Sion took place. Although the embattled walls of

this once-distinguished palace present objects of picturesque effect, yet a ruin so susceptible of all that could be desired, leads the mind to the contemplation of what it may one day become. The alder is growing in some of its untenanted chambers; but the picturesque imagination presents the increasing growth of this solitary tenant, and sees its occupation of every roofless hall of this extensive wreck of fire; it presents the door-ways choked up with long grass, and moss-covered ruins, and the picturesque outline of the entire remains blended with beauty by the growth of ivy and underwood.

From the elevated ground on which Tourbillon was built may be seen Martigny to the south-west, and Leuck to the north-east; and the eye follows the course of the Rhone

through this extensive tract of country. From no place are the distinguishing features of the valley of the Pennine Alps to be seen to so great advantage as from this spot; the vines, fields, and towns, of the Lower Valais—the orchards, vineyards, and cascades, which lie all around Sion—the villages of the Upper Valais—and the pine-forests which stretch themselves on the sides of the mountains beyond Sierre. Among these are beheld the ruins of castles, erected near the bases of the mountains, but principally on spots of elevated ground, which are scattered through the valley.

The city of Sion is the seat of an ancient bishopric, and the government of the Upper and Lower Valais is episcopal. The titles which appertain to the spiritual and temporal sovereign are, Prince of the Roman

Empire, Bishop of Sion, Count and Prefect of the Valais. Perhaps you may be disposed to imagine that unlimited power must accompany titles so exalted, and privileges apparently so unlimited; but you are deceived—the power of the bishop is not absolute. You may remember Dr. Moore's masterly sketch of the history of the Venetian Republic; and, if you do so, you assist me to an illustration of the power possessed by the Bishops of Sion: it resembles that of the Doges of Venice. The bishop presides at the councils, it is true, and the currency of the country bears his name and his arms; all public decrees and private documents of legal importance are set forth in his name; but the sovereign power is vested in the representative government, consisting of those deputed by the depart-

ments of the Valais. The bishops do not succeed each other by any common-place succession or privilege of birth—like the falling of snow-flakes one upon another, or the quiescent and monotonous rippling of water on the borders of a lake,—but by the healthful and vigorous declaration of public sentiment, for the elective power emanates from the deputies of the departments, and the canons of the cathedral.

Where most liberty exists, there is found the greatest portion of happiness: Switzerland and America prove this. If the posthumous work of the virtuous and unfortunate Condorcet, the "*Esquisse d'un Tableau Politique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain*," and other French productions of the same period, were as much read as they merit, the mind would no longer be

shackled by the revolting doctrines of every court of Europe, relative to the right to govern. The wretch who inculcates "passive obedience and non-resistance," proves that he has had the meanness to barter his freedom for superfluity and inaction; and that, in gratitude for his own disgrace, yet loathing his own depravity, he is vile enough to attempt the slavery of others.

Some of the cantons of this hardy, active, and industrious people, are ruled by an aristocratical form of government—as Zurich, Lucerne, and others. Yet, as the welfare and happiness of the people are consulted, we do wrong in stigmatising the governments of these cantons with aristocracy; for in them are associated the almost anomalous ingredients of the power of oppression and the virtue of resistance: ex-

cepting, indeed, the aristocracy of Berne, whose tyranny and injustice towards the people of the *Pays de Vaud* led to the subjugation of Switzerland. The form of government of two or three is mixed, but the majority are ruled by a pure democracy.

Uri, Switz, and Underwalden, the cantons which first confederated—the earliest and the only unconquered advocates of Swiss independence since their union, until the invasion of Switzerland by the French—were not, perhaps, more enterprising than the natives of the Valais; but high-minded and honourable pretensions have never been respected by the cold-hearted and cruel slaves of ambition and conquest. The Valais did not accept without a struggle the new constitution proffered to them by the theorists of liberty, but practical tyrants, of

France, at the period of their irruption into Switzerland. Sion was besieged by the troops of the Directory, and it is believed that its fall was accelerated by the treachery of its garrison: it was taken by storm, and abandoned to pillage.

That principles of equity rarely influence the conduct of those who govern, has been amply illustrated by the fate of the Upper and Lower Valais, at certain epochs, since the period of their subjugation under Julius Cæsar to their conquest by the French Directory. The Burgundians, the Savoyards, the Lombards, and the Germans, have successively possessed themselves of certain districts of this wild country; and traces of their occupation remain in the languages which are spoken in different parts of the Valais, and on the mountains which compose

its southern boundary; and that which was germinated by conquest has been since fostered by pacific intercourse.

From a very early period, we find that the rights and liberties of the people have been usurped by powerful nobles, or by dignitaries of the church, who united spiritual with temporal power; but, in connexion with these arbitrary acts, are recorded the struggles and frequent successes of the people in the control or punishment of their rulers. Many writers have represented the Valaisans a slothful and inactive people: this may be, in a degree, correct; but the history of this country will furnish an ample refutation of the aspersion, as it applies, at any period of its records, to the mass of the people.

The Valaisans have been always distinguished for their fearless and warlike dispo-

sition: had it been otherwise, the annals of the Valais would have been less turbulent. The jealousy and hatred with which the increasing wealth of an individual were contemplated by the Valaisans, were illustrated by a singular custom, which exists no longer; for, when any one had, by aggrandisement, become an object of distrust, every person who felt disposed to take cognizance of the circumstance drove a nail into a block of wood, which was exposed for the purpose of concentrating, by this means, the sentiments of the people; and, unless the individual abandoned a portion of his wealth, a day was fixed for the partition of his superfluities. That ardent love of liberty which has frequently animated the Valaisans, and their hereditary jealousy of wealth, luxury, titles, dress, and foreign customs, have happily che-

rished that character, which they did not lose even under the late French emperor, who annexed the Valais to France, and increased the representatives of the people.

The best conservative of the happiness of a community is jealousy of individual power: the oligarchy of Berne was more dangerous to the liberties of Switzerland than the troops of France. Were the people to exercise a seasonable control over the hereditary feelings of despotism, which disgrace all who are placed in authority over them, the pressure of national imposts would be diminished, and leisure for intellectual cultivation be found. Is an offspring to submit patiently to every species of indignity and cruelty which a parent may choose to inflict upon it? It will rather waive that respect which justice and dignity only can com-

mand, and, animated by the principles of equity alone, it may give its parent the additional cause of uneasiness arising from self-reproach. It is the same in the political as in the moral world. That the frame of an unjust government should be destroyed, is as wise and necessary as that a good government should be upheld, and wanton disaffection punished. The people of France ought to feel more love for the single generation of disinterested and high-minded men, who, by their writings or actions, effected the French revolution, than hatred for the house of Bourbon, that has oppressed them for centuries.

The diminution of liberty moves in a direct ratio with the progress of taxation; for, so long as sixteen of the twenty-four hours are devoted to physical labour, the

mind must lie fallow until it becomes poor and useless. That government promises a duration the most permanent which places no invidious barrier between rank and talents; since the individual who has a voice in a government which is representative, identifies himself with that government, and selfishness becomes patriotism. Do you remember Dr. Moore's Sketch of the Genevois? He represents these republicans humane in their dispositions, lovers of order, jealous of the external as well as internal enemies of their independence; social in their disposition, yet detesting dissipation. He tells us also, that it is not uncommon to find mechanics, in the intervals of their labour, amusing themselves with Locke, Montesquieu, and Newton.

Before I bid you adieu, I will turn from

the turbulent records of political history to the "simple annals" of private life.—Eloise banished St. Preux to the capital of the Valais. From Vevai and the rocks of Meillerie to Sion all is enchanted ground. As the ancients had faith in the existence of *genii locorum*, so must the lover of Rousseau believe that his spirit is every-where the *genius loci;* and imagine that new charms are diffused on the scenery by the magic influence of his presiding genius.

Brieg ; Sept. 21.

It appears to me that, throughout the valley of the Rhone, the most agreeable and fertile spots have been chosen for the erection of towns and villages, excepting, indeed, St. Maurice, which was, no doubt, built rather from necessity than choice,—as the Valais is here connected with the canton of Berne by a bridge. Sierre is, perhaps, as delightfully situated as any of them : it lies on the right bank of the river, surrounded by gardens, orchards, and vineyards; and the valley here is more wide and healthy than elsewhere.

The evening had considerably advanced before we entered Sierre; and, as the shades

of twilight began to deepen around us, our anxiety to arrive at the place of our destination increased: this induced me to question some peasants whom we met, and their hesitation in replying to my enquiries led me to doubt whether I was understood. I knew that the language of the Upper Valais is German, but this I had forgotten at the time. Whether their imperfect articulation led to the conjecture, I cannot say; but our German companion terminated a somewhat embarrassed conversation by addressing them in his native language.

I omitted to acquaint you, in my last letter, that I was most agreeably surprised in meeting a friend between Sion and Sierre, the town at which I slept last night: he had quitted the baths of Leuck yesterday morning, and strongly urged me not to

make a *detour* to visit them,—assuring me, that they would excite only disappointment and disgust; yet I almost regret that I did not quit the borders of the Rhone at Sierre, for I have since been informed that the road between that town and the Gemmi presents many features of terrific interest.

We passed this morning, to our left, and on the opposite side of the Rhone to that on which we were walking, the ancient town of Leuck. About five miles beyond this place, situated in a narrow valley, and at the base of the Gemmi,—a lofty chain of mountains, separating the canton of Berne from the Valais,—are the baths of Leuck, the most famous of the numerous baths of Switzerland. The friend whom I met, and one of his companions, had determined to bathe, and visited one of the public baths

for that purpose; but their resolution was instantaneously counteracted by the filthy appearance of the sides of the bath, and by the heavy scum which lay on the almost motionless body of water before them. The invalid may benefit by the use of these waters, but it appeared to them that the healthy might gain what the diseased had lost: besides, there is a mysterious influence in the workings of imagination. Priests and physicians are well aware that they would have but few to acknowledge their pretensions, were the charm of faith broken.

The baths of Leuck are derived from five sources of hot mineral water,—the warmth of which is so great, that a fowl may be despoiled of its plumage, or an egg boiled in it: its temperature, at the principal source, is about 115. It is four centuries

since these waters have been in use, and it appears that their virtues and temperature entirely resemble those of Somersetshire, over which King Bladud has presided for so many centuries. But health and dissipation have not paradoxically established a permanent residence in this village, as at that beautiful city of the west of England; nor have they here a spacious pump-room, with a statue of the presiding genius of the place.

I am disposed to think that no Englishman would enter the heated springs of Leuck with pleasure; but, what would be the sensations of those who had reposed in the royal baths of the capital of Somersetshire, or of him whose classic mind could present the enchanting pleasures of the *thermæ* of the ancient Egyptians and Romans, where

every sense was stimulated to an excess of enjoyment?—But adieu to the baths of Leuck. My friend, like an ancient Greek, was contented to bathe himself in a tub of this water, which was taken to his chamber.

The next object which arrested our attention in a forcible manner was the cascade of Tourtmagne. I believe that it is rarely visited; but, from the singularity of its situation, and the magnitude of its volume, it is truly deserving of the inconvenience, not unaccompanied by danger, which must be experienced in viewing it to advantage. We approached it by the left bank of the river: the opposite side is easily accessible; but the view which is obtained from it is too partial to gratify the ardent curiosity and exhaustless love of that mind which adores the charms and sublimities of Nature.

Words cannot present this extraordinary and impressive scene. If you could picture to your imagination a natural *arena* in a mountain-side, perhaps ninety feet in circumference, and nearly one hundred feet deep, with a rising ground on one side, covered with bright verdure, rising from the bottom of this arena, and overhanging a craggy abyss, into which the collected waters of a considerable mountain-river fall perpendicularly;—if, above the apparent summit of this, you could look beyond it, and see the first fall of the stream, rolling its vast sheet over a bank partially fringed with underwood, or small trees, which overhang the torrent; and if, to view all this, you could recline on the verdant acclivity of which I have spoken, you would place yourself where I was:—and can you

form a conception of the deafening reverberation occasioned by the fall of this vast torrent into a spot so circumscribed and deep?—Yes, perhaps you can imagine all that I attempt to describe: but, to be agitated, to be awed, to be delighted, as I was, you must hear the torrent roar, and behold with your own eyes the wonders of this scene.—I felt as if I had entered the most hallowed sanctuary of Nature: I involuntarily sunk almost upon my face: I lay prostrate—in an attitude of worship: fear—wonder—delight overcame me: my emotions would have approached a fearful intensity, had I visited this spot alone. You have read of the dangerous tendency of religious beatitude: may not lonely visits to the most sequestered, awful, and sublime

scenes of Nature lead to transports or musings which verge on delirium?

There is no passion pregnant with evils so various, so complicated, so unlimited, as the thirst of conquest: "Fire, Famine, and Slaughter," are the hallowed trinity, whose mysteries are worshipped by the ambitious, whether ministers or kings. The detail of the destructive effects of conquest was, perhaps, never more heart-rending than in the narrative of the unreposing exertions, the heroic valour, and complicated sufferings, of the Upper Valaisans, during the invasion of the French in 1798 and 99. Few conquests have been more dearly purchased than that of the Valais. The perseverance evinced by the Valaisans, under the severest privations; their knowledge of a

country, which gave them every advantage over an invading army accustomed only to operate on level ground, added to their personal courage, made them formidable to the French, however numerous and well-disciplined: the flagrant injustice of the Directory was heightened by this invasion of territory becoming a war of extermination. The country between Sierre and Brieg fell at length into the power of the French: the lust of conquest left to their brutal passions a country disorganised and desolate;—the hedge-row, the gate, the rustic fence, were broken down and trampled under foot; bridges were burned; villages and towns were rent by artillery, or razed to the ground by fire. This fairest portion of the Valais fell at last resistless into their power; but, like the victim of the usurping

decemvir Appius Claudius, the object of their lust was despoiled of beauty,—it lay before them bloody, motionless, spiritless.

Between Tourtmagne and Brieg, objects of minor interest with the stupendous torrent at the former place present themselves: cascades of various magnitude are seen tumbling from a greater or lesser height; some struggling through an irregular and circuitous course; others falling from a lofty eminence, and presenting an unbroken sheet of water. On the rapid acclivity of the mountain-side are seen, on elevations of many hundred feet, the apparently inaccessible residence of the peasant, with adjoining pasture-land irregularly enclosed; and, at early morning, or at evening, when vapours are lying in the depths of the valley, and when the partial distribution of mist is tak-

ing place, these fields and cottages sometimes appear suspended in the atmosphere, and enclosed in a frame-work of light and fleeting clouds. Trees and shrubs of considerable variety present themselves, from the umbrageous beech, that loves a dry soil and lofty situation, to the mean willow, that stretches its naked branches over marshy land and rank weeds.

Twilight began to appear while we were yet some distance from Brieg, where we intended to sleep,—as it is almost at the base of the Simplon mountain. As we continued to advance, we arrived at a spot across which we might have had some difficulty to find our way, but for the uncertain light which yet remained. It was a part of the valley which had been entirely inundated by the Rhone: no rail, post, or fosse, marked the

boundaries of a road; dust, stones, and pieces of rock, lay all around us. An opening among the hedge-rows, faintly discovered at some distance, directed our steps to the place where we found the road again resumed. We continued to walk on:—darkness succeeded twilight, yet Brieg did not appear. We questioned all whom we met, "How far are we from Brieg?"—"*Vous y arriverez dans un quart d'heure.*" A quarter of an hour had seemed to pass, when our enquiry was answered by, "*Vous n'avez q'un petit quart d'heure à marcher.*" However confidently we might have believed in the actual existence of time, I think that our situation would have led us to become sceptical. That time has no existence, abstractedly considered, but has being only in relation to two events—as to the rising and

to the setting of the sun, I have no doubt: duration cannot be determined by the most observant mind; and, if a particular period could not be marked by the revolution of the seasons, or by a means equally certain, we might for ever dispute about time: like the *centime*, which has no existence, it is a means of calculation only. When the mind experiences pleasure or repose, we are unconscious of the lapse of it: if we impatiently desire that which we expect time to bring us, duration is increased in our imagination. Time moved with the sluggishness of extreme age and infirmity on that night when Leander did not appear to Hero at the wonted hour; but how rapid was his motion to Sir Isaac Newton, who remained in the same attitude of meditation during an entire night, and waked only from the dreams of

intellect when the servant appeared before him, in the morning, to open the window-shutters of his library!—If this train of argument be considered admissible, will it not appear that eternity may more nearly approach our comprehension than time?

Dust, darkness, fatigue, and anxiety, had nearly exhausted us, when we arrived at Gliss; and here we were told that Brieg was about half a mile before us. Two roads appeared to present themselves in the deepening shades: we were abandoned to our own guidance: we chose the broad and much-frequented route, and quitted the narrow road, which would have conducted us to the long-wished-for place of repose. We soon discovered, with feelings bordering on despair, that we had quitted the valley: —the road was evidently an acclivity. Not

a house now appeared before us. On our left, and at some distance below, glittered the lights of a town, which we were quitting: we walked on, looking anxiously for a road to lead us to this place, but none presented itself. I thought that the German would have sunk upon the road; for, in addition to physical exhaustion, he could not but contemplate the dreariness of his situation. The despotic energy of mind had never become so evident to me as at this moment, for my increasing anxiety imposed a new and arduous duty upon my almost nerveless frame. I quitted my friends at a quick pace, telling them that I would return when I had discovered a place of shelter, if not of repose. I had run perhaps half a mile, when I entered a pathway on my left, leading apparently to the town be-

low: I heard the falling of water,—I was breathless with anxiety and haste. I checked my pace, and now crossed a foot-bridge with a single rail: I appeared to pass a second of the same description, and perhaps a third: I speak doubtingly—my mind was confused by apprehension, and darkness was spread around me. I arrived at length in the vicinity of some houses: the town was yet some distance from me. There might, perhaps, be six or seven habitations at this place: the residents were all in the upper chambers, and I suppose retiring to rest. With some difficulty I made myself heard; but I cannot express to you my mortification on finding that I was not understood,—for the people spoke German only. The neighbours were soon alarmed; they crowded to their windows, and held out lights, that they

might survey me. How rejoiced was I at last to discover that one among them understood French. A lanthorn was lighted, and I was committed to the guidance of a man, who conducted me to Brieg. At the inn I procured lights and assistance, and returned to the Simplon, which we had actually begun to ascend: to arrive at it I was conducted by a shorter route than the pathway which led me to the town: it was by the road which we ought to have taken on quitting Gliss. The lights which we bore assisted materially in the discovery of my lost friends, and the shouts of myself and those who came with me were soon re-echoed by them. We entered Brieg. Never was shelter more welcome! never was repose more sweet!

Simpeln ; Sept. 22.

BEFORE we pass the Alps, I will endeavour to explain that which, were it incidental, would impede our progress,—so much so, perhaps, as to neutralize what might otherwise be definite and comprehensible; and I will say a few words, *en passant*, of the phenomena which are observed among these stupendous ruins of a former world. This done, you shall take my arm, and we will ascend the mountains:—nay, do not start; it is not an extravagant proposal: I repeat again, we will ascend the Alps together; for, so inexhaustible have been the skill and ingenuity of the engineers who constructed this route, that you will find the walk almost

as easy as a promenade in your pleasure-ground.

But I have first a few words to say of the valley of the Pennine Alps, and of the Rhone, upon whose borders we have been some time travelling: they are the few words which accompany farewel glances, and cannot, therefore, long detain us.

The Valais is separated from Uri by the Fourche, an alp which rises more than ten thousand feet above the level of the sea; and here commences the colossal chains of mountains which branch from it, and form the valley of the Pennine Alps. Here, also, as I before mentioned, the Rhone takes its rise, and is seen to gush from a stupendous glacier. This river moves through its towering barriers, sometimes with extreme rapidity; sometimes its descent approaches

the precipitous fall of a torrent; in some places, the extreme depth of the valley is indicated by the sluggish movement of the river, and it is said that its lowest part does not rise more than 800 feet above the sea. Perhaps I shall assist you in forming some idea of the rapidity of this impetuous stream, whose strength and volume are increased by the infinity of torrents and cascades which are tributary to it, when I inform you that it falls above 2,800 feet during its progress from the Fourche to the lake of Geneva,—a distance not exceeding eighty miles. The rapidity of the river, from its entrance into the lake to the Mediterranean, is diminished one half, while the distance is increased in a greater proportion; the fall of the river being about 1,200 feet, and the distance exceeding 200 miles.

Let us now turn our eyes towards the Simplon, the passage of which is thus happily and appropriately spoken of by Bourrit :— "*Chaque site de cette montagne demanderoit un cadre et un tableau particulier ;*" and this opinion has been admirably realized in the series of beautiful views on this route, by Lory.

The passage of the Alps at this mountain was formerly difficult and dangerous, and accessible only to persons travelling on mules or on foot: it now presents a more even road than is any-where found, not excepting those in the vicinity of a metropolis. Between Gliss, which is in the valley of the Rhone, and at the base of the Simplon mountain, and Domo d'Ossola in Piedmont, where the road terminates, there are four forests of pine and larch, more than thirty cascades, several glaciers, twenty-two

bridges, and six galleries, or excavations in the rock, where no uncovered way could be constructed, and where an insuperable barrier had apparently been presented. The old road lies almost in the depth of the valley, which is washed by the Saltine river: it could not have been rendered practicable, had not the circuitous and abrupt irregularity of the route been followed, and the necessity of descending into the heart of a ravine, in order to gain the more commanding ground on its opposite side, been yielded to. The new route, which rises obliquely along the precipitous ascent of the mountains on the left, is either on a level or a gentle rise from Gliss to the summit of the pass, and from that to the plains of Italy; and is throughout twenty-four feet wide. In order to preserve this gradual ascent, the road pierces the extre-

mity of a valley bounded by a glacier, and resumes that which it had quitted by this circuitous deviation. The rise is so gentle as never to exceed five inches in a toise; sometimes it is not more than one and a half, and not unfrequently upon a level. On the left side of the road, perhaps a mile and a half from each other, are small buildings, called Houses of Refuge. The distance from Gliss to the summit of the pass is perhaps thirteen miles, and the elevation of this spot above the town exceeds three thousand feet: you will, therefore, immediately conjecture that the road winds exceedingly; and, in order that you may understand its eccentric deviations, a drawing of it shall accompany my next letter.

The dashing of water, either near or remote, never ceases to strike upon the

traveller's ear during the entire of this passage of the mountains.

You are aware that this route was projected by the ex-French Emperor, for the purpose of transporting troops and artillery with facility and expedition to the states of Milan and Venice. Those who were appointed to realize the gigantic projects of Napoleon, have, for the most part, complied with the suggestions of Nature; and it is this willing compliance which has given a grace and facility to this Alpine pass, exceeding the power of description. Along the sides of the mountains, a never-ending terrace seems to stretch, and to bend with their sinuosities, until it reaches the summit of the Alps. The skill displayed in the formation of the road on the side of Italy far surpasses that on the side of Switzerland;

for, throughout the latter, Nature appears every-where as gentle as she is beautiful: traces of violence rarely present themselves; the few excavations which appear are perforated in rocks of a yielding and argillaceous quality: but, on the Italian side, Nature seems every-where wild and untameable;—the road lies in a deep and narrow abyss; the galleries are long, and more difficult of formation, and the longest and most difficult is excavated in a rock of solid granite.

The road is sometimes bounded by a strong railing, constructed of larch, or by a parapet of stone; and sometimes by low and narrow blocks of granite, deeply imbedded: but these are seen only where the inclination of the mountain-side, which rises above the road, describes an angle of forty-five degrees, and where the route is fre-

quently obstructed by the falling of earth, stones, or pieces of rock. Thousands of men were employed during three years in the construction of this magnificent route; and the ceremony of its inauguration took place on the 18th of October, 1806:—the persons who assisted at this inspection were, M. Céard, the principal engineer; the chief magistrate of the Valais, and M. Bourrit.

Among the awful scenery of the Alps, the traveller is never free from peril, but during the depth of winter: then only do the ravages of snow, ice, and hurricane, pause; but this stillness is the dreadful silence of death; nothing moves or lives; every object is wrapped in the poisonous atmosphere of intense frost.

In spring, the mild and gentle breezes awaken Nature from her trance; but, like

the breaking of day upon the collected forces of two mighty empires, she is roused to the terrific energies of tumult and desolation:—the enormous masses of snow, which lie on the sides of the rocks, are penetrated by the dissolving atmosphere, and are precipitated, with destructive violence, into the valleys, tearing away and dragging with them fragments of rock, earth, and trees. Although the imperceptible decay of atmosphere is the herald of danger, yet are the masses in general motionless, until some concussion of the air dissolves the magical and indefinable power which restrains them. The footstep of a traveller—a shout—the tinkling of a bell—the flying of a bird—the leap of a chamois—an echo—an articulation —will break the charm. He who is destined to travel among the Alps at this fatal

season, moves through these valleys of death as soon as the faintest dawn appears to direct his steps: he is speechless; he walks quickly, but not with heedless rapidity: he thinks that he is violating the sanctuary of Nature, and fears to provoke her terrific vengeance. Among these cheerless scenes, the church-bell is suspended but a few inches from the ground, and in some districts it is never heard.

In the summer, when the traveller is moving with difficulty along the valleys, oppressed by intense heat, he hears the distant thunder of the lavange breaking the sublime silence of the Upper Alps: no ruin attends these lavanges, for they visit those scenes only which are inaccessible.

Perhaps the *bouxen*, or autumnal hurricane, is the most dreadful of the mountain

phenomena: these *tourmentes* are impetuous whirlwinds, which tear up the snow of the upper valleys;—they rise in masses, and resemble clouds; they obstruct, in a few moments, the defiles and vast recesses of the mountains; the roads are covered by them, and even the poles which mark the difficult and dangerous passes. The traveller, who is overtaken by these whirlpools of snow, despairs of deliverance: the piercing wind and subtle flakes blister his skin—he is blinded by them—he is maddened by dread, and by pain, that becomes excruciating—he knows not where he treads—he totters—he falls, or is precipitated from a precipice into the fathomless abyss of snow.

I cannot quit the contemplation of these scenes, without acquainting you of a frightful event which took place in the canton of

Glaris, which is not many miles distant. The event occurred long since, but the knowledge of that cannot diminish its interest: nature is still the same: are we less affected by the melancholy death of the young, the innocent, the beautiful Lady Jane Grey, because it happened above two centuries since?

Gaspar Stoeri, and two of his friends, were one day chasing chamois on Mount Limmeren. While they were traversing the snows with that confidence which the idea of perfect safety inspires, Stoeri sunk into a deep abyss of dissolving ice. His friends were horror-struck; they conceived that instant death awaited him, or that he would survive only to contemplate its slow, but inevitable, approach, pierced as he was by cold—bruised—bleeding—motionless. De-

spairing of success, they yet reflected on the means by which they might effect his deliverance;—they could not leave him to perish; their struggles to save him would, for a few moments, assuage their agony. They fled to the nearest cottage, which was three miles distant, to procure ropes;—none were to be found: a wretched counterpane was the only thing which could prove useful to them; they cut it into strips, and hurried from the cottage.

Poor Gaspar was almost perishing when they returned to the brink of the chasm: he lay wedged in the bottom of this rugged, deep, and narrow cleft: nearly one half of his body was plunged in ice-water, and such was the depth of it that he could not see its bed: with his arms extended on the broken and melting ice, he awaited ap-

proaching death. You may picture his situation; but the horrors of his mind must have been for ever confined to his own breast.

He was almost yielding to the excess of his sufferings, and was commending his soul to the Divinity, when the voices of his companions fell upon his ears; and, as they spoke, they lowered the bandages which they had fastened together. Although dying a few moments before, the hopes—the near prospect of deliverance, gave him energy and courage, and he was enabled to fasten the bandage around his body. His friends drew him gently from the chasm—he was approaching the verge of the precipice—he had almost embraced his deliverers, when the bandage broke, and he again sunk.

If deliverance was almost hopeless before,

what was now poor Stoeri's situation !—one half of the bandage had fallen with him—his blood was freezing—the second shock had almost rendered him insensible—and, to consummate the terrors of his situation, and for the extinction of the last faint spark of hope, one of his arms was broken by the fall. What less than a miracle could save him? With sinking hearts, his friends renewed their endeavours to preserve him: the bandage in their hands was again cut, and lowered into the chasm. Can you conceive the pain and distress with which poor Gaspar made one last and desperate exertion to save himself, when I inform you that with one arm he supported himself from sinking, and that with the other, broken as it was, he twisted the bandage round his body, and fastened it? He was thus drawn to the

summit of the precipice a second time, and life was ebbing fast from him as he fainted in the arms of his companions.

Gaspar's friends conveyed him to his cottage; but it was very long before his health and cheerfulness were restored to him. Are you not disposed to think with me, that Gaspar bore "a charmed life?"

SIMPLON PASSAGE OF THE ALPS

to face page 180

Glaciers of Aletsch
Grengiols
Maderhorn
Mörel
Hochstue
Persal
Naters
Brieg
Saltine
Brieg Baths
Glys
Rhone
Gamlsen
Simplon 6575
Rosboden
Visp
Stalden
Hollerbuel
Nanzer
Visp
Shallbet Gallery
Glacier Gallery
New Hospice 6270
Old Hospice
Guggene
Simpeln 4540
Algaby
Algaby Val
Trasqueras
Iselle
Gondo
Gondo Gallery
Doveria
Dovedro
St Marco
Crevola
Masera
Vedro
Val
Domo d'Ossola
Cisorio
Toccia
Ossola
Bugnanco Dentro
Villa
Val Bugnanco
Lorenza
Val Antrona
Palanzano
Mulera
Antrona Piana
Castiglione
Fletschhorn

Engraved for a Walk through Switzerland.

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by J. SMITH No. 1 Clements Inn Strand.

Domo d'Ossola, Piedmont; Sept. 23.

THE SIMPLON PASSAGE OF THE ALPS.

THOSE who pass the Alps from the Upper Valais to Piedmont, will consider those monuments, which have hitherto been erected to commemorate the names and exploits of heroes and of kings, mean and perishable; for here have been inscribed, at the bases, on the sides and summits, of the loftiest mountains of the old world, such traces of the genius and gigantic energies of their author, as are inerasible by time or by tempest!

Many fascinating traits of the picturesque invite the admiration of the traveller on quitting Gliss; but those which irresistibly

check his progress, are beheld from the bridge of the Saltine,—for here the magnificent scenes, through which he is about to advance, are presented to him. From the side of the bridge, which is built of larch, and covered to preserve it from the weather, are seen the torrent dashing through its rocky channel one hundred feet below, and to the left the road winding obliquely up the mountains, which rise above each other.

I had not the gratification of beholding this magnificent view, as we approached the Simplon from Brieg, which is on the east side of the Saltine. On advancing upon it, we discovered traces of the senseless vengeance directed by the Austrians, last year, against the stocks and stones, which are the safeguards and ornaments of this magnificent and beautiful road. The Valaisans dislike the

French, but execrate the Austrians: the former came as undisguised enemies, the latter as specious friends; and a heavy debt is due to Brieg, on account of the ravages committed by the friendly freebooters of the German Emperor.

The road led us through a forest of firs, until we arrived near the summit of the Leria, a mountain which separates the valley of the Pennine Alps from that of Ganter. Here the prospect became varied and extensive:—from this spot we saw the plain of the Valais; the winding course of the Rhone for thirty-five miles in extent; on its northern borders, the mountains, with their spiral summits reflected against a sky of azure; and, more immediately beneath the eye, the glittering spires of Brieg. On the opposite side of the valley of the Saltine

is beheld, towering perhaps 4000 feet above the torrent-river, a mountain called Gleis-horn, whose base is richly covered with larches and the brightest verdure; beneath, the old road winding round the mountain; and, to the left, the junction of the valleys of Ganter and Saltine, which echo with the roar of the torrents that dash through them.

As I advanced, the objects appeared to increase in variety, and to be expanded into more gigantic forms; and my eyes followed the profile view of the mountains, which border the rivers, from their bases enveloped in dark forests and bright verdure, to their summits covered by snow, and capped with craggy rocks. From the survey of these my sight again sunk, with fearful rapidity, into the depth of the valley.

We had now quitted the vale of the

Saltine, and were advancing along the mountain-sides which enclose the valley of Ganter. Before us were the bridge, the cascade, and glacier, which terminate the valley. We approached the glacier, and wound along the sinuosities of the ravine over the bridge. Above us, and stretching beyond the boundary of sight, reposed the glacier of Ganter, which gives existence to the torrent, and falls in the form of a cascade, 1000 feet above the bridge. The preparatory structure, from which this simple and beautiful bridge is thrown, cannot be less, I imagine, than 500 feet in extent, and the elevation of the arch 120. Within a few paces of the bridge, the first gallery formerly stood: the rock through which it was excavated is of an argillaceous quality, and the heavy rains and

hurricanes of autumn had so much decayed it, that its removal was considered necessary. The picturesque approach to the depth of the valley must have been considerably heightened by this excavation in the rock.

We had passed two of the now-deserted Houses of Refuge. On leaving the Ganter bridge, the road wound upon itself through a forest of larch, and conducted us to Persal. On quitting this secluded and beautiful spot, our route lay on the opposite side of the Ganter valley. At almost every step, some new object, either beautiful or sublime, commanded our admiration. The first gallery, called Shalbet, now presented itself: it is one hundred feet in length, and its situation is remarkable. From one side of it we beheld Brieg, the village of Naters, the Rhone, and the smiling meadows which

border it. The picturesque appearance of this gallery is heightened by a water-fall, a few paces before it. On quitting it, and on the opposite side of the valley of the Saltine, which we had again resumed, we saw the glacier of the Simplon, and the old road winding across the river to the base of the Simplon mountain ; and near this, and at a short distance from the river, the welcome houses of shelter, called Tavernettes.

On advancing from the gallery, the eye is struck by the aspect of the Rosboden, whose shining and isolated summit towers to a great height. From the mountain and glacier of Rosboden, my glances fell into the abyss of the valley, where I saw the rivers Tavernettes and Saltine precipitate themselves with tumultuous reverberation. The sides of the abrupt, and sometimes perpen-

dicular, declivities beneath, were partially clothed with aged pines, whose knotted boles, warped bark, and shattered heads, presented a desolate and imposing appearance. Among these I saw masses of rock, which had fallen from the mountain-sides, perhaps many hundred feet above the road: they lay on the precipitous descent, threatening ruin by their progress into the depth of the valley. The parapet on the road-side had been broken in some places: I passed beyond it, the better to survey the appalling scenery which lay beneath my feet. The magnificent, the fearful expanse, gushed upon my sight—it pressed upon my heart—a mixed feeling of delight and dread had almost overpowered me—I shrunk back, and reclined on the parapet—I closed my eyes, but it was some minutes before the consci-

ousness of safety could still the palpitations of my heart. When I awoke from this trance of feeling, and when the current of my thoughts began again to flow with gentleness, I thought how beautiful, how imposing, must be the effect, when, in the depth of autumn, the scattered and umbrageous larches are bending beneath a heavy fall of snow!—I can fancy that they resemble gigantic plumes, decorating the vast brow of some majestic mountain!

The next object that claims the attention is the Glacier gallery, which is so called from the masses of ice and snow which surmount it: it is 130 feet in length. Between this and the Shalbet gallery, the road is extremely dangerous during the autumn and spring; as lavanges of earth, rock, and snow, are very frequent. We were informed

that eight persons, travelling in company, perished last winter by one of these awful occurrences; and our guide discovered himself a poor wretch who had fallen a victim to his temerity. Between two and three years since, when the French were passing the Alps, companies of five-and-twenty men were sometimes overwhelmed. History takes no cognizance of events of so little moment: they are left to the mountaineer or village annalist.

On advancing from the Shalbet gallery, the trees are seen to yield gradually to the increasing rigor of the climate; and, on passing the sixth House of Refuge, they languish, and at length disappear. Bright verdure, flowers, tufts of rhododendron, and of another perennial underwood, replace them, and cover or fringe the few rocks

which are not buried in the snow; and sometimes these rocks are hung with moss or lichens. The Alpine flowers, and the beauteous rose of the Alps, may, not inappropriately, be called imperishable; for neither the severity of the climate, nor the snow and ice which entomb them during the greater part of the year, deprive them either of verdure or of blossom: they are seen smiling even on the verge of the loftiest glaciers.

The glaciers, which are seen from the road, are those of Tavernettes, and are connected with vast tracts of ice and snow. The melting of these immense beds presents an infinity of torrents and cascades of various magnitude: some precipitate themselves towards the plains of Piedmont, and others to the valley of the Rhone.

As I approached the Glacier gallery, I beheld, to the left, the Schonhorn mountain raising its blue-encompassed and majestic summit. It is at the foot of this mountain, and close to a rising-ground covered with the *rosa Alpina*, that the Glacier gallery is passed. The rock through which this grotto is pierced is porous, and, the water being filtered through the roof of the gallery, the slightest change in the temperature of the atmosphere covers its roof with icicles of infinite variety, which are suspended from it like stalactites. The desire to survey with attention this singularly interesting scene cannot be yielded to, as the cold and strong current of wind drive the traveller from it, and compel him to pursue his route. My enterprise and perseverance were not put to the test of temptation; for

water only was dripping from the gallery as I passed it.

Near this, the old road is once more seen: it continues in the depth of the valley, rising gradually until it approaches Tavernettes. The height of this hamlet above the sea is 4,800 feet. I will extract a passage from de Saussure, who passed the Simplon long before the new route was constructed: it is descriptive of the scenery of the old road between Brieg and these cheerless habitations.—" The route traverses beautiful forests of the *pinus sylvestris* (Scotch fir), of considerable magnitude: sometimes the prevailing growth is the *pinus larix* (larch); at other times, the birch. The shade of these umbrageous trees, added to the many cascades, which are for ever broken in their fall, render this road, which is no-where

unsafe, one of the most agreeable of the mountain-passes." From Tavernettes the road rises, by a rapid acclivity, to a height of 1,400 feet: here it reaches the highest point of the passage, and, on descending from it, the *hospice* is seen: it is an ancient and melancholy building, five stories high: it was erected by the Baron of Stockalper, a Valaisan nobleman.

The loftiest part of the new route rises higher than that of the old road. On arriving at it, I paused to contemplate the scenes around me—to take a parting view of the Rhone, the Valais, and the valley of the Saltine, whose torrent appeared like liquid silver streaming through it. On resuming our route, we wound round the base of the Schonhorn mountain, and found ourselves on the level of the pass. Here we saw, on

our left, close to the road, and on the south side of the mountain called Rohonhorn, a large building in ruins, the ground-plan only having been partially finished. It was intended by Napoleon for an *hospice*, like that on St. Bernard, where dogs are trained to search for, and carry provisions to, the lost or fainting traveller, during that desolate season when the road is no longer discernible, and the snow so deep as to be almost impassable. This *hospice* had been endowed by Bonaparte with land in Italy, producing yearly rents exceeding eleven hundred pounds.

The plain on the summit of the Simplon pass is spacious: no tree appears to break its cheerless and desolate character: the craggy rocks and glaciers are here frightfully naked; and above them is seen the Rosboden, tower-

ing and unrivalled. The descent from this spot to the village Simpeln is gentle. We passed two bridges, thrown over the glacier-torrents of Rosboden, on our way to this place, which presents an afflicting appearance of nakedness, vacancy, and desertion. We arrived at it between five and six in the evening.

Domo d'Ossola ; Sept. 24.

THE VALLEY OF GONDO.

We quitted Simpeln between six and seven in the morning. The weather had undergone a change. its gloom harmonised with the scenery, through which we were about to advance. We had quitted the busy sounds of populous valleys, and were traversing those silent regions where the clouds repose: we passed through them, and their dense vapour had penetrated our dresses long before we quitted the gloomy valley of Gondo.

The contrast between the Swiss and Italian sides of the Simplon cannot be more striking. On the side of Switzerland, variety, beauty,

extensiveness, and sublimity, prevail: on that of Italy, the pass of the Alps is narrow, dark, sterile, and cheerless.

After passing two bridges of inconsiderable magnitude, we saw, in a gloomy ravine, called the valley of Laqui, through which a glacier-torrent was struggling, the few melancholy huts of Algaby. Above this valley, the road wound more than once upon itself, and, as we descended it, an effect of atmosphere presented an illusion of singular interest. Below us lay the fourth gallery, called Algaby, and, towering above it, a mountain: midway, or nearer to the base of the mountain, the clouds were floating, but in such a manner as to insulate the greater part of it: it appeared as though it were suspended in the atmosphere, and, however cheerless the scenes around, I could almost

believe that it was too barren and savage to claim alliance with them.

We now approached the gallery, which is 200 feet in length: the rock through which it has been pierced is a slaty granite. Here the united torrents and cascades give existence to the Doveria, which passes each end of the gallery, running to the right of it and parallel with it, and flows through the valley of Gondo. From one extremity of the gallery is seen the opening of this gloomy vale; and from the opposite, the glacier and huts which lie in the valley of Laqui, and the road which winds up to Simpeln. No season operates the slightest change upon the dark valley of Gondo: the rocks present a dark, sometimes a projecting, and sometimes a jagged appearance; and the torrents of centuries have, in many places, worn deep

fissures in their sides: they rise perpendicularly above the river, whose bed is composed of innumerable fragments of gneiss and granite, sapped by the torrents and precipitated by them into the valley, which now seemed closing before us. Not a tree, not a shrub, not a cottage, appeared; and, but for the traces of human labour, we might have believed that neither the footstep nor the eyes of man had ever visited this fearful abyss. My mind was almost realising its wild conjectures of infernal horrors: I could conceive this dark vale the hated passage leading to the kingdom of Ades. It would require the pen of Virgil or Dante to picture the terrific sublimity of the route as we sunk deeper into the valley.

This gloomy vale appears to have been formed by the splitting of a ridge of

mountains from their summit to their base; for, through a part of it there is space for the torrent and the road only, while the mountains rise perpendicularly on each side to a height exceeding 2000 feet, leaving so partial an admission of day, that noon almost resembles twilight.

We were passing a bridge, when we paused to contemplate the scenes which we had quitted, and those which were before us, and hung over the rocky chasm through which the Doveria is precipitated. The volume of the torrent increases as the chasm becomes narrower: this control increases its rage and impetuosity: its roaring becomes terrific; it annihilates all sounds, excepting the mightier thunder, which is sometimes heard bursting over it. These scenes appear too

horrible even for the haunt of the Alpine bandit.

The gallery of Gondo was now in sight: it is seen from a bridge leading to its entrance, which had been destroyed by fire, and is not restored to its original strength or beauty. Here was, indeed, displayed the most consummate efforts of human labour and ingenuity. My senses grew languid and distressed as I contemplated the objects of wonder and sublimity before me; and these feelings had sunk to the deepest emotions which the mind was capable of sustaining, when I beheld the terrific fall of the Doveria from the entrance to the gallery. The roar of thunder accompanied its fall. I walked some paces along the old road, the better to view the gallery and this appalling

object. An immense rock had fallen from the towering cliff above, and partially blocked up the chasm. I could not, from any point of view, behold the bed of the torrent: it appeared to vanish into the bowels of the earth, and imagination pursued it until it became blind and powerless.

I now entered the master-work of the Simplon—the great gallery of Gondo. Before the new route was made, the torrent and the old road, constructed under the cliff, occupied the entire of the valley: on the opposite side of the abyss, an immense block of granite towers above the bed of the Doveria: to continue the road, it was found necessary to excavate a passage through this rock,—which is, laterally, nearly 700 feet, the length of the gallery. This was the incessant labour of eighteen months;

for four-and-twenty men were employed, day and night, during the whole of that time, in blasting the rock at each extremity, and at its side, where two large openings have been made, which admit only a feeble light. To the left of the first opening, a tablet is seen in *basso-relievo*: it forms a part of the rock; but, being quite unobtrusive, it may escape the notice of a careless observer. The following inscription has been carved upon it—

ÆRE ITALO

1805.

I continued to observe it during a few minutes, when I perceived, in faint traces, the following words—

NAP: IMP.

Whether these words have been placed there by an over-zealous friend of Bonaparte, or whether they have been thus partially effaced by a spiritless enemy, I cannot determine. Opposite to this, and on the other side of the Doveria, we discovered, at a considerable height above us, and apparently on the verge of the precipice, an oratory, where many weary travellers have knelt, the fervor of whose devotion has been perhaps wrought to intensity by the scenes around them.

On quitting the gallery, where we had unconsciously lingered nearly an hour,—for

> "Meditation here
> May think down hours to moments;"

our wonder was yet increased by another object of sublimity. To the left of the

gallery, and at its south-eastern extremity, we beheld a cascade falling from a precipice, perhaps 1500 feet above the road: its immense and varied sheet presented an infinite variety of shapes, as it fell over the craggy projections of rock into its bed, where it loses itself in the Doveria.

Objects—sounds—emotions, had overcome me: I hung over the parapet that has been erected on the verge of the torrent; I was motionless—speechless; I became faint with excessive emotion: I cannot describe my feelings: I wish—most fervently do I desire, that they pervaded your frame: I could not wish you sensations more exquisite. I exclaimed, involuntarily, "Eternal gratitude to Nature, that she has moulded me as I am!"

It was now afternoon: the same terrific

objects presented themselves above—below —behind—before us. We stopped for a short time at the gloomy house at Gondo, erected by the Baron of Stockalper. We passed Iselle, the frontier-house,—for it can scarcely be called a hamlet,—where our passports were examined by the military police of the King of Sardinia, and soon entered Piedmont: yet still the same scenes met our eyes. Towards four o'clock, a sky of azure was partially seen; and those trees and shrubs, which are found in climates congenial with our nature, began to appear: the sight of them communicated a singular feeling of pleasure. Again did I see around me, as I continued to descend, the juniper —the fir—the birch—the hornbeam—the beech—the wild cherry—the hazel; and

soon a vast amphitheatre among the rocks, with an aspect sloping to the south, presented to my delighted eyes, with the suddenness of enchantment, the rich meadows of Dovedro, with their umbrageous chesnut-trees scattered irregularly, and the lovely village itself so enveloped in vines as to appear a mass of verdure.

The rocks again closed before us; the valley resumed its gloom. We passed another gallery—it was the last. The magnificent bridge of Crevola, the final work of the Simplon, was in sight: it terminates the valley, and is like a beauteous statue among ruins. We passed it: the luxuriant plains of Piedmont were expanded before us; the mild air of Italy played on our cheeks; we were in a new world: the slender and dark

Italian had succeeded the fair and ruddy Swiss; and, before we arrived at Domo d'Ossola, we had forgotten the wild and cheerless valley of Gondo.

Cesto Calende, Milanese; Sept. 27.

We did not quit Domo d'Ossola so early as our inclination directed, for it was with some difficulty that we found a conveyance for our portmanteaus to Milan: this delay increased the pleasure which we felt in again resuming our walk.

The contrast between midnight and noon —between a fortunate attachment and one that is hopeless, cannot be greater than the valleys of Oscella and Gondo. Had we forgotten the season of the year, the scenery around us could not have dissipated our uncertainty: the brightness of spring, the richness of summer, and the fruitfulness of autumn, were here united. The acclivities of the valley of Oscella are decorated with trees and shrubs, that are blended into each

other; and the lower parts are covered with luxuriantly spreading vines; while the Toccia flows through these enchanting objects, like the noiseless current of reflection. The dark and savage character of the valley of Gondo had recalled to my mind the gloomy passage to the kingdom of Andes: this lovely valley reminded me of the vale of Tempe. The impetuous Doveria, rushing from rock to rock, and roaring into the gulf below the Gondo gallery, was the hated Styx; in the gently-flowing Toccia, I beheld the beloved Penëus. Yet, when I compare the vale of Oscella to that of Tempe, perhaps I should say, with more propriety, that the valley of Gondo resembles that narrow pass of Mount Ossa, which tradition has made the scene of the combat between the Titans and the gods.

The level of the valley of Oscella above the sea is 200 feet less than that of the lake of Geneva.

The road between Domo d'Ossola and the Lago Maggiore is excellent, and two handsome bridges have been thrown over the Toccia, on its progress to the lake. But, travel where one may, the energies of Bonaparte's genius and ambition are to be traced: sometimes, in a beauteous monument; at other times, in a shapeless ruin.

After passing Ponte Massone, we came to Vogogna: opposite to this village is the valley of Anzasca, leading to the mountains Rosa and Cervin, which are distinguished links in the chain of the Pennine Alps. It was five o'clock before we found ourselves on the border of the largest of the Italian lakes. We passed the night at Fariolo, which is the

first village on the banks of the Lago Maggiore; and determined on the following day to visit the famed Borromean islands, and to continue our journey on the lake as far as Cesto Calende.

That anticipation surpasses enjoyment is proverbial: this may be the case; but I think that we should be happier without it, for it colours happiness with fictitious hues, and thus vitiates that which would be pure, but for its sickly dreams. Perhaps our disappointment would not have deepened into disgust, had we checked the officiousness of our imaginations, which, during the evening and on the ensuing morning, were busy in picturing the enchantments of the fairy-islands of Borromeo.

We had not quitted the shore many minutes, when our eyes were directed towards

the rose-tinted granite mountains of Baveno, which lay on the borders of the lake, on our right. While we were looking at them, we beheld a mass of rock, blasted by gunpowder, fall from the cliff: it almost appeared that the cliff itself was falling into the lake. Opposite to the quarry, and on the north-east side of the lake, are the villages Suna and Palanza; and, north-west of these, we saw the Toccia, which flows into the Lago Maggiore near Fariolo.

The town of Baveno, at which travellers usually embark for the Borromean islands, now appeared on our right, and the *Isla Madre*, *Isla Bella*, and *Isla dei Pescatori*, presented themselves before us. We were approaching the first: the palace of the family of Borromeo lay richly embosomed in trees, and the appearance of the

island was favourable to my expectation. We disembarked on the *Isla Madre*, the largest of the three, shortly after nine o'clock, and were received by some domestics of the Borromeo family, who are the only residents of this island: they conducted us through a palace of little beauty, and so neglected that it is lapsing rapidly into decay. A considerable portion of this island, which may be three quarters of a mile in circumference, is planted: the shrubs on it are numerous, and some of the trees of considerable magnitude. On a terrace facing the south I saw aloes, roses, oranges, citrons, and figs. Among the forest-trees, on the north side of the island, I observed the oak, the *pinus sylvestris*, and the cypress of Egypt.

The annals of religious persecution have

rarely recorded a more shocking event than that which this island witnessed, in the cruel martyrdom of Ariald, a young ecclesiastic of the noble family of Alzate, and a reformer of the eleventh century. Archbishop Wido made him a dean in 1056; and little did he then think that he was ordaining the most formidable of his enemies.

From Varese, where Ariald first began to preach against the dissolute morals of the priesthood, he went to Milan; and his first efforts were not without success. Here he made a convert of a Milanese priest, named Landolfe Cotta; and the united exertions of these ecclesiastics inflamed the minds of the people against the clergy. Ariald and his colleague were vulnerable neither to the threats nor to the bribery of Wido, but continued to preach against the simony and

incontinence of the priesthood. The people sided with the reformers; the priests opposed the people: neither the decisions of the councils nor the decrees of the Pope could quell the ferment, which continued during several years, until it became evident to the Archbishop of Milan that nothing but the death of these formidable schismatics could leave the church to the undisturbed fruition of its vices and its wealth. The life of Landolfe was attempted, but he recovered of a wound which he received: he continued his discourses with undiminished ardor, until a pulmonary complaint drove him a second time into retirement. The zeal of Ariald was wrought to enthusiasm by this occurrence: it knew no bounds: he now resolved to violate the solemnity of those ceremonies which were

no longer hallowed by virtue; and one day tore the chalice-cover from a priest who was performing mass, while he accused him of concubinage and simony. The clergy saw no security but in the death of this dauntless reformer. The Archbishop, having won the neutrality of the people by the secret distribution of money during the night, forbade the tolling of bells and the performance of mass.

Ariald now found himself compelled to quit Milan. He wandered about some time, and at length sheltered himself in the castle of Legnano, belonging to the Cotta family; but the sacred claims of hospitality and confidence were betrayed by a priest, who delivered him to the satellites of Wido: he was bound down by cords, and carried to the *Isola Madre*. During their passage

over the lake, the soldiers were so affected by the language which Ariald addressed to them, as to be diverted from their sanguinary duty; but a ferocious woman, named Oliva, the mother of the Archbishop, fearing the weakness of Ariald's executioners, came from Arona, the place of her residence, in company with two priests, who had provided themselves with sharp knives. Oliva enquired for Ariald: she was told that he was no more. She then desired to behold him living or dead: he was discovered seated on a rock, and, as soon as he was seen by the priests, each seized him by an ear, and called upon him to acknowledge Wido his legitimate spiritual ruler. "Never!" exclaimed the intrepid Ariald. The murderers then proceeded to cut off his ears, nose, and upper lip, and to put out his eyes. While

Ariald was returning thanks to God for the signal blessing of martyrdom, the monsters were hacking off his hands, as they exultingly exclaimed—"They shall write no more to Rome." They then tore out his tongue: nor was their ferocity sated until they had mutilated his body in a manner so cruel, so revolting, as to be too disgusting to be told—too horrid to be contemplated.

The remains of Ariald were not permitted to repose: they were exhumed and thrown into the lake. The church numbers Ariald among its saints.

We next visited the *Isla Bella*,—so called, I presume, because it was the principal residence of the Count Vitaliano Borromeo, who built it, and who seems to have considered the eccentricities of art more beautiful than the simplicity of nature: the spacious palace

on this island has been erected nearly 150 years. There is, indeed, little to admire here, but much to disgust. How were "the marble palaces of Borromeo, rising from the waves," diminished in beauty when we approached them!—that part of the palace where a theatre was to have been constructed is a hollow ruin.

The person who conducted us through the palace shewed us a state bed-chamber, which is said to have received the Emperor Napoleon. We afterwards visited the trees near the house,—for I cannot call the place a pleasure-ground: here we saw two immense laurels: you cannot easily picture to yourself the luxuriance of their foliage, and the magnitude of their boles. The sight of them afforded me more pleasure than all that the island has to boast of: those objects,

indeed, which are its boast disgusted me exceedingly,—its terraces, fountains, grottos, and floors of mosaic. Picture to yourself decayed statues, ponderous shells, spars, terraces lessening into insignificance, flowers languishing or dead, shrubs symmetrically arranged yet neglected, basins and fountains arid and vacant!—there was a sickliness in all this which I grow languid even in recalling to my imagination.

And these are the islands of enchantment, of which I have heard and read so much! The charm of pleasure would not leave me spell-bound here: had I been rendered unable to quit them, it would have been from utter languor—from the fascinations of sleep and insensibility. Never was excrescence on a form of perfect beauty more melancholy than are the fountains, statues, and

terraces of the *Isla Bella*, reposing on the bosom of this lovely lake!

We re-embarked; and, as the "enchanted islands" were lessening on our sight, a variety of beautiful objects presented themselves. There is no resemblance between the scenery of this lake and that of Geneva:—the mountains are not so lofty, and are less picturesque. The scenery, indeed, possesses a congenial mildness with the climate, excepting the northern extremity of the lake; and even there the craggy summits of the Alps are softened by the remoteness of the perspective. The lake and its borders are more animated than those of Geneva, not only by the numerous towns and villages which lie on its banks and on the rising-grounds above them, where the castles of the Borromeo family are sometimes

seen; but also by the numerous boats which are for ever gliding upon its surface. On passing the town of Arona, we saw, on the acclivity of the mountain-side above it, the gigantic statue of the great and good San Carlo Borromeo, who died about two centuries and a half since.

As the evening advanced, we entered the river Tecino, and disembarked at Cesto Calende, about six o'clock, quitting Piedmont, and pressing with our feet the more classic soil of the Milanese: and, since I am in the land of love, poetry, and music, excuse me if the remaining lines of the last letter which I shall address to you are almost exclusively devoted to sentiment.

The individual, the events of whose life have pressed most forcibly upon my recollection, since I have respired the mild air of Italy, is

Petrarch; for the pure and unquenchable passion which glowed in his breast proves that love is not, in all hearts, that debased feeling which the selfish residents of dissipated capitals believe. Petrarch's was a life of disappointment, for very few "sunny spots" checkered the "dark wilderness" of his existence: a considerable part of it was passed in travel; but, born in Tuscany, his love of scenery was confined to an Appennine rather than to an Alpine view. Yet to travel from Vaucluse to Mantua, or from Bologna to Florence, during some months of the year, was distressing to him: he shrunk from the rugged precipice, and ice and snow excited feelings of pain and melancholy. We are surprised at Petrarch's longevity, when we remember the fatal attachment which haunted his sleep, and

pressed for ever on his thoughts. With what care did he consecrate every emotion which originated in Laura, by setting the pearls of his mind in the golden frame-work of harmonious verse! Although his passion was unsoothed even by that shadow of hope which the lover so fondly pictures to his imagination, yet no loveliness of features or of mind could charm away his affection from the presence of her whom he adored; and his disappointment led to that consummation of his ideas of beauty and excellence which possession might have weakened or destroyed.

If it be dreadful to feel our peace sinking into the vortex of hopeless affection, and to find that streams, meadows, trees, torrents, and mountains, can no longer delight us, how bright is the halo which encircles these

enchanting objects, when the energy of passion meets return,—not with commensurate eagerness, but like an echo, softened, suppressed, sinking into the heart, and leaving us breathless with emotion: how spell-bound are we when we find this emotion increasing with the velocity of light—when it denies us the power of utterance—when we feel, by the intellectual flashing of those eyes on which we gaze, that its mysterious and indefinable essence is enjoyed in congenial excess!

How pure are those enjoyments of domestic life, which age cannot diminish!—they are born of enthusiasm and reason: to attain them, either the unyielding impartiality of friendship should precede the pliant gentleness of love, or friendship and passion should alternate. This is not visionary, but

it is difficult; yet, when realised, that nearest union which the heart can desire, or the imagination devise, is unbroken by disappointment or regret.

Would that we possessed more self-command and foresight! It is the dark portal of misfortune which, for the most part, conducts us to the bright temple of happiness. I do not wonder that the ancients deified the most wise and virtuous of their species. What can be considered more excellent than consummate intelligence?—it is the exquisite essence of the human frame, that masterwork of creation: it is the all-pervading knowledge of things: it is retrospective—it is anticipative: it is the spirit which survives that which is perishable. To devote a portion of each day to the study of the bright intellect of antiquity, in a library

sufficiently spacious to contain models of the *chef-d'œuvres* of sculpture, disposed in a quiet and suppressed light, would exalt and purify the mind, and communicate a portion of that energy, grace, and delicacy, which the association of mental and physical perfection only can inspire.

It is the high cultivation of mind which leads us to estimate with impartiality the unvitiated sources of enjoyment, and consoles us with resignation when it cannot bless us with happiness. Who, that knows the deceptiveness of worldly enjoyments, would hesitate, were the election of happiness in his power?—who could pause between wealth and all its feverish pleasures, unaccompanied by repose or gratification, and competence with its untiring round of intellectual amusements?

Riches seem to resemble the ocean, which appears boundless and unfathomable: if we once commit ourselves to its agitated bosom, our repose is for ever broken. Its unlimited expansiveness presents no haven: we are for ever exposed to gusts of passion—to the uncertain current of public opinion—to the equally capricious eddies which the thirst of aimless change begets—to the tropic hurricane of untameable desire—or, in age, to the arctic and freezing atmosphere of disappointment and neglect. How immeasurably separated from that limited wealth, which protects us equally from dependence as it does from temptation!

Competence may be resembled to a small lake embedded in mountain-solitudes: no tumultuous heaving disturbs its tranquil bosom, but gentle undulations only, which

are the sweet agitations of pleasurable emotion: we fearlessly commit ourselves to its surface in a bark frail and rustic, and gaze with security and delight into its transparent waters, reflecting neither rock nor shoal, but presenting only sand and pebbles. No gust, no wild eddy, visits it: we need no rudder to direct our course; and, when motionless, we find ourselves reclining in some mossy cove, some fairy haven of verdant underwood:—or the eye reposes upon the protecting boundaries which circumscribe us: or, if we quit its quiescent bosom, it is to worship, in the forest-shades which crown its borders, the spirits of the patriots and sages of antiquity: perhaps to hear the harmonious and inspiring voices of the poets, as we repose upon its verdant banks; and, at evening, when deepening twilight is veiling these enchanting scenes, perhaps we may

forget even *them*, as we listen to those etherial strains which have been breathed by the masters of harmony, who, having robbed the spheres of music, possess the power of transporting us thither. It would be sweet, indeed, to find a being, with looks of light and intelligence, for ever near to share and heighten these pleasures; but enjoyments like these—so pure, so exhaustless—would repay a youth of blighted hope.

You may be disposed to think that such a retreat would be visited by a few friends only; but, would any but those possessing congenial feelings pierce the difficult and intricate recesses which led to a mountain-solitude? and would not such be embraced with the fervour of boundless affection?

We are about to quit Cesto Calende for the capital of Lombardy, the possession of which has given rise to a series of conflicts

as bloody as History can blush to record: indeed, the destruction of Milan would not be long regretted by the philanthropist, if Lombardy could be blotted from the map of Europe; for its local importance must for ever originate new jealousies and renewed struggles, until the exhaustion of life and treasure suspend for a time the power, although it can never extinguish the desire, to satiate ambition or hatred.

Although the luxuriant and classical plains of Italy are before me, yet the scenery of the Alps is still in my heart. Nature has, indeed, no cause to be jealous of me—my love for her is without bounds:—and can so devoted an affection for herself leave one emotion unexcited for the admiration of her shadow? It is ignorance, or want of feeling, or of taste—call it what you will,—but

I fear that I am a very common-place admirer of the Arts: statuary charms me most; and, when it most pleases me, I am disposed to think that the association of ideas and of sentiment alone delights me as I behold it. It is for this reason that I am one of those who consider the removal of the monuments of genius from Italy to the Louvre a violation of feeling, as well as of justice; and, could I believe that the natives of Greece would have left the ruins of the Parthenon in dignified repose, I should have felt disposed, were I the master of the "mighty-magician" who pronounced the malediction, to increase the bitterness of the "Curse of Minerva."*

ADIEU!

* An unpublished satire, by Lord B.

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