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Francis Fox Smith

1863 -

THE
Traveller's Fire-Side :

A SERIES OF

PAPERS

ON

SWITZERLAND, THE ALPS, &c.

CONTAINING INFORMATION AND DESCRIPTIONS,
ORIGINAL, AND SELECTED FROM FRENCH
AND SWISS AUTHORS.

By *SAMUEL MILLER WARING.*

—— inanem redire turpissimum est.

CICERO.

The bliss of seeing is to tell.

MRS. H. MORE. — *Bas bleu.*

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G. H. de Beer

P R E F A C E.

THE history of this little volume is short.

The author returned from Switzerland in the summer of 1818; and it was in the leisure of the succeeding *fire-side* season, that the design suggested itself. While the opportunity was in his hands, and while, in aid of his notes, interesting recollections were yet fresh in his memory, he was willing to enter on the task; and, encouraged by the votes of a family circle, he now throws it before less partial tribunals.

For the translated part he offers no apology: it contains information which, he

conceived, must afford interest, and which he had never seen in an English dress.*

On his own portion he has also little to say: the arts of prefacing would fail to stamp importance on the bagatelle of a young man, and a young traveller. It is mostly the result of hasty rambles, in a field where both reapers and gleaners have preceded him. He has, however, gathered up some scattered ears, of which he here presents a few, mingled with wild flowers of the mountains. He will rejoice if neither narcotic poppies nor viler weeds shall be found among them.

But if the perturbed spirit of some censor, already weary of continental tourists, may not be thus playfully appeased, nor with such light offerings, suffice it to add:—that if these sketches are trifles, the

* Beside the notes to M. Ramond's French translation of Coxe's Letters on Switzerland, and other works which are cited, the abridged '*Manuel du Voyageur*,' of Ebel has been freely had recourse to, oftener than his name occurs.

typographic garb they have assumed is by no means extravagant; that the author has not worked up his whole journal into a hot-pressed quarto, provoking the reader to exclaim,

— non oculos sed *mentem* pascere veni;*

and that, whatever be the entertainment he has spread, it is not, like the meagre banquet of the Roman poet's host, served up ON GOLD.

ALTON, 1819.

* Tunc ego :—non oculos sed ventrem pascere veni :
Aut appone dapes, Vare, vel aufer opes.

MART.

CONTENTS.

NO.

- 1.—THE JURA.
- 2.—THE ALPS.
- 3.—THE GLACIERS.
- 4.—THE AVALANCHES.
- 5.—EXCURSION FROM GENEVA TO CHAMOUNY.
- 6.—WILD ANIMALS OF THE ALPS.
- 7.—EXCURSION FROM CHAMOUNY TO THE CONVENT OF ST. BERNARD.
- 8.—PASTORAL LIFE IN SWITZERLAND.
- 9.—PARTS OF THE CANTON OF BERNE.
- 10.—ANCIENT PASTORAL RACE.—RANZ DES VACHES.
- 11.—PARTS OF THE CANTON OF SCHWITZ.
- 12.—PARTS OF THE CANTON OF FRIBURG.
- 13.—THE LAKE OF GENEVA.—GENEVA.
- 14.—HISTORICAL SKETCH OF GENEVA.
- 15.—THE SWISS SHORE OF THE LAKE OF GENEVA.
- 16.—THE SAVOY SHORE OF THE LAKE OF GENEVA.
- 17.—THE CANTON OF VALAIS.
- 18.—THE PASSAGE OF THE SIMPLON.
- 19.—FROM THE FOOT OF THE SIMPLON TO MILAN.
- 20.—THE MOUNTAINEERS; A TALE IN VERSE.

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 1.

(There) Winter ling'ring, chills the lap of May.

GOLDSMITH.

THE calcarious chain of the Jura mountains, beginning from the Rhone which separates it from the Wuache, in Savoy, is at first entirely in the French territory; in another part, it forms the boundary between that country and Switzerland; and afterwards, crossing the cantons of Berne, Soleure, Basle, and Argovia, terminates in that of Zurich. Its length is reckoned from 90 to 100 leagues. Its general features are those of extensive ridges or crests, rather than a succession of mountains. The undulating outline it presents, so unlike that of the primitive mountains, forms a striking contrast with the peaks and crags of the Alps, and near Geneva is particularly monotonous and uninteresting: though beautiful effects of sun and shade appear at certain parts of the day on the irregular declivities, where vast forests of fir descend from the ridge, retiring at intervals to give place to the fields that rise from the base. The

highest point, which is the Reculet, or summit of Mount Thoiry in the country of Gex, being not quite 5540 feet high, the whole is below the line of perpetual snow; and, as it consequently contains no glaciers, it gives birth to no important rivers: there are, however, one or two deep caverns, where ice remains all the year. The Jura is rich in petrefactions; and large blocks of granite are seen scattered about on it, having their angles and fractures more or less rounded off, and supposed to have been deposited in the convulsion, which, according to the hypothesis of de Saussure, formed the channels of the Rhone and the Arve. The pastures of the Jura are, in general, more arid than those of the Alps; but there are parts of these mountains said scarcely to yield to them in freshness and fertility. It contains a multitude of large and fine *chalets*.* The botanist may gather there many of those Alpine plants which grow beneath the limit of perpetual snow.

The mountain called the Wuache was no doubt considered by Cæsar as a part of the Jura, as it naturally is; and his celebrated line of rampart, formed to oppose the passage of the *Helvetii* over the Rhone, must have been drawn from Geneva, along the Savoy side of the river, to the Wuache. There are no remains of it; at least M. De Luc,

* For further mention of these mountain dairies, see No. 8.

of Geneva, informed me he had observed no traces in traversing that side of the Rhone. The banks are in some places so steep as easily to command the passage of the stream, with little artificial munition.

Between the Rhone and the end of the Jura, is the narrow pass through which the *Helvetii*, on the failure of their attempt to cross the Rhone, passed into the country of the *Sequani*. This defile, described by Cæsar as so narrow as scarcely to admit a single waggon, is now closed by a fort, the *Fort de l'Ecluse*, in a ruinous state since the late hostilities. The high road passes through it under an arch-way; the steep of the mountain, against which the fortress leans, rises high above it; and on the other side of the Rhone, the Wuache presents a declivity, the rocky surface of which is decked with green shrubs, and divided near the base by a road curving in a picturesque manner through the pass. The Rhone, seen winding through the valley from Geneva, is here contracted in a narrow channel between the mountains; and beyond the fort, the traveller still sees it before him between its high banks: it soon winds out of sight near a lofty rock with a ruin on its summit. As I looked back towards Switzerland after passing the fort, the opening happened to exhibit the singular embellishment of a rainbow thrown across it. This fine road, the road to Lyons, follows the

sinuosities of the valleys, whose vines and wooded fields are enlivened by cottages. To avoid this circuitous route, I climbed a footway over an ascent called the *Credo*, which descended again to the village of Vangi, and the high road which still winds above the river, flowing through a deep wooded valley. A little lower down the river, is the curious spot called *the loss of the Rhone*. A path leads down to it from the road: this path is not very easy for a stranger to find, but it is less difficult to obtain a guide than to avoid a retinue of them; as the poor bare-legged inhabitants are on the alert to offer their services to travellers, who often leave their carriages and visit this spot. The scene is highly wild and picturesque: the Rhone here rushes through a deep channel of perpendicular rocks, and is crossed at a great height by a wooden bridge. Standing on the bridge, you look down on the river, where it is completely engulfed by an opening in its rocky bed, and is seen, a little below, issuing from its subterraneous course. In the summer season, when the waters are high, they flow over, and conceal both openings. The wooden bridge was built by the peasants, to supply the place of one of stone, destroyed by the Austrians, and the vestiges of which still remain. The pause of contemplation which this striking scenery invites, is unhappily out of the question, when the voices of your female

guides, vieing with each other in clamorous communicativeness, mingle with the majestic sound of the torrent. One of these poor creatures was going to Vangi, and we talked as we ascended the hill. Alas! how unlike was it to some accounts we have had of the prosperity of the French peasantry, as she spoke of the necessities of the poor, or pointed out the bitter herb, by the way-side, resorted to in seasons of scarcity to swell the scanty store of provisions. The peasants who had built the bridge below, had never, she said, been paid for it, and if any stood to receive toll, some of the passengers were so poor that they did not like to take their money. I again ascended the Credo; stopped awhile and refreshed myself at a rude fountain, commanding a fine view over the valley below; heard the last cadence of the lark's evening song; passed the cottage gossips assembled in companies at the doors, and boys collected in another part for their amusement; and reached my inn at Colonge, a village under the Jura, by the light of the moon.

Above Gex, is the ascent of the Jura by a fine road called *la Faucille*: it commands a view over Switzerland, which the clouds, veiling the sky and the Alps, did not allow me to enjoy. They soon enveloped me quite; and though I would willingly have dispelled them if a wish could have done it, yet there is something sublime in looking down

some precipice which the misty vapours forbid to fathom, and where the green tops of the firs vanish down the steep, whilst an unseen torrent is heard from the dim abyss—in looking up at some traveller winding along the heights, now concealed by clouds, and now coming in sight. The month of May, I soon found too early for exploring with pleasure the higher regions of the Jura. The road towards Les Rousses lay, with very little descent from the summit of the Faucille, through a dreary country, and was surrounded with snow, clouds, firs, and wild masses of rock. Cold wind and driving sleet added to the effect; and the whole was too *Ossianic* to be quite agreeable. I hailed at length a more open tract, a clearer sky, and the steeple of the village of Les Rousses, still in France.* From this poor village, a line of elevated valley extends along the Jura, between its summits, which here form a double chain. This valley descends gently, and is traversed in its length by the waters of the Orbe, flowing from a small lake near Les Rousses, and running into the lake of Joux, and the adjoining lake Brenet at the other end of the valley, which is closed beyond by a rocky barrier, and by the picturesque point, called the *Dent de Vaulion*. The industrious inhabitants of the valleys along this tract carry on a consider-

* You enter Switzerland soon after leaving Les Rousses for the lake of Joux.

able manufacture of lace, musical boxes, cutlery, horology, &c. Though in part it was a waste of snow, yet in others ploughing and sowing were going forward; and the note of the cuckoo struck my ear, producing a singular effect amongst the wintry scenery. Their chief tillage is barley and oats. The village of Chenit was very busy with a fair. I took a dinner in a room at the inn amongst an assemblage of the country people, and was seated near a decent well-behaved woman, whom I conjectured, from her pale appearance, to be a lace-maker, as well as another who seemed to be her sister. The costumes here are not strongly marked; and the neat dresses of this pair, as well as their persons, might, as to what I remember of them, allow them to pass in an English country town as neighbouring villagers.

As you approach the lower end of the valley, it wears softening features, and the dark green of the firs on the heights is relieved by the birch or the beech.

A remarkable feature of the little lake Brenet, is the discharge, which here takes place, of the waters of this valley by subterranean passages, producing a sudden re-appearance of the river Orbe in another valley below. The waters were at this time high, and no whirlpools in their surface betrayed the openings beneath. These openings are called *entonnoirs*; and the inhabitants are

careful to keep them cleared; as an inundation would be the consequence of their being stopped. Unattractive as the scenery of the lake of Joux now appeared, it is often visited by parties in the fine season, and is admired for its gentle, sweet, and graceful characters. Between the two contiguous lakes, a long bridge or causeway leads to the village of Pont, to which it gives its name. The two lakes were now joined, and the bridge overflowed, by the swelling of the waters from the spring thaw. I was directed to call, that a boat might put across for me: but after standing on the 'dreary coast,' and bawling in vain '*bateau!*' I had actually thought of wading, for no Charon appeared: a Mercury, however, did, in the shape of a boy leading the beasts of two travellers over the flooded causeway. Him I soon despatched across for a boat; but he turned in the midst of the water, to announce the approach of a car on my left, on which, dirty and wet as it was, I was content to mount, as a woman had done before me, and leaving the sloppy shore, reached the village of Pont:* here, if bent on pursuing a trite metaphor, I must find my Elysium in the comforts of a fire side, dry stockings, a supper, and a bed.

I ascended, next morning, a path, in order to

* Mr. Coxe says that all the families but one in this village bore the surname of *Rochat*: and that it was the same in a neighbouring village, with the exception of two families.

cross the rocky barrier which closes the valley; and after passing between the wooded heights, leaving the *Dent de Vaulion* on the right, I began to descend, by a steep, wild, and picturesque path, overhung with trees and adorned with mossy rock and wild flowers: it led down a deep ravine, wooded with beech and fir, and by a waterfall rolling over fragments, and heightening the beauties of this romantic walk. A path through a wood in the valley below, led me to the fountain of the Orbe. Its waters gush up from an opening at the base of a lofty rock, in a strong clear stream, and rushing over a bed green with aquatic moss, dash along out of sight between the trees that overhang the banks. I crossed over by a ledge of rock above the fountain, and sat down to enjoy this curious and sequestered scene, preferred by de Saussure to the celebrated fountain of Vaucluse. I now began to traverse the pleasant valley of Valorbe, passed a flock of goats browsing on its side, and reached the village of Valorbe. Though the sumptuary laws, and those which lay certain restrictions on amusements, laws once very prevalent in Switzerland, are now so generally abolished, I observed in the room of the inn where I dined, amongst other municipal regulations posted up, a prohibition of cards and dancing in the house: the rules were enforced by pecuniary fines destined for the poor. The road afterwards crosses a torrent, thundering in a deep

channel, thickly overhung with boughs; passes through a wood; and sometimes beautifully overlooks the deep ravine of the river forming the bottom of the valley. Farther on, a magnificent view opens over Switzerland, with the lakes of Geneva and Neuchatel, and the wide verdant valley stretching between them. This extensive picture, bounded by a long horizon of Alps, was varied by sunshine and shadows from the clouds; rain and sun-beams producing an exquisite effect on an eminence of the Jura to the right. The descent towards Yverdun is delightful, with sloping vineyards, green fields, and village spires. The Chateau of Chamven, a large square building, with circular pointed towers at the corners, looks from its vine-clad slope, a specimen of the ancient feudal residences, apparently in high preservation: and farther on is seen another, appearing likewise in good condition, though uninhabited. There was merry-making, with sounds of music and dancing, in one or two villages I passed through; and at one, a grotesque masked personage, in a fool's dress, darted from the crowd, at my approach, and came towards me; I soon found his object was begging, and an *abbaye* or shooting match seemed to be the cause of the fête. But yesterday, I had travelled amid the snows of winter; and to day, saw the young peasantry preparing their large garland *la belle couronne*, to celebrate the month of May.

I had crossed the Jura from Pontarlier to Yverdun, in April of the preceding year; and before arriving at the former place, in passing over an out-skirt of this chain, had been struck with the beauties of a fir-forest, the idea of which is so naturally associated with the dreary scenery of the northern regions. After travelling among leafless trees in France, the verdant green was particularly grateful to the eye: the tall trunks were adorned with green moss or with the pale pendent lichen; the fine and smooth turf, looking almost as if mowed and rolled; here, sloping banks with bushes of juniper and other plants; there, a large green recess retiring into the forest, and forming a lawn surrounded by firs; young and shorter trees of brighter hue in front, and others rising gradually behind them. After leaving Pontarlier you begin to cross the grand chain of the Jura. The snow soon lay around us; the firs rose in erect verdure on the rocky heights; the mountain streams brawled over their channels; and the birds, even in the mid-winter reigning here, were singing gaily. A mill had been destroyed by the violence of the winter's torrent, and part of a wheel was seen projecting from amongst the melancholy ruins. The descent is very fine; but here also I was unfortunate in the weather.

Bears of a large size, wolves, and a kind of wild cat inhabit parts of these mountains; and the two

former, though they seldom attack men, sometimes commit ravages among the cattle, the sheep, and the shepherds' dogs. The traveller, whose imagination is busy, may amuse himself with fancying he sees the traces of some of these wild animals, in the prints of paws that mark the snow, and left, perhaps, by the harmless dog of some neighbouring peasant. A lad of the canton of Vaud related, as an occurrence on the Jura or in the neighbourhood, that a female peasant whose husband was from home, was sitting solitarily in her cottage, rocking her infant and knitting, when a bear made his appearance at the window with his paws placed against it: the child was probably the object of this dreadful visit. The mother, however, with great courage and presence of mind, strengthened the window by barring it with the iron instrument used for stirring and blowing the fire;* and, seizing from the hearth a burning brand, rushed out of the door on her enemy, who immediately fled, and taking his course, contrary to the usual custom of these animals, along the road, he was met and killed.

In the *ci-devant* bishopric of Basle is a curious and ancient excavated road, perforating a part of the Jura, and called Pierre-Port, or Pierre-Pertuis—

* This instrument looks like an old gun-barrel, branching into two small tubes at the end, in the shape of a fork: it is, in fact, a blow-pipe.

in the Latin of the middle ages, *Petra Pertusa*. Though far less than that of Pausilippo, near Naples, it is upwards of fifty feet in length. It forms a communication between the vale of Munsterthal or Moutier-grand-val, formerly in the country of the *Rauraci*, and the vale of St. Imers, in the ancient Helvetia. The words *Numini Augustorum*, which may be traced in a mutilated Roman inscription above the entrance, indicate the decline of the Empire at the date of the construction.

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 2.

..... Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature,

LORD BYRON.

IN casting the eye over the extent of the Alps, an inexhaustible treasure of interest is spread before us. So great is the assemblage of the beautiful, the awful, the vast, and the various, comprized within their circuit: stupendous crags—leagues of snow—unmeasured forests; the storm—the torrent—the avalanche; seas of ice apparently dead and still, yet sending forth their waters to traverse Europe; the smiling valley—the placid lake—the clear fountain—the cascade—the vineyard—the pasture; the herdsman's hut—the village—the town—the republic; character and climate—men and things. Here we may enjoy alternately the picturesque and the profound: and if we wander here with the naturalist, whether we look for the eagle* in the cloud, or the chamois on

* A naturalist of Berne, M. Sprunglein, has formed, with considerable pains and expense, a complete collection of the birds of the Alps, which consists of about 500. Amongst them are found species

the steep; for the plants of the southern regions in the valleys, or those of the northern on the heights;* whether we study the phenomena of the atmosphere,† or read the history of the globe, inscribed on its strata; draw the ore from its bed, or the crystal from its cavern; a world of beauty and wonder opens around us.

Descriptions of scenery in the Alps and observations on some of their leading phenomena will be found in future papers: the present will contain an outline of the principal chains, with notices of remarkable mountains. Many of the ancient divisions of the Romans are still preserved. To begin from the Mediterranean:—

belonging to all the climates, from the south of Italy to the north of America. See *Ramond*.

* “The botanist finds on the mountains and in the valleys of Switzerland a multitude of the most interesting vegetables: 496 genera are already known, and 1,800 indigenous species, independently of more than 1000 other species in the class *Cryptogamia*.” *Ebel*.

† “At the elevation of 1200 or 1300 toises you are in the 80th degree of latitude: in a few hours’ march, you have experienced the influence of all the seasons, seen the productions of all the European climates, traversed the whole scale of vegetation, and compared the birds of Italy with those of the continent, and of the northern lakes. What do I say? You have passed beyond the most frozen habitable zone. At the latitude of 75 degrees, vast forests are found: at the elevation of 1100 toises, the Alps afford them no more. Here the cold is accompanied by a diminution of the height of the column of air: there (in the arctic regions) it is maintained by the obliquity of the sun’s rays. It seems that vegetable life yields soonest to the former of these circumstances; and you would be in the most frightful of regions, if a sky of an admirable serenity---if the purest lustre of the sun did not here take place of the perpetual fogs which cover the polar continent, and of the pale gleam that illumines its melancholy frosts.” *Ramond*.

The MARITIME ALPS extend from the sea-coast, in the county of Nice, to Mount Viso, the first of the Cottian Alps, between France and Piedmont.

The COTTIAN ALPS separate Piedmont from Dauphiny and Savoy: they begin with Mount Viso, and extend to Mount Cenis, the first of the Graian Alps.

Mount Viso, called by the Romans *Vesulus*, is the loftiest of this division. Its singular pointed form may be clearly distinguished at Turin, and even at Milan: the Po rises in two branches on its eastern side, whence three valleys descend to the plains of Piedmont.

The GRAIAN, or GRECIAN ALPS include Mount Cenis, the Iseran, and the Little St. Bernard, terminating at the Mountain-passage called the Col du Bonhomme: they are between Savoy and Piedmont.

Over *Mount Cenis* is one of the great roads into Italy, and one of the finest works of the reign of Napoleon, a part being cut in solid granite. It was formerly a difficult passage, and dangerous from the avalanches. On the elevated parts of the passage are stationed houses, called *houses of refuge*, inhabited by workmen employed in the maintenance of the road, and by their wives who sell provisions to passengers. On the plain, at the top of the ascent, is a convent, or *hospice*, where

travellers are entertained by the monks. The road is marked out by poles, and when the storms or fogs render them insufficient, the traveller is guided by the sound of a bell from one of the neighbouring houses of refuge. At the foot of the mountain, on the side of Savoy is the village of Langlebourg, where the sun remains unseen for two months together; and on St. Anthony's day, the inhabitants have the pleasure of seeing its rays again gild the spires of their church.*

The *Little St. Bernard* has also a road over it for mules, at the highest part† of which, is an *hospice* or convent for the reception of travellers, founded, like that of the Great St. Bernard, by St. Bernard of Menthon, and served by two priests. There appears sufficient reason to conclude that Hannibal crossed the Alps by the Little St. Bernard.‡

The road over the *Col du Bonhomme* is very steep, and dangerous on account of precipices: it is therefore suited only for calm weather. The mules pass with difficulty in some parts from the slippery nature of the stones. This passage is probably very ancient, as coins of the first Roman emperors have been found on the summit. The scenery it commands is wild and savage.

* See '*Voyage en Italie, par G. Mallet.*'

† 7,190 feet.

‡ See M. J. A. De Luc's '*Histoire du Passage des Alpes, par Annibal.*'

The PENNINE, or HIGH ALPS,* extend from the Col du Bonhomme to Mount Rosa; including Mont Blanc, the Great St. Bernard, the Coubin, and the Cervin, they form a part of the boundary which separates Piedmont from the canton of Valais, and from Savoy.

Mont Blanc, the highest of the Alps, measures, according to de Saussure, 15,660† feet in height, above the sea. Though by this mode of measurement it is inferior to Chimborazo by several thousand feet, yet considered as a mountain, and with reference to the distance from the base to the summit, it surpasses even the chief of the Andes, and may perhaps rank next to the mountains of Thibet. Its height above the valley of Chamouny is 12,280 feet; whilst that of Chimborazo is only 11,950 above the valley of Tapia. The sides of Mont Blanc towards the S. W. and N. E. rise in successive crags to the summit, which has been called, from its form, the Dromedary's Hunch. The mountain descends gradually towards the valley of Chamouny; but its southern side, towards Piedmont, presents one tremendous precipice 10,000 feet in height, and flanked by buttress-like projections: the declivity is so steep as to refuse a resting place to the snow and ice. From the valleys of ice which

* Ebel is here followed. The term *High Alps* is sometimes used in a less restricted sense.

† The heights are here calculated from French feet into English, omitting the units of the latter.

spread about its sides, descend 17 or 18 glaciers, several of which are five or six leagues in length. Mont Blanc may be seen from the mountains of Burgundy, from Dijon, and even from Langres (180 miles in a direct line.) Notwithstanding the amazing extent of this horizon, the traveller, who, in the expectation of enjoying a view corresponding to it, incurs all the difficulties, the dangers, and the expenses attending the ascent, would be completely disappointed; as the density of the lower atmosphere naturally conceals objects beneath it, from one placed on this eminence, which itself rises conspicuous in a pure and elevated region. Two peasants of Chamouny, Jaques Balmat, and Paccard, (called Dr. Paccard,) were the first who reached the top, which they did in 1786; though M. Bourrit and others had before attempted it. M. de Saussure who had indulged so ardent a desire to accomplish it, that the very sight of the mountain agitated him, set out the same year, accompanied by seventeen guides; but the weather proved so unfavourable, that they were obliged to return. In August of the following year he succeeded, and remained five hours in his tent on the summit. In this rare atmosphere the whole party experienced entire loss of appetite, and were tormented by a burning thirst. Even the most vigorous suffered inconvenience at the height of about 12,150 feet. The sky ap-

peared of a very deep blue colour; and the stars were visible to those who stood shaded from the sun. The Pays de Vaud seemed, though fifty miles off, to lie exactly at the foot of the mountain. The travellers saw beneath them, at a great distance, the lofty neighbouring peaks; they could clearly discover the chains of mountains and their snowy summits; but the more distant objects were enveloped in a veil. Mr. Bourrit, and several successive travellers, have since performed this exploit. Though the distance of this summit in a straight line from Chamouny is inconsiderable, the circuities rendered necessary by precipices and glaciers, make it a march of 18 or 20 leagues.

The effect of the higher atmosphere on the body is observed to be invigorating and exhilarating to a certain elevation; but before arriving at the height of 9,000 feet, among perpetual snows, the muscular powers are exhausted with an astonishing rapidity. It is not a mere *fatigue* with which the traveller is oppressed, but sometimes a total exhaustion, an absolute inability to advance four paces farther, until rest has restored him, were it to save his dearest friend from falling down a precipice: should he persist in attempting to proceed, rapid and violent palpitations in all the arteries would follow, and he would fall senseless on the snow. The strength is, however, apparently restored on standing still, with the same speed as it

was lost; and after three or four minutes cessation of movement, the traveller, on resuming his march, feels so completely re-invigorated, that he may flatter himself he shall gain the summit without more rest, till another sudden seizure convinces him of the contrary. Near the top of Mont Blanc, M. de Saussure could not take more than about sixteen paces without stopping to breathe; and a fainting sensation obliged him, from time to time, to sit down. All the guides were more or less in the same state; and they were two hours in ascending the last steep, scarcely 900 French feet perpendicular. Other symptoms, such as sudden lethargic sleep, nausea, and vomiting, are produced in these high regions.

Mount Rosa,* after Mont Blanc, the highest mountain in Europe, is singularly formed, being composed of a number of peaks of nearly equal heights, clustered in a circle round a common centre, and compared to the petals of a rose: this superb group is supposed thence to have borrowed its name. From Turin and other places these peaks appear united, and present a summit of prodigious size. This mountain is seen at Milan, at Pavia, and throughout Lombardy: the inhabitants sometimes call it *la Rosa della Italia*. The highest summit has never yet been reached; but M. de

* 15,530 feet.

Saussure, who made in 1789, the tour of Mount Rosa, ascended one of the others. "A journey round this fine group of snow-clad mountains," says Ebel, "is, beyond dispute, one of the most interesting, in every respect, that can be made in the Alps."*

Mount Cervin, Sylvio, or the Matterhorn, are the names given to a brilliant peak, the most pointed of all the Alps. It is ranked next in height† to Mount Rosa. The passage over it is the highest in Europe, as the summit of the *Col* is 10,950 feet above the sea.

Of the Great St. Bernard we shall afterwards speak more particularly.‡

THE LEPONTINE, OR HELVETIAN ALPS, so called from the *Lepontii*, an ancient people near the source of the Rhone, run from Mount Rosa, by the Simplon, along the southward boundary of the canton of Valais; and a branch of the chain, turning back at the Furca, in a kind of *fork*, borders the canton on the other side. The main chain also continues east of the Furca, to the Bernardino and the Muschelhorn, comprising the St. Gothard and the Lukmanier: in the other branch are the Grimsel, the Schreckhorn, the Finsteraarhorn, the Jungfrau, and the Gemmi.

* For more on Mount Rosa, see No. 19.

† 14,750 feet.

‡ No. 7.

The *Simplon* will be mentioned in a future paper.*

The *St. Gothard*, the *Mons Adula*† of the Romans, between the cantons of Uri and Tessin, has a road over it paved with slabs of granite, which is one of the most frequented passages between Switzerland and Italy, and abounds in romantic beauties. In the valley or basin of rocks, occupying the height of the passage, are eight or ten small lakes: from one of these, the Reus flows down one side of the mountain, to pass through the lake of Lucern towards the Rhine; and from another flows the Tessin towards Italy, to pass through Lake Maggiore, and join the Po. So different is the destination of the waters of these neighbouring sources; the German Ocean for one, and the Adriatic for the other. As long since as the 13th or 14th century, the canton of Lucern carried on a considerable commerce between Germany and Italy, by way of the *St. Gothard*: the Reus receiving the Italian merchandise at the foot of this mountain, and conveying it to the Rhine. Horses are here employed for carrying goods, and the regular load for each is three quintals (about 3 cwt.) It is remarkable, however, that it is in the winter season that the greatest quantity of merchandise passes; it is then

* No. 18.

† On the *Adula* chain, see No. 10, *Note*.

conveyed over the snow on sledges, drawn by oxen, and of course in larger loads. This curious road strikingly exhibits the industry and perseverance of its contriver, whose name is forgotten. It surmounts the most appalling obstacle. When the rocks, almost perpendicular, refuse space for its whole width, it rests on arches of uncemented stone; the side of the abyss no longer admits its passage—it springs across on bold and light bridges;* a part of the mountain absolutely vertical seems to oppose an effectual barrier—it pierces a rock of granite twenty paces through; and pursues its way among the beautiful and sublime scenery which surrounds it.† Numerous crosses are seen along its course, the melancholy memorials of the fate of travellers who have perished by the cold or the avalanches. The latter are frequent at some part of the year from the steepness of the declivities, and the elevation of the heights overhanging the way: in case of danger, drivers take off, or muffle with hay, the bells of their horses, and make the passengers pass quickly, in profound silence, lest the piles of snow, agitated by the sound, should fall and overwhelm the whole caravan. “The summit of St. Gothard,” says Ramond, is a platform of naked granite, surrounded by

* The first of these, in the ascent from Uri, is the Devil's Bridge, so much celebrated and so often described.

† See *Ramond*.

moderately high rocks of very irregular forms, arresting the sight on every side, and enclosing it within the most fearful solitude. Three small lakes,* and the melancholy convent of the capuchins, alone interrupt the sameness of this desert, where not the least trace of vegetation is seen. The absolute silence which reigns on this platform is new and surprising to an inhabitant of the plain: not the slightest murmur is heard. The wind passing through the heaven meets here with no foliage whose rustling agitation betrays its course: it is only when violent, that it moans mournfully against the crags of the rocks which divide it. It would be in vain to hope, by climbing the accessible summits surrounding this desert, to transport oneself by the sight into habitable countries: nothing is seen below but a chaos of rocks and torrents; nothing is distinguished at a distance but barren crags covered with eternal snows, piercing the cloud which floats over the valleys, and which covers them with a veil often impenetrable; nothing of all that exists beyond meets the eye, except a dark blue sky, which, descending far below the horizon, terminates the picture on all sides, and seems an immense sea surrounding this mass of mountains. The unfortunate capuchins who inhabit the *hospice*, are,

* Ebel describes eight or ten lakes: see page 23.

during nine months of the year, buried in the snows which often in the space of one night rise as high as their roof, and stop all the entries of the convent:* it is then necessary to make a passage through the upper windows, which serve for doors.”

The St. Gothard is rich in fossil productions.

The *Lukmanier* (*Mons Lucumoni*) and the *Muschelhorn* (*Avicula*) are on the borders of the canton of the Grisons. From the summit of a peak of the former called the *Scopi*, is a magnificent view of the Alps of remarkable extent, from Mont Blanc to the Dreyherrnspez on the borders of the Tyrol; also of the sources of the Rhine, the Tessin, and the Reuss. From one of the valleys of the Lukmanier descends the middle source of the Rhine, called the Middle-Rhine; and in one of those of the Muschelhorn is the glacier of the Rhinwald, the source of the Back-Rhine, the most easterly of the three streams which are considered the origin of that river. In the valley of Tavetsch, between the Middle-Rhine and the Crispalta,† is the other stream called the Fore-Rhine.

* The neighbourhood of the St. Gothard was the scene of war and bloodshed in 1799 and 1800. The hospital and the convent were pillaged, and the inhabitants obliged to fly. In the winter, a piquet of fifty French was placed there, and though they drew supplies of wood from Airolo, these soldiers burnt the doors, the wood of the windows, and the beams of the convent, which was at last entirely destroyed. Travellers have since been obliged to put up with the miserable hospital of the poor.

† The most northern summit of the St. Gothard chain.

Au pied du mont Adule, entre mille roseaux,
 Le Rhin, tranquille et fier du progrès de ses eaux,
 Appuyé d'une main sur son urne penchante,
 Dormoit au bruit flatteur de son onde naissante.*

The *Furca* is between the cantons of Valais and Uri, and may be considered a part of the St. Gothard chain. It is remarkable for the superb glacier in which the Rhone† takes its rise, called the glacier of the Rhone, or of Mount Furca. This glacier lies in the fork formed by the Furca and the Grimsel, and descends from a valley of ice six leagues in length.

The *Grimsel* is a high mountain, with a passage between the cantons of Berne and Valais, affording wild and magnificent scenery. The top of the passage is 7,000 feet above the sea. The neighbourhood has rich mines of crystal and grottoes of the same. One of the crystals upwards of three feet and a half in diameter is preserved in the Museum of Natural History at Paris. The high valleys from the Grimsel to the Gemmi are so filled with glaciers, that the mountains resemble islands rising from the bosom of a glacial sea.

The *Schreckhorn* (*peak of terror*), less in bulk than Mont Blanc, and less elevated,‡ is incomparably more pointed; and though defended by fewer branches of glaciers, it is still less accessible. The

* Boileau. Epit. 4.

† The neighbouring inhabitants give the title of *source of the Rhone* exclusively to three *springs* near the glacier,

‡ About 13,200 feet above the sea.

precipices closing its avenues are more profound, and its declivity is so steep that the snow cannot rest on it. Like Mont Blanc, it is the point of union of the veins of crystal, whose branches follow so faithfully those of the glaciers.* This mountain is not situated on any boundary, as are all the others here mentioned in this chain: it is in a corner of the canton of Berne, between the valleys of Grindelwald, Hasli, and the Valais.

The *Finsteraarhorn*, also between the cantons of Berne and Valais, one of the highest pyramids of granite and gneis in the whole chain of the Alps, is ranked in height† next to the Matterhorn, and the third after Mont Blanc. The three great glaciers of the Aar lie at its base. Its summit has never been reached.

The *Jungfrau*‡ (pronounced *Yungfrow*) is the name of the most magnificent and extraordinary of the mountains in the northern chain of the Alps, rocks of which are composed of horizontal calcareous strata. Its imposing form is surrounded on all sides by tremendous steeps, and wears a mantle of perpetual snows.

The *Gemmi* (pron. *g* hard), so called from two summits of nearly equal heights named the *Twins*, is, like the two former Alps, between the cantons

* See *Ramond*.--For more on the Schreckhorn, see No. 10.

† 14,110 feet.

‡ 13,690 feet.

of Berne and Valais, and is remarkable for the most curious mountain-passage in all Switzerland. The southern face of the mountain descends almost perpendicularly; and it is in this vast wall that a zig-zag road is made, accessible to beasts of burden. So steep is the declivity in which this unique road is formed, that the traveller on it sees neither the part turning above him, nor that under him: and when, after the descent, he casts his eye upward from the foot, he is surprized at not perceiving any traces of the road he has traversed. In one part of the way, the rock hangs arched in a terrific manner over it. As it is bordered by tremendous precipices, a dry stone wall is raised by way of parapet on the edge: it is however dangerous for persons very subject to vertigo to descend; though they may ascend in turning the back to the precipices. Many of the invalids from the north of Switzerland, who visit the baths of Leuck in the Valais, are carried in a sort of litter by eight men in relays: on arriving at this part of the journey, the traveller's back is turned toward the descent, or his eyes are bandaged, and the vigorous porters pursue their way singing as they go. The vertical height of the wall of the Gemmi above the baths of Leuck is reckoned upwards of 1,700 feet and 7,420 above the sea. The ascent commands magnificent views across the valley of the Rhone, and to the chain of snowy summits on the other side.

The *Titlis* or *Titlisberg*, situated near the union of the three cantons of Berne, Uri, and Unterwalden, may be considered as part of an offset of the Lepontine Alps. From its singularly formed summit, reckoned by de Saussure 11,530 feet high, is discovered the whole chain of the Alps from Savoy to the Tyrol and Carinthia. It has been even asserted that, in clear weather and before sun-rise, the spire of the cathedral of Strasburg may be discerned by the aid of a good telescope: this is about 50 leagues distant in a direct line. The Titlis and the neighbouring summits may certainly be distinguished from two leagues beyond that city. On the 6th of August, 1797, the coat of ice on the top of this mountain was, according to the measurement of M. Muller upwards of 180 feet thick. It was first ascended in 1744. At its base, in a romantic and sequestered valley, is the Benedictine abbey of Engelberg.

THE RHÆTIAN ALPS reach from the Bernardino to the Dreyherrnspitz on the confines of the Tyrol, Carinthia, and Salzburg: they occupy the canton of the Grisons and the Tyrol, and limit Germany and Hungary.

*Mount Julier** in the Grisons may be noticed as

* The *Dictionnaire de la Suisse* terms the chain near the source of the Inn, to which this belongs, the Julian Alps; and adds that they derive their name from a road begun by Julius Cæsar, and

having, on the summit of the passage over it, two rude columns of granite, known by the name of the Julian Columns. Whether their origin be such as their name would indicate, or not, they are supposed to be a monument of high antiquity. They are about four feet high, of the same granite as the mountain, but without either pedestal, capital, or inscription. The Alps sink so much towards Mount Julier, that there is no part in Switzerland where a road practicable for carriages could so easily be made across the central chain.

Amongst the other mountains worthy of note, but not referred to either of these chains, is *Mount Pilate* on the west side of the Lake of the Four Cantons, and upwards of 7,000 feet above the sea. In 1798, after the entry of the French troops into Lucern, their signal, strangely termed the *standard of Liberty*, was planted with much trouble and fatigue on this mountain. On the Brundlen Alp, a part of it, is a curious echo. Ebel describes the effect produced by a peasant singing while he turns in a semicircle, as like the music of celestial spirits resounding from all parts of the opposite rocks, and producing a most ravishing effect during the calm of a fine evening. At a great height is seen the mouth of a cavern; and by it a colossal statue of stone, apparently thirty

finished by Augustus, according to Rufus Festus, in the time of the Illyrian wars.

feet high, in a sitting posture with the legs crossed, leaning on a table, as though placed to guard the entrance of the cavern. This statue is called by the inhabitants *our Cornell*, or St. Dominic, and the cave *Dominiks-Loek*. It is impossible to climb the steep to this entrance, but the cavern passes completely through the mountain: unsuccessful attempts have been made to reach the statue through the other opening, which is rather difficult and dangerous of access.*

The *Rigi* (pron. *Riggee*) in the canton of Schwitz, and the *Albis* near *Zuric*, are visited on account of the magnificent views they command.

Passing beyond the bounds of Switzerland, it remains slightly to notice four other chains.


The **NORIC ALPS** extend from the *Dreyherrnspitz*, across *Carinthia* and *Stiria*, into *Hungary*.

The **CARNIC ALPS** reach from *Mount Pelegrino*, along the south of the *Drave*, to the *Terglou*, on which the *Save* takes its rise.

The **JULIAN ALPS** are those which pass from the *Terglou* towards the *Adriatic*, separating *Friuli* and *Istria*, from *Carinthia*, *Carniola*, &c.

The **DINARIC ALPS** branch off along the left of the *Save* and the *Danube*, as far as *Sophia*, joining the *Balkan* or *Hæmus*, which reaches to the *Euxine*.

* I find no account of the origin of this mysterious statue.

 The following note is added as a correction to the account of *Mount Cenis*, page 16.

“ A magnificent building which he (Napoleon) had begun, a sort of caravansera, on the top of the *Simplon*, has been left half finished, but things are infinitely worse on *Mount Cenis*. Buonaparte had there as well as here, constructed several houses termed *refuges*, at different distances for the shelter of passengers in the dangerous months, and endowed them with slight privileges, such as that of selling wine and provisions duty free. It was amongst the early acts of the King of Sardinia to abrogate these, and the *refuges* of *Mount Cenis* are lost to the traveller.” *Rose's Letters from the North of Italy*, 1819.

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 3.

Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow ?

JOB.

SO many of our countrymen have visited the glaciers, that it is somewhat surprising to find how little pains have been taken to give a familiar description of their appearance and nature, for the information of those who have never seen them. Their general features are so clear and distinct, when once observed, that the traveller may have almost forgotten his former confused idea, and fear to presume that his reader can want to be told simply what a glacier is. Thus one traveller pays you an unwelcome compliment; and another, in conversation, gravely informs you which way the Tiber flows.

The wanderer in the green and peopled valleys within the avenues of the highest Alps, sees, between the mountains whose bases join to form a stupendous range, other valleys or channels sloping down from the heights, and filled with irregular craggy masses of ice, of an opaque bluish

white;* resembling, at a little distance, what in fact they have been, snow hardened by alternate thaw and frost. This deep and closely wedged stratum more than a mile wide, terminates abruptly below, in the regions of culture and fertility; where, by means of its vast mass, it maintains a solid form amid waving harvests and summer suns. The channel, as it ascends, will perhaps be seen to sweep round towards the parent-mountain of the neighbourhood; or, if its course allow the eye to trace it upwards, the ice is lost at length in the dazzling white of perpetual snows.

This vast stratum is a glacier. We approach its foot: this is a wall or bank of ice a hundred feet high or upwards, according to the depth of the glacier, rough with large clefts and irregular cavities, and dripping with the continual thaw of the warm season. From an arched opening in this wall flows a rapid torrent, rolling over a bed of fragments of granite rounded by attrition. Others of these fragments are seen resting on the crags of ice above, and menacing the stranger who

* "It is only the surfaces much inclined, the transverse clefts, the edges and the points, the chinks and crevices, along which the water flows freely, which afford solid ice of a clear green and of the greatest transparency. The inferior strata are also found composed of ice of a dark blue. . . . I know but one exception to this rule, and that is the glacier of *Rosboden* (on the Simplon) the whole mass of which is an extremely hard, firm, compact ice, of a darkish blue, so that it seems to form one *jet* of enormous height." *Ebel*.

is so incautious as to stand below them; others, reduced to powder amongst the blocks of ice, spread a muddy defilement on parts of its surface; others lie strewed around in the chaos of earth and rock which forms the border of the glacier,* and which it deposits in its descent and at its base, thus casting at the feet of the naturalist the testimonials of its elevated origin.

The arched opening we have been observing, sometimes near a hundred feet high, is the orifice of a duct which passes under the glacier, up through its whole length, and is the general outlet for the waters melting from various parts of the glacier, and draining through its thousand crevices. But the origin of the stream lies still higher up among the snows; and the duct appears to have been originally formed by the current, when the masses, as yet in the higher region, had not assumed their glacial form: as the stream flows in that lowest part of the ground to which it would naturally tend if the glacier were not there.† The ice forming the wall before us, fell many years since, in the form of snow, on the summits of the mountain; whence it has gradually descended, and gradually hardened in its descent, pressed on by the weight of succeeding fragments

* This border is called, in the Swiss Alps, *Gandcken*, *Ganda*; in Savoy, *Moraine*.

† See *Ramond*.

above, formed every year. This glacier then, though apparently motionless, does in fact move, at least during a certain season, making a progress of several feet in the course of the year. Observations on this head have been made in the glaciers of Faucigny. "Fir-trees planted in the crevices of the ice," M. Ramond informs us, "have served as points of comparison. One of the most decisive experiments of this kind we owe to M. Hennin, then French minister at Geneva. The result of all that have been made seems to be, that the progress of the ice is about fourteen feet* in a year. It is not possible, however, that this law should be universal: it must vary with the declivity and direction of the valleys of ice: in short with the pressure of the superior masses, and the direction of that pressure. The temperature, likewise, of the regions in which the glaciers are, must farther modify the rate of movement. The soil, more or less moistened by the melting of the ice, favours more or less its descent." The lower channels are loaded with the enormous weight of the snows of the high region, and have thus a provision made to supply the more rapid thaw incident to their situation.

"The slow process," continues Mons. R., "which draws insensibly to the foot of the Alps the

* The French foot is about 13 inches English.

snows their summits have collected, is at once the origin of the glaciers and the cause of their permanence. If the snows remained invariably in their cold native regions, and received there only the augmentation required to repair the loss caused by evaporation, Switzerland would have no accumulations of ice, and would not send to the four seas which surround Europe the finest rivers of this part of the world. If, on the contrary, these same snows fell suddenly into the inferior valleys, before they had assumed the consistence which they acquire in the middle region by the alternation of frost and thaw, their dissolution would be as rapid as their fall, and they would quickly disappear with the furious torrents they had formed. It is not thus that Nature acts. She has appointed the highest land in Europe to water its surface: but this irrigation must be regular, or it would cease to be beneficial. The snows which accumulate in this elevated country should then melt slowly and uniformly. In order to melt, they must descend into the lower region of the atmosphere; and in order to melt slowly, they must exist there in a large mass, and under a very solid form—they should assume the consistence of the most compact ice. Let us follow, in detail, this singular transformation. Nothing but snow, indeed, falls from the clouds (on the tops of the higher Alps), and that which

attaches itself to these elevated summits, as it can never undergo a complete thaw, must remain in that form, or be covered only with a slight varnish of imperfect ice, caused by the agglutination of the parts of the surface most exposed to the sun: it is this resplendent crust which has sometimes deceived observers with regard to the nature of the covering of these mountains. All the parts of that covering are very easily detached, and often fall in an icy powder to the bottom of the (high) valleys just round. Such is the first state of the higher snows, and such the first step they take towards the lower valleys.

“ Directly below these eminences, and in the elevated basin which receives at once their spoils and the snows of the atmosphere, the temperature is less glacial, the sun has some power, and days of thaw suspend the rigours of winter. There the snows are found more condensed and more adhesive: they will already bear the foot, but still preserve the trace of it. Here is the immense reservoir from which the glaciers draw. An infinity of branches escape, in every direction, along the steep valleys which descend towards the plains. Their snows, prepared in the superior basin, and become more solid, are fitted to sustain the trial to which a rather more temperate region will expose them. The second step is now taken.

“ In their new residence, the snows are exposed

to longer thaws, but the frost is scarcely less severe. The mass becomes much more penetrated with the water produced by a solution of some of its particles; but whilst saturated with the moisture, the cold seizes it, and transforms the whole into a sort of *semi-ice*, which has already some transparency: here begins the glacier.*

“ The work is not yet finished, but it tends rapidly towards its completion. Every *toise* of descent towards the lower region gives to the ice an additional degree of hardness and transparency, and the glacier, soon entirely metamorphosed, no longer retains any thing which recalls its origin.†

“ In casting, however, an attentive eye on that part where the transformation is the most complete, that is to say, at the foot of the glacier, it will be observed that it does not yet form a perfectly homogeneous whole, and that it is composed of two very different sorts of ice. That which forms the inferior stratum, more compact and more transparent, is of a hardness surpassing that of our most perfect ice: it is also like that in all respects, and breaks, with a slight blow,

* There are very few glaciers, the direction of which lies east and west: and all are surrounded with high mountains, whose shadows diminish considerably the effect of the sun's rays, during the three summer months. See *Ebel*.

† It will be observed that the impression of Mons. R. on this point is different to my own. *Translator*.

in angular splinters bounded by plane surfaces. But that composing the irregular, rocky, and jagged masses, is more white and lighter, as well as less solid, and separates easily into globular fragments, which are only aggregations of similar particles. The lower ice is then the product of water regularly crystallized, whilst the other is still but a sort of snow, the particles of which are agglutinated by a succession of thaws and frosts."

The foregoing details on the form and formation of glaciers must not be applied without exception to all. "Collections (of ice) are seen, which, being situated in extremely warm valleys, receive every year a reinforcement of auxiliary snows, by the periodical fall of an avalanche, which regularly forms above them. Some have been seen, which, left to their own pressure on a very steep declivity, have suddenly rushed on the pastures below them, and destroyed them for ever. New glaciers have sometimes formed in hollows little exposed to the sun's rays, where the snows of winter are maintained by those which the heat of summer has detached from the higher mountains. It is this last phenomenon which the inhabitants of the Alps have in view, when they advance as an axiom, that a glacier is produced wherever a portion of snow, however small, has remained for the space of a year.

. " After having described the general forms of the glaciers, owing to their origin, I shall not stay to paint the innumerable varieties that distinguish them: these are as numerous as places and circumstances. Here, a band of ice, applied to a steep rock, detaches itself from it in proportion as the sun heats its resting place, and appears, seen in profile, like a transparent and extremely elevated peak the equilibrium of which seems a prodigy. There, a collection of ice, having reached the edge of a precipice, overhangs the depth, bending in a semi-arch. In another place this projection, detached by its weight, leaves a perpendicular wall of ice of a terrific height. Between mountains but little separated, the glacier is a narrow strait: farther on, it is an immense sea, above which some half-inguifed summits but just raise themselves. When it escapes through a narrow pass, it is a furious torrent whose waves urge and pursue each other. All in this scene recalls the idea of motion and noise; but silence and immobility surround you."

With regard to the number of the glaciers, "there are reckoned," says Ebel, "about four hundred glaciers in the chain of the Alps, from Mont Blanc to the limits of the Tyrol; of which there are but very few that are only a league in

length, whilst there are a multitude from six to seven leagues long, from half to three-quarters of a league wide, and from a hundred to six hundred feet deep. It is impossible to measure exactly the sum total of the surfaces of all these glaciers: a general idea only can be formed. I have, however, endeavoured to form a calculation approaching the truth, as to the extent of these surfaces; and I have found, that the part of the Alps comprehended in Switzerland, between Mont Blanc and the frontiers of the Tyrol, must form a sea of ice more than a hundred and thirty leagues square. Such are the inexhaustible reservoirs that maintain the largest and most important rivers of Europe."

The nature of the surface varies with the nature of the ground. In valleys nearly level the glaciers present few crevices: when, on the contrary, they are on steep and uneven slopes, crevices and elevations are formed measuring from 50 to 100 feet. If the slope is inclined more than 30 or 40 degrees, the masses break and assume the most fantastic forms. "During winter, the profoundest silence reigns on the glaciers; but as soon as the air begins to grow warm, and during the summer, a frightful roaring is heard from time to time, accompanied by terrific shocks that make the whole mountain tremble. Whenever a crevice forms, it is with a noise like thunder. When

these detonations are heard several times in a day, they are supposed to indicate a change of weather.*

Currents of air insupportably cold sometimes issue from the crevices, attributed to sudden changes in the atmosphere, but possibly produced by the waters breaking their way from icy enclosures: as torrents are also seen to rush suddenly from the fissures. Sometimes a sort of circular well occurs, filled with water, and produced by a large stone, which, heated by the sun, has melted a passage downwards. Travellers amuse themselves by darting the mountain staves, with which they are furnished, to the bottom of these wells, and seeing them rise to the surface.

So great is the proportion of that part of the surface of the Alps which is covered with ice and snow, that, "if it were possible," observes Ramond, "to rise above their summits, and embrace their whole mass at one glance, the fertile parts would disappear before the uninhabitable spaces. Two principal and adjacent seas of ice, one to the north-east, and the other to the south-west, would directly fix the attention. In the former would be perceived, like half-sunk islands, the mountains which run from the St. Gothard and the Grimsel, to the Schreckhorn; on the other side

* *Ebel.*

would be distinguished, in a uniform livery, the formidable range of those which rise between Mounts St. Bernard and Velan, and Mont Blanc. From these seas a multitude of branches would be seen to divide, which tend towards each other, mingle, and cross each other in all directions, connect the large masses with the smaller ones, and invade all that lies in the neighbourhood of this focus of frosts. Amid this uniform white, some peaks would be observed of a different colour, which, though enchased in ice, seem to have kept their summits clear of it. Formerly they were undoubtedly covered by it; but their fleshless skeletons have since become incapable of retaining it: nature has spared their old age from the common servitude. Some dark spots would indicate the place of the most extensive cultivated lands and pastures; but the eye would seek in vain the imperceptible interstices in which man has made passes; and the Valais, the widest interval the beds of ice leave between them, would be but a narrow ribbon silvered by the Rhone."

With regard to the increase of the whole mass of ice in the Alps, different opinions have prevailed. Ebel thinks that, though glaciers sometimes advance considerably, such as do so are commonly found to diminish afterwards for several years successively; the valleys above having, probably, been so cleared by the discharge, as

to require several years to restore the former propelling pressure. Ramond, on the other hand, is decidedly of opinion that, how melancholy soever the fact, the ice tends to cover the whole surface of the high Alps, and to isolate the more temperate valleys they inclose. One must have seen little, he observes, of the collections of ice, and have little consulted the herdsmen alarmed by their vicinity, not to know how many glaciers there are bearing the names of the pastures they have lately destroyed. He was assured by the celebrated Haller, the Pliny of Switzerland, then at the age of eighty, that he remembered to have seen from Berne, in his early youth, mountains stripped of their snows during the greater part of the summer, but which were, when Ramond wrote, constantly covered. This last author also mentions, as a curious fact, that the inhabitants of Alsace, situated on the same side of the Alps as Berne, appear formerly not to have known the true name of these mountains, and consequently termed them, *Hohe-Blauen*, the *High Blues*; a name once descriptive of their appearance, and still found in maps of Mérian, but which was falling into disuse as inapplicable to the brilliant white they had since assumed.

M. Ramond thus concludes the remarks on the glaciers from which we have been selecting.

“ I willingly abandon particular descriptions and

cold details, to works intended to describe every thing, and explain every thing. But why have I not brought back from this new world the power of painting it to the imagination, as it has been painted before my own eyes; to retrace the feelings it has inspired—the ideas it has created! let no one judge of these solitudes by the solitudes of our plains. Here below, all lives—all has a soul. In the most secluded retreat, in deserts where I find no traces of men, I find a family of birds which recalls our families; a republic of insects which retraces our nations and their industry, their relations, and their quarrels. The rustling of a tree, the agitation of a bush, the rapid flow and the murmur of a rivulet, all bring me back to the sensation of existence, by suggesting the idea of motion, the pleasantest of all ideas, because it banishes that of nonentity. But how different are these immense deserts of the Alps!
. An eternal silence reigns in this isolated region. If, at a great distance, an avalanche falls down its precipices, if a rock rolls over its ice, this sound will be heard alone: no living creature will answer with a cry of terror; no timid birds will fly in tumult; the winding labyrinths of these mountains, covered with a snow which deafens them, will receive in silence this sound which will be followed by no other sound. Who but the observer of Nature would suppose that this vast

tomb encloses her secret laboratory; and that like a careful monarch who in the quietest recess of his palace anxiously meditates the happiness of his people, the mother of the world prepares, in this abode defended by avenues so terrific, the flowers that she will strew over our plains?"

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 4.

L'air en tremble, et soudain, s'écroutant à la fois,
Des hivers entassés l'épouvantable poids
Bondit de roc en roc, roule de cime en cime,
Et de sa chute immense ébranle au loin l'abîme :
Les hameaux sont détruits, et les bois emportés. . . .

DELILLE.

“THE expense of the glacial mass to supply its inferior branches, and the prodigious loss which it suffers by evaporation, would yet not suffice to counterbalance the continual augmentation it receives, if the higher snows descended into the region where they are to dissolve, only at the slow rate of their regular march, and under the solid form which they acquire by this gradual descent. But the heights, soon overloaded, with their weight, and being no longer able to retain them on their steep declivities, disencumber themselves by sending them, under the form of avalanches,* into the depths where the rays of

* Also called *lavanges*. “The word *lavange* is derived from the German term *lauine*, by which the inhabitants of the Swiss Alps de-

the sun have more activity. Thus, arrived before their time at the goal to which they all tend, they are exposed without defence to the action of the heat, and dissolve with a facility which restores the equilibrium between the losses and the augmentations.*

“So long as the tender and powdery snows which cover the firs are not fallen, avalanches must be expected; so that the danger commonly lasts from two to four days after it has snowed. When the snows are tender, the avalanches are more frequent; but they are more dangerous in thaw. When the snow falls on the frozen surface of older snow, it more readily forms avalanches than when it falls on a thawed surface. Avalanches occur in winter, in spring, and in summer.

“The cold or windy Avalanches (*Wind-Lauinen*). When the high mountains are covered with recent snow, and the wind or some other cause detaches flakes of it, these often fall along the declivity of the rocks, where they increase to a monstrous size; after which they pursue their formidable course,

signate this phenomenon. The word *avalanche*, which expresses the same thing, and which is more in use in the *Romance** country, has for its etymon the old word *avaler*, to descend, no longer used in this sense; or rather the adverb *à-val*, from the monkish Latin *ad vallem*, which is still in use in the language of mariners, and which is the origin of the word *avaler*.” *Ramond*.

* *Ramond*.

* The eastern part of the canton of Vaud was formerly so called (*Pays Roman ou Romand*).

rolling to the bottom of the valleys. When men or cattle have the misfortune to be overtaken and buried in this sort of avalanche, they may be saved by speedily removing the snow, which is practicable, as these masses are not compact. When the avalanches are not very considerable, those overtaken by them sometimes contrive to make their way out, by melting the snow with their breath joined to the effect of their perspiration, and by keeping the body in continual motion. But when the avalanche is too large, and there is no external aid, the unhappy man within it perishes with cold.

“The *Spring-Avalanches*, (*Schlag-Grund* or *Schloss-Lauinen*). In the course of the winter, enormous masses of snow collect, and advance considerably beyond the steeps of the rocks, so as to overhang the land below. In the months of April and May, when the sun has recovered some force, and a sudden thaw occurs, these masses break and fall by their own weight, or by the agitation of the air created by the horses' bells, by the voices of men, or by storms. These avalanches then rush with incredible violence into the lower regions, drawing with them in their descent masses of stone, trees, and tracts of land; they rend the rocks, bury beneath their ruins houses and villages, and overthrow whole forests with an irresistible impetuosity. It is in the spring that this sort of

avalanche commonly takes place; and it is these that render the passage of the high Alps so dangerous at this season. The least sound is capable of producing a fall of the snows. Those who are under the necessity of passing the Alps in the spring ought to contrive to travel in company. The travellers then pass on at convenient distances from each other, in order that they may fly to the assistance of those who may be overtaken by an avalanche. In dangerous countries, all the bells should be taken from the horses, and the traveller must set out early in the morning, before the sun has softened the snows; marching quickly, and in the greatest silence. He may also take the precaution of firing a pistol before passing the most dangerous places; for this agitation of the air usually draws down the masses the most disposed to fall, before he is exposed to their violence. The inhabitants of the mountains, however, know precisely the spots which present, every year, dangers of this kind; it is therefore of the greatest importance to follow their advice. Those who have the misfortune to be overwhelmed by a spring-avalanche, are, for the most part, lost without resource: they are stifled, or crushed under this enormous weight. The snow it is composed of is in so hardened a state, that a man or horse buried in it is absolutely unable to extricate himself without external assistance: it sometimes also,

forms, across the torrents of the Alps, natural arches, over which bodies of considerable weight are conveyed even when summer is far advanced.

“The frightful impetuosity of the cold and the spring-avalanches is beyond imagination. The fall of these masses of snow, which often descend from the height of several thousand feet, produces so violent an agitation of the air, that cottages are sometimes overturned, and men thrown down and stifled, at a considerable distance from the place where the avalanche has passed. So prodigious is sometimes the violence with which they fall, that they cover, in the valleys, surfaces of more than a league in length; and their ravages extend to places more than two leagues distant from the foot of the rock from which they fell. They always drag a great number of stones down from the mountains, and leave, in the pastures of the Alps and in the valleys, the deplorable traces of their devastations. These frightful vestiges sometimes subsist for a long course of years, like those left by the *wild torrent*,* striking with sterility the most smiling meadows.

“The *Summer, or Dust-Avalanches* (*Staub-Lauinen* or *Sommer-Lauinen*). This third sort of avalanche takes place only in summer: they are neither dan-

* The *torrent sauvage*, or *nant sauvage*, which occasions dreadful ravages, is produced by waters, collected in some mountain basin, bursting their enclosure and rushing on the valleys below.

gerous for men nor for cattle, because they scarcely ever fall but on the most elevated parts of the mountains, where the snow remains the whole year. They present a very curious spectacle: you seem to see a stream of silver, surrounded by a cloud of extremely fine snow, precipitating itself from the rocks; the mass increases as it passes from step to step; it proceeds with a sound resembling that of thunder, and is prolonged by the echoes amid the sublime silence of the Alps. It is commonly when the sky is calm, and the westerly winds reign, that this sort of avalanche occurs. Travellers who pass over the Scheideck, from Grindelwald to Meyringen, seldom miss the pleasure of seeing the spectacle these summer-avalanches present.

“ It has been observed that avalanches penetrate into countries where none had been seen for centuries.*

“ A warm wind from the south, which the inhabitants of the Swiss Alps call *foen*—the same as, in the first days of March, changes suddenly the temperature of the air in the neighbouring countries, which in one day enamels the meadows with violets, and gives to him who breathes it the first feeling of spring—the *sirocco* of the Italians, quickly sweeps the summits of the Alps. The

* *Ebel.*

avalanches then succeed each other without interruption, torrents shoot from all the glaciers, and the rivers, suddenly swollen, overflow their banks. When this wind rises, it finds, over the Alps, a body of icy air opposing its passage; it struggles with it, sets it in motion, but does not gain possession of its place till after two days; and the inhabitants of the northern plains of Switzerland* find, during two days, a cold wind predicting the hot wind which will blow on the third."†

Besides the causes of avalanches here assigned, they may occur from the ice of the high valleys stretching to the edge of precipices, and falling over: the term seems also to be sometimes applied to such accidents as the fall of quantities of rocky fragments, and earth from the mountains.

* This takes place even in Suabia and High-Alsace, although in a far less perceptible manner. *Ramond.*

† *Ramond.*

THE

TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 5.

Ici de frais vallons, une terre féconde ;
Là des rocs décharnés, vieux c semens du monde :
A leur pied le printemps, sur leurs fronts les hivers.
Salut, pompeux Jura, terrible Montanverts,
De neiges, de glaçons, entassements énormes,
Du temple des frimas colonnades informes,
Prismes éblouissans, dont les pans azurés,
Défiant le soleil dont il sont colorés,
Peignent de pourpre et d'or leur éclatante masse,
Tandis que, triomphant sur son trône de glace,
L'Hiver s'enorgueillit de voir l'astre du jour
Embellir son palais et décorer sa cour.

DELILLE.

WINTER lingers long in the elevated valleys of the Alps ; and all the beams of a summer sun, which is admitted but a few hours in a day, are required to clear the mountain-paths from the snows. So that, were it only for the sake of gaining access to the wonders surrounding the regions of the glaciers, autumn is the season to visit Switzerland : not to mention the vintage of that country, of France, or of the banks of the Rhine.

I set out from Geneva towards the valley of Chamouny, in the latter end of August, accompanied by two young men of the former place, in a *char-de-coté*, a very convenient sort of jaunting car much used here, the seat of which is placed side-wise, on two elastic poles, passing from the fore-wheels to those behind: so near is the foot-board to the ground, and so clear is it of the wheels, that even a lady might alight in safety when travelling at a gallop. It was early in the morning when we issued from the gates, and ascended the hill towards the large and populous village of Chêne; the lake and the Jura retiring behind us. The mountains present changing aspects as you approach and pass them. The Voirrons, a cultivated mountain on the left, bears on its fir-crowned ridge, traced against the sky, the hardly distinguished ruins of a Carthusian convent; the conical form of the Mole rises before you; and the Salève is seen on the right, whose rocky precipice towards Geneva soon offers a striking profile as you pass, contrasting with the pastures on its opposite side, gradually slanting from the summit to the base. Passing through Chêne, we crossed a small stream, the boundary between the canton of Geneva, and the Sardinian states; and pursued our way through a richly varied country, where the fruit-trees hung their treasures over the road, and the scenery was animated with groups of Savoyard

peasants and cattle. The task of watching cattle, for want of complete enclosures, employs, or at least takes up, many hands; but the women sometimes occupy themselves at their station, in peeling hemp or knitting. We passed, on the right, the ruins of the chateau of Mornay, and on the left, those of the castle of Faucigny, on the summit of a stupendous craggy rock partially clothed with green: this last was built in the eleventh century, and destroyed in the wars of the sixteenth. We alighted from our car at Bonneville, and proceeded on foot; it having been pronounced a pity not to enjoy the fine walk towards the village of St. Martin, our first day's destination. The little town of Bonneville, became, long since, the capital of Faucigny in consequence of a fire which destroyed Cluse: it possessed formerly a college, where grammar and rhetoric were taught, and has still, in the *maison commune*, a collection of books from the different religious houses of the province. The Arve is here crossed by a bridge; and that river leaves a wide stony bed never covered entirely but during the high floods. We approached the Brézon, a beautiful mountain, exhibiting the varieties of bare craggy summits, green rocks, and wood; with pastures and cultivated land appearing here and there on the heights. Our road lay between this mountain and the Mole, which form the outer portal of the Alps. The Reposoir suc-

ceeds to the Brézon, and is named from a convent once inhabited by Carthusians. On inquiring if any of them yet remained, a man replied, with an air of dry humour which I have several times remarked in these people, '*non, nous les avons tous mangés.*' This was, perhaps, an allusion to the severe sufferings of the poor Savoyards in the preceding winter from scarcity of provisions: many, indeed, would have been reduced to a state of starvation, but for the benevolent exertions of the inhabitants of Geneva in establishing soup-houses among them. The court of Turin seems to trouble itself little about this neglected portion of its subjects, who send to Geneva a constant supply of mendicants; and the Genevese are unfortunate in having, after providing for their own poor, an accession of those whose misery they cannot radically relieve. I have found there the prevalence of mendicity, and that of the most importunate order, quite an alloy to the pleasure of walking. Great numbers of the Savoyards assemble on a Sunday morning in one of the streets of that city to be hired as labourers: and when a time of scarcity, and consequently of discontent, rendered it improper to admit such an assemblage armed with their scythes, &c., they might be seen collected at the gates.

At the village of Siongy, a portly priest was walking, whose kind and pastoral manner, how-

ever, I could but observe as he stopped to shake hands with a peasant. A less creditable appendage of that church appeared by our road side; a cross, with a partly illegible inscription attached to it, holding out the comfortable offer of forty days' indulgence—*a ceux qui diront aux pieds de cette croix un Pater et un Ave, et feront un acte de contrition, d'amour de Dieu, et de remerciement des effets opérés par.*"

Patches of maize are seen near some of the cottages; a grain used by the people to thicken their soup: and in the fields an abundance of buckwheat, which under the name of *bled-noir*, enters into the composition of their bread. The vines look poor and small: they are so low as often to have no stakes at all to support them.

Before arriving at Cluse, we found ourselves in a beautiful valley surrounded by an amphitheatre of mountains of finely varied forms: some parts almost perpendicular; others with gentler declivities. On the slope of one, rose a village church; and the tower of that of Siongy appeared on looking back towards the entrance of the valley. This cultivated plain was enlivened by numbers of the inhabitants employed in rural labours; whilst peace and plenty seemed to reign around them in this sweet seclusion. A mount embowered in oaks bears on its top, hid by foliage, the ruins of the castle of Mussel. We were now en-

tering the palace of the king of mountains; and this charming valley forms a vestibule worthy of his court. The Arve, by the side of which we were to travel all the way to Chamouny, enters the vale of Cluse, through a narrow opening between the mountains.

Cluse, a poor town, carried on formerly a considerable manufacture of horology; trading in that branch with Geneva and Germany. The inhabitants, since they lost, in the 14th century, the prerogatives of the capital of Faucigny, have made several attempts to regain them. They once entered Bonneville in arms, pillaged it, and carried away with them all the *tailable* men of the neighbouring lords, that would follow them to enjoy the privileges offered to residents in their town.

We continued up the course of the Arve, turning up a road through the narrow and romantic opening whence it issues. The valley afterwards widens; and the road winds under wooded steps of the mountains, with mossy fragments of rock scattered among the trees by its side, and with a profusion of the dog's-tooth-violet among the plants and flowers.

High in the side of an almost perpendicular rock, is the mouth of the cavern called *la Balme*, or *Caverne de la Balme*: it contains some stalactites, but Mr. Coxe found nothing there to compensate the difficulties of the ascent, which took

him nearly an hour. It is of considerable depth; and about half-way in, is a well or pit. This cavern was long considered as an enchanted spot; and from the sound made by stones thrown to the bottom of the pit, they were imagined to chink against a heap of money. Some persons, consequently, got themselves let down; but soon cried out to be drawn up again, declaring that a black goat rose up from the bottom and bit their legs. At length some of the inhabitants of Cluse, duly provided with relics and consecrated tapers, made a solemn entry into the cavern. With such powerful protection, no wonder the adventurers were emboldened, and the imaginary demon chased from his haunt: he must, however, have taken his treasure with him, as they had not the satisfaction of finding it.

The mountains are cultivated to a great height, displaying an extent of green pastures, richly clad with wood and interspersed with cottages. I know not how to convey an idea of the sweet vale of Magland which we now entered: its quiet glades and cottages, its green mounts and slopes of turf crowned with trees, its cool streams yielding, as they wind, fertility and beauty, and its white goats* browsing on the woody steeps, should be

* Though many goats are kept in this neighbourhood, cows are the principal source of their dairy produce: the smaller and more agile animal finds food where no cow could possibly climb.

painted by a Claude or a Poussin. But all is not, it seems, paradisiacal in the vale of Magland; as the inhabitants are subject to the visit of bears: three of these animals, we were told, had been lately seen in the neighbourhood, and some men were then searching for them on the other side of the valley.

The* *Nant d'Arpenaz*, a beautiful cascade, shoots from the summit of a steep rock 860 feet high; and falls in a light waving sweep almost in the state of vapour, which the wind sometimes blows away over the rocks. The rocks exhibit curiously varied strata, perpendicular, horizontal, or in concentric curves. Our inn at the village of St. Martin, was in the high road to Chamouny, where a bridge crosses the Arve to the town of Sallenche at a small distance. We renewed our march, next morning, along this continued line of valleys traversed by the Arve. We stopped at the cottage of a peasant in the vale of Passy. Though the interior of the house was wretched, and the windows of the room we sat down in, (an apartment used also as a bed-room) were without glass, yet the humble inhabitants perhaps considered themselves in possession of all that was necessary. We here procured some re-

* There are several streams in this country bearing the name of *Nant*, a word signifying, in the *Welch* language, *brook*, and one of the many traces of the ancient Celtic tongue once prevailing here.

freshment, consisting of rich frothy milk, fruit, and bread; if I may apply the term refreshment to the last article, which set my powers of mastication at complete defiance: like Bloomfield's Suffolk cheese,

Too big to swallow, and too hard to bite.

I learned that the very solid food before me, manufactured partly of rye, was about two months old: it is not uncommon to keep it for a longer time. Our host, though an elderly man, assured me he eat it without sopping. Our entertainer would not readily accept a recompense for his simple and unaffected hospitality. I think he spoke of having a son in Paris; and the work of a modern traveller* now before me gives some details, which I am tempted to introduce here, on the young adventurers from Savoy to that gay metropolis, who seek, in a foreign country, the maintenance denied by the scanty resources of their own.

“ ‘The manner in which the caravans of young mountaineers are organized,’ says the canon Grillet, † ‘is sufficiently singular to deserve mention. An old trader of St. Ferréol, who had acquired, by the experience of many journeys, an exact knowledge of the countries he had traversed, and

* *Voyage en Italie, par Geo. Mallet. Genève, 1817.*

† *Dict. Hist. de la Savoie.*

‘ of the little profits which might be made there
‘ during the winter, assembled in the hamlets all
‘ the young people who chose to follow him. The
‘ fathers were eager to present their children, to
‘ praise their intelligence, their health, and their
‘ talents: the trader, like a good recruiter, examin-
‘ ed their make attentively, interrogated them on
‘ the knowledge they had already acquired, either
‘ in trade, service, or industry, and decided on the
‘ price he could promise to the parents for the use
‘ of their children during the winter course. That
‘ of youths from eighteen to twenty, was six
‘ crowns of six francs each; four crowns are promi-
‘ sed to those of the second class; and those who
‘ were only twelve years old carried home only
‘ twelve francs. As soon as the proposals were
‘ accepted, all this youthful band was in the
‘ service and under the authority of the trader,
‘ whom every father exhorted his children to
‘ obey and respect; to render him an account of
‘ all profits, to practice strictly all the duties of
‘ religion, and to return into their country without
‘ reproach the following spring.’ ”

“ Accident led a stranger into the habitation where these young people were assembled in Paris. Passing, one day, over the *Pont-Neuf*, he stopped near a sick child who was asking alms: struck with his misery, the stranger inquired his country, and his means of subsistence. The child

replied that he was a Savoyard, and that an accident had forced him to desist from labour; offering to lead the inquirer to the spot where he lived with many of his countrymen. The stranger followed him into an obscure part of the Ile-St. Louis, and entered with him a large room. There retired, every evening, all the members of the colony, who had come from the foot of the Alps, to take up their abode on the banks of the Seine. The little pedlar who traversed the streets with his pack, and displayed his merchandise on the quays, the organist, the exhibiter of marmots, and

. ces honnêtes enfans,
 Dont la main légèrement essule
 Les longs canaux engorgés par la suite,

returned in the evening to the same lodgings: two elderly peasants received the money, and required an account of the day. The evening was devoted to instruction: these children learned to write and read; they studied the catechism; they copied it out; they wrote to their friends. Thus were maintained among them the habits of order and the probity which distinguish their nation, and which secure them confidence, when, being grown up, they pass to a more lucrative employ."

The village of Passy, is perched aloft on the side of a mountain: we turned aside from our road, and climbed the steep and rocky ascent to-

wards it. Any poor mountaineer of the district who has to toil up this path to mass on Sunday, if he kept, *en bon catholique*, an account of *merits*, how oft he

. *fasts*, and *item* goes to church,

might certainly add to the latter article a little N. B. on the difficulties of the ascent: though if said catholic were a lover of the sublime and the picturesque, and were I his confessor, not a step of the road should be admitted in mitigation of penance. This fine elevation affords an ample recompense for the labour it imposes. The tower at the end of the church is said by the inhabitants to have existed long before the church itself. The entrance to the building is by an arch-way through the tower; and on each side is a Roman inscription, in good preservation, on stone let into the wall. These are both *ex voto* memorials dedicated to Mars; and one is by a flamen who, as appears from the inscription, held also the office of duumvir of the treasury. These inscriptions are conjectured to have been originally placed in a temple of Mars, supposed to have stood not far distant. In a spot in the neighbourhood, called *les Outards*, have been found plaster-mouldings, fragments of sculpture, and several medals in gold and silver, bearing the effigies of the first emperors. A paved Roman road of the second order

has also been found near the village. The churchyard offered a delightful resting place, and commanded a view across the valley below us to St. Gervais, a village with mineral springs and baths, embosomed in a recess of the opposite mountains. Near us was a newly closed grave, where the simple survivor had planted, at one end, a small cross with a garland of flowers attached to it; substituting for the flattering or the uncouth epitaph, the emblems of him who 'springeth up as a flower, and is cut down,' and of Him who is 'the resurrection and the life.'

We rambled by another way down the mountain, among delicious sloping orchards and pastures with romantic pathways, and regained the road we had left. Here and there is seen a cottage mantled with vine, among embowering foliage; fields and orchards slope up the mountains above them; the fir forests hang in a higher region; and higher still, rise the bold bare crags, among which the morning sun throws exquisite lights and shadows: the hoary form of Mont Blanc crowns the view along the valley. At Chede is another cascade; and here the road leaves the Arve and climbs towards Servoz, a still higher valley, where you again find yourself by the side of the river. At Chede, a man issued from the door of a *cabaret*, and joined us as our guide: the guides of Chamouny often proceed as far as St.

Martin to secure parties on the road. Mr. Southey has given a humorous enumeration of intelligent qualities found in a Swiss guide, in verses* presented to his conductor at parting, in place of the usual prose testimonial. I may mention, in addition, the corporeal endowment of toughness of fibre. This I had afterwards occasion to observe not far from this spot, in one of these men—one of the well-known Paccard family—who was

* By my troth,
This John Roth
Is an excellent guide :
A joker,
A smoker,
And a *savant* beside :

A geologist,
A metaphysician,
Who searches how causes proceed---
A system inventor,
An experimenter
Who raises potatoes from seed !

Each forest and fell,
He knoweth full well,
The *chalets* and dwellers therein ;
The mountains, the fountains,
The ices, the prices,
Ev'ry town---ev'ry village and inn.

Take him for your guide :
He has often been tried,
And will always be useful when needed :
In fair or foul weather
You'll be merry together,
And shake hands at parting as we did.

In consequence of this poetical recommendation, John Roth is said to have become a very popular guide. He permitted a traveller to take a copy of the above, which appeared in the *Times*, November 4, 1817.

riding behind a car in which myself and two others were travelling: a hind-wheel catching his leg, drew him down, and passed over his breast. A book or map of which he had taken charge, and which he had tucked into the bosom of his jacket, happily took the edge of the wheel. He was soon on his feet: though he appeared to suffer at first, he made light of his hurt, and would be by no entreaties prevailed on to take our place in the car, and lie on the cushion. It was strange enough after springing from the car in alarm at so frightful an accident, to hear the honest fellow refusing this little indulgence in such ceremonious terms as, '*Non Messieurs, vous êtes trop bons.*' He again mounted the tail-board, and jolted on as before.

In ascending the winding road, you have again a view of the cascade of Chede; and soon arrive at a small piece of water, which is dignified with the appellation of the lake of Chede: the water is of a fine blue colour, reflecting the snowy summits of the Alps; and the opposite bank is green turf, sprinkled with trees and fragments of rock. Just beyond is a clear spring gushing out beside a tree, at the foot of a steep rock. Here the young peasant, with yellow hair and the light Alpine complexion, stands holding out an alluring draught: a temptation to the traveller heated and parched with thirst, to indulge imprudently in these cold waters, filtered through the veins of the mountain

from snow or ice above.* We had been threatened with bad weather; it had begun to rain; and as we advanced, the rain increased and the thunder rolled. As the weather had been pronounced likely to continue, my companions, discouraged, resolved not to proceed; and inquired of our guide for the bridge across the Arve, in order to reach St. Gervais. My home was not so near the glaciers as theirs; and I was determined not so easily to relinquish or defer my project: they at length concluded to accompany me. After crossing torrents, and passing through less beautiful and more savage scenery, we arrived at Servoz. Here are mines of lead with some silver, also of copper and iron, now no longer worked. A lake is supposed to have formerly existed here, and to have discharged itself by a sudden irruption, through a passage now called the *Portrui*; overwhelming and burying in gravel the town of Dionisia or Diouza near Chede. The washings of the Arve discovered, some years since, the top of a chimney; but no further search has been made. Beyond the village is the tomb of a young German traveller,

* Ebel recommends mixing a few drops of spirit with these mountain-draughts, to prevent ill effects: he informs us, by way of caution to travellers, that "father Floridus, a monk of the convent of Engelberg, climbed on a mountain, one very hot day: in descending, he approached a rivulet to refresh himself; but scarcely had he washed his forehead and hands with this icy water, when he fell dead and stiff, struck with apoplexy."

who perished, in 1801, in a crevice of the glacier of the **Buet**. This monument was erected by the French: in front it bears the name of the unfortunate youth, the names of the guides who found his body, and the date 21 *Thermidor An 9.*, with the names of the consuls Bonaparte, Cambacères, and Lebrun; one side is inscribed with cautions to travellers, and the other with the praises of the French government.

As we stopped under the shelter of the covered bridge near this spot, a man arrived on a mule: he was the brother-in-law of our guide, and we accepted his offer of the use of his mule; to which was to be attached that of two neat chambers in his house at Chamouny. We proceeded, alternately riding, for though we were already perhaps more than a thousand feet above the level of the lake of Geneva, we had still a considerable ascent before arriving at the valley of Chamouny, which is 3,380 feet above the sea: an elevation surpassing that of the summit of our Helvellyn. I had, in a subsequent excursion, more favourable weather for enjoying the charms of this neighbourhood; particularly on arriving at the *Pont-Pelissier*, a wooden bridge over the Arve, placed amid a most striking assemblage of the sublime and the beautiful. To the right are the green valley and the village of Servoz, backed with a sweep of sheltering mountains; and on an eminence

is the feudal ruin of the castle of St. Michael: on the other side of the bridge, the Arve comes down through profound ravines, bordered by stupendous fir-clad heights, with mountain-tops peeping beyond, and the whole magnificently Alpine.

From the bridge we begin to climb, and this part of the road is called *les Montées*: as it turns with precipices on one hand and a wall of rocks on the other, it sometimes overlooks the river rushing far below in the ravine. On the vast steeps on the opposite side, goats are seen clinging at an astonishing height; whilst the winding horn of the goat-herd, resounding among the rocks where the eye wanders in vain to discover him, adds an air of romantic mystery to the scene: the clouds that now hung over, threw on it a shade of more solemn grandeur. We arrived at length in the valley of Chamouny: the road running by a lawn-like pasture, edged with fir and birch. Mont Blanc comes full in view, with the glaciers decending at intervals along the right side of the valley, and the peaks towering above.

We passed the glaciers *des Pêlerins* and *des Boissons*; the latter, travellers have been accustomed to walk on, but it is now become increasingly dangerous from the crevices.

It is singular that this interesting valley and its inhabitants should have remained almost unknown, till explored in 1741 by two of our own

countrymen, Mr. Pocock and Mr. Windham: some years afterwards the works of de Saussure and Bourrit excited so much interest about it, that from 1780 to 1792, it was annually visited by from 800 to 1200 strangers. Stone houses, and three inns—*hotels* as they are styled—have risen, where before was a collection of poor hovels. I found good accommodations, in a subsequent visit, at the *Hotel de l'Union*. Our present quarters, which were decent, had much the air of an inn, though the house proved not to be one. Our apartments were separated by a room, where, if the saints on the walls should realize old legends of the church, and become animated, one of their first impressions would certainly be astonishment at seeing a billiard-table before them, in the remote recesses of the Alps. The evening closed: one of my companions, who sung agreeably, exercised his vocal powers; and amongst the rest, part of the 23d Psalm was applicable to the approaching hour of sleep:

Je me couche sans peur,
Je m'endors sans frayeur,
Sans crainte je m'éveille;
Dieu, qui soutient ma foi,
Est toujours près de moi,
Et jamais ne sommeille.

The next morning brought us much the weather of the preceding day; the rain descended, and

the storm-clouds still brooded over the mountains. We had, therefore, to occupy ourselves in sitting by the fire and reading, visiting the naturalists' shops of minerals, crystals, Alpine plants, and stuffed animals, or casting looks of anxious augury at the clouds. In the afternoon, however, it held up; and forth we sallied, attended by our guide, to visit the source of the Arveiron,* that is to say, the foot of the *Glacier des Bois*. We have already described the appearance of the foot of the glacier.† The arch of ice from which the Arveiron flows, now of inconsiderable size, was, a year or two since, a hundred feet in height. A dreadful accident occurred here several years ago, from the imprudent firing of a pistol into the vault, perhaps to try the reverberation: of a party of three, one was killed by the fall of the ice; his father and another relation were carried away by the torrent, and had each a limb broken.

The ice had here made such progress into the valley, that if it continued to advance as it had done, the village of *les Bois* could not be many years longer in existence; and I have since learned that it has actually destroyed some houses. The rapid absorption of caloric by the glacier, from the surrounding atmosphere, is so perceptible in approaching it, as to impress a vast idea of the effect

* One of the tributaries of the Arve.

† No. 3.

produced on the climate of Switzerland and Savoy, by a hundred and thirty square leagues of ice, supposed to be contained amongst the Alps of those countries; not to mention the immense extent of snow. The neighbourhood of the ice afforded some beautiful flowers of the rhododendron. In the course of the ascent of this glacier, occurs a space running in nearly an horizontal direction, called the *Mer-de-Glace*; and this is a leading object in excursions to Chamouny.

We accordingly set out the next morning, between five and six,* attended by a guide, and provided with long staves or rather poles, pointed with iron; and after passing along the valley through fields of flax, oats, and pasture, we began to ascend the mountain called the Montanvert, which rises by the side of the *glacier des Bois*, and forms a part of the extensive base of Mont Blanc. The path mounts amid a forest of fir, and is sometimes steep and rugged, at others relieved by more level footing, winding among fragments of rock, mossy banks with fern and flowers, and low thickets of rhododendron; looking down on the valley of Chamouny, and its fields distinguished by patches of different hues undivided by hedges. A tract of devastation spread with dead firs, marks where the

* It is highly desirable to set out at an early hour, in order to avoid the oppressive effect of the sun reflected on the rocks you are climbing.

avalanche has swept itself an avenue down the mountain: here a trunk lies prostrate across the path; there a pile of the blasted stems is tossed confusedly together. At about a third of the ascent is the fountain called the *Source du Caillet*; a streamlet directed into the hollowed trunk of a tree: this is a halting place where the young mountaineers wait with fruit and milk; and here those who use mules alight and leave them. We reached, at length, after between two and three hours' march,* the lodge which overlooks the wonderful scene of the *Mer-de-Glace*, which is about half a league in breadth; though the illusion in perspective constantly found among such scenery, where objects abounding in sharp and prominent lines are seen through a rare atmosphere, diminishes very considerably the apparent extent. It certainly requires some effort of the imagination to convert this expanse, as some travellers have done, into a tempestuous sea suddenly arrested by the power of frost: this mighty collection of masses of ice, full of tortuous crevices, consists of forms too irregular, and with too little of an undulating character to resemble billows. On each side of its channel rise high pointed rocks and declivities, either bare, or partially clad with snow; and on looking up the glacier, it is seen to divide,

* The height of Montanvert is 2,730 feet above the valley of Chamouny, and 6,090 above the sea.

at some distance, into two branches. We had rain in our ascent, and snow on reaching this brow; but the sun soon shone beautifully on the ice. Opposite rises, from the edge of the glacier, a superb peak of granite, some thousand feet above it, called the *Aiguille du Drû*: at its foot are pastures, to which the approach is across the ice, and where a solitary herdsman passes the summer in the company of cows and goats, amid the noise of avalanches and mountain-waters. The lodge, an octagon building, where a herdsman attends, affords shelter and fire to the traveller, as well as milk from the cows fed near it: it was built by M. Desportes, a French resident at Geneva, some years after it had been projected, and a sum of money advanced by M. Sémonville, French ambassador to the court of Naples, who had been surprised here by a storm with the duke of Bassano and others. As you sit by the fire at the end of this little room you look through the door, across the *Mer-de-Glace*, to a cascade on the opposite side. We descended to the glacier, and advanced a little way on its surface: a few paces and a pause to look round afford a sufficient notion of its nature, without the necessity of traversing it by striding over crevices a hundred feet deep, where a slip on this very slippery footing might plunge you in an icy chasm beyond recovery. The ice has mostly an opaque appearance, as has

been already observed; but on breaking it with the iron spike, it is found to be an agglutination of roundish grains or knobs of clear brilliant ice. On the steep by the side of the glacier are flowers in bloom; but the vegetation is much less abundant than in other parts, and the rhododendrons are particularly nipped. An album is kept in the lodge, where travellers enter their names, and add, if they please, effusions in prose or poetry, original or quoted. This oglio, in such a variety of hands and languages, is amusing, however incongruous are some portions. I again visited this imposing solitude in company with some of my countrymen. The following was left in the album by one of our English party:—

Since custom allows, 'mid these wonders sublime,
 To scribble in prose, or to sparkle in rhyme,
 Thanks,—thanks to the hands that this shelter have wrought;
 The storm-beaten Sémonville's generous thought.
 How blest, who retains, when afflictions are past,
 The lesson of feeling he learned in the blast;
 And offers the hand and the heart of a brother
 To shield from the tempest the head of another!
 Here, too, the old proverb is well understood:
 'Tis a very ill wind that blows nobody good.'

It is usual for travellers to descend another way by the side of the glacier, to the foot of it, which we had visited the preceding afternoon: we returned the way we came. The aspect of the valley of Chamouny in itself, is somewhat cold,

and not so *riant* as I had imagined from description: its attractions lie in the grand objects which surround it; whilst the softer and more luxuriant beauties of the valleys which lead to it, contribute to render the excursion from Geneva to Chamouny transcendently charming. Winter lasts at Chamouny from October to May; and three feet depth of snow is usually found there at that season: at the village of Tour in the higher end of the valley, it rises to twelve feet. In summer, Reaumur's thermometer is, in the middle of the day, between 14° and 17° ; ($63\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ and $70\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ Fahrenheit): rarely rising to 20° , (77° Fahrenheit). Notwithstanding the severity of the climate, the sweet herbs and flowers of Mont Blanc, like those of Mount Hymettus, afford a delicious honey. The honey of Chamouny is celebrated; but the rigour of the winter does not admit of keeping bees there during that season: they are carried down to the vale of Passy towards the end of September, and brought back in the beginning of June.

We returned to Chamouny before twelve o'clock; and again set out, attended by our attentive guide Jaquet, towards the passage called the *Col de la Forclaz*, in order to reach the baths of St. Gervais. At a village church, a woman was kneeling on the steps with a child curiously covered up in a sort of cradle before her; and we afterwards heard the bell sounding for the christ-

ening as we passed along the valley. In ascending we had a view of several glaciers, and the green valley sprinkled with cottages below us. Near the skirts of a forest, were the ruins of a cottage destroyed in the spring by an avalanche: a father, a mother, and a child, had perished there together. The path of the avalanche was shewn by a cleared space where the trees were broken one way and another, or torn up by the roots. We rested on a grassy seat looking beautifully down along the vale, whilst a woman from a neighbouring cottage brought us milk for our refreshment. The descent to the village of St. Gervais is enchanting: when we appeared to have nearly reached our destination, a still lower valley opened beneath, where the baths are situated, near a water-fall. These warm springs are slightly sulphureous, and of a temperature sufficiently high to afford us the solace of a warm bath, after the fatigues of a day's march of ten or twelve leagues. We now found ourselves again in the world, and sat down to supper in the common dining-room, with a large company at the baths. Soon after ten o'clock, a car and pair of horses were prepared for us, and being well wrapped up, we passed through the vale of Magland, near midnight, by a fine moonlight.

I should have been less inclined for this nocturnal excursion, had I then heard, as I afterwards

did, a reputation for robbery and murder attached to this enchanting neighbourhood. As the criminals spoken of had been guillotined at Geneva, it must have been when that place and Savoy were under the French *régime*; so that the present character of the inhabitants of these valleys need not necessarily be impeached. But whether such facts are old or recent, they conspire, with a thousand others, against the fine theories of the sentimental school,* on the moral efficacy of beautiful scenery. It seems, indeed, on looking abroad into the world, as though much of such scenery were peculiarly distinguished as the haunt of depravity.†

* Passing by the specimens of this doctrine which Zimmerman, Akenside, and a host of others, would furnish, I select, as suited to the present occasion, some from Swiss and French writers, in which atmospheric influence takes the lead in the regenerating process.

“As for those who have reached some of these elevations of the globe, I appeal to them. Is there any one among them who on their summits has not found himself *regenerated*; and who has not found, with surprise, that he had left at the foot of the mountains his frailty, his infirmities, his cares, his anxieties; in a word, the weak part of his being, and the ulcerated portion of his heart?” *Ramond*.

“It seems as though, in rising above the abodes of men, we left behind all low and earthly feelings; and that as we approach the ethereal regions, the soul contracts something of their unchangeable purity.” *Rousseau*.

“It is there, too, that the soul springs with transport into the regions of the infinite. The sublimest thoughts---the noblest sentiments combine to infuse peace and happiness into the mind. An inspiration, new and unheard-of, comes to consecrate all its faculties to the worship of virtue. . . . No, it is only in the solitude of sublime nature that man finds himself restored to all his primitive dignity, &c.” *Ebel*.

But, *ohé, jam satis!*!--*Cant and rant* are, at least, not confined to the votaries of religious enthusiasm.

† The kingdom of Naples will not be found to be the only *paradiso abitato da diavoli*.

Switzerland affords a striking exception: but whilst it would be ridiculous to attribute the character of any nation to causes merely picturesque, the features of the land of the Swiss may have contributed not a little, politically, to form the national virtues of this interesting people; as, in other cases, a wild country may have nurtured its sons in wild and lawless habits. Far be it from me to undervalue the exquisite banquet spread around me, in

. . . . this universal frame

Thus wond'rous fair,

yet it cannot be concealed, that hearts the most highly susceptible of the emotions of taste, are but too often equally so, with regard to those of the passions; and it is well if lovely scenery has, in itself, a charm sufficiently powerful to counteract the voluptuous influence of climate with which it is so frequently combined. A moonlight scene in the bay of Naples might possibly soften, for a moment, a ferocious mood, but could never implant a virtuous principle.* For this, other means are appointed; means, happily, more widely diffused than the lines and the hues of superlative beauty. There is an energy which is independent of these accidents; which can not

* "There is no magical virtue in fields or groves, no local inspiration, which will elevate an *unprepared* mind from things natural to moral, from matter to spirit, from the creature to the Creator." *Bates's Rural Philosophy.*

only shed on them a genial efficacy, not their own,* but, in default of them, can impart that efficacy to others far less promising. The poetic *fatus* may be the vehicle of moral truth, and moral feeling; but it may also be mistaken for them. We may personify Nature, and then worship the allegorical being we have created and embellished; whilst we neglect to learn, from the earthquake, the pestilence, and the thousand other natural calamities, that disorder has entered the physical, as well as the moral world. The father of English philosophy did not disdain the comment which the Author of nature has made on his own works. "Thy creatures," says Lord Bacon, "have been my books, but thy SCRIPTURES much more. I have sought Thee in the courts, fields, and gardens, but I have found Thee in THY TEMPLES."

* Since writing the above, I have been struck with a passage among the private remarks of the late pious and devoted Professor Martyn:---

"Since I have known God in a saving manner, painting, poetry, and music, have had charms unknown to me before---I have received what I suppose is a taste for them; for religion has refined my mind, and made it susceptible of impressions from the sublime and beautiful. O how religion secures the heightened enjoyment of those pleasures, which keep so many from God by their becoming a source of pride!" *Memoir of the Rev. Henry Martyn, B. D.*

THE

TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 6.

Pour suivre le chamois errant dans la montagne,
Le jeune et tendre époux s'arrache à sa compagne.

ST. LAMBERT.

. Manet sub Jove frigido
Venator, teneræ conjugis immemor.

HOR.

AFTER describing the mountainous heights in the neighbourhood of Ober-Hasli, Ramond thus pursues his account of some of the wild animals of the Alps.

“ It is above this desert and desolate region, that is seen to hover the largest and the most terrible of birds; that eagle of the Alps, which far surpasses in strength and size the royal eagle; and which, inhabiting only the loftiest mountains of our hemisphere, finds only on the high summits of the other its corresponding kind. M. de Buffon ranges it in the species of golden vultures; M. de Bomare places it at the head of the eagles; the inhabitants of the country call it *læmmer-geyer*, *lamb-vulture*:

it is the bird which corresponds with the condor of the new world, as the Alps do with the Cordilleras.

“The *Læmmer-geyer*” (Mons. R. here cites the words of Bomare) “is a bird of prey of prodigious force, answering to its size; for the wings of this bird, stretched out, are fourteen feet from one extremity to the other. This tyrant of the air, the destruction of which has not yet been accomplished in the high mountains of Switzerland, wages a cruel war, as well on flocks of goats and sheep, as on chamois, hares, and marmots. When he sees, on a steep rock, some animal too powerful to be carried away, he flies so as to overthrow it down some precipice, in order to enjoy his prey more at ease. A few years ago, a *læmmer-geyer* of the largest sort seized a child of three years old, and would have carried it away, when the father, armed with a stick, ran at the cries of his child, and, as this bird placed on level ground takes wing with difficulty, attacked the ravisher, who quitted his prey to defend himself, and fell dead on the spot after a very obstinate combat.*

“The royal eagle,” continues Mons. R. “when the wings are spread, measures seven feet and a half from one of their extremities to the other; the *læmmer-geyer* is as much as fifteen or sixteen,† and his ferocity equals his strength and size. As

* Bomare, *Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle*.

† French feet.

king of the air, he requires, like kings, an immense space to subsist in. The same region seldom sees two of them together: they would famish one another even in a country which breeds a multitude of their subjects.

“ It is against the chamois, especially, that he should be observed displaying his strength and address. The chamois has on land, the same agility that the *læmmer-geyer* has in the air; he plays on the brink of precipices; he springs distances which it seems as though wings alone could transport him. Considerable strength is inseparable from such agility; and the chamois is a prey not unworthy of the most terrible of birds.* The *læmmer-geyer* goes to seek him in the bottom of the uninhabited valleys, where he feeds, sheltered from the pursuit of men, and attacking him, frightens him, and forces him to seek safety in flight. The rocks are the usual asylum of this timid animal: the eagle follows him thither, dodges him, and forces him to gain the heights. He bounds over the ice, springs from summit to summit with indefatigable swiftness, until, arrested on the edge of the abysses, he has no longer any other resource than to face his formidable enemy. The bird observes him, wheels round him,

* “ The chamois is only a little larger than the goat, but its strength is very superior to that of all animals of its kind. There is perhaps no man powerful enough to hold by the legs a chamois six weeks old.” *Ramond.*

and feigns several times to pounce on him: the chamois opposes his forehead to these false attacks, but the instant his posture is sufficiently embarrassed for his balance to be easily upset, the eagle, darting, precipitates him down the rocks with a stroke of its wing, into depths where his address cannot protect him from certain death; thither it follows him, despatches him with its beak and devours him.

“ I have seen at Berne, in the collection of M. Sprunglein, two *læmmer-geyers*, not of the yellow species, pointed out as the strongest and the largest: they measure across the wings ten (Fr.) feet. M. S. thinks they are never larger, which is the case with this species.* With regard to the yellow *læmmer-geyer*, the people of the country have always assured me that it measures as much as 18 Bernese feet, that is, about 16 feet of France (*de roi*) from the extremity of one wing to that of the other. I shall add to their testimony, that of M. de Voltaire, who has told me that one of these birds which he kept for three years in his court, measured fifteen feet between the wings. Some years ago a *læmmer-geyer*, having had a wing broken by a gun-shot, yielded after a long combat with

* I saw one last year, stuffed, in the collection of M. Schintz of Zurich. I think it was of the kind above-mentioned, and of similar dimensions. M. Schintz had preserved some of the partly digested contents of its stomach: there were part of the skull, and of the hoof, probably of a chamois. *Translator.*

three strong peasants armed with their small clubs; it was of the same dimensions, and was sold alive at Basle. The reward offered by the government of Berne for destroying these eagles is limited, as I am told, to a *louis* (about a pound sterling), and the peasants are not at all eager to chase them. The harm they do is not great: they live principally on chamois and marmots, rarely approach herds, and find abundant sustenance in the carcasses of animals swept away by the avalanches, or fallen down the precipices. They also wage open war with the ravens which beset these countries: their combats with the legions of these birds are very curious, and the tactics of these aerial troops present a singular spectacle. The ravens form in line; they divide into detached corps; each battalion rushes forward in turn; and the eagle, attacked in one quarter, is soon assailed in another by a new corps, which makes a diversion in favour of the retreating division. The event of the contest is very uncertain, particularly when the eagle is but young; but when one is eye witness of it, as I have once been, it is impossible not to form wishes for the king of the birds against this vile populace of heaven. I did not see the event of the combat: the field of battle is vast; and the belligerent powers, turning a mountain, were soon hid from my sight.

“ Bears are met with in all parts of this neigh-

bourhood (round the Schreckhorn), but they are become rare, especially towards the north. In the Valais they are more common, and two sorts of these animals are found there: the one, larger and stronger, lives entirely on vegetables, and sleeps during winter; the other smaller but more cruel, is carnivorous, and more dangerous in the severe season. These animals are in general not very dangerous, but their antipathy to the bulls, and their combats with them, furnish, from time to time, singular examples of the hatred and ferocity of two formidable creatures. A bull who scents a bear in the neighbourhood, cannot be restrained: he goes to meet him, they fight every day, and have every day a rendezvous, till one of two falls.*

“ There are no wolves in this region, savage as it is, but a sort of lynx (*chat-cervier*) is found there, which commits sometimes terrible ravages among the herds. These different animals are continually pursued, and districts assemble to destroy them.

“ Besides that warfare which the safety of the herds demands, the inhabitants of the Alps wage

* “ In the plain the bear has the advantage; in the woods and rocks the bull is commonly conqueror. The bull of a herd of the canton of Uri, having chased a bear, did not return: after three days search, he was found motionless, and pressing against a rock his enemy who had been a long time dead, and was absolutely flattened. He had made such terrible efforts, that his feet were forced several inches into the earth.” *Ramond*,

a cruel one on more gentle animals: chamois-hunting employs a great many. It may be imagined how perilous this must be, amongst those inaccessible deserts which nature has assigned as a refuge for the most agile of quadrupeds. Precipices, among which the most hardy mountaineer does not rove without trembling, are the country of the chamois; he runs lightly over their heights and their abysses, which man scarce dares to fathom with his eyes: it is, however, with all these disadvantages, that the hunter undertakes the pursuit of the chamois.

“This animal has a most exact idea of distances: he does not fly an instant before a man is near enough to hurt him; but the moment he suspects him, he flies like an arrow, and springs towards the heights, with an agility calculated to discourage any other enemy than an eagle. The hunter conjectures his march, and follows slowly; endeavouring always to meet the wind, in order that the sound of his steps, and the particles exhaled by his body, may fly behind him, and neither strike the ear nor the scent of the animal. Notwithstanding these precautions, it often happens that he does not succeed in getting within gunshot, until inaccessible rocks force the chamois to stop. It is then that courage and equilibrium are needful: it may be conceived what precipices they must be, that intimidate a chamois, and what the

dangers that arrest him. -Would it be imagined that a heavy human creature could force him into this last retrenchment, and arrive within a few paces of his prey, suspended over the steeps of abysses, and clinging to some furrow sunk in the rock, on which a spiked heel scarcely finds a resting place. There it is often out of the hunter's power to make use of his arms: he endeavours to frighten the chamois, and to oblige him to throw himself down headlong; but if the depth is very great, the animal, driven to desperation, will not quit his post, and threatens to precipitate his enemy himself. It has happened sometimes, that the chamois has bounded with all his might against the hunter, so as either to force him from his post or perish with him. A great number of men lose their lives in this chase: the thick fogs of the Alps, which suddenly cover the country with an impenetrable veil, lead the hunters astray among the ice, where they perish with cold and hunger: sudden storms moisten the rocks and render them so slippery that shoes however well spiked, cannot cling there.* Sometimes the heat has so dried their

* "I have verified these facts and the following, which the Marquis de Pezai had advanced in the *Soirées Helvétiques*. It may be supposed what this chase costs the Swiss, from the answer of the abbot of Engelberg to M. de Plyffer, who, remarking the rugged nature of the rocks surrounding his abbey, observed that many hunters must perish there: the abbot told him, that in the preceding year he had lost *only five*. The district is, at most, a hundredth part of the Swiss Alps." *Ramond*.

scorching surfaces, and covered them with so sliding a dust, that the unfortunate man climbing them, has been obliged to moisten them with his blood, by making large cuts in the sole of the foot and the leg. The inhabitants of Ober-Hasli are celebrated for their intrepidity in this chase; and the profit they draw from it has afforded them such encouragement, that the chamois is at present reduced to his last retrenchments, and the species has considerably diminished in the Alps.*

It is a singular and terrifying sight to see a Bernese hunter travelling in the rudest parts of these mountains. Nothing stops him. He disdains the pathways: wherever a rock offers an uneven surface, he finds something to place his foot on. It is especially in the descent that he should be seen, leaning on his stick which he draws behind him, suffering himself to slide from rock to rock; having often, as a resting place, only a ledge of a few inches, and seeming rather to precipitate himself, than to descend, into the plain.† Sometimes the Valaisans see them, with terror, arriving

* "In several regions of the Alps, it has been necessary to regulate the number of the chamois that might be killed annually. The flesh of the chamois is excellent, its skin is valuable, its horns are useful, every part, not excepting the bones, is made some use of." *Ramond.*

† "I have taken frequent lessons on this way of descending astride on a stick, or only leaning on it, and drawing it behind one; and I had learned to make use of it pretty well in the regions of snow and ice, but I did not venture on the rocks, except in case of necessity and to a certain extent." *Ramond.*

thus from the height of the Gemmi*, whose steep, almost perpendicular, is of naked rock. In ten minutes, they traverse a space which is not descended in an hour by the most direct path. The Valaisans are far from being so daring. The honest priest who had explained to me with so much sagacity the history of the Devil's Bridge, told me with simplicity, that when a man was seen descending in that way, one might be sure that he was a *protestant*. 'The Catholics,' added he, 'take more care of their souls; and we would never absolve him who should expose himself to so evident a danger.' "

The priest perhaps considered—and not without reason—all needless and imminent exposure of life as irrational contempt of danger, and as chargeable with a portion of the guilt, as well as of the folly of suicide.† The passion for this sort of chase seems to amount to a kind of mania with the hunter of the Alps. M. de Saussure met with a young man of this class, who exhibited an instance of that fascination which very exciting pleasures and pursuits are found to produce on the human mind, and which often overpowers superior considerations. This hunter would quit his home for weeks, on his dangerous excursions among rocks and precipices, leaving a young wife to form

* For the Gemmi, see page 29.

† See *The Rambler*, No. 126.

dreadful conjectures on his fate. Conversing with him on the subject, he assured M. de Saussure, that though his father and his grandfather before him had perished amid such dangers on the mountains, and though he himself then carried with him, as he said, his winding-sheet, being certain he should have no other, yet that nothing M. de S. could offer him, could induce him to relinquish the pursuit. When the philosopher called some time after at his cottage, the garments of mourning were there. His wife was become a widow, and if she had children left to console her, they were orphans. This poor fellow's body was never found.

The chamois (*Antilope Rupicapra*) has been sometimes called the chamois goat; but its beardless chin, and the graces of its fawn-like head and neck, should have preserved the antelope of the Alps from being confounded with the less noble genus. Like the gazelle, so celebrated in the songs of eastern poets, it is admired for the beauty of its eyes: its small delicate taper horns spring nearly straight from the forehead, turning back at the tips. It lives on the leaves of trees, roots, and aromatic herbs, particularly the *Athamanta Meum*, or Spiguel. The female, as well as the male, has horns. The chamois (or shammy) leather of commerce is said to be manufactured from the skin of the deer, the sheep, or the domestic goat.

Such is the havock made by the hunters on this gentle race, and so shy are those remaining, that the ordinary traveller is not likely to meet them in their native scenes: he may however see a pair of them in the garden of Dejean's hotel, at Sècheron, near the gates of Geneva.

Bourrit thus describes a rencounter with a herd of chamois. " We had before us a field of snow: we mounted to it, and on arriving at its edge, we were struck with the aspect of a fearful valley covered with ice, and surrounded on all sides by steep rocks. We were not less surprized to see that these places were the haunts of the peaceable chamois: insurmountable ramparts that protect them from the murderous hands of the hunters, secure their tranquillity. To see them bound over these snows, and these rocks, one would suppose they thought themselves secured from all eyes; but where is the spot so abandoned that the cruelty of man has not carried desolation thither? What creature is there so quiet, as to be seen by him, and preserve its peace? They were nine in number: at the first noise they heard, we saw one of the largest quit the herd, mount the rocks, and arrive on the snow just below us: his countenance was that of a spy; his looks wandered on all sides. He was soon followed by eight others: they did not take four paces without listening. Being arrived, one behind the other, on the snow,

the chief took the lead with short steps. At this moment we rolled a stone: the animal advanced courageously yet twenty paces, with head erect. He at length perceived us, and darted like lightning towards his companions, giving them warning by a sort of hissing: all immediately fled, bounding from rock to rock, and we soon lost sight of them.*

He also says that there are two races of chamois. One, less wild and more fleshy, inhabits the woods, and is found in the Alps of Dauphiny; the other frequents only the high Alps, surrounded with glaciers. The air of the latter animals is more noble, the head handsomer, and the eyes more brilliant: they are also very strong, and more able to elude the hunters.

“In descending the mountain,” says M. B. in another place, “we saw à young chamois returning with the goats from pasture: it had been caught very young, at the foot of the peaks we had been traversing, and was bred up with the flock; its horns were beginning to sprout, its head was handsome, its eyes full of fire, and all its motions indicated strength and lightness. This animal is so well made by nature to live in liberty, that it is almost impossible to keep it long. As soon as it is strong enough, it continually tries to escape to the heights, and rarely fails to succeed.”

* *Description des Glacieres, &c.*

These animals have also been seen, in their wild state in the mountains, mingled with a flock of domestic goats and feeding with them.

The ibex is, according to Buffon, the parent stock of our domestic goat. Its horns are long, large, knotted in rings, and turning backward in a regular curve: these horns are sometimes of a great weight. The habits of these animals appear to resemble those of the chamois.

The following narrative of an ibex-hunter, may serve still farther to illustrate the perilous and precarious nature of such a mode of subsistence; and its hostility to habits of regular industry, as well as to domestic ties. If the natural state of the uncivilized savage is that of a hunter, the life of the hunter may be seen tending towards that of the savage. We cannot, however, fail to remark the extraordinary patience and perseverance manifested in the pursuit of the object—an object, unhappily, inadequate to recompense the effort, or to render it laudable.

*The Narrative of the Hunter Alexis de Caillet,
related by himself.**

“ ‘ The 7th of August, 1808, I set out from Salvent:† I directed my route by the Great St. Ber-

* From the *Bibliothèque Universelle*: ‘ *La Chasse au Bouquetin du Chasseur Alexis de Caillet, de Salvent, racontée par lui-même. Tiré d’un almanac Suisse, intitulé Alpen Rosen (Les Roses des Alpes).*’

† Near Martigny in the canton of Valais.

‘ nard towards the mountains of the Ceresolles, on
‘ the frontiers of Piedmont. I traversed, during a
‘ month, the places the ibexes commonly inhabit,
‘ without perceiving any traces of them.

‘ I passed on, at length, to the Alps which
‘ separate Piedmont from Savoy, where I soon
‘ discovered ibex-tracks. Although I was not
‘ timid, I could not prevail on myself to scale
‘ alone these very dangerous steeps: I procured,
‘ therefore, three other hunters, and we set out full
‘ of hope and courage.

‘ It was the 28th of September, when we
‘ arrived across rocks, and along the brinks of the
‘ deepest abysses, at the haunts of the ibexes: we
‘ perceived, at a distance, five near each other;
‘ but a violent storm arose, and in less than an
‘ hour, all was buried a foot deep in snow. It was
‘ equally dangerous for us to advance or to recede,
‘ and we remained there a considerable time, not
‘ knowing what to resolve on: however, the desire
‘ and the hope of soon reaching our prey urged us
‘ forward. A ledge of rock scarcely wide enough
‘ for the foot to rest on, and suspended over a ter-
‘ rible abyss, offered the only means of arriving
‘ at the spot where we had seen the ibexes. The
‘ dangers of this narrow path were increased by
‘ the newly fallen snow, which rendered the surface
‘ of these schistous rocks still more slippery. As
‘ we advanced on this narrow cornice, we could not

‘ plant firmly the left foot, without suffering the
‘ right leg and a part of the body to hang over the
‘ precipice. We had already made some progress
‘ in this perilous path, stepping along in silence,
‘ when suddenly, the foremost of our party lost
‘ his balance, and fell to the bottom of the abyss.
‘ His last cry reached our ears, and thrilled us
‘ with horror. A general tremor seized us, and in-
‘ creased our danger. We resolved to retrace our
‘ steps; and it was not without indescribable ex-
‘ ertions that we succeeded in extricating our-
‘ selves from this peril. We returned, very sad, to
‘ our lodging, thinking only of seeking for our un-
‘ happy companion; but all our endeavours were
‘ without success. The season was, however, too
‘ far advanced for the chase to be any longer
‘ thought of; and I resolved not to begin my ex-
‘ pedition so late another year.

‘ The following summer, I set out on the 26th
‘ of July. I again penetrated among the Alps as
‘ far as the borders of Piedmont. After having
‘ traversed the wild solitudes unsuccessfully for
‘ some days, I thought I perceived, at length,
‘ some tracks, at the foot of a chain of mountains
‘ almost inaccessible. I made a little stock of pro-
‘ visions, and attempted, with infinite difficulty, to
‘ scale the rocks.

‘ I began to ascend early in the morning; and
‘ it was not till the approach of night, that I

‘ reached the height where I hoped to surprise
‘ the ibexes: for you never succeed when placed
‘ lower down than the animals: it is necessary to
‘ wait for them on the heights, because they ascend
‘ as they return from grazing. I endeavoured,
‘ therefore, to encamp for the night, under a rock,
‘ where I might be a little sheltered from the wind,
‘ which was extremely piercing. A piece of bread
‘ and a glass brandy usually made all my supper.
‘ I soon fell asleep; but the cold did not fail
‘ quickly to wake me, and I waited impatiently
‘ for the dawn. Making a fire to warm myself,
‘ was out of the question, as I should have scared
‘ the ibexes: besides, the nearest fir-trees were
‘ three or four leagues below me, and how could
‘ I have gone to fetch wood so far, and have carried
‘ it among steep rocks and precipices? No resource
‘ remained for warming myself, but motion: I ran
‘ to and fro as far as the space permitted; I car-
‘ ried stones from one place to another; I then
‘ leaped over the stones: thus I contrived to avoid
‘ perishing with cold.

‘ When day at length arrived, I quitted my
‘ exercise, and waited impatiently for the ibexes,
‘ whose numerous tracks afforded great hopes;
‘ but I could no where perceive any. I beat about
‘ the neighbourhood all day: every where I found
‘ traces, but no animal came in sight. I returned

‘ to my last night’s quarters: the weather was
‘ calm, and I slept till day-break.

‘ I rose and seized my gun; but my expecta-
‘ tions were still deceived for that day. What was
‘ still more mortifying, I perceived that the ibexes
‘ had passed close to me, and even fed round me
‘ during the night. I consequently resolved not
‘ to quit this place until I had attained my object.
‘ Although my provisions were now almost ex-
‘ hausted, I persisted in remaining one day more
‘ on this summit, continually occupied in watching
‘ for my prey. The sun had already set, when I
‘ at last espied an ibex within gun-shot. I did not
‘ hesitate long: I took aim: my shot wounded,
‘ but did not kill. The wounded animal took a
‘ few leaps, and disappeared from my sight with
‘ the swiftness of an arrow. There was no longer
‘ day-light enough for me to follow his traces, so
‘ that I found myself obliged to wait till the next
‘ morning.

‘ It was scarcely day-light when I hastened to
‘ begin my research. I soon discovered traces of
‘ the blood, which convinced me that I had not
‘ missed my aim, and afforded hopes of soon reach-
‘ ing my prey: but it was not till noon that I dis-
‘ covered the animal, lying down at a great dis-
‘ tance. He rose, made a few bounds, and lay down
‘ again. I had approached, drawing myself along

‘ on my belly. The ibex appeared to see me; but, as
‘ he made a bound, he was reached by another shot
‘ which I aimed at him; and I at length found
‘ myself in possession of a prey which had been
‘ the object of all my efforts during twenty days.
‘ After having paunched the animal on the spot,
‘ I set out on my return, laden with this heavy
‘ burden.*

‘ I had still many dangers to encounter, from
‘ the jealousy of the Italian hunters, for I was not
‘ on the Swiss territory. In order to avoid this
‘ risk, I was obliged carefully to shun the beaten
‘ paths and inhabited places, and steal by night
‘ through the most difficult passes. I was more
‘ than once on the point of losing my life,—
‘ Thanks to God and the Holy Virgin, I accom-
‘ plished my task, and at length arrived at my
‘ house extremely fatigued.’ ”

* An ibex, without the entrails, may weigh upwards of 200lbs.

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 7.

E'en here, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend.

GOLDSMITH.

THE valley of Chamouny is too close to the base of Mont Blanc to be a good station for viewing that mountain. From Geneva, it appears completely white as it towers behind the other Alps; but from Chamouny, beside the actual diminution of height by the spectator being raised two thousand feet, its bulk is fore-shortened, and the eternal snows dwindle above the extent of fir forests and bare steeps that rise from the base.

Continuing to trace up the course of the Arve, you pass, on the right, the *glacier des Bois* descending from the *Mer-de-Glace*, afterwards the glaciers of Argentiere and La Tour, with villages of the same name opposite them, and arrive at the Col de Balme, a mountain-ridge,* which closes the end

* Here the Arve takes its rise.

of the valley, separating Savoy from the canton of Valais. Climbing its bare side, you gain the summit of the passage into that canton. The view both ways is magnificent; and offers a sufficient object to the traveller at Chainouny, to ascend the mountain, if he does not mean to cross it. The eye wanders along the valley of Chamouny to the distance of several leagues, with the Arve winding through it, and the remote spire of its little capital dimly discerned. Along the left side of the valley stretches a part of the grand central chain of the Alps; and Mont Blanc at the other end, heads this majestic file of mountains; where peaks of granite rise above the snows, and the glaciers below descend, one beyond the other, along the range. The right side of the valley is formed by the great calcareous chain running parallel with the other. These two chains continue along the sides of the canton of Valais forming the valley of the Rhone; and looking in that direction, a succession of these Alps reach as far as the St. Gothard and the Furca. On this mountain, M. Bourrit and his son encountered a herdsman or shepherd, who, clad with the skin of a bear and holding a club in his hand, advanced with a sort of savage air, demanding what they did there. After receiving an answer, a book was seen peeping out of the shepherd's pocket; and on its being supposed that he had found it, he replied, "no, that book

belongs to me; it treats of the kingdoms of the north." These shepherds, M. B. informs us, are by no means without education: they teach each other during their leisure hours, and in the long winter evenings.

Though it was the eleventh of September when I passed the Col de Balme with three of my countrymen, a considerable quantity of snow lay, yet unthawed, in our way; and some sheep were picking a scanty feed near it. We descended among fine larches, and reached the pastures below, which were resounding with the bells of numerous cows feeding. We entered a *chalet* near, where one of the processes of making cheese was going forward in a large kettle over the fire, and where, in a little rough wooden apartment with a square hole for a window, there were set before us, wine, bread, fruit, and a great jug of cream; whilst our mules took their refreshment in the stable. We had again to mount, in order to cross the Forclaz;* and after passing a number of wooden houses for cattle, without habitations or human creatures, we descended towards Martigny, by the side of a torrent. The entrance of the grand valley of the Rhone opened before us in a superb manner, with the snowy heads of the Alps lighted up by the evening sun. The delicious grove-like

* Another Forclaz in the neighbourhood of Mont Blanc has been before mentioned.

pastures seen in our descent, and wooded with fine chesnut-trees, are scenes suited for Helvetian, if not Arcadian idylls.

The neighbourhood of Martigny abounds in chesnut and walnut-trees: the fruit of the former is quite an article of food with the inhabitants, who eat them at their meals like potatoes: they boil them, or roast them in a pierced vessel, and eat them with milk or butter. From the walnuts they express both lamp and sallad-oil. The latter, though it tastes very well, is much less esteemed than that of the olive, and is, like oil of almonds, more liable to become rancid: it is consequently not an appendage of genteel tables.

At Martigny we found little interesting. Another ruined castle is here seen on an eminence near the town; and our inn, though our host said it had not been a convent, had decidedly the appearance of one of those monastic edifices, which have yielded up their inmates, after the example of the feudal towers; adding the trophies of religious, to those of civil liberty. We had already passed many of these old castles since we left Geneva. With regard to convents, the *chartreuse* of the Reposior which had lain not far from our road, is secularized; another was seen in ruins on the Voirions; and at Cluse, over a large arched door-way beneath an arcade, traces of the text, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,'

marked the solemn uses of a building, which once echoed the matins and vespers of Franciscans, but is now converted into a noble barn. The village of Chamouny is sometimes still called *le Prieurē*, from a monastery no longer existing there, but to which the place owes its origin. Such is the decay of monachism even in Roman catholic countries: such, too, are the changes 'all-trying time' is working; teaching us to regard with two-fold veneration other and more ancient principles, which have stood the shock of conflicting interests, and the current of opinion.

Though this place abounds with *cretins*; we saw none in the utmost state of imbecility: I observed, indeed, only two, who were girls, and were passing along the street with such an air as betrayed their calamity. Our guide to the Great St. Bernard, in assigning causes for the prevalence of this malady, mentioned some circumstances in the habits of the lower classes, highly calculated to promote idiotism: parents go out to work, and leave their young children in the bed or the cradle, shut up in their dirty close cottages, without fresh air or maternal attentions. Some families, however, who are not in these negligent and filthy habits, are found to have *cretins*.

The road over the St. Bernard lies by the side of the Dranse, a torrent one branch of which rises near the convent. We passed, on the left, the en-

trance of the Val de Bagnes, a green valley watered by the other branch of the Dranse, which descends from the glacier of Chermontane, in a part of the St. Bernard chain. How melancholy would have been our feelings could we have foreseen the catastrophe that was to occur here the following year! An avalanche fell in the spring, and crossing the stream of the Dranse, obstructed its course, forming a lake in the Val de Bagnes. Precautions were taken to let off the water, but in vain: on the 16th of June, a terrific noise announced that the barrier of ice had given way. The waters burst with fury down the valleys, sweeping away fine pastures, and more than forty houses; overthrowing forests, and a great number of *chalets*, and carrying along masses of rock. The havoc made by the torrent at Martigny and its environs was still more terrible: there, more than eighty buildings were ruined. Besides the numbers who lost their lives, survivors were left in misery, from the ruin of so many buildings, and the destruction of almost all the crops. The waters entered the lake of Geneva, eighteen leagues distant, a few hours after their rupture. The inhabitants of other cantons have united with zeal in affording succour to the unhappy sufferers.

The road passes through several villages. Religious inscriptions on the fronts of houses or barns meet the eye: such sentences are seen as

Dieu soit beni—Soli Deo gloria—or the names of *Jesus, Marie, Joseph*, probably intended as a sort of amulet to protect the dwelling or the store-house. Small crosses of straw and flowers, nailed on some of the doors, remained as vestiges of St. John's day. The barley-harvest was going forward, and quantities of beans were hung to dry, regularly disposed on racks against the sides of barns or granaries. We arrived through the valley of Entremont, at the village of St. Pierre, considered to be at the foot of St. Bernard, though the road has already made, gradually, a considerable ascent. We were now entering on the rude scenery of the mountain. St. Pierre is exposed in winter to the visits of wolves: firs are spread about it, and a high rocky eminence surmounted by a wooden cross overlooks it.

Leaving behind the cultivated valleys, the road climbs by the side of the torrent, among the sterile rocks of St. Bernard: the ascent, though often rough, is not very steep. The mountain, wild and barren, soon ceases to yield even a shrub: the view is not over the fertile valleys below, but among summits bare and huge, though finely shadowed. Near two leagues from the convent we passed, on the right, some buildings belonging to it, and some pasture where its large herd of cows was feeding: our guide said there were eighty. Higher up, is a small rude stone build-

ing, with a wooden grate: on looking in, a few human skulls and bones scattered on the floor, and the putrid smell that exhaled from them, showed where the bodies of some wretched travellers, who had perished in this savage region, had been left to dissolve.

It was already evening: the hour of supper at the convent we had understood was seven, and we were desirous of arriving in time to dine at their supper-table; but our mules, uninfluenced by this consideration, plodded slowly on. At length the convent opened on us, seen against the sky in a cleft of the mountain, with craggy summits rising above it. The air of the building, like that of the rocks about it, is cold and dreary: it has been compared to the ark resting on the mountains, after the deluge, amid the ruins of the world.* We passed over deep and hardened snow to arrive at it. Mount Velan, the highest point of the St. Bernard chain, rose behind us with grand effect; fine clouds hanging above it in the evening sky. The massive edifice we were approaching, the highest dwelling in Europe, is about 8000 feet above the level of the sea, and placed at the entrance of a basin of rocks forming the summit of the passage. On the double flight of steps at the door, stood a monk in a long close black dress,

* See *Bourrit*.

buttoned with small shining black buttons, and wearing a high cap of the same colour topped with a large silk tassel: a white belt hung from his neck round one side, where it was tied with a coloured ribbon. He saluted us courteously as we arrived, and offered it to our choice, whether we would take a little walk before supper. To this we readily agreed; and he obligingly accompanied us, conversing and giving us various information. We walked beyond the building along a raised path-way on one side of the basin of rocks through which the road passes. A small lake lies just below the monastery, reflecting its walls and the wild forms around it: in winter, the water freezes to the very bottom, and the road passes over it. A few sheep find, near it, a scanty picking of grass: they have not long to lament their banishment from the flowery pastures of Switzerland, as those which are not killed for the table, must be salted down as winter provision at the approach of the cold season. I say the cold season, for it was now mid-summer at St. Bernard. At a short distance we entered the Italian territory; the boundary being marked by the respective arms of the contiguous countries, cut on stone laid across a rivulet. Near this, is the spot called the *Plan de Jupiter*, where once stood a Roman temple, dedicated to Jupiter Peninus: fragments of cornice and other remains are still seen there; and several votive tablets once

attached to the walls, together with some small bronze figures, are preserved in the convent. St. Bernard, who founded his establishment for the reception of travellers, in the 10th century, demolished this temple, in pursuance of his grand object, the propagation of christianity among the mountaineers. The zeal that assumed the right of battering down the sanctuary of the poor heathens, might have led his saintship, had he lived a century and a half later, to aid his renowned namesake, the abbot of Clairvaux, in rousing Europe to the second crusade; brandishing the cross in the hand, and breathing a spirit most opposed to it from the lips. But let me not charge my long-departed host with what he never committed: it would be more grateful in a guest to extol the two hospitable monasteries he has founded, above the hundred and sixty built by the Burgundian monk; and to regard with greater approbation, him who has rescued so many perishing travellers, than him who swayed the counsels of monarchs and pontiffs, but became the missionary of destruction.

This mountain was called by the Romans *Mons Jovis*: there was, no doubt, in their time a passage over it. The name was afterwards corrupted to Mont Jou,* which remained till the time of St. Bernard, who founded the convent in 962. Some place of hospitality appears to have existed

* Or Mont Joux.

there, as early as 832; and Hartmann, made bishop of Lausanne in 851, was almoner of Mont Jou. The office of the monks is to receive travellers, without distinction of rank, sex, or religion: all may claim entertainment, gratis, for three days. Travellers in easy circumstances are of course bound to requite the entertainment they receive there, not by offering payment, but by putting an adequate contribution into the poor-box in the chapel; the product of which is devoted to the purposes of hospitality. The expenses of that hospitality must, indeed, be great: on certain festivals, in particular, they have visitors in large numbers; and in 1782, no less than five hundred and sixty-one travellers were, one night, assembled there. In May 1800, the French army of reserve, consisting of 30,000 men commanded by Napoleon,* then first consul, crossed here with cannon and cavalry, before the battle of Marengo: every man received a glass of wine at the convent.†

Their revenues have been considerably diminished; but they have a farm in Switzerland,‡ and

* "The utility of the convent of St. Bernard, in the situation in which it is placed, is so obvious, that whilst Bonaparte smoked out all the drones of the plains, he left several mountain-convents, and by endowing this with an additional estate in Lombardy, most considerably increased its revenues," *Rose's Letters from the North of Italy*.

† Twenty pieces of cannon were conveyed over: they were obliged to be dismounted at St. Pierre; and sixty-four men were employed to drag each piece to the top of the passage.

‡ They possessed lands in England before the Reformation.

they make an annual collection in that country in aid of their finances. I spoke of a large collection that had been made in England for their house; and was assured that such collectors must have been impostors, as whatever the fraternity might hereafter be induced to do in an emergency, they had never yet solicited contributions beyond the limits of Switzerland.

Though the construction of the roads of the Simplon and Mount Cenis must naturally have diminished the number of passengers, yet besides the wayfarers on foot, and the muleteers who convey casks of Gruyeres cheese, by this road, into Piedmont, this spot must ever possess peculiar attractions, for intelligent travellers. It is said that from 7000 to 8000 persons pass annually. It is especially in their long winter season, when the winds howl, and the snows whirl round their walls, that these friendly recluses quit their shelter, and brave the inclemencies of the blast, to traverse the road for the succour of travellers; or stand centinel on some rocky eminence, casting a guardian eye around. When the avalanche has overwhelmed the passenger, or when, bewildered and benumbed,

---- down he sinks,

Amid the shelter of the shapeless drift;

Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,

His wife, his children, and his friends unseen,

he is discovered beneath the snow, by the fine race

of dogs trained for the purpose, who, by scratching, show the spot: the monks, attended by their domestics called *maronniers*, draw the sufferer from his snowy sepulchre, perhaps still breathing, and convey him to their dwelling: there cherished and restored, he pursues his way, blessing the convent of St. Bernard.

Our conductor led us to a spot on the farther edge of the basin, where a stone cross is erected, and whence you look down a valley, through which passes the road to Aosta in Piedmont: some of the horses of the convent were grazing there on the stunted herbage. We turned back. One or two little enclosures are seen, walled in by way of vegetable garden; but the earth which produces there a little spinnage has probably been brought up from below. A stone seat, built up round a semicircular recess in the rock, offers a desirable sunning-place, suited to such a climate. Among some of the high snowy summits near, a herd of chamois is sometimes seen: they have also wolves, bears, and marmots, and a bird they call *perdrix blanche*, which they have been told is the ptarmigan of our Island.

We entered the convent, and ascended, passing through a high lobby where was a portrait of the founder on the ceiling, to a gallery arched with crossing vaults and hung with old portraits; and thence to the refectory. This was a wainscotted

apartment, warmed in winter by a stone stove : the windows were double-glazed, though the inner casements were now thrown open. There were shelves furnished with books ; a canary hung in a cage from the ceiling ; and a bird-organ stood near : on one side of the room was a crucifix, and on the opposite, another portrait of the founder. The superior was now announced : he was not a prior but merely a president chosen out of their number. After he had received us politely, grace was duly sung or said, and we sat down to the repast. The superior, did the honours of the table, with the suavity and ease of a man accustomed to the world : one of my companions afterwards pronounced him a finished gentleman. Conversation flowed freely, and no cloister-gloom overshadowed it ; though the austerities of La Trappe furnished one of the topics. That house of maceration being broken up at the revolution, one part of its members retired into England, and another into the canton of Friburg. I had lately, in travelling, seen an inn-keeper's son who had manifested a desire to join that appalling fraternity ; and had actually left his father's house for the purpose. Professor P. of Geneva, who had been his schoolfellow, had kindly interested himself in restoring him to his family, and gave me a message to him : his air was melancholy, and I felt delicate as to touching on the subject, on which it would have been interesting to know his feelings.

The monks of St. Bernard are regular Augustinian canons: there were at table only eight of their number, which amounted in all to thirty-two. The greater part reside in a milder region, where some fill the office of priests; indeed so severe a climate is ill-suited for any but those in the prime of life. As it was Friday, a *jour maigre*, no meat was set before us: but we must have been ‘carnivorous sinners’ indeed, to have been discontented with a good and plentiful meal of *potage*, omelet, spinnage, and rice; followed by pears, cherries, nuts, cheese, and excellent Muscat wine. The superior rose soon after supper, observing we must be fatigued; and advancing into the room, grace again commenced. After the responses and crossings were finished, it seemed to be expected we should withdraw; and a servant attended to warm our beds. Retired to my chamber, I could not so soon resolve to close my eyes on the unaccustomed objects about me. Near my bed hung some pictures characteristic of the place: a figure of our Saviour on the cross; a portrait in armour, chained, and in a praying attitude; and another holding the devil by a chain—no less a person, as appeared from the Latin inscription below, than ‘*the Demi-god Bernard*,’* whose portrait was seen in two other places in the convent, always attended

* ‘*Divus Bernardus*,’

by his infernal companion or captive. The bleak and dusky scene without, was varied by the tracts of snow; and the silence of this awful solitude broken by the sound of the mountain-waters. I found in the room a book entitled, '*Pain quotidien, pour l'homme animal et l'homme spirituel, &c.*' intended for the use of the peasants of the mountains; and containing, together with religious matter, various instructions in rural economy. I extracted the following—a little memorial of the moment.

“L'Oraison est le pain de notre âme; et de même que notre corps, ayant froid, a besoin de s'approcher du feu, et qu'ayant faim, il a besoin de nourriture; de même, notre âme, étant refroidie et languissante, a besoin de rallumer sa ferveur, et de prendre de nouvelles forces par l'oraison.”

I rose near the time of matin-bell: a glimmering lamp was burning in the sombre gallery. Having occasion to enter the refectory for something I had left there, the silent figures of kneeling monks warned me that I had intruded on their morning devotions; and I quickly retired. I found our guide, and explored some of the lower part of the building; where we saw the large barrels of wine in the cellar, and the place where I was told they salt down before winter, as many as twenty-seven cows and one hundred and eighty sheep at once. The salt meat is eaten by the domestics, and by people of the lower class who receive hospitality.

In the cellar, a mysterious low door, locked, shuts the entrance to the dungeon where St. Bernard used to do penance. I entered the kitchen, where I found one of the monks, with whom I sat and conversed before the fire, on a high-backed wooden bench, appropriately called a *settle* in some parts of England. I could readily believe him, when he assured me it was a comfortable retreat in winter. Another of our hosts entered and joined us. I afterwards understood it was their time of silence, which lasts two hours in the morning, and one in the evening: the silence is not rigorously enjoined; they are allowed to speak to strangers; and both conversed with me, in such a manner, that I did not observe that they avoided speaking to each other. One of them told me that the thermometer (Reaumur's*) was then 4 degrees above freezing. Their greatest heat and cold are about 15° above; and 24° or 27° below zero.† It was now their warmest season. The situation is found

* Some readers may pardon, for the sake of others, a rule for converting degrees of Reaumur into those of Fahrenheit. If above zero, the freezing point, multiply them by 9, divide the product by 4, and add 32 to the quotient. If below 0°, after the same multiplication and division, find the difference between the quotient and 32.

† The prior Murith thus writes to M. Bourrit, in March 1784. "During six weeks, morning and evening, the thermometer has constantly been between 18° and 19° below 0°; and to day it is 16½°. During that cold season, our rooms which have no fires, were commonly at 10° or 12°. Not but that the cold has been, in other years, from 20° to 22°; but this excessive cold lasted only a day or two." *Bourrit, Descr. des Glacieres.*

generally healthy, excepting in the spring; when the great humidity, attending the melting of the snows, produces rheumatic complaints, &c. The important article of wood for fuel is one of the most costly of their necessaries: the forests are far below them, and they are obliged to employ forty or fifty horses to convey it up the mountain, during the only two or three months in the year that admit of it. In the room we were sitting in, near the window, spouted a clear fountain, supplied from a spring at a little distance which never freezes. This kitchen was formerly liable to be filled with snow, by the avalanches rushing through the window: they have now erected a strong building opposite, which, whilst it increases their lodging rooms, presents its roof to the channel of the avalanche, dividing the mass as it falls; throwing one part towards the lake, and the rest on the other side. The wolves do not visit them in the dead of winter, but in the season when they have sheep near the convent. One of their noble dogs has defended himself against two wolves at once. They had the misfortune to lose three of these valuable creatures in the preceding winter, by the avalanche.

We visited, after breakfast, the cabinet of minerals, collected by the late prior, M. Murith. Studies in natural history, with occasional excursions among these wilds and these wonders, are recre-

ations particularly well chosen for a recluse. We were also shewn the charnel-house, where are deposited the bodies of those who have perished by the avalanches, &c. It is a stone building, a sort of out-house by the convent, with a wooden grated window, so as to keep out the bears and wolves. This window our conductor unlocked, and we looked in. The corpses are enveloped in a cloth which assumes the shape of the body: two were placed on a table; others dry and stiff, were set up against the wall; and the floor was heaped with a confused mass of mouldering bodies, limbs, and bones. So effectually does the cold counteract putrefaction, that I observed no unpleasant smell; and the features of the dead are here preserved for a year or two. The inhospitable soil on which these poor wretches are laid, presenting all around a surface of hard rock, refuses them even a grave: but though thus deprived of sepulture, and the last rites of friendship, disinterested humanity has protected their remains from violation. But for the care of the presiding guardians of the place, this kindred flesh might have been the meal of wild beasts, or have been conveyed through the air by the eagle, to be parted amongst her young. The corpses of the monks themselves are laid under the pavement of the chapel. In a marble monument in the chapel, is entombed the body of general Desaix, who fell at the battle of Marengo,

where he had decided the victory in favour of the French. In a bass-relief in front of the tomb, general D. is represented fallen wounded from his horse, and supported by one of the military. Napoleon has erected a monument to his memory, near the gates of Strasburgh.

We soon after descended the mountain, and bade adieu to this extraordinary and impressive abode, whose pleasant and communicative inmates, together with the interesting objects around, would give attractions to a much longer visit, even in a scene so desolate.

We found, at Martigny, the travelling carriage which had brought us to St. Martin in Savoy, and which it had been necessary, for want of roads, to send back to Geneva, and round by the Savoy side of the lake, to meet us here. I was disappointed in the cascade of the Sallenche:* it wants those beautiful masses of wood and rock which adorn some other waterfalls; and the neighbourhood is dreary. After entering the canton of Vaud by a bridge over the Rhone, just beyond St. Maurice, the scenery is charming.

It is delightful to the traveller, after the dirt and trumpery of the catholic canton he has just quitted, to find himself on a Sunday morning in a

* *Vulgò et vulgariter*, the Pissevache. The Sallenche is the name of the stream; and I have taken the liberty of calling the fall by that name, in the same way as we say the *falls of the Clyde*, or the *cataract of the Rhine*.

very comfortable inn, such as was ours at the village of Bex, with a neat protestant church in sight of the windows; and, instead of the poor and squalid inhabitants of the Valais, to see females in the simple and pretty costume of the canton of Vaud, with their psalm-books in their hands, obeying the summons of the sabbath-bell, and bending their steps towards the church. Their venerable pastor appealed, that morning, to the gratitude of his hearers, towards Him who 'giveth us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with joy and gladness.'

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 8:

Hinc anni labor, hinc patriam parvosque nepotes
Sustinet; hinc armenta boùm, meritosque juvencos.
. Ubera vacca:
Lactea demittunt; pinguesque in gramine læto
Inter se adversis luctantur cornibus hædi.

VIRG.

AMONG the distinguishing features of Switzerland, its numerous herds of cattle, its mountain-pastures, and the branches of rural economy connected with them are conspicuous; and the interesting associations belonging to them present themselves as characteristics of the country and its manners.

“A more picturesque valley than Ober-Hasli,” says M. Ramond, “cannot be imagined: the plants most agreeable to the cattle are there in their natural soil; and the neighbouring Alps are covered with the richest and most elevated pastures of Switzerland. Numerous habitations scattered on their ridges receive the herdsmen, who, in the fine season, ascend with their families and their herds,

and who move gradually higher up the mountains, as the snows retire towards the regions of ice. These migrations to the high pastures are general in Switzerland, and are conducted every where in a manner nearly similar: the account I shall give of Ober-Hasli, applies to the greater part of the mountainous regions.

“ The plain is divided into portions, of which each cabin possesses one, in the centre of which it is commonly built, when the houses do not form a street. Each owner is allowed to raise so many head of cattle only as he feeds during winter with the hay of his meadows in the plain: and to this number is limited the herd he may lead into the Alps, which are the colonies of the canton. Every one there places his hut where he likes. What the Swiss (mountaineers) understand by *Alps*, is, not so much the chain of mountains to which we give that appellation, as the fertile part of those mountains. The word *alp* is certainly indigeneous: it is found in several dialects of the Celtic; and its real meaning is *mountain-pasture*. The high conical mountains which rise behind the fertile *Alps*,* have the generic name of *Horn* or *Stock*, monosyllables approaching to our word *peak* (*pic*), and which, as similar words are used in German,

* The word *alps*, when it occurs in this paper in italics, may be understood to mean the different regions, or steps with pastures on them, upon the sides of the Alps. *Translator.*

with a meaning perfectly different, appear to have been separated, many centuries since, from that language. A part of the words most habitually used in these regions, differ entirely from those used in Germany: I have remarked some, the origin of which is evidently not Teutonic. Amongst these last, I cannot help citing that of *balm*, cavern, not properly in use in any language in Europe, but found, however, in several, merely veiled by some modifications.*

“The fertile *alps*† are divided into (higher and lower regions, called) first and second mountains and the herdsman has often three habitations: one for winter, one for spring and autumn, and a third for summer. The first is his metropolis: he quits it in the month of May, with his family, his goods, and his herds, and goes to take possession of his spring-dwelling, which the snows have just left, and which is placed on a ridge of the first mountains, or lower *alps*: there he remains till the month of July; though in the course of this time he descends some days into the plain, to mow and make his hay, and

* “The word *balm* is absolutely consecrated in Switzerland to mountain caves. In Savoy there is a celebrated *caverne de la Balme*: we have in Provence the famous cavern of *Sainte-Baume*. The English have several caverns named *Balm*.” *Ramond*.

† The word *Alps*, which in its Celtic original, signified *high*, and which was formerly the name of the Pyrennees as well as of the Helvetian mountains, is so far consecrated to the most elevated pastures, that the peasants sometimes refuse the denomination to the inferior mountains. See *Ramond*.

stow it away in his winter-house. In the month of July, the second mountains or higher *alps* are cleared from snow, and the family go to establish themselves in the summer-dwelling, where they remain till August: at this period they are chased by the cold, and descend again to the cabin they have inhabited in the spring. The grass has by this time grown, and the herds find there an abundant nourishment. During this interval, they send again into the plain, to get in the second crop of hay, and add it to the winter provisions. The cattle return, at length, to the valleys, towards the end of autumn; and continue to live on the newly-grown grass of the meadows, till the settled cold banishes them to the cow-house, where they are reduced to a hay-diet. This fodder is further increased by the grass, which the men go to cut in summer on the high rocks, and on the sides of precipices, where the herds cannot reach it. They make it into little cocks, which, when the descent does not allow of carrying them, they bind up firmly, and throw from rock to rock, to the foot of the mountain.

“ In some parts, such as the high Valais, the peasants of the plain do not themselves ascend the Alps with their herds: they send herdsmen who conduct at once all the cattle of the community, and make cheese without any distinction of cows. Twice in the warm season the owners assemble in

the mountains, to divide the cheeses among them, according to the number of cattle each has furnished to the common herd. If, during the time of the herds being thus united, any of the cows perish, either by accident or disease, the loss does not fall entirely upon the owner, but is shared by the community. The application of this law is by no means rare: it often happens, especially at the end of summer, that these animals venture to the brinks of precipices, to reach some blades of grass which they had left there when they found more plentiful feed elsewhere: they then frequently fall."

M. Bourrit describes a visit to a pasture occupied by a company of herdsmen of the last description, in ascending to the glacier of Chermontane in the canton of Valais; accompanied by M. Murith, the prior of St. Bernard.

"We were however not far," says he, "from the object of our hopes: at ten paces off we still saw nothing of it, but all on a sudden, we had before our eyes the most beautiful carpet of verdure, and the so-much-desired *chalet*. What an agreeable surprise, after having marched all day without meeting a single living being! Our eyes rested on those of men astonished to see us. . . . This beautiful carpet was not monotonous: it was an undulating slope, where were seen small mounts and gentle dells, some in shadow, others gilded

by a fine setting sun ; and here and there sheets of water clear as crystal, where the beautiful verdure and the summits of the glaciers were brilliantly painted. On arriving at the *chalet* itself, this spot, worthy of the palace of the gods, presents only a poor cabin, the wall of which, made full of openings, is only four feet high: a little grass spread by the wall serves as mattress for ten or twelve shepherds, and was to perform the same service for us.

“ This pasture, which bears at Bagnes the name of the *Charmontane*, is called by the herdsmen the *Chanrion*, that is, *round field*: its form is in fact round. It supports, during four weeks, a hundred and thirteen cows, seventy heifers, thirty-six goats, two hundred sheep, and thirty pigs (*bêtes noires*). These various herds, which lodge in the open air, do not always enjoy there a perfect tranquillity. Two years ago it snowed so heavily on St. James’s day, that the cattle remained twenty-four hours without eating, and they were obliged to be brought down from this place. The winds here are sometimes terrible.”

Our travellers, after exploring some of the neighbouring scenery, returned in the evening to the *chalet*, where they saw the herdsmen enter, according to custom, one only passing the night out of doors in the midst of the cattle. They made, in the presence of their visitors, 20lbs. of cheese, their

usual daily quantity. These men live entirely on milk or its products (*laitage*). Their occupations are uniform: milking the cows twice a day, making cheese, watching the herd, and cleaving wood, which they convey thither on their backs from a distance of several leagues. This uniformity does not appear wearisome to them: they are described as bearing cheerfulness on their countenances, and enjoying the most perfect health, with minds serene as the air they breathe; living in harmony and contentment; and joining every night in offering up their prayers and thanksgiving to the Supreme Being. ‘Continue’ said the prior, addressing them, ‘. . . . to love one another, to be ‘ humane, and more especially, to place yourselves ‘ every night and every morning under the protection of Heaven, it is the way to obtain its favours ‘ whilst on earth, and its blessings in eternity.’

“ If the day,” continues M. B. “ had presented us with beauties without number, night, in its turn, excited our admiration, by the brightness of the luminaries which rolled over our heads: the milky way was more brilliant than I had ever seen it; the snows—the ice, shedding rays of light in the midst of the nightly shadows, increased the majesty of the scene. Invited, at length, to take our repose, we lay down to rest on a bed of dried grass at the head of the herdsmen: the

next morning we breakfasted early, and began our march.”*

To resume M. Ramond's details:—“It is during the summer, and at the summit of the high *Alps*, that cheese is made in great quantity and of the best quality. The cows are milked twice a day, and the produce of one cow, taking on an average the best with the worst, is from six to twelve *pots*. The *pot* equals two pints.† Notwithstanding this prodigious fecundity, these honest herdsmen suppose a time when it was more considerable: tradition, they say, has transmitted to them the memory of a happy age, when the snow-mountains (*glacieres*)‡ had not yet destroyed the finest part of their *alps*; the plants now venomous, were then wholesome; the *milk-thistles* increased with their milk that of the cows, and they could milk them three times a day. The sins of men, they add, have drawn down the malediction of Heaven on the ice and on their pastures.

“Although the pernicious plants which infect the pastures of the *Alps* are few in number, they are not the less dangerous to the young cattle which

* *Description des Alpes, &c.*

† French pints. “This milk is so rich and so thick, that, when skimmed, its consistence still equals that of our cream. The cream has the tenacity of a pretty firm paste: in Underwalden it is tried by placing a knife on its surface, which ought to remain on the top when it is not mingled with the milk.” *Ramond*.

‡ The mountains from which vallies of ice or *glaciers* descend, are termed *glacieres*,

have not yet learned to distinguish them: those which have passed a summer on the mountains, know them and avoid them. The most remarkable of these plants, is what the herdsmen call *Eiser-hutli*: it is no other than an extremely vigorous *Aconis Napel*, which, partaking of the favours of nature on these fertile mountains, acquires a quality so venomous, that it resembles in its effects the manchineal of America. That species of the aconite which is characterized by white flowers, is so active a poison, that it acts when applied to the exterior of the skin, particularly when this is softened by perspiration: there are instances of persons having been poisoned by its touch. M. de Pfyffer mentioned to me that of a young engaged couple, who having danced together a whole evening, according to the custom of the country which does not allow the dancer to change his partner, both died a few hours after, in consequence of the young man having carried in his hand a nosegay of this aconite. M. de Pfyffer himself, having gathered, one day, a few flowers of this terrible plant, soon found his wrist and the lower part of his arm benumbed; and he does not doubt but this numbness would have made a rapid progress, if he had not quickly got rid of the dangerous *bouquet* that occasioned it.

“ The cheese of the best quality is made without salt in all the high *alps*: the fermentation is

sufficient to give it a flavour which appears saline, and in which the aromatic odour of the mountain-plants sensibly prevails. That made in July and August on the most elevated pastures, will keep for an indefinite length of time, when its substance has been worked so as not to leave one of those interstices called *eyes*, which always characterize a salted or ill-made cheese. The cheeses, made in the mill-stone form, only a few inches thick, and weighing from ten to fifty pounds, are kept a long time piled up in the hoops which serve as moulds, and loaded with a very heavy weight, which confines and presses them, stops all the little interstices, and expresses the last serous particles. They have then acquired solidity, and are carried into the store-houses, where they are kept in the cool and in the air, but carefully preserved from cold and damp, which are equally pernicious to them. These store-houses (*granges*) are cabins constructed like those inhabited, with this difference, that the cross-timbers forming the sides, are not dove-tailed together in the part where they cross; so that considerable interstices remain, rendering these cabins perforated houses in which the air circulates freely. To protect them from the mice, they are raised four or five feet from the ground, on four posts placed at the corners, and crowned with large slabs of slate, extending at least a foot every way. From these store-houses,

the cheeses are transferred to cellars (*celliers*), to shelter them from the frosts of winter: there they may be kept for a century: I have eaten some of an astonishing age at the house of the priest of Lauterbrounnen, who had one sixty years old. It then resembles, in colour and solidity, a cake of yellow wax, is extremely dry, and has a tendency to scale: its flavour is excessively strong, and the old men of the country sometimes use it as a very powerful digestive, after the cheese of later date which they use as food. In that chain of the Alps which rises between the Swiss cantons and the Valais,* the herdsmen are in the practice of making some cheeses with particular care whenever a remarkable event occurs in their family: they rarely fail to do so, in case of a marriage; and they mark on these cheeses the names of the married pair and the date of the ceremony. They also salt, or rather embalm, pig-meat which they preserve with the same veneration, in order to eat it at great solemnities. To regale strangers with this bacon and this cheese, is considered paying them a mark of very particular consideration. A traveller, a friend of mine who has enjoyed this honour in its full extent, eat one day, in a cabin of the Valais, bacon twenty-five years old, of the strong and aromatic flavour of which, he has given

* The Valais, it will be recollected, was not incorporated with the Swiss cantons till the congress of Vienna, in 1815.

me no very favourable report. This custom recalls that of the Cyprians, who, on similar occasions, buried casks of wine, of which some are still continually found of a prodigious age.

“The old cheeses I have just mentioned are not very common, nor are they for sale: the others pass into Italy. Those which cross the St. Gothard are sold at Milan by the muleteers, at the same price (per lb.) as they have been bought in the mountains and the costs of transport are paid by the difference of the weight of Switzerland and that of Italy. The Swiss pound has, in some parts, as much as twenty-eight of the ounces, of which the Italian pound has only eighteen.”

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 9.

Ye glitt'ring towns, with wealth and splendour crown'd;
Ye fields, where summer spreads profusion round;
Ye lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale;
Ye bending swains, that dress the flow'ry vale;
For me your tributary stores combine;
Creation's heir--the world, the world is mine!

GOLDSMITH.

BERNE, one of the largest of the Swiss cantons, and the second in rank, necessarily embraces a great variety within a territory extending from this side of the Jura, into the interior as far as the high Alps, among which it occupies a considerable district.* The costumes of the inhabitants of different parts of this small state consequently offer contrasts as striking as so many different nations. Like the cantons of Friburg and the Valais, it contains within its circuit two separate languages: French and French *patois* prevail in that portion which was formerly the bishopric of Basle; and German, with German *patois*, in the rest.

* It borders on ten other cantons, besides a part of France,

The capital is curiously situated ; and its appearance was very striking as I approached it, from Hofwyl on a moonlight evening. A fine elevated road, with trees and high sloping banks of turf, winds doubling down a hill to the entrance ; and overlooks the town, which is built on a rising ground, surrounded on three sides by the waters of the Aar, whose course here winds so as nearly to form a peninsula : the fourth side is defended by fortifications.

Berne, like many others of these little republics, owes its origin to the association of that lower order of the feudal community termed *serfs* or *villains*, with the little nobility, and under favour of the clergy, for the sake of protection against the oppression of powerful barons, and the violence of petty chieftains : an association which sovereign princes found it their interest to promote, as a check to the ambition of their great nominal vassals, less accustomed to obey than to command. Freedom has thus sprung up from the midst of tyranny : the monarch, driven by dire necessity, has sacrificed a part of his power to preserve the rest ; and, happily, Liberty has since claimed as her own right, what was at first only an offering at the shrine of Despotism.

The dukes of Zähringen, vicegerents of the German Empire in a large part of Switzerland, pursued this system of policy. Duke Berthold III.

founded the town of Freyburg (*Free-town*), the capital of Breisgau in Suabia; and his nephew Berthold IV., that of Freyburg,* in Switzerland. The latter also projected the foundation of Berne, which his son Berthold V. carried into execution in the latter end of the twelfth century. It is the most regularly built town I have seen in Switzerland. The views it commands include a great range of the Alps; and its fortifications are laid out in fine terrace walks, with seats, trees, and turf. Below these walks is the arena, furnished with gymnastic apparatus, where the youth are regularly trained in athletic exercises under a professor. A wide green fosse, affords a tolerable range to a number of deer; and a part of the moat by one of the gates is allotted to two bears, kept there as armorial bearings of the canton. The bears' den was once the favourite resort of a character, very singular, both as a man and an artist. The late Gottfried Mind, a painter of eccentric celebrity, excelled in the delineation of bears and cats: his pictures of the latter animals have been particularly esteemed, not only for the correctness of outline, and the perfect imitation of fur, but for the life and spirit with which they are animated. Madame le Brun, the Parisian artist, gave him the appellation of *le Raphael des Chats*; a

* Commonly spelt by the French and English *Friburg*.

title by which he was afterwards known and inquired for by strangers. His domestic habits afforded abundant opportunity for studying the air and gestures of the feline race, as he is said to have been often found at work at a table, with one of his purring favourites on his lap, and two or three kittens on his shoulders, or in the hollow formed at the back of his neck by the inclination of his head. By the shaggy inmates of the den, he was cordially welcomed: they saluted their visitor with a sort of grunt and a bow; and received in return a treat of fruit or bread from his pockets. He excelled also in cutting out his favourite subjects in chesnut-wood.*

In the same building as the public library, is a large and interesting collection of the birds and quadrupeds of the country; which, together with cabinets of mineralogy, entomology, &c., and models of the Alps, is intended to form, in time, a complete museum of the natural history of Switzerland. Among the birds, I saw some which are not natives; as a flamingo killed near Morat, and a pelican from the lake of Constance. One of the large dogs of St. Bernard is preserved in the collection: this noble creature saved, in its life-time, the lives of several persons, and has thus richly merited the *simple apotheosis* recommended

* For further memoirs of Gottfried Mind, see *New Monthly Mag.* Jan. 1815.

by Delille.* There are also a number of Roman antiquities, and a model of the Bastille. At the time of the demolition of that building, models were made by order of the French government, and sent into all the departments: this is the one that belonged to the bishopric of Basle.

The eye of the English traveller is arrested by articles from the South Sea islands, with labels in his own language: they were the property of Weber, a painter of Berne, who accompanied Captain Cook: and they are curious as having furnished originals for engravings published in Cook's voyages. In a quadrangle adjoining, is a bust of the great Haller in a small botanic garden, where the plants of the highest Alps grow among rock-work of a siliceous or calcarious quality, according to the nature of their parent soil.

Leaving Berne, and passing up the course of the Aar, the neighbourhood of the lakes of Thun and Brientz is eminently worthy of the traveller's attention. At Thun, I rose about four in the morning, and repaired to the edge of the lake, intending to navigate its length in the *bâteau de poste*; but finding I had been misinformed as to the day on which it set out, I pursued my way on foot along the left shore of the lake.

* *L'Homme des Champs. Chant 3.*

The morning mists were dispersing, and the Alps were issuing finely from them, beyond the surface of the water. The way, which is only a foot-path, winds along the high shore; at one time descending to the edge of the lake, at another climbing along the heights, or running above some tremendous precipice, on a ledge of a rock where the stone has been hewn away to admit the narrow footing. Hanging woods of beech or oak, cascades, precipitous rocks, orchards, vineyards, and cottages, combine with the beauties of the opposite shore, to adorn this excursion with magnificent variety. After looking about the gloomy and unpromising town of Unterseen for some time, I was pleasantly surprised to find in its outskirts agreeable accommodations at the sign of the *Hôtel de Ville* or *Stadt Haus*, where I took my coffee in a gallery looking towards the mighty form of the Jungfrau enthroned in clouds.

The village of Interlaken, at a little distance, is a delightful and sequestered retreat, particularly for invalids, for whom there are houses which afford accommodations; and though this valley is nearly two thousand feet above the sea, the air is so soft and mild, that the meadows are said to be enamelled with flowers in the month of February: it is screened from the north by mountains with fine hanging wood. This village, situated between two lakes abounding with exquisite beauties, espe-

cially invites travelling parties to a short residence, as a centre from which excursions may be made to some peculiarly interesting parts of the Alps: excursions, in which it is often necessary to leave carriages behind, and in which it is convenient to ramble without encumbrance. Beyond the mountains to the north, lies the rich vale of Emmenthal; in the other direction, are the valleys of Grindelwald and Lauterbrounn; and to the eastward, is the vale of Hasli.

At the distance of two leagues, the valleys of Grindelwald and Lauterbrounn branch off to right and left at the village of Zweylütschinen, where is the junction of the two torrents flowing from them: the Black Lütchine runs from the glaciers of Grindelwald; and the White Lütchine, in its way down from the Tschingel glacier, receives the magnificent fall of the Staubbach, and the other cascades of the valley of Lauterbrounn, which is named from the abundance of its waters. These two valleys are green defiles, between lofty barriers of wooded mountains, whose bold and precipitous forms, facing each other, might be supposed to have been cleft by some convulsion. The magnificence of their scenery baffles description. At the village of Lauterbrounn, the valley is rather more open, and pastures, with huts for goats or cattle, rise nearly to the summit. The Staubbach shoots from the edge of a beetling rock more than 900

feet in height: it was, when I saw it, a thin waving sheet, floating gracefully, the sport of the winds. In the severest cold of winter, the fine drops of the cascade freeze in their descent and scatter, with a violent noise, a shower of hail, announcing the approaching congelation of the whole torrent, which soon assumes the form of an enormous icicle suspended from the rock. The mass increases, till, drawn down by its weight, it falls on the heaps of ice below, with a sound scarcely equalled by the thunder and the avalanches.* The view is here closed along the valley by the Breit-horn, whose snowy crags show finely between two mountains of darker shading.

Near the village of Grindelwald, the valley also opens to the right and left, sloping to a great height, with pastures, cottages, and fruit-trees. On the right of the valley the sides of three steep mountains present themselves: the Mettenberg is one stupendous precipice of rock; beyond it rises the Wetterhorn, or *Peak of Storms*, whose magnificent summits are mostly enveloped in clouds; and on this side of the Mettenberg is the Eiger.† In the channels left between these three mountains, two glaciers descend into the valley, one on each side of the Mettenberg. This mountain, with a

* See *Ramond*.

† The Schreckhorn, mentioned in the next paper, is immediately behind these mountains.

large stratum of clouds at a considerable height, raised its snowy head, looking grandly above its veil. The wooden gallery of my inn looked down to the village church, and a neat house of stone near it, bespeaking itself that of the pastor. The cottages in these valleys are built of timber, except the foundation or ground floor. The roofs, which are but little sloped, are covered with wooden shingles, a common Alpine tiling, laid thickly over each other, and crossed by pieces of wood placed lengthwise with the roof, at intervals, from the ridge to the eaves: on the cross-pieces are laid large stones to secure the whole. The huts for goats or cattle are built of timbers laid lengthwise one on the other, crossing and dovetailing at the corners. The valley is closed, and separated from the vale of Hasli, by a ridge called the Scheideck.*

On a lovely morning, I took my breakfast in the open gallery of my inn, preparatory to crossing the Scheideck, to Meyringhen in the vale of Hasli. A boy attended me as guide, and I set out, among the pastures, cottages, and rural scenery, which fill the grand outline I have already traced. A fountain—cattle feeding—a female peasant standing and knitting, with goats browsing near her—another woman stopping to talk, over the wood fence by the way side, to a herdsman

* In the German orthography, *Scheidegg*. There are many ridges thus named, from the German *scheiden*, to separate. See *Ramond*.

leaning familiarly over the back of a cow—my young guide carrying my pouch, and saluting his acquaintance as he passed, as though desirous of drawing attention to the important office he was filling: such were the objects that animated the picture of a sweet Alpine morning. The glaciers and the mountains on the right were displaying, to the morning sun, forms highly sublime and striking; and though at a distance, seemed as usual very near. The illusion may be dispelled, for a moment, by looking at the diminutive appearance of the houses and other objects below; but it quickly returns on casting the eyes higher up. The fine short turf, in the ascent, was studded with the brilliant purple stars of the gentiana: farther up were crocuses, and richly coloured heart's-ease. On one side of the valley we were leaving, light clouds were hovering round the summits of the Faulhorn; whilst, on the opposite side, the Wetterhorn, the Mettenberg, and the Eigher, were lifting their majestic white crags in a clear blue sky. I know not that I have seen a near view even of Mont Blanc, so impressive as that of these very steep rocky mountains.

I had been informed that a guide was not necessary for the whole way; and I accordingly parted from my 'little foot-page' at the top of the ascent. He was engaged to attend me as far as was needful; but he had not left me long, when

unexpected difficulties occurred. Sheets of deep snow concealed the path: I was got out of my way in turning aside to avoid them, when a call behind me stayed my steps; and turning, I saw two peasants. I had seen them before in ascending; the man, with a basket on his back, and the woman knitting as she climbed. I was soon given to understand, by signs, that I was straying; the man came across the snow to meet me and set me right; and we all began to traverse together the frozen surface. The icy crust gave way, from time to time, and plunged us into the snow: nor did our feet always find a bottom. The treacherous pavement betrayed us all three, by turns: not without affording some diversion at these sudden plunges. The snow-water, however, soaking my shoes and stockings, produced intense cold, which I was glad to dissipate, in some degree, by brisk motion, when spots of *terra firma* intervened.

I had heard the harmless thunder of the summer-avalanches,* on the preceding night, at Grindelwald: I now heard it several times; but as they are in high regions, and do not reach the valleys, the sound, amid the reverberations of the mountains, does not always readily guide the eye to the right spot. At length I beheld the white cloud of fine snow surrounding the powdery torrent, as it rolled beauti-

* See page 54.

fully from crag to crag. The spectacle appears of so inconsiderable a size, as to seem exceedingly disproportionate to so mighty a sound. Perhaps what appears, at a distance, a stream of powdery snow, may be really small granulated ice formed in the snowy crust of the summits; a substance which would be more adequate to such an effect.

I wandered from my companions among the firs, but after a long descent, reached at length a brow, whence I looked down, with impressions not easy to describe, on the green vale of Hasli, and its little capital, far beneath my feet. On my left, the cascade of the Reichenbach rolled thundering down the mountain: the path crosses it twice, by bridges, in the descent. A shallow, but lofty grot, with a rude wooden seat, offers a delightful resting place, whence the eye wanders over this wonderful scene. Meyringen consists chiefly of wooden houses, some of which are arranged in streets, and others interspersed among orchards and gardens: paths, bordered by a fence of wood, sometimes prettily intersect these little domains.

The next day was Sunday; but ignorance of the language excluded me from the service of the church. The building is plain, and furnished with seats without backs: the women sit separately from the men on one side of the aisle, and are dressed so much alike, with little black caps on

the back of the head, and large white shirt-sleeves, as to produce the effect of an uniform. The appearance of their pastor in canonicals, with his neck encircled by a deep white frill, somewhat like those of the days of queen Elizabeth, added to the novelty and singularity of the scene. The church-tower stands at some distance from the church itself.

Hasli and its inhabitants are so well known, that instead of farther description of my own, I shall give that of the interior of a dwelling, by one more familiar with the country. M. Ramond and his travelling companion chose, instead of an inn, a residence in two of the peasants' cabins, to spend a few days in this charming country.

“In the mountains,” says he, “the houses have commonly only a low ground floor: in the plain they add one story. Both are pretty high and commodious in the better sort of dwellings; but in the cabins of the least wealthy of the peasants, all is compressed into a very small compass, and so low, that it is impossible for a man of very middling height to stand upright in them. The one I inhabited near Meyringen was of this kind, and notwithstanding the experience I had of the inconveniences of this mode of building, I seldom rose from my seat without striking my head against the ceiling. My hosts inhabited the lower part of the house, consisting of one room only, in the corner of which was a stove of rude masonry,

about three feet high: directly over it, a square hole was left in the ceiling, and this was the entrance to my apartment, which occupied the whole of the first story, and to which I climbed by mounting on the stove, the substitute for a staircase. My bed was a sack filled with dry leaves, upon which I slept, very luxuriously, to the continued sound of the distant cataracts of Mount Housli. Beside me I had a loop-hole, through which I saw the Scheideck, and the enormous conical summits of the Wetterhorn and the Wellhorn, with their glaciers, whose surface was silvered by the moon.
 Every morning, my companion came to see me, and we passed the day together, in the midst of the peasants who assembled from the different cabins of the neighbourhood. The women sat round with their children, and the men played at nine-pins or wrestled before us."*

* The swains of Switzerland, as well as those of ancient Italy practise gymnastic exercises. There are places in the Alps where they assemble regularly for this favourite sport.

Corporaque agresti nudant prædura palæstrâ.

The inhabitants of Hasli and Underwalden celebrate their athletic games on the 26th of July, on the Engstejn-Alp, and the 10th of August, on the Tenn-Alp. Those of Hasli and Grindelwald assemble on the Scheideck, the first *Sunday* in September.

THE

TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 10.

Ille canit : pulsæ referunt ad sidera valles;
Cogere donec oves stabulis numerumque referre
Jussit, et invito processit Vesper Olympo.

VIRG.

AMONGST the pastoral race of men spread over Switzerland, whose habits and occupations we have already been observing, some of those in the neighbourhood of the *Schreckhorn* appear to be of peculiar antiquity. It is supposed, that amid the torrents of invaders—the Romans from the south, and the northern natives from beyond the Rhine—these mountains have afforded, like those of Wales and of the Highlands of Scotland, an unconquered asylum: though the hills on the outer circuit of these valleys are still crowned with ruins, the vestiges of a feudal epoch, and of that system of vassallage which followed the second kingdom of the Burgundians.*

* See *Ramond*.

time before. There exist herdsmen whose race has been established in the place they inhabit, from the first ages of civilization. In certain cabins of the mountains are found registers, in which these honest pastors have commemorated the descent of their herds from father to son, through a long period of time. I have seen one of these chronicles, containing a continued history of the revolutions of the neighbouring glaciers, and of the numerous years which had witnessed the prosperity or the diminution of their cattle. These events, the only ones that interest men acquainted merely with their mountains and their herds, and whose life is so uniform that they distinguish no epoch in it, are written by thirty different hands, in the same character, and the same style. The very names of these mountaineers attest the antiquity of their race; they bear the names of the spots near which their cabins are or were built. One is called *John by the rock*; another, *Peter in the orchard*; another, *James under the forest*: a glacier has, however, for several centuries covered the rock which gave its name to the first; there is no longer an orchard in the place where is seen the cot of the second; and the forest which shaded the habitation of the third, has been, long since, carried away by the avalanches."

After speaking of the subjugation of the inhabitants of the Valais by the savages of the north

and of the west, by Gauls, barbarous and civilized, by the conquerors of the world, and by the hordes who overthrew their empire, he adds :

“ To these moral causes, have been joined the physical transformations, of which the Valais, more than any other region of the Alps, appears to have been the theatre. Such are, the destruction of its cold forests, and the spoliation of the mountains. The number of the herdsmen has diminished as the pastures have disappeared, and the cultivators have multiplied ; in short the inhabitant of those valleys which have become scorched,* has departed farther and farther from the race of pastors to which he belonged, and who still subsist on the northern ridge of the same chain of mountains.

“ I have described elsewhere the pastoral manners of the inhabitants of the Alps. I have noticed the truly remarkable difference which subsists between the Swiss herdsmen and that of the Valais. The result of this comparison is, that there are still true pastors among the Swiss, and that in the Valais there are now very few ; for I do not allow this title to the hired herdsmen, undertaking the management of the herds of a community. This is, without doubt, the reason why I have never heard,

* In the lower Valais, Reaumur's thermometer rises in summer to $24\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ (about 87° Fahrenheit) in the shade : on the rocks, in the heat of the sun, it is seen to rise to 48° (140° Fahrenheit) and sometimes as high as 58° ($162\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ Fahrenheit.) See *Ebel*.

in any part of the Valais, the *Ranz des Vaches*, that favourite air of the herdsmen of Switzerland. I dare not assert that it is never performed there, but it appears to me certain that it is forgotten in the greater part of these mountains. It is the same in those of Alsace and Suabia, where they retain only a few detached passages of it."

This air, sung by the mountaineers in order to collect their cattle,* has become famous in Europe, since it was mentioned by Rousseau,† who observes, however, that its power has diminished, because the Swiss have lost their original simplicity. Accounts of the extraordinary effects of this music formerly, on the Swiss soldiers in foreign service, are well known. It is said that these violent emotions were produced, whether it was played, sung, or even whistled; that few could restrain their tears, that many deserted, and that some died of the *nostalgia*, that melancholy and languishing, but ardent longing for home, to which the French have given the name of *maladie du pays*. The colonels of Swiss regiments, in France and Holland, were obliged to forbid its being played before their troops: it is even asserted to have been prohibited on pain of death. Ramond remarks that this tune has by no means lost all its power, and that he

* The cows, though at a great distance, immediately go towards their keeper, whenever he begins to sing this tune.

† *Dictionnaire de Musique*,

could bring proofs of it from all the mountainous parts of Switzerland, except the Valais. Some farther notices on this subject may be interesting, as there are observations on it connected with the pastoral economy and the language of the country, and as these ancient bucolics are curious remains of antiquity.*

The name of *ranz* seems to have been given in France: the word is now unknown except in this title, but its etymon is sought in the word *reihen*, rank, row, or file,† one of the components of *Kü-reihen* the German term for these songs. There are perhaps more than fifty different *Ranz des Vaches* in Switzerland. The words of that of Appenzel, which passes for the oldest of all, are ancient German *patois* :‡ the German tongue in-

* See *Recherches sur les Ranz des Vaches, par Geo. Tarenne. Paris, 1813.*

† See *Tarenne*: but Ramond says that *reihen* signifies *rondeau*, and cites, to illustrate the subject, the title of an English song, 'The Sailor's *Rant*.' The word *rane* is applied, in Scotland, to certain rude rhymes, such as that chanted by children to lady-birds:

Lady lady Lanners,
Fly away to Flanners, &c.

See *Edin. Mag.*

‡ Ebel, in his work on the canton of Appenzel, asserts that the *Ranz des Vaches* is never sung by herdsmen with words, and that the tones are mostly formed in the throat, resembling those of a wind instrument. However this may be, the existence of so many national vocal melodies, without any words ever having belonged to them, appears in itself highly improbable.—There is also a Cambrian *Ranz des Vaches*, which has been, and perhaps still is, in use in the Principality. I remember to have heard it hummed by Edward Williams, the aged Welsh bard, whose knowledge of the antiquities of his country is perhaps unequalled, and whose name is undoubtedly known to some of my readers.

deed, was first introduced into Switzerland in this canton, between the sixth and ninth centuries. At the time of the conquest of the Romans, a dialect of the Celtic was the language of the country. The *Ranz* of the Alps of Gruyères which is considered the finest, and which appears to me to be the one I have heard in the mouth of a young woman of the canton of Vaud, is in one of the Romance* or Latin *patois*: the conclusion of the burdens, particularly, I thought plaintive and touching. The composition and rhyme are highly rude; but in genuine pastorals we must not look for refinement.† Shepherds and herdsmen, it may be concluded, were not the founders of our schools of pastoral. Theocritus and Virgil wrote in courts. It was when mankind had advanced from the pas-

* These are spoken by the peasantry in various parts of Switzerland, in Savoy, and in France. Tarenne mentions five principal dialects in the first of these countries; that of the Valais; that of the *Ormonds*, on the eastern part of the canton of Vaud; that of the canton of Fribourg; that of the neighbourhood of the lakes of Morat and Neuchâtel; and that of the ci-devant bishopric of Basle. He refers to *Recherches sur les langues anciennes de la Suisse, &c. par Bertrand*; and also informs us that the oldest specimen of the Romance tongue we have remaining, is a treaty of peace between Louis of Germany and Charles the Bald, dated 842. It is to be found in the *Mem. de l'Académie des Inscr., &c.* vol. 27, also in the *Glossaire de la langue romane*, by *Roquefort*, where is also an interesting dissertation on the Romance tongue.

† The extempore verses which du Bos mentions as sung by the Italian peasants, who bear the guitar as they tend their flocks, are, perhaps, not exactly pastoral poetry, but a mere *ding-dong* of amatory common-place in imitation of higher ranks, under favour of a rhyme-provoking language. The Abbé casts just contempt on the *galans porte-houettes païtris de métaphysique amoureuse*; personages in eclogue, better known in the history of French poetry, than in that of our own country. See *Reflections critiques sur la Poésie, &c.*

toral life, to agriculture and civilization, that they appear to have recurred with fondness to the images of rural beauty and tranquillity connected with their former condition; not reflecting that it was their own acquired refinement, that now gave those images their peculiar grace. This confusion of the present with the past, was a sort of anachronism in the reminiscences of nations, analogous to the error of the full-grown man, who when indulging in the recollections of his boy-hood, unconsciously mingles with them the pleasures of developed intellect and enlarged experience, and, charmed with the fair but false idea, pronounces his school-boy days the happiest of his life.

The subject of this *Ranz*, which is sufficiently nonsensical, is a kind of pastoral narrative and dialogue, continually interrupted by the burden addressed to the cows. The style is so rude and obscure, that some explanations are required, to fill up the outline and render the whole comprehensible.

The argument is this:—the herd, supposed to have been milked early in a spring morning, sets out from the valley towards the mountain-pasture, where it is to pass the warm season, and is attended to by a herdsman (*armailli*) and his assistant, or *djigno** (junior). The cows arrive at some

* There are in a *chalet* besides the *djigno*, domestics of an inferior rank, such as those called *tortzchon*, *boubo*, *guerson*, &c. according to

boggy land, which they are unable to get through : in this trying juncture, the *djigno* is despatched to the house of the priest, to request he will assist them by a mass. The priest (*eincoura*) demands, as the price of his services, a cheese made of unskimmed milk ; and the peasant consents, desiring him to send his maid (*serveinta*) for it. To this last step the priest suggests some prudential objections ; and after more conversation equally edifying, dismisses petitioner, promising to say an avemary, and adding his benediction, ‘ *Prau bein, prau pri, ié vo sohetto,* ’ ‘ I wish you plenty of wealth and plenty of cheeses.’ The *djigno* returns to his superior herdsman, and the cows—*mirabile dictu*—pass well over the bog, and arrive in the evening at the *chalet*. But this is not all : for such is the further efficacy of the priest’s prayer and benediction, that, on milking the cows in the evening, the *tzaudairé*, or cauldron,* in which the milk is curdled for cheese, is full before they have half done milking!!

the country. Their business is to guard the herd, to milk, to wash the vessels, to cleave wood for the fire, and in short to do all the odd work of the dairy. See *Tarenne*.

* A large cauldron may contain the milk of about a hundred cows, and a common one, that of forty or fifty. The milk is commonly curdled morning and evening, unless the herd be small, in which case, the evening’s milk, after being skimmed, is added to that of the next morning : but this is not usual in the large *chalets*, where the best cheeses are made. The acid used for turning the milk is of two sorts ; the *có* or rennet-liquor, and the *azi* made from butter-milk (*petit-lait*) fermented ; the latter is also used as a purgative for the cows. The two acids are sometimes used mingled together. See *Tarenne*.

The beginning will afford a specimen of the language and style :

Lé z'armailli dei Colombetté

Dé bon matin sé san lévâ.

A ! a ! a ! a !

Lioba,* lioba, por aria.

The herdsmen of the Colombettes†

Are risen early in the morning.

Ah ! ah ! ah ! ah !

Cows, cows, to milking (*pour traire*).

Then follows the burden in a livelier strain :

Vinidé toté, bliantz' et nairé,

Rodz' et motaillé, dzjouvèn' et otro,

Déso on tzhâno, yo ié vos ario,

Déso on treimblio, yo ié treintzo,

Lioba, lioba, por aria,

Come all, black and white,

Red and starred,‡ the young, and the rest,

Under an oak, where I milk you,

Under an aspen, where I curdle (the milk).

Cows, cows, &c.

After every second verse follows another burden :

Lé sonnailliré van lé prémiré,

Lé toté nairé van lé derrairé,

Lioba, lioba, por aria.

* *Lioba* (darling) is an appellation of endearment given to cows. The pronunciation of this line may be represented nearly thus, in English sounds; *L'yó-ba, l'yó-ba, pore ar-yá*.

† The *Colombettes* is a mountain of Gruyères: the *Ranz* of the canton of Vaud also mention this mountain, thus indicating their own origin.

‡ Having a star or white spot in the forehead.

The bell-cows* go first,
 Those quite black go last,
 Cows, cows, &c.†

It is observed that the *Ranz des Vaches*, to be fully appreciated, must be heard in its native scenes; and that even there, various circumstances may contribute to heighten or diminish its effect.‡ When the herdsman, unseen, like an invisible genius, sings it among secluded and imposing scenery, when the murmur of a neighbouring torrent, producing a continued bass, combines finely with the notes of the alp-horn,§ when the echoes pro-

* In general, all the cows of a herd have bells of different sizes: they march without any order, except that the one bearing the large bell or *sounno* goes first: these cows are called *sonnailliré*. This badge of precedency seems to be a proud distinction; and it is asserted that the cow who has it taken from her pines away, manifests her grief by lowing, and furiously attacks her who has succeeded to the honour of *bearing the bell*. The cow which is in the habit of straying farthest, is sometimes furnished with a small bell; and the herdsman in collecting his cows, judges by her arrival that they are all assembled.

† It will be seen how little affinity this singular piece has with the insipid modern production styled a *Ranz des Vaches*, and adapted to the notes of Rousseau:

Quand reverrai-je, en un jour,
 Tous les objets de mon amour?
 Nos clairs ruisseaux,
 Nos coteaux,
 Nos hameaux,
 Nos montagnes, &c. &c.

The 'gentile Isabeau' also follows---somewhat late indeed---in this inventory of poetical effects.

‡ See *Tarenne*.

§ The *alp-horn*---such is the untranslated German word---is an instrument much used by herdsmen in Switzerland, and made by themselves. It is sometimes upwards of six feet in length, and is formed of thin bark rolled up and bound round with string from one end to the other: its form is somewhat curved.

long the sounds among the mountains, and when the cattle, from some sweet pasture, join at intervals the chime of their bells; the traveller whose eye and ear are thus ravished at once, will carry away with him a delightful recollection, to be awakened by the same notes in a distant land—an emotion not to be enjoyed by one who has never visited Switzerland. But the more melancholy charm working so powerfully on the hearts of the Swiss, appears not to be that of scenic, or poetic, or musical taste, but of association, the secret cause, perhaps, of all our strong emotions from sounds: such association is, no doubt, rendered more powerful by the strong distinguishing characters of the scenery of this country. The mountaineer who has been accustomed to hear this melody from the lips of a father, a sister, or a friend; and to hear it from early life, when surrounding things are daily strengthening imperceptibly their ties about the heart—perhaps, too, at those hours, when the slanting mountain-shadows brought home his dearest associates and his dearest pleasures—will hear it, in another country, with feelings far different from those of the English traveller. No wonder that it seems to him the well-known voice of friendship or of love; that home floats before his eyes; and that he burns to realize the vision.

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 11.

Of relics he'd a monstrous store;
Saints' elbows, eyes, and thumbs galore.
He'd got, to keep the devil from us,
Jags from the toe-nails of St. Thomas,
The slippers of the virgin Mary,
And good St. Jerome's breviary.

THE territory of the little canton of Schwitz is computed at 22 square geographical miles: it possesses no town, Schwitz, its capital, being only a village. Though in the centre of Switzerland, it has no mountains so high as the line of perpetual snow, and has consequently no glaciers. In the infancy of the Swiss confederation, such was the energetic character of the inhabitants of this canton, as to procure it the honour of giving its name to the whole nation. *Schweiz* is, according to the German orthography of the country, at once the name of the canton and of Switzerland. The village of Schwitz, as you approach it on the lake of Lucern, is seen about a league up from the shore, in a green recess under the Mythen, a mountain

rising above it in two pointed summits. Though a village, it is a considerable one: it has good houses, a *town-hall*, an arsenal, and two convents. At Ibach, between the village and the edge of the lake, is the meadow furnished with benches, where the general assembly or *landesgemeinde* of the canton is annually held, in the month of May, in the open air.

Not far distant, is the small lake of Lowertz, beyond which may be seen, from a distance, the vestiges of a most dreadful catastrophe, which occurred here in 1806; a slip of part of the mountain called the Rossberg. After a very snowy winter, and a rainy July and August, in the beginning of September, a crackling noise was heard in the mountain, and other remarkable circumstances were observed. In the evening of the same day, enormous strata, a thousand feet wide, a hundred deep, and near a league in length, rushed with the noise of thunder on the valleys of Goldau and Brousinghen. "In five minutes," says Ebel, "this neighbourhood, so charming and so fertile, was converted into a frightful desert; the two valleys were covered, for the space of a square league, with a chaos of hills from a hundred to two hundred feet high; the villages of Goldau, Brousinghen, Ober-Rœthen, Unter-Rœthen, and Lowertz, were buried beneath the ruins; the western part of the lake was filled; and the inhabitants of these val-

leys, so interesting from the beauty of their figure, their energy, their activity, and their frugality, were either crushed under the ruins of the mountain, or reduced to the most dreadful misery. Of these last, there are five hundred and thirty. Four hundred and thirty-three individuals perished, all inhabitants of the valley; besides sixteen persons from various other parts of the canton of Schwitz, and eight travellers from the cantons of Berne and Argovia.”

Taking the road to the right of the lake of Lowertz, a beautiful country lay around me towards the village of Einsiedeln. The scene was animated by the hay-makers, and by the troops of well-dressed peasantry returning from pilgrimage to the shrine of ‘our Lady of the Hermits’, placed in the church of the great Benedictine abbey at Einsiedeln. It attracts a concourse of French, Swiss, and German pilgrims, surpassed in number only by those who visit Loretto. Passing through the fields, a little band of these pilgrims were on their way to the shrine, reciting in response, as they walked, the service to the virgin: an elderly man, with a chaplet of beads* in his hand, ap-

* The chaplet contains sometimes fifty, sometimes sixty beads, representing avemaries, and after every ten, a larger one, which is a paternoster. There are also a few supplementary beads. It is intended to contain an avemary for every year of the Virgin Mary’s life; but as there are two traditions on that important point, those who can persuade themselves that she lived only fifty years, spare themselves, every time, ten avemaries and a paternoster. Now, supposing

peared to be the leader of their devotions. The road is lined by beggars, young and old. Children run barefoot out of the cottages, following you, and gabbling something which seems to be a prayer for your benefit, at least provided you pay for it when it is done. Mendicity is an important part in the system of the Romish church. Her resources of this kind never fail; for what she bestows on idleness, promotes idleness: superstition is followed by degradation, and degradation by poverty. She has indeed been eminently the patroness of sloth, dirt, and beggary. Even the great Pascal, powerful as was his intellect in some points, treated organized plans for the radical assistance of the indigent, as the subterfuges of avarice. He wished—doubtless in the humility of his heart—to give to the poor, as he expressed it, *poorly*. As though the object were, not to relieve misery, but to purchase so many penny-worths of *merit*. When He, who, whilst on earth, ‘went about doing good,’ enjoined the practice on his followers, we must conclude, from the whole tenor of his conduct, that he had in view the diminution of suffering and of degradation, the enlightened cultivation of the benevolent affections, and the reduction of the selfish principle.

the service to be said twice a day, this would save, in a year, 7,900 avemaries, and 730 paternosters; an economy of time and labour worthy of note.

Near the village of Rothenthurm, the country becomes bleak and cheerless. On my left stretched the ridge of Morgarten, in part clad with dark firs, and wearing bare and dreary features, though affording grass for cattle. I climbed over its summit, and looked down on the little lake of Egeri, in the canton of Zug: it reposes in a verdant valley, opening, with an effect particularly beautiful, on the traveller who has just turned his back on cold and uninviting scenery.

On the opposite side of the lake rose a wooded mountain; whilst a continuation of that on which I stood curved round the shore of the lake to the right, wearing a new and smiling aspect, and displaying slopes sprinkled with dwellings. Below me, lay the Thermopylæ of Switzerland, the pass of Morgarten; a spot trodden as hallowed ground by the Swiss, and the name of which tells the story of an eventful day in their history.

The abbey of Einsiedeln, founded in the tenth century, in the midst of a wild forest-country, had, by means of an image of the Virgin, reputed miraculous and enriched with offerings, risen, from a small origin, to wealth and importance. In the progress of clearing lands by the monks, disputes had arisen between them and the Swiss, on the subject of territorial boundaries but ill defined. These hostile dispositions had long subsisted, when the Dukes of Austria, having become the protect-

ors of the monastery with the title of *garde-noble*, forbade the Swiss all intercourse with their subject lands. All the Swiss who dared to pass through the domains of the abbey were now abused, plundered, and beaten by the monks. Some of the inhabitants of this canton, roused by these acts of hostility, retaliated by attacking and pillaging the abbey, and carrying away, as prisoners, the monks whom they suspected of promoting the offensive edict. Frederick, Duke of Austria, who was engaged in the contest with Louis, Duke of Bavaria, for the imperial crown, despatched his brother Leopold with an army, to chastise the three cantons of Schwitz, Uri, and Underwalden, which had but a few years before formed their first alliance, and whose love of liberty had already made them bated. Leopold, attended by 1,300 horse armed with cuirasses, and 20,000 foot, directed his efforts towards the pass of Morgarten, as the entrance to the territories of the republic. A thousand men of Lucern were to traverse their lake in boats, and join him in the heart of the country; whilst the Count of Strasburg was charged to assemble the troops of Hasli and other parts, to the number of 4,000, and to march against Underwalden. The Count of Toggenburg, touched with compassion at the condition of the Swiss—a little band of patriots, whom such hosts of enemies were threatening to overwhelm—threw himself at the feet of Leopold

to intercede in their behalf. The inveterate prince turned a deaf ear to his intreaties, but at length yielded so far as to send him to the Swiss, with offers of peace, on condition of their acknowledging Frederic as their legitimate Emperor. The terms met with a decided refusal; and the benevolent count, unable to accomplish his object as peace-maker, found himself, with reluctance, obliged to retire. Leopold imprudently engaged his army between the lake and the mountain of Morgarten; whilst the Swiss, only 2,000* in number, having spent the night in fasting and prayer, waited his approach at the other end of the pass. Some of them possessed themselves of the heights, rolling down timber and fragments of rock on the Austrian horse, which were thus soon thrown into disorder. The confusion became general, and the Austrians were routed with dreadful slaughter. The flower of the Helvetian nobility fell in this battle; and about 1,500 of the invader's cavalry lay on the field: the victory is said to have cost the conquerors only 14 men.† The same day, the inhabitants of Underwalden, crossing the lake of Lucern, repulsed the forces of that quarter, and afterwards, joining their countrymen, defeated the count of Strasburg. Leopold fled to Winter-

* According to Gibbon (*Introd. à l'Hist. gén. de la Suisse*): but some of the popular histories considerably reduce the number.

† The battle of Morgarten occurred in 1315.

thur. Schwitz, Uri, and Underwalden changed their former treaty of ten years, to a perpetual alliance, the basis of the Swiss confederation. A foreign enemy never entered the territory of Schwitz, till the bloody combat with the French in 1798. The canton of Zug was, however, again stained with blood in 1531, by one of those contests bearing the same relation to other wars, as fratricide does to murder: the reformer Zuinglius fell in that year, in a battle between the protestants and the catholics, near Cappel. The neighbourhood was doomed to hear, once more, the noise of arms, those of the French and the Austrians, in 1799. May the herds of these valleys henceforth feed in peace.—In the mean time, it is highly interesting to the philanthropist, in turning back the page of history, and marking the progress of enlightened opinions, to observe not only that religious wars are exploded, but that the achievements of the ambitious conqueror no longer hold the rank they once held in the estimation of mankind. They will, certainly, never regain it: the outrageous selfishness they exhibit is seen to be utterly incompatible with true mental greatness—true dignity of character. More than once, in the course of one century, has such a hero figured, and vanished,

And left the name at which the world grew pale
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

The press has pleaded the cause of religion and humanity in the world; it has widely diffused a knowledge of the rights of man—I do not mean in the revolutionary, but the sober sense of the words; and it has given currency to completely new lessons, which political economy has taught, on the real interests of nations. From such a contemplation of the past, the eye naturally turns to the future; and it rests, with delightful veneration, on the recorded prediction of a sacred oracle :

And he shall judge among the nations ;
 And shall **WORK CONVICTION** in many peoples :
 And they shall beat their swords into plough-shares,
 And their spears into pruning-hooks :
 Nation shall not lift up sword against nation ;
 Neither shall they learn war any more.*

I regained the high road, and after passing through a continuation of the dreary scenery, arrived, near a small public-house, the sign of which was inscribed "*The Mother of God*," at a brow, overlooking the town-like village of Einsiedeln, and the buildings of the abbey. The principal portion of these buildings forms an extensive square pile, with long ranges of windows; and in the centre of the front, appears the front of the church, with its two steeples. On a high point, between the steeples, is a statue of the Virgin, from

* Isaiah,—*Bishop Lowth's translation.*

whose body proceed gilded rays, which, in the evening produce a curious effect, in short, something of the effect intended. This church is a modern building, having been erected in 1779.

The village contains an amazing number of inns, which I believe is common in places of pilgrimage. My inn was opposite the front of the abbey, facing a semicircular arcade, through the centre of which is the approach to the principal entrance of the church. This arcade is full of little shops, which form a sort of bazar, for the sale of crosses, chaplets of beads, missals, wax tapers, and wax figures of arms, legs, babies, &c. These last are used as votive offerings, by way of acknowledgment to the Virgin, for the effect her influence is supposed to have had, in the progress of the cure of a diseased limb, or in the grant of any other petition. The arcade is surmounted by a stone balustrade, and statues; and before the sweep formed by it, is a large fountain, with the statue of the Woman crowned with stars, and the moon under her feet, and trampling the dragon. The water spouts from fourteen pipes, at all of which pilgrims are careful to drink, that they may be sure of not missing that at which they are taught to believe Jesus Christ once slaked his thirst. The interior of the church, though decorated in bad taste, is gorgeously ornamented with paintings and gilding on the ceiling, with large figures of angels, apparently

marble, placed aloft, and with *coveys* of cherubs: the whole calculated to strike with astonishment the poor ignorant pilgrims, who flock hither, from different parts of Switzerland, from Germany, and from Alsace. The worshippers I saw here were mostly of the lower orders: my impression with regard to some persons of superior appearance, who were at the same inn as myself, was, that they were ashamed of the mummeries of the place. The shrine, which is the great object of their devotion, is a small covered chapel of marble, placed in the central aisle: an iron gate or grating, in front, at once displays the interior, and forbids entrance. The back part, thrown into deep shade, contains a recess, where is seen the image of the Virgin in an embroidered dress,* with the child Jesus in her arms: a concealed lamp sheds a mystic gleam on her head, and on the crown which she wears. Her face, as well as that of the infant, is black. This chapel, like the *Casa Santa* at Loretto, is said to have been conveyed hither by angels. The church resounded with the gabbled prayers of the pilgrims; some kneeling, some sitting, some standing, in the various costumes of their different countries. They would afford singular groups for the pencil, as they cluster together before the shrine, or kneel

* The wardrobe of 'Our Lady of the Hermits,' is said to contain fifty-two complete suits; one for every week in the year.

before the skeletons of saints, which are gorgeously apparelled in velvet and gold, or other glittering array, and laid in glass cases like stuffed animals in a museum. These cases are let into altars, in the recesses down the sides of the church; and the poor devotees are kept, by grating, at a due distance from the bony objects of their adoration. Near the principal entrance, hang a great number of the small votive pictures, which are a common decoration of the sanctuaries of the Virgin. In these, various deliverances are commemorated. In one, a poor fellow is seen under the wheel of a waggon, another is fallen into that of a mill: in another piece, several persons appear to be praying in a besieged city, with the bombs flying over their heads. Among the rude *ex voto* paintings of this kind which I have seen elsewhere, I have observed the worshippers represented, not only offering up their prayers by the side of the sick beds, but also in behalf of diseased horses or cows. The Virgin is commonly seen in the higher part of these pictures, shedding her benign protection on her votaries. I did not discover the silver plate over the door of the chapel, with the five holes said to have been impressed by the fingers of Jesus Christ, nor the inscription, 'Here are obtained plenary indulgence and remission of sins.' They have possibly been removed, as rather too bad for the nineteenth century.

The concourse of pilgrims is truly surprising. I think I was told that two thousand of them had left the village the day I arrived ; an unusual number having attended a procession of the *fête-Dieu*.

I gained admission to the richly decorated choir, and into the interior of the abbey. Long and well lighted corridors, paved with brick, lead to the ranges of apartments. Among the paintings, was one on a furrowed surface of wood, representing the head of Christ, when seen in one direction, and turning into that of the Virgin, when looked at in another. A venerable monk, of mild and pleasing manners, showed me the library, which is large and handsome, but its shelves suffered considerably in the revolution. A large room devoted to scientific purposes, contained a cabinet of fossils. This was, perhaps, considered better suited for the inspection of a protestant, than the wardrobe of the Virgin, which I was not shewn.

The day after my arrival was Friday ; and after a dinner in which some of the fasting discipline of the church was enforced, more, perhaps, by the presence of the demon of scarcity, than that of the ' Queen of angels,' I left Einsiedeln in the company of a young Swiss I met with at the inn ; and in spite of foul weather, I willingly quitted this village, which I had found to be haunted by gloomy feelings. Though it was now the 29th of May, the snow fell around us, producing a strange effect, as

the large flakes alighted on flowery grass beside our road. The descent towards the lake of Zurich would have been beautiful, had the weather been fine. We crossed a narrow part of the lake to the town of Rapperschwyl,* by a bridge half a mile or more in length. This singular bridge is narrow, without any protection at the sides, and covered only with loose planks, which are left quite unfastened, that they may yield to the violence of the storms, and spare the frame-work which supports them. These irregular and gaping boards I found to be very ugly footing, slippery as they were with the rain; but the traveller who ventures to cross in high winds, is liable to have the planks before and behind him carried away, and himself left suspended over the roaring waters.

* In the canton of St. Gall,

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 12.

His dwelling a recess in some rude rock,
Book, beads, and maple dish his meagre stock,
In shirt of hair and weeds of canvass dress'd,
Girt with a bell-rope that the Pope has bless'd,
Wearing out life in his religious whim,
Till his religious whimsy wears out him.

COWPER.

THE situation of the town of Friburg, the capital of the canton of the same name, resembles that of Berne; being principally on rising ground, in a curve of the river Sarine.* It has been already remarked that both these towns were founded by Dukes of Zæringen. The French language is spoken in the southern part of the canton, and German in the other; and it is remarkable that the line which separates these districts passes through the town of Friburg, presenting the phenomenon of people of a different speech, inhabiting the two opposite sides of the same town:

* *Alias Saane.*

the two languages mingle towards the centre. The streets are irregular, and the ground so much so, that the pavement of one street serves as a roof to some houses below.

Monachism and poverty abound in Friburg. When the doctrines of the Reformers first attracted attention, the government of Berne wrote to that of Friburg an exhortation not to quit the faith of their ancestors: Berne herself, however, soon ventured to conclude that her forefathers were fallible; and she embraced the reformation. Friburg, for her part, followed the advice she had received; and the reformed doctrines were sedulously and effectually excluded by the magistrate.

The cathedral church of St. Nicholas, was built in the thirteenth century: its tower, the loftiest in Switzerland, is 380 feet in height, an elevation which would be great even for a spire, and surpasses that of Salisbury cathedral. Over the principal entrance is a curious old piece of sculpture; a subject not entirely unlike that of the bass-relief at St. Giles's, and however inferior in execution, appears, at least, equally unique in design. It represents the day of judgment: an angel is weighing, in a pair of scales, several persons, who preponderate, notwithstanding the efforts of a demon, who hangs on to the weight-scale; on one hand, St. Peter, with his key, is about to admit some into heaven; and on the other a demon,

with a basket on his back, like those carried by Swiss peasants, is conveying some of his victims towards a cauldron, where one of the infernal brethren is presiding, and another blowing the fire with a pair of bellows.

The *ci-devant* college of the Jesuits is a large building in the monastic style, still used as a college, and inhabited by the professors. Among the portraits that adorned its long and large galleries, I observed that of Ignatius Loyola; but none of the order now remained here, to venerate the effigy of their patriarch. The Franciscans have also a large convent. At that of the Augustinians, a monk shewed me, in the church, a curiously executed carving in wood, representing the last supper; also the skeleton of St. Victor, gaudily decorated, bearing a gilt palm-branch in one hand, and a sword, the emblem of martyrdom, in the other. The public fountains are numerous; and in an open part of the town, stands a lime, planted in 1476, to commemorate the battle of Morat.

The neighbourhood contains several excavated hermitages, among which, the most remarkable is the celebrated one of St. Mary Magdalen, a delightful walk from the town. After turning across the fields from the Laupen road, and down a deep lane overhung with hasle, I passed a green glen sloping down between beech and oak, towards the

stream of the Sarine, whose waters gleamed through the boughs below. A path to the right, under trees, along the edge of a field, led me to a rock, in which was cut a small door-way, with a wooden cross placed above. It was closed by a door, which readily admitted me through the humble portal, and I found myself in the little garden of the hermitage. The garden with its fruit-trees is sheltered, on the right, by the perpendicular wood-crowned rock in which the hermitage is hewn, and on the other hand it looks down from its height on the Sarine flowing beneath. The river, with an opposite shore of steep wooded rock, sweeps round an undulating meadow on the left, with trees and cattle: to the right, the rocky shore retires, and gives place to a beautiful pasture overhung by wood. Finding no human being in this romantic solitude, I proceeded to explore the recesses of the rock. There are three flights of steps cut in it, at different places, leading to the excavated apartments, which all communicate with each other. The chapel is spacious and lofty, and contains three altars, on one of which is exposed a piece of bone, as a relic of some saint or sinner, whose name I may easily be pardoned for forgetting. Attached to the chapel is a sacristy; and an opening pierced upwards quite through the rock, shews two small bells above. At the other end of the chapel opens a small apartment, and

beyond it a larger, where a fastened door seemed to shut a human habitation: but here I knocked in vain. From the garden, I could peep into a cellar, where a store of apples and potatoes also plainly indicated inhabitants: but none were visible. From the chapel, I looked through the doorway, down on the river below, and the mingled rocks and wood on the other side, where a streamlet descended through a ravine: at the opening at the top of the ravine, appeared the white summits of distant mountains.

The hermit who first took up his abode here, in the end of the seventeenth century, is said to have contented himself with a cave, made only long enough to allow its tenant to lie at length. His successor, Jean du Pré of Gruyères, continued the excavations, until, with the help of one assistant, he had completed the present extensive hermitage. He used to go in a little boat to Friburg, to fetch provisions. This poor anchorite was drowned in the Sarine, in 1708, in conveying back some young people who had come to visit him.

After rambling about and contemplating the scene, I was about to return, when a sound from within broke the silence of the caverns: the door I had found closed was now opened, and a peasant who lives there made his appearance. As the troglodyte was as ignorant of French as I was of German, he could only show me the rest of the

apartments, which are continued along the rock, with windows in its perpendicular wall, looking towards the garden and the river. I passed through the kitchen, where a woman, apparently my conductor's wife, was employed in her household concerns: the kitchen-chimney, which is of considerable height, is cut up through the rock. Beyond this apartment is another, long and lofty, with four windows, and farther on, a passage led by the door of a bed room, which was furnished with a stove, to a snug sitting room, lined with wood, and containing a little furniture, as well as some pious inscriptions. The windows of this room and the chapel were glazed.

These excavations, as the twenty-five years' work of the hermit, aided by a boy, appear to me by no means so surprising an achievement as they have been represented. This sand-stone rock is so soft, that it may be scraped away with the point of a walking-stick; but though the work is less astonishing on that account, it is not the less worthy of admiration, since the portion of ill-spent time and labour bestowed on it must have been so much the smaller. The situation is, however, highly picturesque, and the spot altogether curious and interesting: beside the beauty of the walk, which sometimes looks down on the romantic windings of the rocky and wooded banks of the Sarine. Mountains whitened with the autumnal

snows now appeared in different directions. The peasantry are seen passing along the road in picturesque costumes, or beating out hemp or flax by the road-side: others pressing their cider from mingled apples and pears, in the open air, or tending cattle, whose bells enliven the sweet scenery where they graze. Among the female peasants in the neighbourhood of Friburg, two different modes of dress prevail. They wear no caps; and on the German side, they dress their hair in a style particularly tasteful and classical: it is parted in front, and bound down on each side by a braid, which crosses above the forehead. They wear a cloth vest or jacket, trimmed with a sort of velvet, and falling open; a piece of the apron covers the bosom, leaving partly visible a red corset beneath. A flat straw hat is worn out of doors.

In returning to the town, I changed part of my road, and after passing over fields, descended to the gates by a long flight of steps formed by pieces of wood. The situation of the town is striking. Its towers, and battlements rise on rocky and wooded heights above the Sarine. Spires and convents ascend, one behind the other, overlooked by the lofty gothic tower of the cathedral.

The territories of the ancient Counts of Gruyères extended from the source of the Sarine, on the frontier of the Valais, as far as two leagues

from Friburg. Count Michael, the last of his house, having become overwhelmed with debts, the distraint of his property was decreed by the deputies of the cantons, in 1553. The cantons of Berne and Friburg bought the lands, and divided them between them. It is in the *balliage* of Gruyères, in the canton of Friburg, that the best Gruyères cheese is made: Bulle, about a league from the town of Gruyères, is a great *dépôt* for this commodity.

As I left Bulle on a Thursday morning, a company of the peasantry were forming a market for platted straw, about a spreading tree in an open part of the town. It recalled a similar scene at Baldock in Hertfordshire: but whilst the latter was in the midst of a corn-country, this, at Bulle, was remarkable, as occurring in a part which is so eminently a pasture-district.

I rambled from the road, through a wood on the left, towards the monastery of the Part-Dieu. After crossing the wide and stony bed of a torrent, with a mill on the other side, I met a cart conducted by a peasant, and bearing an elderly fat monk, in a white cowl and a large cocked hat. It was the *procureur* of the monastery, going to the market of Bulle to buy provisions for the house: he saluted me as I passed, making a singular figure, as he rolled and jolted along over the frosty ground. The Molesson here lifts its firs and mountain-pas-

tures: its bold summit was now hoary with snow.* About the 7th or 9th of October, the cattle descend into the valley, and the streets of Bulle resound with a long succession of the bells of these fine herds.

The monastery is placed on the side of the Molesson: it is a large building, in great part new, having been burnt some years since. The monks live separately, and eat together in the refectory, only on Sundays and festivals. A servant led me to the cell, or rather the apartments of one of them. A door enclosed the whole: we entered a small passage room at the foot of a stair-case, and opening into a small garden appropriated to the occupant. My conductor went up stairs to announce me, and an elderly monk, in a white flannel cowl, soon made his appearance, conducting me up stairs, and welcoming me with a pleasant, cheerful, and communicative air, as though not unwilling to have his solitude interrupted by a little intercourse with his fellow man. We passed through an outer room, to his bed-chamber, a comfortable apartment, warmed by an earthenware stove, and furnished with books on shelves: the bed was in a small curtained recess, and near it, a *prie-Dieu*, or desk for prayer. One of his windows looked into his little garden, in the midst

* None of the mountains of the canton of Friburg have perpetual snows.

of which he had himself constructed a fountain. Near the head of the stairs, stood an extremely well-chosen instrument of recreation for a cloister, a turning-lathe, with tools: '*On ne peut pas toujours prier le bon Dieu*', observed the monk. I did not venture to ask him why he had not made the discovery before he entered a monastery. A lay-brother, to whose apartment he afterwards conducted me, had been occupying himself in making plaister-casts, of the Virgin, &c. He requested the lay-brother to procure me some refreshment, of which I partook in a room adjoining the kitchen, whilst a venerable carthusian seated himself opposite me, and kindly entertained his guest. In the room were ten plates, with the desserts of the brethren, prepared against dinner-time: each plate contained a pear, a bunch of grapes, and a piece of cheese. They eat no meat; but plenty of fish lay in the kitchen. By the side of the outer door of one of the sets of rooms, I was shewn a small square opening in the wall, with a door, which a servant opens to put in the recluse's meal, without entering. The prior was gone to Vevay, to the vintage. It was in this direction also that I bent my steps after leaving the Part-Dieu. After walking among the pastures of Gruyères, the Alps beyond the lake of Geneva rose to view, the expanse of the lake soon appeared, and night closed around me in its neighbourhood.

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 13:

Clear placid Leman! thy contrasted lake
With the wide world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.
LORD BYRON.

THE varied beauties of the lake of Geneva claim for it the same pre-eminence among the lakes of Europe, as Mont Blanc, from its height, holds among the mountains: it reflects on its bosom the summit of that mountain, at the distance of more than 40 miles.

The surface, which is upwards of 1200 feet* above the sea, is occasionally observed to rise suddenly four or five feet, and to subside as quickly, continuing this sort of ebb and flow for several

* 1134 French feet, by the calculation of M. Pictet.

hours. Philosophers have attempted different explanations of this phenomenon, which is termed the *seiches*, and is particularly remarked near Geneva; where the lake stretches into a narrow neck. Water-spouts have sometimes been seen on it.

The country on the Swiss border, the convex side of the crescent formed by the lake, slopes upwards from the shore, presenting to the rising and the southern sun an extensive verdant sweep nearly fifty miles in length, clad with fields and vineyards, and sprinkled with towns, villages, country seats, and old castles. The declivities increase in height and boldness, as you approach the eastern extremity; and beyond Vevay, the road runs on the edge of the water, by the castle of Chillon, which rises from its surface, and beneath high wooded steps of the Alps. After turning the corner of the lake, crossing the Rhone, and entering Savoy, you arrive at St. Gingough, and are again under the declivities of the Alps. The road between them and the lake has been cut in the rock, and forms part of the high road between Geneva and the Simplon. This steep shore, as far as Evian, formerly afforded only a pathway. Beyond the latter village, the mountains retire towards the high Alps, and undulating hills succeed along the road to Geneva.

GENEVA is surrounded by the canton of the the same name: a territory little more than 12

square leagues in extent, exclusive of that part of the lake which belongs to it. The canton of Geneva, notwithstanding the additions decreed by the congress of Vienna, of several parishes from Savoy, and from the country of Gex, is the smallest of the twenty-two cantons, not excepting that of Zug. The city is situated on the edge of the lake, where the Rhone issues from it, in two rapid streams of a remarkably deep blue colour, dividing the town into two unequal parts, and enclosing a third in a small island, beyond which the streams join. Four plain bridges connect, by means of the island, the two other portions. The lower and more trading streets are nearly on a level with the lake: others rise to the summit of a hill, which descends abruptly on the other side. On this eminence, the handsome modern houses on the edge of the town, rising above their high terrace gardens bordered with stone balustrades, look over the country into Savoy, and along the windings of the Rhone. The streets in the interior by no means answer to these buildings; some are narrow and disagreeable. The *Rue d'Enfer*, the *Rue de Purgatoire*, and the *Rue Punaise*, may be said to bear names at least as descriptive as some of the vile *Prospect Places* and *Pleasant Rows* about London. The *Rue Basse*, which is long and full of shops, has rude wooden arcades* on each side,

* A view of the *Rue de Coutances*, at Geneva, which forms the

supported by squared timbers: these, though heavy and ugly, are a convenient shelter to the foot passenger in bad weather. Small shops are also contrived between the foot-way and the road; so that the street is absolutely crammed with articles of trade, of various kinds. The numerous public fountains at once ornament the town, and afford a plentiful supply of water. An hydraulic engine, maintained at considerable expense, forces up water from the Rhone to a reservoir on the top of a private house in the higher part of the town: thence most of the fountains are supplied. The houses are built of stone, mostly brought from the rocks of Meillerie: they are high and large; and even the most opulent families require commonly no more than one floor in their town-dwelling. The ground, limited by the fortifications, is thus economized, and a population of 22,000 is compressed in a space which might be occupied by half the number. You ascend a stone staircase, and find, at different landing places, a sort of front-door, with the name of the inhabitant, a bell, and a scraper.

There are, in Geneva, five churches; one of which is appropriated to the Roman Catholics.* The interior of that of St. Pierre, formerly the ca-

frontispiece to Darton and Harvey's *Minor's Pocket-Book* for this year, has a very good representation of similar arcades.

* The addition of several catholic parishes makes this part of the population amount to about one half the number of the protestants.

thedral, is an ancient and venerable piece of gothic architecture: its front, a grand Corinthian portico, the design of which is taken from the Pantheon at Rome, was added in the last century: this, though a most incongruous appendage to the building, is a fine thing, and may be viewed so as to conceal the body of the church. Nearly contiguous, is a chapel belonging to it, called the Auditoire, where a lecture on Scripture-history, founded by Calvin, is delivered on Thursdays, by the pastors in rotation. I have had the opportunity of hearing interesting and eloquent discourses in this very chapel, where John Knox formerly officiated, as pastor, to an English congregation, who found an asylum in this friendly country, at the time when Strasburg and Geneva were two great cities of refuge for our ancestors, from the persecutions under Mary. Two years after the death of that queen, most of the English refugees at Geneva returned home; taking with them Nicolas Des Gallars, one of the most esteemed ministers of this place, who became pastor of the French church in London. Our countrymen, in the present day, enjoy the English national worship at Geneva: the service of that church is performed on Sunday mornings by an English clergyman, in the chapel of the hospital; being respectably, and, at certain seasons of the year, very numerously attended.

Among the other public buildings are, the *Hôtel-de-Ville*, which has a curious sort of stair-case without steps, winding with a sloping paved ascent from the bottom to the top; the theatre, no longer suffered to be used for this purpose, experience having proved its demoralizing effects; and the college, founded by Calvin, containing the public library of 40,000 volumes, and school-rooms for nine classes of boys, with the apartments of the masters. Every citizen is entitled to the use of books from the library, and to education for his sons at the college. The humble artisan may be seen, amongst others, on a Saturday morning, bringing back one book in order to receive another; whilst his boy, who has perhaps crossed the quadrangle with satchel at his back, and medal at his breast, is plying his task below in the school-room, where his father sat before him, and where his sons may sit after him. The exertions of the scholar are stimulated by the annual distribution of prize-medals in public, in the church of St. Pierre, and by an annual report of his progress and conduct, called the *grabeau*, read at the college, in the presence of his parents or any who please to attend. Education is thus generally diffused; and it has been sometimes the practice even in the workshops, for one to read aloud whilst the rest worked. The general taste for reading proved, indeed, in the

days of the Voltaires and the Rousseaus, a means of spreading more readily among the lower ranks the infection of their principles: the poison rangles still; but we know that the use and the abuse of learning are not necessarily connected. In our own country we have good reason to know it: one sister kingdom has exhibited to us the moral and religious benefits of parochial instruction, and another the deplorable effects of its neglect; whilst we see both again exemplified within our own precincts. In the education of the children of mechanics, &c., it is not, perhaps, sufficiently considered at Geneva, that the sciences applicable to arts and manufactures have a claim prior to that of elegant literature and the classics, on the limited leisure of their future lives; and that it is no kindness to cultivate the imagination of one, who is to be surrounded with few objects calculated to flatter it, and many to offend it. Parochial schools were established by the legislature of Geneva, as early as 1703. There is now a public school in Geneva, as well as another in the suburbs, partly on the Lancasterian plan. There is also an asylum for the education of female orphans, founded by ladies, and conducted with much zeal and success; the girls from the establishment being highly in request as servants.

Subsequent to the juvenile studies of the college, is the instruction of the lecture-rooms called *audi-*

toires, where able professors lecture on philosophical, mathematical, and literary subjects; and strangers are, with great liberality, admitted on the same footing as the citizens: they may either enter as students by a public examination, or attend the lectures as visitors. In the latter case, it is expected that such strangers should ask permission of the respective professors; a permission which is politely and readily granted. Many English youths are seen among the foreigners who avail themselves of this privilege, whilst they are admitted to the intelligent society of the natives, of whose hospitality our countrymen enjoy so large a share. There is also an *auditoire* of theology.

The clergy* are numerous at Geneva, and their stipends very moderate. Those who have a district or *cure d'âmes* assigned them, are styled *pasteurs*; and the younger who are unbeneficed, and

* On the tenets of this body, little need be said here: much on this subject has already been before the public. Yet whilst materially differing, as an individual, from the scheme of doctrines most prevalent in the church of Geneva, I may be allowed to enter my protest against the application of the epithet *Socinian*, which has been so freely bestowed upon it. Charity is not only *kind*, but she *delights in truth*; and I think that an inspection of the Genevese liturgy, or *friendly* conversation with the pastors, might convince a candid enquirer that this is not truth. There is certainly a wide diversity of sentiment between some of these clergymen; a circumstance in which that company does not stand alone: but, however this may be, I cannot join in calling that, a Socinian church, in which I have had the satisfaction of hearing the doctrine of the Atonement preached, and the Divinity—the Deity of Jesus Christ distinctly asserted. I should add, that I never heard of an ecclesiastical censure, of any kind, being passed on the sermons to which I now particularly allude.

who only occasionally officiate, *ministres*. The pastors of the town are not constantly appointed to particular churches, but officiate wherever the company of pastors directs at its weekly meeting: the arrangements are announced every week in a printed list. The church service of Sunday morning begins by a portion of Scripture with a comment, read by a student, as well as the Decalogue, and the summary of it in the words of our Saviour. The minister afterwards ascends the pulpit, and reads a general confession of sins. A prayer of his own composition follows; and a few verses of a psalm, given out from the pulpit, are then sung by the congregation, led by the chanter, and, in the town, mostly accompanied by an organ. The tunes are extremely simple, and a knowledge of the church psalmody forms a part of the education of children. After the sermon,* follow a liturgic prayer,† the creed called the Apostles' Creed, one or two verses of a psalm, and the benediction from Numbers 6. An exhortation to 'remember the poor' is also added, which is farther enforced by a poor man from the hospital, who posts himself near the poor-box, and cries out to the passing congregation, sometimes with a rather alarming loudness, '*Au nom de Dieu, sou-*

* The sermon is written and committed to memory, except when the preacher, on account of age or infirmity, is permitted to read it.

† In the afternoon service, the clergyman is allowed, if he pleases, to deliver, in the place of this prayer, one of his own.

venez-vous des pauvres!—*N'oubliez pas les pauvres, au nom de Dieu!* &c.' The contribution is general, not excepting servants. In country churches, the collection is made during the last psalm, by handing about small tin boxes fixed on long staves. The poor-boxes of the city are said to have afforded to the hospital, during the last century, an average of £700 per annum. There are prayers, at one church or other, every evening in the week-days.

The principal manufactures, those of watch-making and jewelry, are depressed, as well as other branches, by the exclusion of their merchandise by France and other neighbouring countries. The number of watches made in 1812, is estimated at 62,000. Italy has been the principal mart for their manufactures of printed cottons and tanned leather. It is remarkable that the trades of shoemaker, carpenter, tailor, &c. are mostly held by Germans.

The French civil, penal, and commercial codes are provisionally in force with some modifications; but since the restoration of the republic, on the last day of 1813, the criminal tribunal has never had to pronounce sentence of death. The guillotine is the instrument of execution.* Six magistrates from the tribunal of audience, called *auditeurs*, fill offices analogous to that of *justice of*

* At Lausanne, criminals are beheaded with a large knife, sitting in a chair.

peace in England, and have a peculiar claim to the latter title, as, in addition to their other functions, they have to pay a particular attention to the accommodation of differences, and the prevention of law suits; in which cases their mediation is observed to be attended with considerable success.

There are, within the fortifications, delightful public promenades, on spacious and elevated terraces, shaded with trees and furnished with numerous seats. That called *La Treille* looks down on the botanic garden, which is also within the gates; and beyond the ramparts, the eye wanders over a champaign country into Savoy, enlivened by houses in the suburbs. The Salève bounds the picture on the left, presenting an almost perpendicular rocky side, striped with horizontal strata, and crowned with pasture on its summit; whilst the wall-like barrier of the Jura arrests the sight on the other hand. The wooded steeps on the banks of the Rhone discover the course of that river, otherwise concealed: these are the heights of St. Jean, where is the country seat called *Les Délices*, once the favourite residence of Voltaire. An opening appears between the end of the Jura, which is in France, and the Wuache, which is in Savoy: through this opening the Rhone passes, and another mountain is seen beyond. Nearer the gates spreads an extensive level green, surrounded

on three sides by double and treble avenues of trees. Here, on a summer's evening, when the shadows slant across the grass, neatly-dressed maid-servants, in gipsy straw hats, bring out the children for air and exercise: they are seen walking about knitting, with a small basket hanging on the arm, or sitting in social groups on the turf or the benches, whilst their young charge gambol near. Sheep feeding sometimes vary the scene; at others the open space of the green is less peacefully animated by the military parade; and I have found, in one of the avenues, a young clergyman whom I knew, one of the *Waldenses*, composing his sermon as he walked.

On another side of the town is the *Promenade-St. Antoine*, the end of which commands, over a low parapet, a view over the lake, and along its verdant shores sprinkled with vineyards, trees, and houses. The range of the Jura, clad with forests of fir, forms the horizon to the left: to the right are seen the Salève and other mountains, and beyond them, the more distant Alps, whose snowy summits are sometimes enveloped in clouds, and sometimes glowing with the rosy tint of sun-set. Mont Blanc is concealed from this spot by the Salève. The Jura retires in the distance beyond a long ridge of hill, near the edge of the lake, in the canton of Vaud. This ridge is called *la Côte*:

its slope is clothed with vineyards, and is one of the finest *vignobles* or wine districts* in Switzerland. In walking between the rows of horse-chesnut and elm that shade this terrace, the lake is seen through an arch of foliage at the end: it exhibits very varied aspects, from the calm blue surface lightly dimpled by the oar, with distant sails gliding away towards the horizon, to the agitated scene of billows crested with foam and tossed by the *bise*. At a bench near the town, on the edge of the lake, and overhung with trees, a spot I have often visited, you may sometimes sit and hear the water gently rippling at your feet, and see through it the pebbles in its bed; at another time, in the same place, your meditations would be quickly dispersed, by the waves dashing over you, as they break against the edge. The autumnal fogs, which occasionally hang over the lake, and conceal the distant shores, contribute also to give a marine aspect to its surface. ‘*L’Océan,*’ it has been said, ‘*a envoyé à Genève son portrait en miniature.*’† A short distance from the shore, two rocks of granite peep from the water, one of which, according to tradition, served in ancient times as an altar for fishermen, and was dedicated to Neptune; it is still called *la pierre*

* The wine produced in the immediate neighbourhood of Geneva is little esteemed, and is banished from the tables of the opulent.

† Chevalier de Boufflers.

à Niton. In a hollow in the lower part of this rock, were found, in the 17th century, a sacrificial knife of Roman brass, and two other pieces of the same metal, apparently heads of *mallei* for felling the victims. These are preserved in the public library, with many other antiquities.

To return to the terraces I have been describing, you may contemplate there the varied groups stationary and moving, of the inhabitants of Geneva, both foreign and native: German princes, Polish nobility, and English gentlemen, mingled with the citizens of different ranks; and the citizen's infant borne in the arms of the robust Savoyard female peasant, whose bosom is the healthy source of its earliest nourishment. The tradesman, seated on a bench, enjoys with his acquaintance the evening release from business; the sick and infirm come out to taste the medicine of nature; the blind finds the well-known seat, that commands a prospect, still seen perhaps in recollection, and inhales the fresh breeze from the lake, little caring if it is tainted by the pipe of a sociable neighbour. The Genevese are chased in winter from the St. Antoine, by the north-easterly winds that cut over the lake with excessive keenness, and are as formidable as 'the bleak affliction of the peevish east,' in England. This is not, however, what they term *the wind*: the furious blasts, which receive the emphatic appellation of *le vent*,

come in the opposite direction; frequently throwing down chimneys, &c.*

On the other side of the town, the banks of the Rhone and the Arve, in addition to many picturesque beauties, are interesting to the geologist from their alluvial deposits, which furnish, it is said, a complete collection of specimens of the rocks that compose the great chain of the Alps of the Valais and Savoy; from the most ancient granite of the *aiguilles* of Chamouny, and the syenite which forms the highest points of Mont Blanc, to the most modern calcareous formation of the Salève. Numerous large blocks of granite, detached like the two already described in the lake, are found scattered about the canton, as well as on the Jura, and in the canton of Vaud. Such have already been mentioned, with a reference to the hypothesis of de Saussure, who considers them to have been brought by a mass of waters, which escaped from confinement in the Alps, and formed the channel of the Rhone, cleaving a passage for that river through the Jura.

The Arve comes rushing down from the Alps, with an impetuous and turbid current, fed by glaciers and melting snows, and whirls itself into the Rhone, not far from the town. The two streams

* In 1645, the wind was so violent, as to drive back the Rhone into the lake, so that several persons crossed its bed dry-shod. See *Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, for 1672.

flow on for some time after their junction, without losing the mark of separation between the muddy hue of the one, and the blue of the other. The bed of the Arve contains a considerable quantity of gold, but not in sufficient abundance to afford a good compensation for the time spent in finding it.

The name of Geneva has been supposed to have a Celtic origin, corresponding with its situation, and derived from *gen* or *ken*, (gate, outlet,) and *av* or *ev* (river). The half-eagle, seen in the city arms, was anciently conferred as a mark of the privileges of an imperial city, holding its franchises immediately from the imperial crown, and not through the medium of allegiance to any subordinate sovereign. Two eagles are still kept in a cage near the shambles. The motto of the arms, 'POST TENEBRAS LUX,' bears a striking application to this city, as one of the first visited by the dawn of the Reformation: it was, however, in use long before that event.

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 14.

— thus I,
Still on thy shores, fair Lemman, may find room
And food for meditation, nor pass by
Much that may give us pause, if pondered fittingly.

LORD BYRON.

THESE recollections which the history of Geneva brings in aid of the local attractions of that city, are sufficiently interesting to apologize for a few historical notices.*

Geneva, after having remained more than five centuries in the power of the Romans, and having been the centre of a considerable province, passed, in the year 426, at the time of the invasion of the Roman Empire by the northern barbarians, under the dominion of the Burgundians, who made it the most important of their capitals. In the following century, the Ostrogoths, under Theodoric, took possession of it; but after about fifteen years, find-

* See Picot: *Histoire de Genève*, and *Essai statistique sur le Canton de Genève*, G. Mallet: *Genève et les Genevois*.

ing themselves pressed by Justinian on the one hand, and by the Franks on the other, they ceded it to the latter, with all their dominions in Gaul, in 536. It remained in the power of the Franks during nearly three centuries and a half, till the decline of the successors of Charlemagne. Geneva then became, by turns, part of the kingdom of Arles, and of the second kingdom of Burgundy.

It was afterwards torn by the contentions for mastery between the counts of the Genevois, and the bishops. In the 10th century, the counts of Savoy became powerful in the neighbourhood; and thence arose new struggles, of which the Genevese availed themselves to extend their privileges. Count Amadeus V., in order to procure the support of the inhabitants, made a treaty with a great number of them, and engaged to protect them. They now established a civil council, took possession of the keys of the city, and fortified it with walls and towers: they also levied contributions, and performed acts of sovereignty opposed to those hitherto exercised by the bishops.

The government now became excessively complicated; and this unhappy city contained no less than six sovereign authorities, independent of each other, all rivals, and each struggling to supplant the other by address or by force. The bishop was the real sovereign; but the council, the chapter of St. Peter's, the prior of St. Victor, and

the count of the Genevois, all claimed their several powers. These last had each his castle there, and they often stained the streets with blood by their quarrels. Such was the spirit of anarchy and barbarism which prevailed, more or less, over the greater part of Europe.

The county of the Genevois was united to that of Savoy in 1401; and from that time the power of the counts of Savoy greatly preponderated.

The increase of knowledge, which threw light on the abuses of ecclesiastical domination, and produced gradually the reformation, had made its appearance at Geneva as early as the middle of the 15th century. Printing was already established there in 1478, at a time when this discovery was little known in Europe.

In the 16th century, Charles III., Duke of Savoy, made great efforts to subject Geneva to his yoke; and the bishop* seconded his projects. The city, however, found protectors in the Swiss cantons, particularly in that of Friburg, the first with which it had formed an alliance; and also in some of its own citizens, among whom, Berthelier and Levrier fell victims to their patriotism: the former, condemned to death by the tyranny of the bishop, and the latter, by that of the duke. Fran-

* The house of Savoy had before obtained the almost entire disposal of the episcopal office, and had taken care to place in the see members of their own family.

cis de **Bonnivard**,* prior of St. Victor, though not a native of Geneva, attached himself with zeal to its interests. Having been deprived of his priory, he had again obtained possession of it; but was afterwards arrested by the orders of the duke whilst travelling in the Pays de Vaud, and conducted to the castle of Chillon, a fortress situated at the east end of the lake of Geneva and washed by its waters. After two years' imprisonment, his captivity became more cruel: he was treated like the vilest criminals, and immured in a dungeon, where he suffered cruelly from cold and damp. On the conquest of the Pays de Vaud by the Bernese in 1536, he was at length released by them, aided by the Genevese; and he found, on his liberation, Geneva free and protestant. **Bonnivard** had himself favoured principles of reform, though opposed to his own secular interests, and had inveighed warmly against reigning abuses.

Early in the 16th century, Switzerland was in agitation with the doctrines of the reformers, which had already spread their light through Germany. **Zuinglius**, **Bucer**, **Æcolampadius**, and **Haller**, preached them with ardour. Berne embraced the reformation in January 1528: the connexion which subsisted between this canton and that of Geneva favoured the dissemination of its

* **Bonnivard** is also known as an author, by a chronicle and other works,

principles in the latter place; where the corruptions of the ecclesiastics contributed to rouse the public mind. The reformers Farel and Saunier, followed by Froment,* arrived at Geneva from France in 1532. In vain the magistrates, on the representation of the episcopal council, opposed, or feigned to oppose the success of their doctrines: the protestant party was become too powerful. In the midst of the popular ferment, the bishop quitted the city to join the Duke of Savoy. In spite of his thunders of excommunication he was never re-admitted to his throne; and the Genevese found themselves in possession, at once, of civil and religious liberty, in 1533. In 1535 the reformation was established, and the property of the church devolved to the state.

Then came the demolition of images, the removal of relics, and the rummaging out of the dusty corners of popery:—the *fun* of reformation. The arm of St. Anthony, preserved at St. Peter's, and

* Antoine Froment was a young man of talent, a native of Dauphiny, only 22 or 23 years of age: he began to introduce himself quietly, by hiring a large room in order to teach reading and writing, (accomplishments less cheap at that time than at present), and to distribute gratis medical remedies: he taught also arithmetic. His advertisement is curious: "*Il est venu un homme en cette ville qui veut enseigner à lire et écrire en françois dans un mois à tous ceux et celles qui voudront venir, petits et grands, hommes et femmes, même à ceux qui ne furent jamais en eschole; et si, dans ledit mois, ne savent lire et écrire, ne demande rien de sa peine. Lequel trouveront en la grande salle de Boitet près du Molurd, à l'enseigne de la croix d'or, et s'y guérit beaucoup de maladies pour néant.*" I copy this from Picot's History; but know not why the old orthography appears in one word only.

on which solemn oaths were administered, was discovered, it is said, to be no other than a part of a stag; and the brain of St. Peter, formerly approached with veneration, dwindled to a pumice-stone. Among the frauds practised by the monks and priests, it is related that there were announced, from time to time, apparitions of souls from purgatory; and that lobsters, with small lighted tapers fastened on them, were dispersed in dark nights about the burial-grounds, to pass for these unearthly visitants. Among the suppressed convents was that of the nuns of St. Claire, who retired to Annecy, as from a city which had drawn down the malediction of heaven; but not till they had been forced to pay 200 crowns to one of their number who chose to marry. Farel represented in vain to the others, that the blessed Virgin had never been shut up in a convent; and that she was married, although a pattern of sanctity. These timid and defenceless maids opposed only their tears and prayers to the tumultuous zeal which violated their sanctuary, and carried off their saints. One of them, sister Jane de Jussie, has left a little narrative of these events, entitled, *Commencement de l'hérésie, ou relation de l'apostasie de Genève*: a curious document, revealing the emotion produced in the interior of the cloister by the progress of the events without, and written with the simplicity and the agitation of a poor

recluse, ignorant of the world; and driven from her convent. These nuns were so unaccustomed to walking, that they employed a day for a journey of a league. Many of them, she relates, had not been out of a convent for thirty years, and felt extreme surprise when they found themselves in the open fields; whilst some took cows and sheep for bears and wolves. They were constantly protected by the magistrates, and escorted by them on leaving their convent.

The infant republic of the Genevese was again disturbed by their old enemy Charles III., Duke of Savoy; who at length died and left them in peace, after he had been deprived of the Pays de Vaud and other parts of his dominions by the Bernese; and after he had in vain acted on the motto adopted in his adversity, '*Spoliatis arma supersunt.*' Bonnivard observes of this ambitious man, that he would have been the happiest prince in christendom if he had been contented.

In 1536 Calvin, obliged to leave France,* was repairing to Germany, and took Geneva in his way, without the intention of stopping there; but the pressing solicitations of Farel changed his plans, and he stayed to join the other reformers. The claims of this illustrious man on the gratitude of

* It is remarkable how many labourers in the work of the reformation have been contributed by a country in which that reformation has never been nationally established: Calvin, Beza, Farel, Saunier, Froment, Bucer, and Waldo all arose in France,

Geneva, where institutions of his still exist, are well known. Devoted to its interests, he had the reward of seeing religion, morals, industry, and learning diffused under his auspices. It is humiliating to turn from the devoted, disinterested, and generous part of his conduct, to asperity and persecution. In forming our estimate of his character as a man, we must certainly consider the spirit of the times in which he lived: how little soever we may be inclined to apologize for the reformer and the minister, with the gentle though firm doctrines of the New Testament in his hand. The burning of Servetus has, perhaps, been represented too exclusively as Calvin's act; whereas the sentence was passed by a civil council in which that reformer, whatever influence he might have, had no seat: and it was not pronounced till the protestant churches of Switzerland had been consulted.* Nicholas de Fontaine, a disciple of Calvin's, was the accuser. Servetus declared, in the course of his defence, that he believed in the union of three Persons in the Deity, but that he understood the word *Person* differently from his cotemporaries. He appears to have imprudently indisposed his judges by his violent abuse of

* I know not whether the reply of these churches was such as to involve them in the crime; but the spirit of mildness and charity with which they are stated to have answered on a former occasion, is a presumption in their favour, and must, in such an age, do honour to their memory.

Calvin. But we dismiss this horrible and disgraceful occurrence.

A faction of the licentious class, called the party of the Libertines, had been formed, who were hostile to Calvin and the public discipline. Calvin and Farel, refused, in opposition to the council, to admit into the church certain ceremonies or alterations adopted by the synod held at Lausanne; and especially to administer the Eucharist with unleavened bread. Their enemies seized this occasion of rendering them odious, and they were banished (1538). Calvin repaired to Strasburg. On his departure, the ceremonies of the Bernese were admitted: the austerity of some of the punishments for moral breaches was also mitigated; but disorders of this kind broke out with fresh violence. His sentence of perpetual exile was revoked in 1541, and he was earnestly solicited to return: he did so, at length, and endeavoured, without success, to persuade Farel to return also, who had gone to Neuchatel, the church of which place he had before founded.

In 1564, the constitution of Calvin, naturally weak, exhausted by watchings and labours, and by a complication of disorders, at length gave way. In his greatest sufferings he was never heard to utter a word unworthy of a christian: sometimes only, in piercing pains, he raised his eyes to heaven, saying, 'How long, O Lord?' or applied to himself the words of David; 'I hold my peace,

Lord, because it is thou that hast done it.' When his friends pressed him to abstain from all labours during his illness, 'Do you wish then,' he replied, 'that the Lord should find me doing nothing?' He continued to apply to his different functions, and maintained a considerable correspondence with churches and with princes, who consulted him from various parts of Europe. He was carried in March, for the last time, into the hall of the sittings of the company of pastors; and on the 2d of April, the day of the Easter communion, he chose to be taken to church, where he was present at the sermon, and received the communion from the hands of Theodore Beza. In the latter end of the same month, the council, assembled by his dying bed, received his farewell, and his parting exhortations. He thanked them for their kindness, begging them to regard rather his good intentions than his deeds: protesting before God, that though far from having fulfilled all his duties, he had entertained feelings of the sincerest attachment towards the republic; and that in all that he had done, he had always proposed to himself the greatest public good.

'I entreat you, especially, noble Lords,'* he continued, 'not to remember my faults, which you have borne with so much goodness and pa-

* Literally, '*Magnificent Lords*.'—The title of the supreme council and the senate of Berne is, '*Magnificent, High, and Mighty, Sovereign Lords!!!*'

' tience, and in particular the too great impetuosity
 ' which I have indulged on different occasions;
 ' for which I hope God will have granted me the
 ' pardon that I have asked of him with all the hu-
 ' mility of which I have been capable. For the
 ' rest, with regard to the doctrine I have preached,
 ' I take God to witness that I have announced in all
 ' its purity* his word, which he had entrusted to
 ' me: and if I had done the contrary, very far from
 ' expecting the bliss of heaven, as I now do, with
 ' the firmest and liveliest faith, I should have
 ' to fear that the most terrible judgments of God
 ' would fall on my head. After having
 ' spoken of what regards myself, permit me, noble
 ' Lords, to address myself more particularly to
 ' you. Although no state in the world
 ' appears more tottering than yours, and though its
 ' preservation hangs, as it were, by a thread; you
 ' ought to hope, nevertheless, that God will con-
 ' tinue to protect you for the future, as he has done
 ' in the past. If he grants you, by his goodness, a
 ' tranquil condition, you must not be puffed up;
 ' nor ought you to cease to trust in God, even

* May we not discern here marks of that assumption of doctrinal infallibility which is the very root of religious persecution? It was perhaps in a moment of candour, and in the confidence of private intercourse, that Calvin, when advanced in life, is said to have acknowledged in a letter, alluding to certain predestinarian dogmas on the very mysterious subject of divine decrees, that, *they are perplexed and confused, and produce no fruits of edification*: '*Elles sont perplexes, confuses, et de nul fruit en bonne instruction*', are the words I have seen quoted.

‘ though you should seem to be surrounded with a
 ‘ deluge of evils. If you wish that God should pre-
 ‘ serve you in the happy state in which, by his favour,
 ‘ he has placed you, you should take care that the
 ‘ seats you occupy be not dishonoured; for it is said,
 ‘ that he will honour them who shall honour him,
 ‘ and that he will cover with shame those who shall
 ‘ despise him. Be ever mindful that he is the only
 ‘ Potentate, the King of kings, the Lord of lords;
 ‘ in order that you may serve him purely, and ac-
 ‘ cording to his word.’

After exhortations applicable to different dis-
 positions, he dwelt on equity and impartiality in
 administering judgment; ‘ and when you find
 ‘ yourselves tempted,’ continued he, ‘ to deviate
 ‘ ever so little, summon immediately all the con-
 ‘ stancy and firmness you are masters of; raising
 ‘ your hearts to Him who has placed you in the
 ‘ seats you occupy, and praying him to guide you
 ‘ by his Holy Spirit. In short, noble Lords, after
 ‘ having again conjured you to pardon the weak-
 ‘ nesses and infirmities you have remarked in me—
 ‘ which I am not ashamed to own before men,
 ‘ since they are known to God, and since I confess
 ‘ them before that supreme Being and before his
 ‘ angels—accept favourably my poor labours. I
 ‘ pray that good God that he will be always your
 ‘ conductor; and that he will multiply on you his
 ‘ most precious favours, for your own preservation,

‘ and that of the poor people he has committed to
‘ your care.’

After concluding his address, he pressed the hand of each of the members of the council, who, touched with his exhortations, and the tone in which they were delivered, retired in tears and in deep affliction. The same day he received and addressed the pastors. His death, which followed on the 27th of May, spread mourning throughout the city; all seemed to have lost a protector and a father; and the people crowded to see the body of him who was now taken from them. The next day he was buried, without extraordinary state, according to his own order; his funeral being attended by almost the whole city.

Geneva had again struggles for liberty with the Dukes of Savoy, and formed alliances with Zurich and Berne, and with Henry III., and Henry IV. of France.

It was in 1602, that Charles Emanuel, Duke of Savoy, made, in time of peace, a treacherous attempt to take possession of the city intending, it was said, to put every man to the sword, and to abandon the women and the pillage to the soldiers. He chose the 11th of December (old style), when the longest night in all the year favoured his project,

*Involvens umbrâ magnâ terramque polumque,
Myrmidonumque dolos.*

In the dead of night, he introduced into the city, by means of ladders, 300 chosen men, whilst troops waited without to rush in when admitted. The entry was effected by scaling-ladders, whilst a Scotch Jesuit stood by and encouraged the soldiers, by assuring them that every round of the ladders was a step towards paradise. They were discovered by a centinel. The tocsin sounded; and the citizens, roused from their sleep, rushed out into the streets, some in arms, others half dressed, to defend themselves. The attempt to admit the enemy by the gates failed. After a desperate nocturnal combat, the city was saved, and the enemy were at a distance before day-light; leaving 54 of their number dead, and 13 prisoners. Theodore Beza, the successor of Calvin, and then in his 84th year, had slept unconscious of the tumult of this eventful night, and was astonished, in the morning, with hearing what had passed. Though, from infirmity, he had for some time ceased to preach, yet impressed with this deliverance, he that day ascended the pulpit for the last time, and gave out the 124th Psalm; 'If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say, &c.' This day, so celebrated in the annals of Geneva, continued to be observed as a festival,*

* Among the songs composed, and still sung in memory of the day, is the one of which the first stanza may serve as a specimen of the *patois* then prevailing there :

under the name of the *Escalade*, and this psalm to be sung in the public worship on the occasion; till the late incorporation of so many Savoyards into the canton would have rendered such public rejoicings odious. The war recommenced, but was terminated the following year; and good intelligence has scarcely ceased, from that time, between Geneva and the house of Savoy.

The 17th and 18th centuries offered a long period of external peace to Geneva, which was unhappily marred by internal dissensions between the aristocratic and the popular party. These centuries were, however, distinguished by a great progress in civilization, in commerce, in literature, the arts, and the sciences. In the 17th, appear, amongst others, the names of Chabrey, Puerari, Casaubon, the Spanheims, and the Leclercs: also of Petitot, the painter in enamel, the most eminent artist Geneva has produced.* Among the distin-

Ce qu'è lainô, le Maitre dé Bataillé,
 Que se moque et se ri dé canaillé,
 A' bein fai vi per on Desande nay
 Qu 'il étivé Patron dé Genèveis.

It was not till the latter half of the century, that the French language was introduced at Geneva; where it was diffused in the polite circles, as well as the polish which the court of Louis XIV. communicated even at that distance, particularly on the dispersion of the protestants by the revocation of the edict of Nantz. The public notifications of the police were made in *patois* till 1703: the peasantry still speak it, though they can also speak French. The language of these country people betrays more directly its Latin origin in some words: *hic*, is *here*; *adi'vo*, is a salutation, supposed to be a contraction of *God be with you—adsit vobis (Deus)*.

* A highly valued specimen of his painting is preserved in the public library at Geneva: it is a small picture of Alexander in the tent of

guished names the 18th century presents, may be noticed, with numerous theologians and physicians, Burlamaqui the civilian; Delolme, known by his treatise on the British constitution; Bonnet, by his researches in philosophy and vegetable physiology; Senebier, by his works on the latter subject and meteorology; and de Saussure, by his discoveries in natural history and geology: in the mathematics, Cramer, who corrected an error in the *Principia* of Newton; Calandrini, Le Sage, and Bertrand: in other branches of science, Necker, P. H. Mallet, and Mallet du Pan; and among the artists, Dassier the engraver, and Arlaud the painter in miniature.* The brilliant light of our Argand lamps we owe to Jaques-Antoine Argand, author of several useful inventions. The name of Rousseau as a native, and of Voltaire as a resident, have been but too well known at Geneva. Voltaire, from his residence at Colmar, after his quarrel with Frederic of Prussia, removed to his seat called *Les Délices*, on the banks of the Rhone, near Geneva. Here he composed several of his works; and the attractions of his polished society drew around him a numerous circle of the inhabitants:

Darius. Petitot's draperies and the ground of his portraits were painted by his brother-in-law Bordier.

* He was drawing-master to the Duke of Orleans, regent of France, and deserves mention for his sacrifice of a *chef d'œuvre* to modesty and purity: this piece was a *Leda*, his most famous picture; but struck, towards the close of life, with its effect on the imagination of the spectators, he destroyed it. A beautiful miniature-painter of the same name is now living at Geneva.

but among the flowers of taste and literature, lurked the serpents of scepticism, as Geneva unhappily proved.

Rousseau, having absconded from the master to whom he had been apprenticed with the design of bringing him up as an engraver, and having embraced the Roman-catholic religion, returned, after many years and many villainies, to his native place; where he re-entered, at least nominally, the protestant church. Such, however, was the ferment his works excited, that the government soon found itself obliged to interfere: thence arose fresh troubles to agitate the state. Rousseau thus speaks of his early studies with his father, an artisan, whom he describes as having Tacitus and Plutarch lying mingled with the instruments of his labour: ‘ My father and myself applied to reading after supper. It was only proposed at first to exercise me in reading by amusing books; but the interest soon became so lively, that we read by turns unremittingly, and passed the nights in this occupation. We could never leave off till the end of the volume: sometimes, my father, hearing the swallows in the morning, said, quite ashamed, ‘ let us go to bed; I am more childish than yourself.’

This truly unhappy genius—this tormentor of himself and others, thus writes, in advanced years, when retracing his early days:—‘ Before I abandon

' myself to the fatality of my destiny, suffer me to
 ' turn my eyes for an instant on that which natu-
 ' rally awaited me, if I had fallen into the hands
 ' of a better master. Nothing was more suited to
 ' my disposition, nor better adapted to render me
 ' happy, than the tranquil and obscure condition of
 ' an honest artisan, of certain classes, such as is that
 ' of engravers at Geneva. This employ, lucrative
 ' enough to afford an easy subsistence, and not
 ' sufficient to lead to fortune, would have bounded
 ' my ambition for the rest of my days, and left me
 ' a reasonable leisure for the cultivation of mo-
 ' derate pursuits: it would have preserved me in
 ' my sphere, without offering any means of leaving
 ' it. In the bosom of my religion, of my
 ' country, of my family, and of my friends, I
 ' should have led a sweet and peaceful life, such as
 ' my disposition required, in the uniform tenour of
 ' a labour after my own taste, and of a society after
 ' my own heart. I should have been a good chris-
 ' tian, a good citizen, a good father of a family, a good
 ' friend, a good workman. I should have
 ' loved my station—perhaps I should have done
 ' honour to it; and after a life, obscure and simple,
 ' but equable and sweet, I should have died peace-
 ' fully in the bosom of my connexions. Though
 ' doubtless soon forgotten, I should have been at
 ' least regretted as long as I was remembered. In-
 ' stead of this what a picture am I about
 ' to draw!'

In 1792, the revolutionary party, having become powerful by the protection of the French Jacobins, obtained possession of the government: the horrors committed in France by Robespierre, were imitated at Geneva in 1794; and the country had to mourn some of its best citizens. This faction had here also their National Assembly, their *droits de l'homme*, their *codes d'égalité*, their revolutionary committees, in short, their *fusillades* and their massacres.

The victorious republic of France conceived the project of subjecting Geneva. Not succeeding by persuasions, and finding the independence of this little state unshaken, France had recourse to vexations of various kinds; laying excessive restrictions on their communications, intercepting their provisions, submitting them in the French states to a rigid search, and dealing out menaces and reproaches: but finding that the love of liberty overpowered the sense of all privations, she had recourse at once to fraud and violence. On the 15th of April, 1798, a corps of French troops, introduced into the city on pretence of passing through it, took possession of it. The Genevese had now the melancholy task of liberating the eagles* which they kept as the symbols of the privileges of an imperial city, lest these should swell the tro-

* See page 202.

phies of the usurpers. The emblems of their liberty soared away from a city now no longer free; but after having disappeared, returned and alighted on the place where they had so long been fed. In the days of omens this would have been hailed as a glorious presage; and the sequel would have strengthened the opinion. The prognostic was not spoiled by the eagles falling into the hands of the French, as these noble birds were driven away by the inhabitants.

Geneva remained fifteen years and eight months united to France; but the successes of the allied sovereigns against Napoleon, and the patriotism of the ancient magistrates, restored its independence. On the 30th of December 1813, an invited corps of Austrian troops entered the city: the French evacuated it, and the restoration of the republic under the ancient form of government was proclaimed. After being in imminent peril of falling, as a rebel city, into the hands of the French, it was, at length, united to the Helvetic Confederation, as 22d canton, in 1814; an aggrandizement of territory being afterwards conferred on it by the congress of Vienna, and by the treaties of Paris and Turin.

It was in June 1814, that the vessels which had so lately served to transport artillery, or convey the sick and wounded, now crowned with flowers, and colours flying, glided over the lake towards

Geneva, bearing the Swiss troops who were to receive that state into their alliance. The cannon, the signal of their leaving the shore, was heard from the canton of Vaud; and the inhabitants of Geneva crowded towards the strand, along the road which had been already adorned with festive flowers and boughs, with triumphal arches, emblems, and mottoes. Their eyes stretched across the surface of the lake, to discover the distant sails; and soon the arrival of their brother Swiss was joyously hailed by the notes of the song,

Enfans de Tell, soyez les bien-venus!

Peace and liberty again smiled on the walls and the fields of Geneva; and the anniversary of this day has been ever since celebrated as a festival, by its people and its church.

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 15.

C'est la molle épaisseur de la fraîche verdure,
C'est de mille ruisseaux le caressant murmure,
Des coteaux arrondis, des bois majestueux,
Et des antres rians l'abri voluptueux,

DELILLE.

PASSING along the shore of the lake, from Geneva towards Lausanne, Ferney lies at some distance to the left, behind the charming heights of Grand-Sacconex and Chambeisi. The situation of Ferney is by no means particularly attractive, being rather low, under the shade of the Jura, and abounding with trees with stripped stems. The *château*, once inhabited by Voltaire, and now the residence of M. Budet of Geneva, is on an eminence near the village, whence you get a peep at the lake, but not such a one as to render appropriate the appellation of *my lake*, which Voltaire here used to give it, when he boasted '*mon lac est le premier.*' By the *château* is the little Romani-

catholic church which was built by Voltaire, and inscribed by him,

DEO EREXIT VOLTAIRE,

as though to shew how condescending a philosopher can be.—Methinks I hear the prophet solemnly exclaim, ‘He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh!’

The road passes by the village of Genthod, the residence of the late celebrated naturalist Bonnet. Afterwards comes Versoi, where, in the reign of Louis XV., under the ministry of the Duke de Choiseul, a town and port were projected, which were intended to deprive Geneva of its trade and importance. The works were actually begun, and many streets were marked out, but the project, although it created some alarm at Geneva, was afterwards abandoned.

Beyond Versoi, the traveller enters the canton of Vaud, and soon after, arrives at the village of Copet, where is seen, above the road on the left, the *château* where Necker spent in retirement the last years of his life, from 1790 to his death in 1804. Here he heard, from his retreat, the revolutionary storm burst over France. His remains are deposited in a marble mausoleum in the gardens of the *château*, together with those of Madame Necker, and their celebrated daughter Madame de Staël.

A league and a half farther, is Nyon, the *Colonia Equestris Noiodunum* or *Noviodunum* of the Romans.

Two leagues farther, is the pretty town of Rolle. Between it and Nyon, begins the ridge of hill called *la Côte*, running along on the left of the road. It has already been mentioned as one of the most distinguished wine-districts in Switzerland. The district extending from Lausanne to Vevay, and called *la Vaux*, is its rival. The wine of *la Vaux* is superior in flavour to that of *la Côte*, but, on the other hand, does not bear carriage so well, and is said to be less wholesome.

At Rolle I was entertained with most friendly hospitality at the house of Mons. R., a respectable tradesman, a part of whose family I had seen at Geneva. Soon after my arrival, Madame R., who was going out to tea, took me with her to the house of a married daughter, where we joined a party, of which a great portion were young ladies, assembled on the occasion of the approaching departure of one of their number for Scotland, in the capacity of governess. This was a social parting token of friendship, which many of her acquaintance were paying her in turn. Madame R. informed me that no fewer than twelve young women, from this small town, were in England as governesses. She feelingly lamented the vacancies thus made, by the absence of such a portion of

the *jeunesse*, in their little circle of society. They return from more elevated circles to their long-forsaken friends, with a competence, after the season of youth is past; and the early years, spent in an office which should qualify for the care of a family, are not commonly crowned by conjugal and maternal endearments.

Among these young ladies I had the pleasure of finding one of my own country-women. After the *gouté*, cards were, as usual, introduced, and engaged nearly the whole party. Mademoiselle R., the charming daughter of my hostess, unacquainted, like myself, with these expedients for giving a *shove* to the time which already escapes us but too rapidly, gave me her conversation. After a while, away flew the card-tables; a juvenile but more active game of forfeits succeeded; recitation came among the penalties; and my country-woman sung a part of 'God save the King,' to redeem one of the pledges.

The next morning I took a walk with Madame R., her daughter, and a young Bernese, towards the hill of *la Côte*, whose vine-clad slope overlooks Rolle, and is there called *le Mont*. We met with some of our party of the preceding evening, and visited with them one of the public dairies. These are established by associations of proprietors, and accomplish at a smaller expense, on a large scale, that labour which every proprietor must otherwise separately bestow on his daily

quantity of milk, however small. These houses are called *fruitières*; for the word which means *fruit-woman* in Paris, means *dairy* in French Switzerland. On the first establishment of the public *fruitière*, a debtor and creditor account is opened by the manager of it in the name of each of the members, who sends his morning's and evening's milk, which is measured, marked on a tally, and entered in the book to the credit of the sender. The tallies are ingeniously contrived, consisting of two pieces of wood applied sidewise to each other, so that the marks are made on both at once, and the bearer of the milk carries one home as a check. The respective quantities of the first day being compared, he who proves the greatest creditor carries off the whole produce of the dairy for this day, and is directly made debtor for so many *litres* of milk, the whole of which has been entered on the book, subtracting his own. The following day, he who succeeds to the rank of largest creditor, claims all the butter, &c., and likewise becomes debtor. The former debtor, in the mean time, by his daily contribution of milk, becomes in turn creditor, and at length highest creditor; when he again takes all the day's produce, and sinks to the condition of debtor. The arithmetic of these accounts is thus of a very simple nature, and may be intrusted to a peasant.*

* For farther information on these establishments, the reader is referred to M. Lullin's work on the '*Associations rurales pour la fabrication du lait.*'

I was informed that no less than fifty-two proprietors sent their milk to this dairy. The milk was set to cream in shallow wooden tub-formed vessels; and the dairy-man was using a barrel-churn. The different products made from milk in Switzerland are very numerous: I was told there are as many as sixty-two. Those usually made are butter, cheese, and *serêt* or *serai*. This last is a curd-like deposit from whey, used as food by the lower classes: the residuum it leaves is called *la cuite*, and is given to pigs.

Here our party divided: Mademoiselle R., the Bernese, and myself ascended the long ridge of *la Côte*, to a spot on its summit called the *Signal de Bougi*, commanding in clear weather, which was just then denied us, a magnificent view of the lake in its whole extent, with the Alps and Mont Blanc beyond it.

My fair conductress had entertained, some time before, a poor friendless nun of the order of La Trappe, who was undertaking a formidable journey from Lyons to a convent in Switzerland. The nun, to express her grateful sense of the kindness she had received, before parting, uttered a wish that God might give her young protestant friend *the vocation to become a nun of La Trappe*. The pious prayer of poor sister Marie-Madeleine seemed, however, not likely to be fulfilled: a more genial vocation awaited her benefactor. A favoured

youth, from a distant city, who had gained her heart, was now waiting for her hand; and the light step that tripped with me up *la Côte*, has perhaps, ere this, pressed the side of Vesuvius.

It was now the 15th of October; but no signs of the vintage. Before I left Geneva the summits of the Jura and the Salève had already been whitened with snow; some of the limes had lost their leaves; and the grapes, hanging to catch the late beams of the autumnal sun, were imbibing the cold *bise*. A peasant, however, had cheered me with an augury of more fine weather, observing that *St. Martin had not yet made hay for his ass*. A period of fair weather which commonly occurs after this time is called *l'été du St. Martin*.

The ridge of *La Côte* terminates eastward near the village of Aubonne, more than a league distant from Rolle. The celebrated traveller Tavernier, in 1669, after his return from his travels in the east, purchased the barony of Aubonne where he built a *château*: the situation he considered so delicious, that he had scarcely seen any comparable to it, but the neighbourhood of Erivan in Persia.

The greatest width of the lake is between Rolle, and Thonon in Savoy, and is upwards of three leagues and a quarter.

The diligence conveyed me to Lausanne, where I arrived in the evening, after passing through

Morges, a neat town with a handsome modern church.

Lausanne is situated on an eminence at a considerable height above the lake, to which it looks down over a rich sloping shore, clad with vineyards, orchards, and wooded pastures, and traversed by delightful walks. The village of Ouchy below on the edge of the lake, is the port of Lausanne. The appearance of the town, on entering it from Geneva, is prepossessing, but on farther exploring its steep and narrow streets, they soon exhibit disagreeable features, which strongly contrast with the exquisite beauty of the scenery spread before the houses and gardens towards the lake. Above the town the country rises still higher; and the road towards Moudon continues to ascend for two leagues. This vast steep, is the side of a mountain-ridge called the Jorat, running from the Alps towards the Jura. In one of my first rambles in the neighbourhood of Lausanne, the path wore so much the air of walks cut in private grounds, as to make me fear I was trespassing. Above the town is a romantic glen called *la Solitude*: it is adorned with wooded rock, green slopes, hanging wood, and waterfalls; a stream brawls through it over its rocky bed; and this sequestered spot sometimes resounds with the notes of the nightingale. Looking along the glen, appears the gothic tower of the cathedral, with part of the tranquil surface of the

lake, and the mountains beyond. Paths wind about the declivities, and one leads up to a fine wood above, with extensive walks, which, from their elevated situation, sometimes afford beautiful openings in different directions.

From this wood you reach an open space called the Signal, furnished with seats and commanding the view below. Here the enraptured stranger may sit and breathe the sweet air of this elevated station, and indulge the feelings inspired by one of the most enchanting scenes in the world: one where nature seems to have lavished all her charms. Here, though vast and grand, all is serene. The calm expanse of the lake is lightly furrowed by boats gliding on its surface; the snow topped mountains beyond descend to the edge of the water, shedding on it the reflection of their wooded bases, where Meillerie and the other villages of Savoy are scattered along the shore. At the end of the lake to the left, a range of wooded mountains, sweeps round towards those in front, leaving the opening where the Rhone enters, and where is seen part of the more distant Alps of the Valais. To the right, the lake, with its lessening shores, softens away in the distance, and almost blends with the mountains and the sky on the horizon. A wide fertile tract stretches from the shore of the lake to the Jura. The glories of a sun-set which I viewed from this spot, no pen can

describe. The reflection in the lake was like burning gold; the tints, glowing up from behind the mountains where the sun had disappeared, were caught from cloud to cloud, and spread far across the sky; whilst the points of land jutting out into the lake, and the illuminated edge of the water, added to the exquisite effect.

Another walk on these heights led me to a grot, in a rock adorned with moss, shrubs, ivy, and flowers, and containing a seat shaded by two trees whose boughs meet above, and suffer the eye to wander over the delicious view below.

After an excursion from Lausanne which occupied me from the 20th to the 30th of October, I was mortified, on my return, with the intelligence that the vintage had begun and ended in my absence. I found, however, one vineyard, where it was not yet begun, and in others, the red grapes had been left to catch more of the sun-beams, and still hung blushing among the leaves. The high shore from Lausanne to Vevey is a succession of vine-clad slopes: the vineyards being terraced with stone walls one above the other. This part of the shore is the *vignoble* of *la Vaux*. This vast extent of vineyards is so unvaried, and so unbroken by trees, as to have a monotonous effect viewed from the lake, in passing between these towns. It had been a short, and consequently a dull vintage. I saw a small number of grape-gatherers, picking

the grapes into their aprons, or into small hand-tubs, which were afterwards emptied into a flat hooped carrying vessel called a *brente*, and borne on the back by bands passing over the shoulders. A man took one of these on his back, and I followed him into the remains of an old castle, to the pressing-house, where were four presses; though I was informed that one of them was enough for this year's vintage. The man stepped on a small ladder, and, without taking the *brente* from his back, emptied the grapes into a vat, where they were to remain till the gathering was over, and the pressing began. As he turned away, he took a small stick from his pocket and cut a notch.

Amid scenes so full of beauty, it would be unreasonable to murmur that they did not realize all an Englishman's glowing anticipations of a vintage.

THE

TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 16.

Que tout plait eu ces lieux à mes sens étonnés !
D'un tranquille océan l'eau pure et transparente
Baigne les bords fleuris de ces champs fortunés.
D'innombrable coteaux ces champs sont couronnés.
Bacchus les embellit : leur insensible pente
Vous conduit par degrés à ces monts sourcilleux
Qui pressent les enfers et qui fendent les cieux.

VOLT. ON THE LAKE OF GENEVA.

AFTER our glance on the Swiss border of lake Lemman, we now turn to the southern shore; and having before deferred exploring the Simplon, we shall accomplish both these objects, and traverse the grand valley of the Rhone which lies between them, by having recourse to a series of descriptive letters on the road to Milan, across the Simplon, from Geneva, by a gentleman of the last-mentioned place. This, and the three following papers will contain a translation of the greater part of these letters.*

* *Lettres sur la Route de Genève à Milan par le Simplon, écrites en 1808, par George Mallet, Deuxme. Edit. Paris & Genève, 1816.*

“ The mountains that border the lake present different aspects: on the side of Switzerland, the hills of the Pays de Vaud are covered with rich tracts of vineyards; and pretty towns, with a multitude of villages appear in the midst of this well cultivated country. On the Savoy side, rise mountains more varied but less fertile: immense rocks covered with thick forests seem to descend into the lake, and reflect in the water their dark masses crowned with inaccessible peaks.

“ No more than two towns are found on the Savoy border: the first is Thonon; this town was taken by the Bernese in 1536, and returned, some years after, to its ancient masters. The inhabitants of Thonon, when subject to the Bernese, were protestants, and again became catholics under the Duke of Savoy: they had successively as pastors, Froment, and Francis de Sales. The castle is placed in a remarkable situation. At some distance is seen the convent of Ripaille: the size of this monastery and the beauty of its park attract the stranger. Amadeus VIII. had founded there a priory of Augustinians; and this prince, disgusted with power and with the world, having resolved to retire thither, convoked the states of the duchy at Ripaille, the 7th of November, 1484, declared to them his project, and appointed his son lieutenant-general of his provinces. Amadeus, amid a select court, in a delightful retreat, and de-

livered from the restraints of court-etiquette, enjoyed all the sweets of the hermit's life without knowing its austerities.

“ The reconciliation of the Greek and Latin churches was at that time in agitation, and a council had been assembled, with this object, at Basle. Pope Eugene IV., after having acknowledged its authority, wished to dissolve it, and opposed to it another council assembled at Ferrara. The fathers who were met at Basle, irritated against Eugene IV., deposed him, and named Amadeus his successor. Twenty-five prelates, at the head of whom were the cardinal d'Arles, and Æneas Sylvius (afterwards Pius II.), repaired to Ripaille* to announce to the duke his elevation. The prince heard with sorrow the choice of the council, and did not yield without regret to the solicitations of the cardinal and his suite. Ripaille could no longer contain the ambassadors and the prelates who came from all quarters to acknowledge the new pope. Amadeus, who took the name of Felix V.,

* Voltaire thus apostrophizes Amadeus, in his poem on the lake of Geneva :

Aux bords de cette mer où s'égarant mes yeux,
Ripaille, je te vois. O bizarre Amédée !
Est il vrai que dans ces beaux lieux,
Des biens et des grandeurs oubliant toute idée,
Tu vécus en vrai sage, en vrai voluptueux ;
Et que lassé bientôt de ton doux ermitage,
Tu voulus être pape, et cessas d'être sage ?

Faire ripaille (to live in clover) has passed into a well-known proverb. *Translator.*

obliged to enter again the vortex of affairs, quitted his beloved retreat shedding tears, and repaired to Basle, where he was solemnly recognized. He remained three years in that city, in which time he created several cardinals, and issued a great number of bulls. Eugene IV. died; Nicolas V. succeeded him; and Felix, now weary of contending for a rank to which he had never aspired, publicly abdicated in the church at Lausanne, and obtained of his competitor the most honourable conditions. He returned to Ripaille, decorated with the Roman purple, and regretting, perhaps, that he had quitted the hermit's gown under which he had found happiness: he retained, for the rest of his life, the bishoprics of Lausanne and Geneva. He had confirmed as pope, and he defended with zeal, as bishop, the privileges of Geneva, which he had endeavoured to abolish when Duke of Savoy.

“ At a quarter of a league from Thonon, you pass the Drance, by a very long and narrow bridge. Beyond the Drance, the road, which till then has been rather monotonous, alters; hills, covered with trees, rise on the right of the traveller; and fine walnut-trees form, above his head, thick bowers of verdure.

“ You arrive at the spring of Amphion. These waters were formerly more in repute than at present: Amphion, however, is not entirely abandoned; some of the inhabitants of Geneva and of

Savoy still repair thither in the months of July and August. By the side of the small building which covers the fountain, has been erected a pretty saloon, whither the invalids retire when it rains, and whither the inhabitants of the two neighbouring towns repair on Sundays and festivals, attracted more by the sound of a violin, than by the murmur of the ferruginous wave.

“ Evian is remarkable only by its position. On leaving the town begins the new road, which is every where 24 (Fr.) feet wide, placed between the lake and the hills of St. Paul. These shores already embellished by the cool waves, and by the shade of the woods of chesnut-trees that rise above the road, are farther remarkable for the life and movement which animate them.

“ The villages of Grande-Rive, Petite-Rive, and Tour-Ronde occur at short distances from each other, inhabited by fishermen and by their numerous families. The nets used by these fishers cover the shore; and long pieces of rind from which cords are manufactured, hang from the trees on the road. Timber hurled from the neighbouring summits, is piled up on the strand, and there awaits the boats which are to carry it to the opposite shore. The different labours of the road still enliven it. Engineers, stationed at intervals, superintend numbers of workmen. Here, a bridge is throwing across a stream; there, a walk is raising

to support the earth cut away to a considerable depth: the sound of the chisel is heard on all sides.

“At the mouth of the torrent, which, in its course, moves the saw or turns the wheel of a mill, a fisherman has drawn in his boat, which he stations at a short distance from his house and the enclosure that he cultivates. During the heat of the day, he sits in his bark, employed in mending his nets, or falls asleep under the shade of the willows and walnut-trees which adorn his little port; but as soon as the last rays of the sun gild the surface of the lake, he prepares and casts his nets at some distance from the shore. There he passes the whole night in silence: he discerns, at a distance, the lamp that lights his family, and hears the murmur of the waves washing against the walls that enclose it. When the blush of morning appears in the sky, and the stir on the shore announces the beginning of day, the weary fisherman draws in his nets, and regains his dwelling.

“We quitted the road to climb the mountains above it. The silence and the solitude of the shadowy chesnut-forests which cover them, were in contrast with the gait of the shores we had just quitted. The scene became gradually enlivened, and presented us with interesting pictures. The rustling of the trees was heard as the fruit was shaken from them; the bell of a herd drew us

towards a pasture; the voice of a priest who was instructing the villagers guided our steps near a chapel: two or three peasants were prostrate on the steps of the building. From the church-yard, decked with small crosses and bunches of flowers, the lake appeared in its greatest extent; the smoke from a farm-house arose in the distance; a village-steeple looked over the trees and the high trellises which hid the dwellings from our sight. A half-ruined tower led us into the court of an old castle: this edifice recalls the most renowned names, and the times of chivalry in which it was built. With these ancient recollections is combined the animated picture of a farm-yard. Through this arch, which serves as an entrance, and to which enormous gates were formerly attached you discover the country and its labours: the oxen come and leave the plough beside the rustic well; pigeons flutter on the towers; and the gourd climbs up to the battlements. May we not find again, in the yard of the farmer, an image of the power exercised here by the ancient governor of the castle? And is not the peasant still a sovereign? The dog, who by day takes a place by his fire, is his guard during the night; his bees pay him more than the tithe of their harvest; the swallow that lodges under his eaves, and the sparrow that gathers the scatterings of his crops, are the poor who claim the

protection of their master, and who profit by his abundance.

“ At some distance the scene again becomes wild. The noise of a cascade is heard: a torrent plunges into a bed filled with bushes. The mountains are fertile: they produce a great deal of fruit, and afford delicate dairy produce. The land, at the same time, is very dear. The ambition of the fishermen is to gain a little possession there; and the wealthy inhabitants of the country, who take no part in trade, and whose fortune is not exposed to vicissitudes, are unwilling to sell lands which, without requiring expense or much labour, procure them the necessaries of life.

“ After Tour-Ronde, come the villages of Meillerie and St. Gingough. There the labours of the road become remarkable: it may be best judged of from the lake, above which it is raised 32 (Fr.) feet. It is seen to follow the sides of the mountain, across forests, and rocks cut sometimes to the depth of 35 *mètres*; bridges are placed over the torrents; and fine embankments support the land. At a small distance from St. Gingough, there has been suffered to remain; by the side of the lake, a rock crowned with verdure, which gives an idea of the obstacles nature opposed to the construction of the road. The openings have here discovered petrifications. The different strata of the rocks, their inclination, their structure, and

their colour, are easily distinguished, and form walls of mosaic, which the lichens, the moss, and the strawberry-plants will gradually cover with hangings of verdure.

“ The attention that has been paid to even the smallest details of the road cannot be too much admired. The course of the rivulets, which descend in great numbers from the summits, is directed by canals or elegantly constructed aqueducts; sloping walls restrain the lake; and a bordering is placed in the steep parts. Formerly carriages, and even horses, could come no farther than Tour-Ronde. The little path which served the wood-men and fishermen inhabiting these parts, is still seen to wind: sometimes it is at the feet of the traveller, coasting the strand; at another, above his head among the woods. The road from Geneva to Tour-Ronde had been made by Charles Emanuel III., in the hope of reviving commerce and prosperity in this part of Chablais, which had suffered much from the wars of the sixteenth century: that prince wished to continue it, and to establish a communication with Italy by the Great St. Bernard; but the Valaisans opposed the project.

“ Near Meillerie, the mountains, covered with holly and fir, approach the road: the lake, of an immense depth, dashes against the perpendicular rocks in which its bed is formed.

“ We enter the Valais at the village of St. Gingough, of which, half only belongs to that republic; the other makes part of Chablais: from its port issue the greater part of the little vessels which embellish the vast extent of the lake. Boats filled with fish, barks laden with wood, lime, or stones cut from Meillerie, repair almost daily to Geneva or the (other) towns of Switzerland. Near St. Gingough, are forests of walnut-trees, which are pointed out as rare.

“ The breadth of the lake, near the village of Boveret, sensibly diminishes; and the opposite shores, before half concealed by vapour, appear distinctly. We discover the town of Vevay, the castle of Chillon, and the valleys and the torrents which furrow the mountains of the canton of Vaud. The mountain of Boveret gave way in the year 533. Marius, bishop of Lausanne, thus mentions the circumstance:

“ ‘ The very elevated mountain of Boveret, situated in the Valais, gave way with such impetuosity, that it buried a castle, and several villages with all their inhabitants, and gave such an agitation to the lake, as to cause it to overflow its banks, and destroy some old villages with the men and the flocks; it carried away several churches with those who ministered at the altars; threw down a bridge and some mills at Geneva; and, entering the city, destroyed several persons.’

“The new road is finished no farther than Boveret; but it is carrying on, and we saw several workmen engaged in it. They employ, especially, the Piedmontese, who are intelligent, and little sensible to fatigue and pain. We were told that a workman had been thrown some distance into the lake, by a mine which blew up too soon. They ran to his assistance, not doubting to find him either dead or covered with wounds: he was only stunned and a little bruised; he refused to go to the hospital; he shook himself, drank a large glass of brandy, and set to work directly, as though nothing had happened to him.

“Following the banks of the lake, we have already taken some steps in the Valais; afterwards, passing along the course of the Rhone, we shall arrive at the foot of the Simplon.”

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 17.

Et du palais magique où se rendent les eaux,
Ensemble remontons au lieu de leurs berceaux ;
Vers ces monts, de vos champs dominateurs antiques.
Quels sublimes aspects ! quels tableaux romantiques !

DELILLE.

“**A**T some distance from Boveret, the valley becomes much contracted between the Rhone and the mountain. A castle called the gate of Sex, through which the road passes, over a draw-bridge, shuts off the country. Near this fort is a ferry across the Rhone ; young people who are going to seek work out of their own country, present themselves on the opposite bank ; two boatmen try to stem the current by yielding themselves to its force ; they reach the shore, and the troop quietly pursue their way.

“ On the other side of the gate of Sex, the valley widens ; and now are seen to spread spacious meadows covered with fruit-trees, dwellings, and well cultivated gardens, separated by light hurdles

of fir-wood. Peasants, women, and children, dispersed in these meadows, and, as it were, under the shadow of these fortifications which their ancestors had raised to defend them, were employed on the second crop of hay. In the back ground of the landscape, boats ascending the river; of which the course was not visible, showed their white sails, and seemed to be penetrating among the forests of the opposite shore.

“All here announces a new country. The dwellings are surrounded with a wooden gallery; the roof, which is prolonged on the outside, is made of thin planks loaded with large stones: under the projection, which it forms, the inhabitant of the house arranges his store of wood, leaving openings for the little windows of his lodging. He thus procures himself another rampart against the cold. The barns are raised on posts topped with flat projecting stones, in order to prevent the rats and mice from penetrating them. These cabins, built of larch of a reddish colour, are scattered here and there in the meadows, and rise to a considerable height on the slope of the mountains.

“*Cretins* are met with in pretty large numbers: they are often seen laid before their doors in a state of total inaction. The exterior signs of their malformation are enormous wens, a complexion of an olive tint, and splay features. Different degrees of imbecility are observable among them;

some may be employed in the most simple country labours; but a great number are incapable of any occupation. When we spoke to them, we had no other answer than notes of the voice resembling the cries of an animal; and a shocking smile, that contrasted with our own feelings, spread itself on the countenance of these poor creatures. The sight of these beings, ranked by their form among mankind, but who seem to have been rejected from the class of brutes, inspires melancholy and a sort of terror. All the strangers who have traversed the Valais have thought themselves obliged to invent a system to explain the causes of this degradation. M. de Saussure, who has made profound researches on the subject, assigns for the cause of cretinism, the heat, and the stagnation of the air, in the lower part of the valley.* It has been said that the Valaisans see their children with pleasure in a state which renders them incapable of committing faults, and secures for them the happiness of heaven; but this prejudice does not exist: the attentions paid to these beings destitute of all resources, may have given rise to the error. The Valaisans are too artless, and too much accustomed to such spectacles, to blush at it, or seek to disguise

* I have observed the deformity of *goitres* in Switzerland, more in women than the other sex: this may, perhaps, be attributed to the protection which a cravat affords to the glands of the neck, against the extreme changes in the temperature of the air. The simple pressure of such a covering may produce some effect.
Translator.

it. It is observed, however, that the number of *cretins* sensibly diminishes, in consequence of the precaution taken by the inhabitants in easy circumstances, to send their wives to lie in on the mountains, and to bring up their children there until the age of ten or twelve years. This infirmity, which afflicts the inhabitants of the Alps, has been long known: Juvenal has said,

Quis tumidum guttur miratur in Alpibus?

SAT. 13.

“ The entrance of St. Maurice has great affinity with that of the gate of Sex. The *Dent de la Morcle*, and the *Dent du Midi*, narrow the passage, and seem as though they would a second time shut off the country. The handsome bridge which rests on the bases of these two mountains, belongs to the Valais and the canton of Vaud, and unites these two states. It is about 200 (Fr.) feet long, and has only a single arch. In the middle is a little chapel, in which the Valaisans say mass: it is the people of that canton, who are charged with the repairs of the bridge, and who receive the toll. This passage, before the construction of the new road, was the only one open to carriages: by shutting one gate they were denied entrance to the whole Valais.

“ St. Maurice is overlooked by high beetling rocks: the trees which grow on them form bowers above the first street. It was near this town,

that the massacre of the Theban legion took place. The authenticity of this historical fact has been contested: it has been said that the valley of St. Maurice was too narrow to contain, at once, a legion of more than 6,000 men, and the army of Maximian by which that legion was massacred; but it should be observed that the rocks separate considerably at a short distance from the town, and that the valley becomes very broad. Besides, the foundation of a convent dedicated to St. Maurice* in the place where he perished, the veneration attached to the memory of this martyr, the change in the name of the town, formerly called Agaunum, and the orders of St. Maurice and of Lazarus, created by the Dukes of Savoy, are monuments which coincide with the historians on the subject of this event.†

“Simler, a writer of the 16th century, relates it in detail, in a paper sent to the abbot of St. Maurice. The soldiers composing the Theban legion had received baptism from Zabda, bishop of Jerusalem; and the instructions of Marcellinus, who was bishop of Rome at the time of their entering that city, had confirmed their faith. Being arrived at Agaunum, and learning that they were destined to pursue the christians, they refused to obey. On

* Chief of the Theban legion, *Trans.*

† “Simleri Valesiæ descriptio.—Guillimani Helvetia—Suiseri Chronologia Helvetica.—S. Euchere, Passio S. Mauritii,—Balde-sano,—De Rivas,—&c. &c.”

the news of their resistance, Maximian, who was at Martigny, abandoned himself to the most violent anger, caused the legion to be decimated, and renewed his orders. This punishment not having intimidated the soldiers, the prince ordered them to be decimated a second time, and commanded those whom the lot had preserved, to obey. These brave men, strengthened by the exhortations of the priests who accompanied them, and by those of the senator Candidus, and surrounded by the bloody corpses of their companions, replied to the emperor :

“ Maximian, we are thy soldiers; but we regard God more than thee: he has given us life, and we receive from thee only the price of our labours. We know how to combat enemies, but not to embrue our hands in the blood of virtuous men. If so horrible a crime as this were not enjoined us, we are ready to obey, as we have hitherto done; but we are christians, and we can not slaughter our brethren.’

“ Maximian, despairing to overcome their generous resistance, ordered them to be surrounded, and massacred by his army. The courage of these martyrs is so much the more worthy of the cause for which they perished, as they knew how to resist the unjust orders of their chief without insolence, and to receive death without complaining.

“ On the perpendicular rocks that command the town of St. Maurice, are seen a church, and a small building inhabited by a hermit, who cultivates a garden of a few *toises*, placed on a ledge of the rock beside his dwelling. This retreat recalls that of the anchorites of the Thebais, who, separated from the world, passed their lives in meditation and prayer.

“ The country lying between St. Maurice and Martigny, is sterile; and brambles cover almost all the valley. The fine cascade of the Pissevache, embellishes these savage scenes: the Salanche, which forms it, issues from a deep furrow it has worn in the mountain, and falls perpendicularly from the height of from 270 to 300 (Fr.) feet. The water, broken in its fall, is transformed into a brilliant gauze, which veils the rock. Whilst the Salanche, reduced to powder, assumes a hundred different forms, mingles with the air, shines with the brilliance of mother-of-pearl, and reflects the tints of the rainbow, the black waves of the Trient issue, at a short distance, from a deep crevice, formed by a rupture of the rocks.

“ The Rhone, the shores of which we are following, floats a great quantity of timber: its banks and its islands are covered with it. We were informed that this timber comes from Sion, and that it is passed down to Villeneuve: a little boat

ascends the river, in order to set at liberty the pieces stopped by the way.

“ There is a great difference in temperature, between the two shores of the Rhone: we could judge of this, in a journey we made in the Valais in the beginning of spring. On the left bank were seen firs and larches; the vegetation had not yet felt the presence of the fine days; only a few alpine plants, and the rose coloured primroses (*primevères roses*) flourished in tufts among the rocks. On the right shore, the oaks were growing; the thick grass of the meadows was enamelled with violets and anemones; the fruit trees were covered with blossom; the bees were heard humming; all the butterflies of spring fluttered round us; and large green lizards were spreading themselves in the sun upon the rocks.

“ Opposite Martigny, are seen the villages of Branson and Fouilly, situated in the warmest part of the whole Valais. The vineyard-lands of Branson are much esteemed: I have been assured that the square *toise* was often sold for eighteen francs, and that in good years, they yielded an interest of five per cent. on that sum.

“ The town of Martigny is situated at the union of the roads to France, Italy, and Chamouny, and at the entrance of the grand valley of the Rhone. This river, which takes its rise in the mountain of the Furca at the extremity of the Valais, and

the course of which, till it enters the lake of Geneva, determines the extent of this country, being here repelled by the mountain of the Forcla, has been forced to turn northward.

“ At Martigny, we visited the prior (of St. Bernard) M. Murith, who showed us, with much complaisance, a fine mineralogical cabinet. This learned ecclesiastic is thoroughly acquainted with the natural history of the Valais: he has just published a work which will be very useful to botanists; a work, in which he attends them as guide in all the valleys which contain rare plants, and enlivens these scientific excursions by a rapid description of the spots he visits.

“ The republic of the Valais has a surface of about 200 square leagues, and is composed of the grand valley of the Rhone, and several other lateral and less considerable valleys. Thirteen are counted towards the south, and three to the north; not to mention several others, very small or uninhabited. The valley of the Rhone is the largest in all Switzerland: from the mountains of the Furca, where it begins, to the lake of Geneva, where it terminates, is reckoned 36 leagues. It is also one of the deepest: for the lower part of the valley is little* higher than the surface of the

* The lake of Geneva is, as has been already remarked, more than 1200 feet above the sea: the Valais must necessarily be higher, as the Rhone descends from it towards the lake. *Translator.*

sea; whilst Mount Rosa, Mount Cervin, and the other summits which overlook this country, are among the most elevated mountains of the ancient continent. The Valais, therefore, situated in a temperate latitude, unites the productions of the torrid and the frozen climates. In the summer months, the rays of the sun, reflected and concentrated by these high mountains, produce there an extreme heat, give birth to the aloe and the Indian fig, and ripen the grape which yields a very strong wine; whilst on the heights of these same mountains, grow the *génépi* and the rhododendron. The oppressed traveller, unrefreshed by a breath of air, passes slowly along these burning rocks. Wearing by the swarms of insects flying round him, and dinning with the monotonous chirp of the grasshopper, he thinks himself under the sun of the southern climates. This country is also the dwelling of the clouds attracted by the elevated peaks: these clouds, arrested over the Valais, remain there a long time, and, at length, dissolve in torrents of rain. The mountains pour all their waters into the bottom of the valley, where a great part remains stagnant in the marshes which border the Rhone: it is afterwards drawn up by the sun, and falls again. This burning air, these marshy vapours, and these almost constant fogs that hang upon the Valais, and form a heavy and unwholesome atmosphere, are probably the cause, not only of *goitres* and of cretinism, but also of the

softness and the indolence generally found among the inhabitants of the bottom of the valley, and which disappear in the more elevated situations.

“ The fertility of the Valais varies considerably: near Martigny, the rocks, rising perpendicularly, offer no space for culture; marshes occupy a part of the lower end of the valley; and on the banks of the river, flocks of goats feed at liberty, and during the night retire to the dry lands. As we looked at the peasants cutting bulrushes (*joncs*), which seemed at a distance like ears of corn, and chasing before them birds of all kinds, we recollected the charming description of M. de Châteaubriant :

“ ‘ The marshes, hurtful as they appear, are, however, of great use: their mud and the ashes of their plants, furnish manure to the labourers; their reeds afford fire and roofing to poor families: a frail covering corresponding with the life of man, and no more lasting than our days! In autumn, these marshes are clad with dried bulrushes, which give to sterility itself the appearance of the richest harvests. The wind gliding over these reeds bends their tops by turns; one bows whilst another rises; then, on a sudden, the whole forest bending at once, discovers the golden bittern, or the white heron standing motionless on one leg as on a stake.’

“ The country afterwards changes: fine pastures succeed to the marshes; vineyards, sup-

ported by little walls, rise one above the other in terraces, and clothe the southern bases of the mountains; and on those towards the north, fields are mingled with the verdure of the woods and the meadows. Villages, as well as churches and oratories conspicuous by their whiteness, adorn the heights which command Sion.

“ This town, six leagues distant from Martigny, is the capital of the Valais, and the residence of a bishop: it existed in the time of Julius Cæsar. Sion, in the course of the last century, has been successively ravaged by the waters, by fire, and by war: the great street is formed of new houses, built with taste, but contrasting with the ruinous buildings which surround them. Two old castles, raised on two hills, overlook the town. The most elevated is called Tourbillon: there they formerly assembled the council of state, and crowned the bishop, who resided in a castle not far from the two others. A powder-magazine having blown up, set fire to Tourbillon, near which it was placed: nothing now remains of this building but some embattled walls; and elders grow in the place formerly occupied by the apartments. The view from Tourbillon is very extensive, following the course of the Rhone from Martigny to Leuck; and you may, with a single glance, form an idea of the whole country.

“ The second hill, called Valère, offers a mass of buildings without rule or taste: fragments of

fortifications, covered with miserable habitations interspersed with trees, and the whole overlooked by an old gothic church, rising amid these ruins and the rocks that support them. Here are seen the remains of the dwelling of Theodore, first bishop of Sion. The canons of the town formerly resided in this place; but it is now inhabited by some poor families, who there find tenements at a cheap rate.

“ We saw, near Valère, two women who advanced slowly: the dress of coarse cloth which covered them even on the head, and chaplets hanging to their waists, informed us that they were nuns. They told us they were called the *Sisters of Christian Solitude*: they came down every morning to a hospital in the town, to teach the children, and returned to pass the night in the habitation well suited to the name they had assumed. Other nuns were dispersed on the hill, employed in rural labours: we quitted them, struck with their calm and mild expression.

“ We had seen, in the town, a convent of capuchins, which had made a different impression on us. We had been shown, in the refectory, a clock turning eighteen hands, each with a different movement; one marked the rising and setting of the sun, another the departure and arrival of the couriers, and several, the periods of the principal festivals. ‘He who made it,’ said the superior, ‘is very clever, but I no longer allow him to lose

‘ his time about such things: there is too much
‘ to do in the convent.’ Thus, he who, in his retirement, had known how to avail himself of the talents nature had given him, was deprived of his own predilections, in order to be employed in the coarsest labours, on a level with the ignorant man; and to beg his bread, when he might have gained it honourably by his industry.

“ From this spot, inhabited by poor families and timid nuns, the bishops of Sion formerly commanded the whole country, reduced under their domination after the fall of the two kingdoms of Burgundy. Princes of the Holy-Empire, decorated with the titles of prefects and counts of the Valais, they enjoyed an unlimited power. In the recesses of these castles, now destroyed, the celebrated cardinal Schinner meditated those great enterprises which rendered his name formidable to France, and which assigned a brilliant part to be performed by his countrymen. Accident drew him forth from the obscurity to which his birth seemed to have condemned him. Born of very poor parents, at Grechen, a village in the sombre valley of the Axe, he filled the place of simple *curé*, and devoted his leisure to study. The bishop, Justus de Sillinen, traversing his diocese, stopped at his house; and, astonished with the learning he found in a poor parish priest, he summoned him to his residence, and made him canon of Sion.

Justus de Sillinen, having undertaken an unsuccessful war against the Count of Arona, displeased his townsmen; who, emboldened by George de Supersax, forced him to quit the episcopal chair. Some time after, Schinner was appointed bishop: this dignity, the most eminent in the Valais, was the first step among the honours to which the wars of Italy were to promote him. Repulsed, it is said, by the king of France, to whom he offered his services, he attached himself to the pope, and engaged his countrymen to declare themselves for him, in the war he was maintaining against Louis XII. It would be too long a task to follow Schinner in all the details of this war: more disposed to wield the sword than the crosier, he himself led the Swiss to combat. Master of the minds of others by his insinuating manners, by his eloquence, and by the gifts of the sovereign pontiff, of which he was the distributor, he swayed their deliberations, and silenced the general interest, and the solicitations of princes who courted their alliance. The parish priest of Grechen, who should have lived unknown beneath the thatch of a parsonage, now decorated with the title of legate, and with the Roman purple, reassured the sovereign pontiff, alarmed even in his capital; conducted Maximilian Sforza in triumph into Milan; and opposed a powerful barrier to the ambitious projects of the king of France. Schinner found an indefati-

gable adversary in the person of George de Supersax, who, jealous of his influence, attached himself to the French cause. . . . The Valaisans, regretting that they had quitted the obscure and calm state which had constituted their happiness, banished the two men whose rivalry had brought upon them the evils of intestine dissensions, and the thunders of the Church. Both died out of their country: Schinner, occupied in pursuing his great schemes, forgot, at the court of Rome, the enmity of his countrymen; and George de Supersax retired into Switzerland.

“ The Valaisans, weary of the tyranny of their bishops, revolted; and having contracted an alliance with the cantons of Uri, Underwalden, and Lucern, obtained their liberty. Great bounds were placed to the power of the bishops, which from that time has continued to diminish, and has been, at length, reduced to the management of ecclesiastical affairs.

“ In traversing the Valais, one seems to be still in the middle ages: it appears as though this country had not advanced on a par with the rest of Europe; and that civilization and knowledge had not been able to scale the high mountains that separate it from the world. Castles placed on little eminences, towns built on the sides of mountains, and defended by towers, and houses where the light of day seems to be feared, recall those

feudal times, when petty princes were in continual war, and when communities had always to defend their possessions and their lives by arms. Gibbets are seen raised on the hills by the road: this practice seems to be derived from barbarous governments, which caused their power to be recollected by the most melancholy of their prerogatives.

“ The inhabitants of the lower part of the valley are indolent, and would be taken rather for timid vassals than a free people: there is little industry, and no trade; and the expression of joy is seldom seen among them. On our return from Milan, we passed through the Valais at the time of vintage. The slopes of the mountains were covered with men and women who were stripping the vines; but the echoes of the valley repeated not the songs and cries of joy that resound in the vineyards of the rest of Switzerland. During the hay-harvest, the workmen preserved the same silence.

“ The village of Sierre,* three leagues from the capital, is in an agreeable situation; there are seen a church and buildings more highly ornamented than in the rest of the Valais; and it is the residence of the richest people, a part of the *noblesse* of the country.

* The Valais is inhabited by two entirely different races of people: one, of German origin, reaches from the Grimsel and the Furca to Sierre. The inhabitants of the lower valley, supposed to be descended from a mixture of Celts, Romans, Gauls, and Burgundians, speak a sort of French *patois*: the well informed speak French.
Translator.

“From Sion to Brigg, you pass the fields of the battles fought between the Valaisans and the French, in the bloody war, which, in the year 1798, and the summer of 1799, was waged by the Directory on the unhappy inhabitants of these countries. The peasants of the high Valais displayed great courage; the knowledge they had of their country made them formidable to their enemies; but they were, at length, obliged to yield to a superiority in numbers and discipline. The French became masters of a country deserted and covered with ashes: the misery of the country was brought to such a pitch, that the harvests that had not been burnt could not find hands to gather them. The neighbouring cantons were obliged to furnish considerable subsidies in provisions and clothing, and to receive a great number of abandoned orphans. France, after having been a cruel enemy to the Valais, has become its protector and ally. She has promoted its prosperity in constructing a road, which will be of great use to the Valaisans, and the expense of which they could not have defrayed. By abolishing the distinctions between the high and the low Valais, which had existed since the latter had been conquered, by the tithings of Brigg and Sion, from the Duke of Savoy, and extending to all the inhabitants liberty and equal rights, France has destroyed the germe of hatred and jealousy which divided this country.

“ Beyond Sierre, high mounts of sand rise in the form of cones in the valley: the bed of the river is covered with verdant islets, formed by trunks of trees carried away by the current. On the left is seen the town of Leuck, placed on the side of the mountain, and fortified by an antique castle formerly belonging to the bishop. The dress, the persons, and the language of the natives are not less remarkable than the country they inhabit.

“ The village of Viège, at the entrance of the valleys of Sass and St. Nicholas, stretches along the river which descends from them. Two churches of remarkable architecture, in the highest part of the village, are traced against the mountains below Mount Rosa. The grave sound of the German psalmody resounded in these gothic buildings, ornamented with fantastic figures. In the church-yard rose heaps of bones and skulls carefully arranged. After divine service, the women retire into their dwellings: the men sit before their doors, enjoying silence and repose.

“ Beyond Viège, are marshy meadows. Shepherds and shepherdesses, quitting their flocks, enter the marshes, plunge themselves up to the waist, draw out the bundles of hemp steeped there, shake them, plunge them again, and go to wash them in a brook. The sight of such labours would undeceive those who still expect to find

in the fields the *Thyrsises* and the *Chloes* sung by Gessner and Fontenelle. Alas! if any yet exist, they must not be sought in the Valais.

“ We reached the higher end of the valley: it widens at the extremity, and is covered with verdure. The town of Brigg, and its towers, surmounted by enormous globes of tin-plate, appear at the foot of the glaciers, amid meadows, woods, and thickets. To the left, is the pretty village of Naters: the Rhone, which waters it, descends from the summits of the Furca, and from the sombre valleys of the Axe. On the right, is already perceived the beginning of the labours of the Simplon, the fine bridge built over the Saltine. The road, rising insensibly, pierces the shadowy forests of fir.

“ Sion, St. Maurice, and Brigg are inhabited only by an agricultural (or pastoral) people; as must be the case in a country without trade. The noise of rustic cars is here heard instead of that of carriages: every morning, in the great square, the shepherd's horn is heard; the inhabitants open their stables, and the flocks assemble. From our inn, we saw them return in great numbers in the evening: the noise of their bells, their bleatings, and the bustle of the townsmen, whose most important business is the care of their flocks, give to the capital the air of a village. At Brigg, you are no longer hemmed in by high rocks: the temperature is less burning

than in the rest of the valley, and you breathe more freely.

“ The Valais contains valleys, which, though less known than those of the Rhone, are only the more interesting: such are those of Sass, St. Nicholas, and Annivers. The high mountains which form them contain valuable minerals; the flowers which clothe them attract insects, and butterflies of all sorts; and the scene of wild nature is there contrasted with that of industry and labour. The steep declivities of the rocks are seen covered with fields and meadows; villages are placed in spots, which, at a distance, appear inaccessible; little oratories and churches rise beside the glaciers; and the sound of the bells is heard at the same time with the terrific noise of avalanches. The sharp and clear air of these elevated places gives again to the inhabitants all their energy, and banishes the maladies, the languor, and the inertia prevailing in the low valleys. The picture of simple manners adds to the interest these mountains inspire: strangers too rarely visit these remote villages for inns to be found there, but every inhabitant is eager to offer them his dwelling. The traveller sits down to a frugal table, between the master and the servant; and it is with difficulty that he has suffered to pay the price of this valuable hospitality.

“ Thomas Plater was born, in 1469, at Grechen,

(in the valley of St. Nicholas) of very poor parents. His fear of his master induced him to quit the Valais, and join a society of itinerant students. The rank of men of letters, was not then, it seems, so dignified as at present. The students of the German universities traversed the different towns asking alms; but fearing to degrade themselves and their profession, they had children under them, who excited for them the charity of passengers. It was for the humble station of servant to a mendicant, that Plater quitted his flock of goats: the only salary he received was a wretched supply of food. Weary of a connexion so little advantageous, he quitted his companions, and repaired to Alsace, where he pursued his first studies. The reputation of Myconius attracted him to Zurich. He connected himself with Zuinglius, and was useful to him in the great work of the reformation. Impelled by the love of study, the young Valaisan learned Greek and Hebrew, and devoted a crown, all the fortune his dying father had left him, to the purchase of a Hebrew Bible. Being forced to earn his bread by labour, he learned the trade of rope-maker at the house of Collinus, who united this modest occupation with the title of Greek professor. The master and the apprentice worked all day, and in the evening, they read Homer and Sophocles. Plater afterwards repaired to Basle, where he exercised his

new profession, and employed some hours, which his master granted him, in giving lessons in Hebrew. He entered the hall of study with the apron he wore in the shop. His zeal for the reformation induced him to refuse an advantageous place offered him by the bishop of Sion: he obtained, at length, a Greek professor's chair at Basle, established a library, printed several good works, and left behind him two sons who distinguished themselves as physicians.

“ There are valleys still more wild than those of Sass and St. Nicholas; such as that which opens at some distance from Leuck. A road between high rocks, six leagues in length, often rendered impassable by the snows and the rains, leads to a village, which has no communication with Switzerland, but by a glacier frequented only by chamois-hunters. The inhabitants of Lonza, who find at home all that is necessary to existence, but who have no superfluities to carry to their neighbours, remain shut off and separated from the whole world. The language and the dress of the traveller, who penetrates into this secluded region, excite a general surprise; and he himself feels the same astonishment as he sees on every countenance. Some idea may be formed of the simplicity of the manners of this almost unknown tribe; the name of *deed* and *contract* have never been pronounced among a people who are unable

to read; and notches made in a piece of wood, are the only vouchers the debtor leaves in the hands of the creditor.

“ The valley of Mont-Cheville has been exposed, in the last century, to terrible convulsions: the mountains of the Diablerets, which overlook it, gave way, covered with their ruins the space of a square league, and buried several persons, with a great number of flocks. Some steep peaks still threaten these unhappy regions; and they are consequently uninhabited. The theatre of the slip offers the most melancholy spectacle: enormous rocks are piled confusedly together; larches grow among the ruins of cabins, and among the decomposed trunks covered with maidenhair and campanulas; and the rivulets, which formerly watered meadows sprinkled with dwellings, now arrested in their course, have formed lakes in the midst of the ruins. A herdsman, who was here leading a flock of goats, showed us the place where a peasant had been saved by an enormous rock, which, half-supported by the mountain, covered his dwelling without crushing it, and resisted the weight of stones and earth. The unhappy man, buried alive, sustained himself on cheese, and slaked his thirst from a little rivulet which the convulsion had conducted to him. He laboured unremittingly to work a passage out; and after three months, saw at length, with transport, the light of

day. Pale, emaciated, and too feeble to support the brightness of the sun, he slowly gained the neighbouring village. He was taken for a spectre: the alarm spread on all sides; the people entrenched themselves in their houses; the priest inundated him with holy water; and it was not without great difficulty that the unfortunate man was permitted to rank among the living.

“ The mineral baths of Leuck, on the confines of the Valais and of the canton of Berne, attract every year a great number of strangers. Cottages, in a meadow surrounded by the high rocks of the Gemmi,* form the village, which is reached only by a difficult road. This hamlet, which seems, at the first glance, only a collection of the rustic dwellings of the shepherds of the Alps, and which, during winter, is abandoned beneath the snow, assembles, in the fine season, foreigners of all nations and all ranks. The spring, which is to restore health to so many individuals, flows into a large building, of which it fills the lower part, divided into four squares. Each of these squares will contain a great number of invalids, who, clothed in flannel dresses, there place themselves one beside another. As a great part of the day is passed there, they establish themselves there comfortably: there they read, converse, and give fêtes: the flowers borrow from the water a more

* See No. 2.

lively freshness and a new perfume. Every bather has before him a little floating table: early in the day, these tables are covered with breakfasts; and these light vessels, laden with cargoes of coffee, tea, and cakes, arrive at him for whom they are bound. At the arrival of the courier, the letters and the news-papers, distributed in the building, bring intelligence from the different parts of Europe. At eleven o'clock, they leave the bath, and quit the modest uniform of the waters: those who have been seen confounded in the same enclosure, make their appearance dressed, each according to his fortune and the mode of his country. With the little Valaisan hats, are mingled the more elegant dresses of the females of large towns. Groups are formed, which ramble over the meadows, sit under the shade of the woods, or scale the rocks. The hour of returning to the bath brings back the wandering troops: in the evening they re-assemble, and sometimes give fêtes.

“ I have seen the bishop of Sion officiate in the little church of Leuck: the music of his chapel, re-echoed by the rocks, produced a most solemn effect in this wild valley. Strangers leave it in the latter end of September: they often separate to meet no more; and at the commencement of winter, this animated village becomes deserted.”

We are now arrived at the foot of the Simplon, the passage of which will be the subject of the next paper.

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 18.

Πολλὰ δ' ἀνάτα, κατάντα, παραντα τε, δοχμια τ' ἤθρον.

HOMER.

O'er heights, o'er depths, o'er craggy steeps they wind.

THE Simplon, called by the Italian's *Sempione*, and, in German Switzerland, *Simpeln*, has been already mentioned among the Lepontine or Helvetian Alps: it is on the boundary between the canton of Valais and Piedmont. It contains no fewer than six glaciers. From the village of Glyss in the Valais, to the town of Domo d'Ossola on the other side of the mountain, passes the celebrated road of the Simplon. This magnificent work, begun by Napoleon in 1801, and completed in 1805, was undertaken at the joint expense of France and Italy. The Italian engineers had the most arduous portion of the task, from the extreme hardness of the rocks on their side of the mountain; whilst the side towards the Valais is very much composed of schist and slate, in some parts in a state of decomposition. The old road, which, like other passages of the Alps,

was not passable for carriages, was shorter than the new: this last is reckoned 14 leagues in length. The summit of the passage is nearly 6,600 feet above the sea.

To resume the extracts from M. Mallet:

“ Between Glyss and Domo d’Ossola, a journey of fourteen or fifteen hours, are twenty-two bridges, and seven tunnels* cut in the rock. The number of passengers over the Simplon has already produced a revival of plenty in the tithing of Brigg, which had suffered more from the war than the rest of the Valais. Although travellers commonly go to lodge at Brigg, the road does not pass by that town: it ends at Glyss, a village at some distance, before a highly ornamented church. This church was decorated by George de Supersax, a native of Glyss. A painting was formerly seen in one of the chapels, representing George de Supersax, with his wife, his twelve sons, and his eleven daughters. The inscription which was attached to it, I think remarkable for its simplicity:

IN HONOUR OF ST. ANNE,
 GEORGE DE SUPERSAX, KNIGHT,
 FOUNDED THIS CHAPEL IN THE YEAR OF GRACE 1519,
 ERECTED AN ALTAR AND DECORATED IT,
 IN GRATITUDE FOR THE TWENTY-THREE CHILDREN
 WHICH HIS WIFE MARGARET HAS BORNE HIM.

* The French word *gallerie*, applied to these tunnels, has been rendered *gallery* by the English: as this last term is now explained, it will be used in this paper. It may be remarked that these exca-

“The first remarkable work is the fine bridge over the Saltine, one of the largest in all the road: it is a single arch, formed of wood, like those of all the large bridges. The timber employed for these constructions is larch, which is more durable than fir. The bridge over the Saltine is the only covered one, and has been thus built, in order to protect from the rain the wood-work of the arch.

“The road, as it mounts, leaves on the left a chapel placed on the side of the mountain, and several little oratories built on the road leading to it. These chapels are common in the Valais. Thither, when the country is afflicted by any calamity, long processions bend. The labourer comes to ask there rain for his field; and the herdsman, the cessation of the malady which attacks his cattle. The temple where so many petitions meet, rises beside the field parched by the heat, amid the pasture where the herds languish, and not far from the avalanche that has overthrown every thing in its progress.

“The passage of the Simplon is situated between high mountains. The old road, traced in the bottom of the valley, was forced to follow the inequalities of the ground, and descended to

ventions are not regularly arched like the tunnels of our canals, and consequently accord better with the wild magnificence of the scenery.
Trans.

mount again. The new road, placed on the mountains on the left, has a very gentle slope; in many parts only two inches in six feet, never more than six inches,* and sometimes it is on a level. We ascended gently, sometimes enjoying the prospect of the valley, sometimes passing along in the shade of thick forests. Enormous fir-trees, torn up by the roots, resting in their fall on the tops of their neighbours, bend them towards the earth. The road is every where 24 (Fr) feet† in breadth: on the side towards the mountain, are channels which receive the waters running from it; and on that towards the precipice, are erected pretty fences of larch: but as it has been necessary to support the road by terraces in several places, the wall has been then raised breast-high above the road. The ground not being yet settled, avalanches of earth and stones have crossed the road in different parts, and overthrown these little walls, which have been replaced by flat stone posts with sharp edges, so formed that by cutting the avalanche they may escape being carried away by it. They have observed the precaution of planting poles ten feet high, at intervals, to mark the road when the snows prevent the precipice from being distinguished: the poles themselves are sometimes entirely covered by the snow. In the latter end

* Ebel says that the slope is no where greater than two inches and a half in the length of six feet. *Trans.*

† According to Ebel, 25. *Trans.*

of winter, the road is exposed to injuries which call for very expensive repairs. Land not supported by trees, and cut at an angle of more than 45 degrees, is liable to crumble down; but these slips become less considerable every year. In order to preserve the gentle inclination of the road, it has been necessary to make great circuits: it bends with all the sinuosities of the mountain, and descends to the bottom of a valley to find the bridge of Ganter.

“Some paces before arriving at this bridge, you traverse the first gallery: it is one of the smallest, and is pierced in a part of the mountain formed of pieces of rock, united by clay. This clay becomes slippery after rain: and rocks detach themselves from it and render the passage dangerous. We were shown a block which had fallen the preceding spring, when the engineers were not far distant: it has been consequently determined to take away this gallery.* The bridge of Ganter is placed near a ravine, where two torrents join, in a spot exposed to frequent avalanches, from which the ingeniously constructed bridge is sheltered: its elegant architecture produces a pretty effect amid the firs that surround it.

“It is with reason, that such great undertakings command our astonishment; but should they not especially excite our admiration in the mountains, in those regions where man’s right of dwelling is

* It has since been destroyed,

always uncertain? Avalanches of snow and fragments of rock overwhelm his labours, sometimes burying himself; and teach him that the soil he wishes to appropriate refuses his dominion. Winter, at length, takes again what he thought he had gained from the snows and the frosts; and chases him into the lowest valleys: so that he inhabits these spots, not as a proprietor, but as a tenant, who from one moment to another may be deprived of his possession. He raises there only simple huts; slight fences surround his fields; and, for the most part, he contents himself with wandering over the mountain with his flocks: encamping, rather than dwelling, in places which he will abandon at the first notice.

“ It is near these feeble works which an instant may destroy, that a road has been constructed, which is to resist the fury of storms and the lapse of time. It seems to sport with obstacles, and to set nature at defiance: it passes from one mountain to another, plunges under the rocks, fills up the precipices, turns back in graceful and rounding curves, and leads the traveller, with a gentle ascent, by the glaciers, and above the clouds.

“ We stopped to bait our horses at the *chalet* of Berenzaal, situated a short distance from the bridge of Ganter. This *chalet* is inhabited by a family of St. Maurice. The husband has the inspection of workmen employed on the road: his wife and daughter entertain travellers; and from

them we met with a very good reception. Whilst we were taking our repast within the cabin, a passenger and his wife finished theirs on the grass. They came from the banks of lake Maggiore, whither they had been to gather branches of bay, which they carried to Friburg in Switzerland; where their merchandise was, they said, in great request, for flavouring dishes, and for decorating festivals. Their ambition was, to sell for five crowns at Friburg, what had cost them ten *sous* in Italy: for the sake of this little profit, they had undertaken a journey of thirty days. Their manner of travelling was not expensive; they made but one halt in the day; and took, for their only sustenance, soup prepared by themselves on the road. In the evening they ask shelter of a peasant, who, when they arrive at the right hour, sometimes shares his supper with them; and in the morning, they repay his hospitality with a branch of bay, of the value of two *sous*. In this manner, they said, they gained themselves good friends all along the road. The bottle of wine they had drunk at the *chalet*, was an indulgence they allowed themselves, in order to support the fatigues of the mountain.

“ This *chalet* belongs to the Baron de Stockalper,* who has large possessions in the Valais.

* Ramond speaks of the founder of the family as a simple peasant who had acquired great riches: it was asserted that he could pass from Sion to Milan without going out of his farms. M. R. says of the *Stockalper* then living, “ I have been assured that, inheriting the

It is said that one of his ancestors, who had a considerable fortune, having erected buildings on different hills, roused the suspicions of his countrymen, who were extremely jealous of their independence, and they condemned him to lose a part of his goods. The Baron de Stockalper had recourse to artifice: he concealed sums of money beneath the altar on which he had been ordered to deposit his fortune, and swore that all he possessed was under the hand which he lifted up over the altar. I know not whether entire reliance may be placed on this story, which has been related to me, but it may be presumed true, from a custom formerly practised in the Valais. When an individual became too powerful, a log of wood was exposed to the people, into which all who wished to league against him who was the object of apprehension, came and drove a nail. The form of this log was afterwards changed; that of the human figure was given to it; and the head was adorned with cock's feathers. Those who were earnest in supporting the rights of their country carried this sort of statue into a public place." After a sort of mock trial, "the day of execution was fixed; and if the unfortunate per-

property of his ancestors, he had inherited their simplicity. Nothing, it is said, distinguishes him from the substantial peasants of his country. Luxury has not entered his family, whose interest it is to avoid exciting envy. . . . All that distinguishes it at Brigg, consists in their church, their clergy, and the title of Mr. (*Monsieur*) given by the people to the males of the race."—*Translator*,

son over whom the storm was gathering did not take care to appease the fury of those who leagued against him, or put himself in a condition to resist them by force, he was obliged to fly, and leave his possessions to the mercy of a furious populace; who, with the log, the signal of riot, at their head, penetrated into his dwelling, and pillaged or destroyed all his goods. The first use made of the log was against the family of Rarogne, which had arrogated absolute power.

“The situation of this *chalet* is agreeable; and the life of its inhabitants must be very pleasant in the fine season. In the latter end of autumn, the Simplon is covered with snows; the storms heap them up and render the passage dangerous; the herdsmen of the neighbouring country retire into the plain; and the family of Berenzaal remain alone on the mountain. A flambeau of resinous larch-wood lights them during the long evenings. Often, when the snows render the road undistinguishable, and when the wind blows violently, a poor traveller, oppressed with fatigue, knocks at the door of the *chalet*, and blesses the roof that shelters him from the cold and the storm. A rich traveller thinks himself happy to find a place near the fire, between a journeyman and a family of peasants. Men whom their fortune, as well as their country, has placed at a great distance apart, who have never before seen each other, and who

are to see each other no more, unite familiarly at the same fire-side. More than once, the sheltering cabin has heard the narratives of a nobleman repairing from the north to the south of Europe, with the detail of the adventures of a trader, going from village to village.

“ The gallery of Schalbet, passed next to that of Ganter, is about 100 (Fr.) feet long, and is remarkable from its situation. On one side are seen the road just passed, a small part of the valley of the Rhone, and the glaciers of Switzerland: at the other extremity of the gallery, you follow the road to the summit of the Simplon, which overlooks the Rosboden and the southern chain of the Alps. Above Schalbet, are situated the two houses called *Tavernettes*, where travellers on the old road stopped for refreshment.

“ We reach the height where trees diminish, languish, and at length cease to vegetate. The trees are replaced by the rhododendron, which braves the most piercing cold, and is found on the steep rocks beneath the ice: its wood keeps up the fire of the *chalets* distant from forests; and the brilliancy of its flower, called the rose of the Alps, refreshes the eye of the traveller. The high Alps are remarkable for the beauty of the turf which clothes them. The blue gentians, the saxifrages, and the *carnillet moussier* with rose coloured flowers, spring up on the mountains as the snows

melt: they seem to advance and follow the frosts to the summits; communicate their perfume to the milk of the herds that feed on them; and form a tissue, which, still brilliant with the most lively tints, disappears beneath the snows of autumn.

“ Above Schalbet, was the dwelling of M. Polonceau, long entrusted with the direction of the works under the inspection of M. Ceard,* to whose talents we are indebted for this fine road. Before the cottage inhabited by M. Polonceau, were a fountain, a little Chinese pavilion, and an aviary filled with canaries, bulfinches, goldfinches, and mountain-linnets: these birds, confined only by a net-work, lived happily among the firs growing in their dwelling. The pavilion, the fountain, and the trees which were arrested in their growth by the rarity of the air, and which, in these sterile regions, might be considered the productions of art, formed a striking contrast with the bare summits, and the snows that alone interrupted their uniformity. M. Polonceau, occupied with important labours, amid wild scenes of nature, and a throng of rough men who often mutinied, had contrived to procure pleasures, of which another would not have had sufficient ease of mind to avail himself. It is said that the workmen, irri-

* He was the author of the project,

tated by the delay of their pay, one night forcibly entered his dwelling, with designs on his life, which his absence alone prevented their accomplishing. M. Polonceau, always in danger, preserved so much calm and comfort, that the care of a little aviary; and the difficult culture of a few *toises* of land restored his serenity. I did not see Mons. P. at the time of my passage, but I have received these details from travelling friends, whom he had entertained in the most amiable manner, in his rural habitation.

“ The part of the road situated between the gallery of Schalbet, and that of the glaciers, is dangerous: you are there exposed to extremely violent gusts of wind; and the gallery of the glaciers is often obstructed with snow. It is situated a short distance from the highest point in the road, where the *hospice* is to be built. There the old road joins the new: the former shortens the way by two leagues, and is used for mules without burdens.

“ The part of the Simplon we had just passed presented a beautiful spectacle, a fortnight afterwards, on our return from Milan. The snow, fallen during the preceding days, covered the summit of the mountain, and the parts of the road exposed to the north: the way was slippery, and three horses, fastened behind our carriage, fell, and were dragged some time before the driver

perceived it. We found the sides of the gallery adorned with columns of ice; brilliant points in the form of stalactites hung from the roof; the cascade which spouts at the entrance flowed over a bed of ice; and the snows, mingling with the sombre verdure of the firs, descended as far as the pastures. A fine sunshine, shedding a mild temperature over the whole mountain, recalled the beautiful days of spring, to travellers surrounded with the winter's cold. At our first passage, we had only seen a few workmen busied in squaring timber, and a young girl seated on a solitary rock beside her dog, and making the echoes resound with her songs: on our return, the herdsmen, chased from the heights by the cold, were gone to dwell in a lower part of the mountain, where every meadow was enlivened by the presence of a flock, and the bell of the goat was heard among the bushes. From the road, as from a magnificent belvedere, we beheld an immense prospect unfold: far below us flowed the Saltine, winding, like a thread of silver, among meadows and cottages. A great number of rural habitations rose like an amphitheatre on the side of the mountain; some placed in the midst of a pasture, others behind a wood, and discovered only by a column of smoke rising above the trees. With the dark firs, were mingled the verdure of the larches of brighter foliage, and that of the birch already yellowed by

autumn : chaffinches hopped and sung among the denuded trunks. Goats, scared by our carriage, fled bounding before it; stopped at some distance; measured the depth of the precipice; continued their course; sprung on the heights; and advanced their heads over the rocks, to contemplate in safety the object of their terror. We discovered at our feet the valley of the Rhone, and the shining steeples of Brigg. I shall never forget this day, when the aspect of nature, at once wild and smiling, inspired me with the sweetest enjoyment.

“ The highest part of the Simplon is a melancholy wide plain, overlooked by high mountains, whence hang several glaciers: in the distance were seen cabins, the abodes of the workmen who were preparing materials for the new hospice,* the foundations of which will soon be laid. Landed property in Italy, the revenues of which are to amount to 20,000 francs, is appropriated to the expenses of this house. The convent of the Simplon will be always dependant on that of St. Bernard; and at the latter place, the accounts will be rendered, and the noviciates served. The hospitality and devotedness of the ecclesiastics who inhabit it, will serve as a model to those of the Simplon. M. Dalève, superior of the new convent,

* See p. 33.

dwells, whilst the edifice is erecting, with one of his brethren in a building belonging to M. de Stockalper, a short distance from the most elevated point.

“ You arrive at the village of Simplon two hours after quitting the summit of the mountain. This village is situated at the bottom of a wild valley, by a foaming torrent bordered with larch. The houses, rudely constructed, are built of stone, and the lichens that clothe them give them a yellowish appearance: near them are little gardens, where grow a few plants; but you do not see, rising in the midst of the village, as in those placed in a milder temperature, those fine trees which spread their shade and their fruits over every cabin. We had a long conversation with the priest of Simplon, who gave us some details about his parishioners. Although their situation does not seem brilliant, they are all well off: in summer, they employ themselves with their flocks and their pastures; and in the winter, the transport of merchandise, and the clearing of the roads, afford them a pretty lucrative occupation. The passing of strangers is also advantageous to them, although they are obliged to fetch almost all their provisions from Italy or the Valais: potatoes and other vegetables cannot attain to maturity under so rigorous a climate. The picture the priest drew us of his winter life appeared very melancholy:

he complained bitterly of the rigour of the cold, which affected his health. The snows rose often to the first story of his house ; and it was necessary to dig a way in the snow to reach the door of the church. His recreations were limited to the society of a few friends. The lowness of the apartments, the smallness of the windows, never opened in the severe season, and the stone stoves, keep up a tolerable warmth in the houses.

“ A short distance from Simplon, the road, turning back, leads to the gallery of Algaby, 220 (Fr.) feet in length. The Doveria flows on the right over a thousand fragments of rock. The post-chaise of an Italian, who had passed the night in the inn at Simplon, passed us: we saw it descend, following the windings of the road, appear and disappear by turns, and at length drive into the gallery, where we afterwards penetrated, and discovered another country.

“ Immense rocks, rising with a melancholy air above our heads, left room only for the road, and for the torrent which rolls with a loud noise at the bottom of the valley: the trees and the huts had disappeared; and the labours of the road alone indicated that men had entered here. Near the gallery, a building is erecting, designed to shelter travellers surprised by the storm, and to serve as a dwelling for the workmen who clear the roads. As we advanced, we found the mountains ap-

proach each other, and the valley become so contracted, that before the late improvements, a rock, detached from the summit, remained suspended above the way. The road passes from one to the other: it is entirely cut in the rock. The sky, in harmony with the country we were passing through, was covered with a gloomy veil. We arrived at the great gallery, the most astonishing of all the works on the Simplon.* An enormous mass of rock had barred the way; it was necessary to pierce it; and the road plunges into the mountain. This superb gallery, 200 *mètres* in length, is wholly cut in granite: two large openings, left to admit the day, scarcely suffice to light it. The noise of the horses feet, and of the carriage-wheels, resounded beneath its sonorous vaults. At the extremity, a bridge is thrown over a torrent, whose white waters are relieved against the dark opening of the gallery. It seems as though art and nature had endeavoured to assemble in the same spot all that is formed to strike the imagination. By the side of the pierced rock, the Doveria, rushing among enormous blocks, precipitates itself, boiling, into a gulph to which you see no bottom. I conjecture that in the next epic, the author will lead his hero to the infernal regions by the valley of Gondo.

* This gallery is the result of the labour of 18 months; a labour uninterrupted either by day or night. *Mallet.*

“They have been satisfied to engrave as the only inscription, on the wall of the gallery, these words: *ÆRE ITALO*, 1805. It was indeed superfluous to extol the magnitude of the work, or to speak of him who appointed it.

“We saw coming out of the gallery M. Dalève, superior of the new *hospice*, who was going into Italy, to make a provision of wine and grain for the establishment. This respectable man has passed twenty-nine years on the Great St. Bernard, and has inhabited the *hospice* of the Simplon ever since the beginning of the labours: he gave us some details on the subject of the road. A curious spectacle presented itself, in crossing the mountain when it was animated by a great number of workmen: they were seen to climb the steepest rocks with surprising agility, by means of a ladder, which they drew after them on gaining the top, and placed it successively against the other rocks they wished to scale: they descended in the same manner.

“We saw, at length, some habitations: two or three houses form the melancholy village of Gondo; and in the midst, rises the inn belonging to the barons of Stockalper, remarkable from the fantastic architecture common to the buildings they possess on the road: a mode which the large quantities of snow that fall on the valleys have induced them to adopt. Its eight stories, its little

grated windows, and its melancholy situation, give it more the air of a prison, than the abode of freemen. We quitted the cold and humid house, and came out to enjoy, on a bench a ray of sunshine, which penetrated through an opening of the opposite rocks. Below the road were seen two little gardens surrounded with walls, where a few vegetables were growing with difficulty; a torrent fell in a white sheet on the rock opposite, through the firs and the walnut-trees already stripped of leaves; and near was an *ossuaire*, where the inhabitants of Gondo had carefully ranged the bones and skulls of their ancestors. At the village of Gondo we are still in the Valais; they, however, speak Italian there. Three-quarters of a league farther, is found the village of Yeselle, the first of the kingdom of Italy. It appears as miserable as Gondo; and nothing is seen there to announce the brilliant country you have entered.

“ During the year 1799, the Simplon was successively occupied by the French and the Austrians, who disputed the passage. Ebel relates the following anecdote on the subject.

“ In May, 1800, General B ethencourt was sent at the head of a column of 1000 men, French and Swiss, with orders to pass the Simplon, and occupy the pass of Yeselle. Falls of snow and rocks had carried away a bridge, and the road was interrupted by an abyss 60 feet wide. An intrepid

volunteer offered to attempt an enterprise of the most hazardous nature. He stepped in the holes of the lateral wall, which before served to receive the timbers of the bridge, and passing thus from one hole to another, he happily arrived at the other brink: a cord, which he had carried, was fixed, breast-high (from the holes), between the two edges of the chasm. General B ethencourt passed second, suspending himself by the cord stretched over the abyss, and endeavouring to place his feet in the holes of the wall. The thousand soldiers followed him, loaded with their arms and their knapsacks. To commemorate this bold action, the names of the officers who commanded have been cut in the rock. Five dogs followed the battalion; and when the last man had passed over, the poor animals precipitated themselves all at once into the abyss. Three of them were instantly carried away by the impetuous waters of the torrent; the two others had the strength to struggle against the current, and reaching the opposite side, they gained the top of the precipice, and arrived all bloody at their masters' feet.

“ The gallery you pass after Yeselle, is the smallest of all, and scarcely deserves the name: the scenery still continues wild. At some distance from Yeselle, the rocks, which till then rise perpendicularly, open to the east, and form an amphi-

theatre. In the midst of meadows sprinkled with chesnut-trees, which clothe this vale, is seen the village of Dovredo. The vines, which grow before every dwelling, rise to the roof, and make the house a mass of verdure. This happy spot of earth produces an effect so much the more striking, as the rocks soon approach each other again, and the road resumes its melancholy and wild aspect. A gallery again presents itself in our road; but soon the rocks retire, and give to view the smiling plain of Domo. The magnificent bridge of Crevola, thrown from one mountain to the other, encloses the valley: this is the last of the works of the Simplon.

“ The structure of the bridge of Crevola offers a contrast of another kind: on one side we saw the sombre valley we had just left, and the river, which flows embedded in high rocks; on the other, we discovered spacious meadows shaded with fine oaks, and watered by the Toccia. The plain of Domo is covered with fresh plants; and the hills and distant mountains display, on their sides, buildings of elegant architecture. Here then, at length, was Italy, such as it had been described to us.

“ The little town of Domo d'Ossola is populous and commercial. Ancient convents are seen there: that which belonged to the Jesuits is of black and white marble. There was a fair in the town; and the square was covered with shops.

Sugar, coffee, and cinnamon, heaped on the tables, perfumed the air. Mingling with elegantly attired ladies, were seen the peasants in their fantastic costume: they wear red stockings; a handkerchief of cotton or silk covers the head; and their corsets of brocade are half concealed by a floating mantle. Farther off, capuchins and monks of different orders walk apart; grotesque masks traverse the streets; jugglers announce, with the sound of life and drum, the grand exhibition of the evening; the bell is heard, and the crowd moves towards the church to attend the service.

“ We found, beyond the Alps, those fine summer days which had long ceased in our own country, already chilled by autumn. We had taken but a few steps in Italy, but we already saw the tastes and manners which characterize this country. The love of the fine arts displayed itself in the paintings and sculptures, rude, but scattered in abundance in the environs of a little town; harmonious instruments and songs had been heard; and we had been struck with the elegant attire of the ladies, and their fine black eyes. It is true, that, on these points, we had not been spoiled in the beginning of our journey; and the first signs of the wit and vivacity of the Italians must make a great impression on him, who had just slowly traversed the Valais and the deserts of Gondo.”

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 19.

Far to the right, where Appennine ascends,
Bright as the summer, Italy extends,
Could nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.

GOLDSMITH.

“ **O**N leaving Domo d'Ossola, a straight road leads to Villa, where we passed a torrent over a handsome bridge: the village opens to the right, and some buildings rise with elegance on a wooded hill that commands it. The road afterwards crosses stony lands, where a spare crop of grass furnishes a poor feed to the flocks. Opposite Massone, is seen the village of Pic-de-Mulière, where opens the valley of Mount Rosa.

“ Mount Rosa is composed of a succession of gigantic peaks, nearly equal in size, forming a vast circus. This enclosure contains meadows sprinkled with pine and larch, in the midst of which is situated the village of Macugnaga: the steep declivities, and the glaciers that overlook it, form the second step in the amphitheatre, and rise gradually to the tops of the mountain. This valley is re-

markable for the beauty of its vegetation; and still more so for its mines of gold: the ore containing the metal is found in veined granite. Captain Testoni, who worked these mines, had totally exhausted his resources, and was on the point of being compelled to abandon his enterprise, when he met with a vein from which he drew, in twenty-two days, 189 marks of pure gold: he has since made an immense fortune.

“ The form of lake Maggiore is irregular; and from the road we followed, those branches only are discovered where the Borromeo islands are situated. The first you perceive is the Isola Madre, half a league from the shore: it is a mile round, and a part is occupied by terraces built one above the other, and covered with orange, lemon, and citron trees, which we saw loaded with fruit. These terraces are overlooked by the palace, which is of very simple architecture: the interior offers nothing remarkable, but a little theatre. The rest of the island is covered with trees, which rise gracefully above the waters, and form charming woods inhabited by numerous pheasants, guinea-fowls, &c., which flutter under the bays*

* The bay (certainly the *laurus* of the Latin poets) is common in the woods and hedges of Italy. Our laurel was scarcely known in Europe till the latter end of the 16th century; about which time Martyn supposes it to have been brought from Trebizond on the Euxine to Constantinople, and thence into various parts of Europe. See Martyn's notes on Virg. Georg. I, v. 306.—*Translator*,

and the Italian pines, and take wing noisily at the approach of the traveller. These birds have not sufficient strength of wing to cross the lake; and those who venture on this long passage lose their lives in the waves. The island is re-peopled every year with a great number of pheasants. An avenue of ancient yew leads from the chateau to the side of the lake, where, on a gently sloping turf, you enjoy the view of the opposite shores, and the embarkations of the inhabitants. The Isola Madre is defended from the north winds by the neighbouring mountains; the plants of the warm climates find here a temperature which suits them; and the aloe and the cactus grow without culture, clothing with their large leaves the rocks on the edge of the island.

“ The Isola Bella is nearer the shore than the Isola Madre, and is much more highly ornamented. The palace is every year inhabited for some weeks by the Borromeo family. We walked among thickets of orange and bay, and under bowers of citron trees. In the part of the island opposite the palace, ten terraces rise one above the other: the last is ornamented with statues representing the seasons and the elements; and a gigantic unicorn, mounted by a cupid, overlooks them. From this terrace you discover the neighbouring islands, the towns of Palanza, of Intra, Lavenno, Souna, and St. Catherine, with the hills that rise up to the

snow-covered summits of the Simplon. The Isola Bella, not being protected by the mountains like the Isola Madre, it is necessary in winter to shelter it with planks, which shut one into the other, and screen the delicate plants.

“ By these terraces is seen a little village formed of the houses of fishermen, in the midst of which rises the Dauphin-inn, where travellers find lodging. The palace is large; and for more than a century it has been the practice of every proprietor to devote a large sum in ornamenting it according to the taste of the age. The apartments and the furniture are rich in the highest degree: gold, mirrors, and the most rare marbles are lavished there. There are pictures of Luca Jordano, of Procaccini, Schidone, and Lebrun: several apartments have preserved the name of Tempesta, from this artist having inhabited them some years, and decorated them with paintings. The islands of lake Maggiore were formerly only sterile rocks: count Vitalian Borromeo bought them in 1673, covered them with earth, and, after prodigious labours, rendered them what they are at present. It is true that the ornaments which decorate the Isola Bella are no longer in the modern taste; and you soon experience a sort of *ennui*, enclosed within these regular terraces, and traversing shrubberies in which you cannot stray.

“ Near the Isola Bella is the Fisher's Island,

which, by the simplicity of its buildings, and the poverty of its inhabitants, seems as though placed expressly to set off the magnificence of its neighbour.

“ The Isola Bella and the Isola Madre, seen from the lake, produce a charming effect ; and the labour of decorating them has contributed more to the pleasure of those who come to see them, than of those who inhabit them. The regular arches, the terraces rising majestically in the midst of the lake, the statues reflected in the water, the trees of the southern climates which grow around, as though in this spot only in the whole country the rigours of winter were unknown, give to the Isola Bella something of enchantment.

“ The environs of lake Maggiore present smiling and animated pictures. The mountains above them do not display those rude forms and those ruptures seen among the Alps : the chesnut, the pale olive, and the vine climbing on the mulberry tree, or rounded into bowers, cover the hills, and embellish them by the contrast of different tints of verdure. Several little towns, and numerous villages of brilliant whiteness, edifices remarkable by the lightness of their roofs and the elegance and variety of their structure, adorn the shores of the lake.

“ On quitting the Isola Bella, we heard the singing of the people assembled in the church :

the harmonious sounds, heard more faintly as we retired, inspired a sweet reverie; the blue surface of the lake was furrowed by the boats of people going from one island to the other, and trying to pass each other; the bark of the Borromeo family was distinguished by its streamers, and by the silk which adorned the interior. Fishermen were casting their nets at some distance from the shore. The boats of lake Maggiore can ascend the Toccia; and they also ascend the Tessin, whence a canal conducts them to Milan. They convey thither fish, charcoal, wood, and hay. A large oar at the stern serves as a rudder: the sail is square and is lowered or unfurled in an instant. This alacrity is necessary on lake Maggiore, which is subject to violent gusts of wind: sometimes, under a serene sky, the waves are violently agitated; and the curious who go to visit the islands are liable to be upset.

“The boatman who conducted us was a young man of an agreeable countenance, with the Italian vivacity and cheerfulness. We asked him questions respecting the country. He informed us that the environs of the lake cannot support all the inhabitants; and that a part quit their country and their families, and go into France, Spain, and as far as Russia, to seek a fortune in selling wares. They return with what they have gained; and during their absence, the women are employed in rural

labours. We had seen some on our road laden with enormous baskets full of hay; and above, was sometimes seen the cradle, where slept the yet unweaned infant. Our conductor gave us some details on the boatmen's fête at Intra, his native place: . . . whilst he spoke, a light breeze had sprung up and swelled our sail. Reclined on the benches, we listened in silence to the recitals of our guide; the superb Borromean islands had disappeared; no boat was now seen on the lake. The moon rose from behind the mountains; whilst a light vapour blended their blue tops with the sky. We could not discern Intra, which the boatman endeavoured to show us. The gentle murmur of the waves breaking on the strand, and the movement on the shore, announced our arrival at a port; and we saw before us the little town of Belgirate. The post-inn of this town is the best we found on the whole road: its situation is charming; and our spacious chambers were painted in fresco.

“ The weather was so mild, that I left my window open all night. I was awakened at break of day by the noise of boatmen and fishermen. On opening my eyes, I beheld the first glow of dawn shed on this beautiful lake, which had been whitened the evening before by the beams of the moon. The tint of bright red which covered the waves, terminated at the foot of the dark mountains: it

became more and more brilliant; and at length the sun appeared.

“ The banks of lake Maggiore are cased in walls of a great height, for the labours of the road do not end on leaving the Simplon, and the beauty of the bridges, of the aqueducts, and of other works, continues to attract admiration, till you arrive at Somma, a village a few leagues from Milan.

“ At Arona, we stopped to see the colossal statue of St. Charles Borromeo. This prelate, rendered illustrious by his virtues, was born in this town in 1538, of Gilbert Borromeo and Margaret de Medici:* he was, from his infancy, intended for the church. His uncle, cardinal de Medici, having been erected pope under the name of Pius IV., made him cardinal at the age of 21, as well as archbishop of Milan, and entrusted to him the administration of pontifical affairs. The young prelate, in the midst of a splendid court, suffered himself to be drawn into luxury and magnificence, and collected about him a great number of gentlemen and *literati*. The death of his elder brother, the count of Arona, which occurred during his residence at Rome, by recalling to his mind the uncertainty of human life, interrupted the course of his dissipations. Far from renouncing his ecclesiastical office, as his friends

* Not of the celebrated Florentine family. *Trans.*

desired, he became penetrated with the true spirit of his vocation, and devoted himself entirely to the duties it imposed on him. He was the first to set an example of the reform prescribed by the council of Trent: he dismissed a great number of his household servants, and replaced them by ecclesiastics, whom he caused to be educated near him. He also resigned his benefices, and, contrary to the wishes of his uncle, who desired to retain him at Rome, he repaired to his archbishopric, where he endeavoured to revive, among the clergy, order and purity of manners. He enforced, in the convents, the severe rules which had been gradually banished; and founded establishments for the poor, and for young persons exposed to the dangers of the world. The cardinal's strictness gained him the hatred of a great number of ecclesiastics." He was particularly charged by Pius V. with the reform of the great corruption and disorder which had crept into the monastic order of the *Umiliati*. "The evil had, however, taken too deep a root: the monks were weary of the yoke laid on them, and regarded the cardinal as their greatest enemy. Lignano, provost of a convent at Verseil, engaged one of the monks, named Farina, to make an attempt on his life. The latter fired at him with an arquebuse, as the prelate was at evening prayers in his chapel with the domestics. The ball only

grazed the cardinal, who, undisturbed by the danger to which he had been exposed, continued his devotions. The two criminals were punished with death, and the order was suppressed.

“The plague, which broke out at Milan, and made great ravages there, gave occasion to this great man for the manifestation of the rarest virtues. Far from following the multitude of the inhabitants, who quitted the town to escape the contagion of the malady, he devoted himself entirely to the infected. He built a lazaretto; he sold, to defray the expenses, the most valuable furniture he possessed; and joining with the (other) succours of charity the consolations of religion, he confessed the sick, and administered the viaticum with his own hand.*

“St. Charles, in the last years of his life, took nothing at his repasts but bread and water; to which, on certain days, he joined milk and herbs. It is probable that a diet too poor for a man of weak constitution and laborious life, hastened the termination of the cardinal's days: he was seized with a fever, in a journey he made through his diocese, and with difficulty reached Milan, where

* His preservation recalls that of cardinal Belsunce, bishop of Marseilles, who sustained a similar character of Christian heroism among his flock, in the plague at Marseilles in 1720. Pope's allusion to him is well known:

Why drew Marseilles' good bishop purer breath,
When Nature sicken'd, and each gale was death?—*Trans.*

he died at the age of forty-six, after twenty-four years of episcopacy. Pope Paul V. canonized him in 1605.

“ The colossus of St. Charles is placed on a hill which overlooks Arona. The cardinal is represented in the dress of a simple monk: in one hand he holds a breviary, and with the other, gives his benediction to his native town. This statue is 66 (Fr.) feet high, and the pedestal of granite on which it stands is 46 feet. It is so well proportioned, that at first sight an incorrect idea is formed of its size. The head, the feet, and the hands, are of cast brass; the rest is of very thick plates of copper; and within, is a mass of large stones, to give solidity to the colossus. It contains a staircase, by means of which you may ascend to the head. This statue is the work of Siro Zanella of Pavia, and of Bernard de Falcono of Lugano: it was erected in 1697, at the cost of the neighbouring inhabitants, and of the Borromeo family.

“ Some leagues from Verona, you cross the Tessin by a ferry-boat, at its issue from lake Maggiore. The town of Sesto spreads on the edge of the opposite shore, and is reflected in the waters of the river.

“ Leaving Sesto, you enter the plains of Lombardy: no mountain there bounds the horizon. Vast fields of maize, parsnips, and millet, border

the road, and are only divided by vine-trellises, and plantations of white mulberry-trees. We passed through several small towns; Somma—Galerata—Castellanza. We left our road to visit Leinate, the country-house of the marquis of Litta, remarkable for the beauty of its gardens, and its baths ornamented with mosaics.

“ Two hours after leaving Leinate, you perceive the walls of Milan; and you reach the city through a wide avenue of tulipiferas, terminated by a triumphal arch of white marble.

“ The thick shades of the lake of Geneva, the valley of the Rhone uniting different climates, the solitudes of Gondo, and smiling Italy, will present to the lover of nature, various objects, each remarkable in its kind: in the space of a few leagues, he will see the Borromeo palace succeed to the huts of the Valaisans; and thickets of myrtle and orange-trees, to mountains covered with snow.”

THE
TRAVELLER'S FIRE-SIDE, No. 20.

Mais si les maux et la tristesse
Nous sont des secours superflus
Quand des bornes de la sagesse
Les biens ne nous ont point exclus ;
Ils nous font trouver plus charmante
Notre félicité présente
Comparée au malheur passé ;
Et leur influence tragique
Réveille un bonheur léthargique
Que rien n'a jamais traversé.

J. B. ROUSSEAU.

THE MOUNTAINEERS: A TALE.*

ON Alpine crags, or on the mid-way steep,
Trembles, high balanced, winter's fleecy heap :
Thence, when loud winds, with winds contending,
blow,
Or gentler sun-beams pierce the yielding snow,
Ruin, down-rushing, whelms the smiling vale ;
And thund'ring echoes spread the mournful tale.

* From the French of St. Lambert. The story is considerably compressed, and some liberty has been taken with the description : the names are also added.

'Tis here that dwell the wise Helvetia's sons,
Whose simple life within her circuit runs ;
Who love the home—the rights that nature gave ;
Tho' free, not lawless ; and tho' peaceful, brave.

In these fair climes a wedded pair I knew,
Whose union from life's early morning grew :
The fields beneath a mountain's fertile side,
The cot wood-shelter'd, and the orchard's pride
Their wealth—and neighb'ring poverty's redress :
For love, with blessings crown'd, had learn'd to
 bless.

'Twas dawn : the snow-crag on the eastern height
Had caught the azure and the emerald light ;
When Julian left his door, refresh'd with sleep,
To chase the chamois bounding o'er the steep ;
And ere the star of eve began to glow,
Bent with his prey, press'd homeward, firm and
 slow.

While yet afar, his glad boy sprung to meet
Th' extended hand, that soon sustain'd his feet
On slippery paths.—Still Julian nearer drew ;
E'en now, his peaceful home—his door in view.
But lo ! yon mountain trembles ! On his ear
Loud rolls the sound unutterably drear :
The Avalanche !—he sees—it comes—it falls :
One alp of ice hides deep his humble walls.
Stiff, with stretch'd arms, he gazes ; scarce can cry
' She is no more ! ' then sinks in agony.

His frantic child clings round him. Hence, in vain,
To draw the father tries each pitying swain.
Julian is chang'd: and now he bursts away,
With dizzy brain where reason runs astray.
'Hear how she calls!—I come!' he wildly cries,
And, instant, tow'rd the mighty ruin flies;
There, vainly plies the spade.—Fond dreamer, leave
The vast broad mass no arm like thine can cleave.
And what the gain thy crumbled cot to find?
But yes—the effort soothes thy tortured mind.
Still toils the poor lorn man, bent 'mid the snow,
His warm tears freezing as they fall below,
Through the dark night, and through the cheerless
noon;
And by the waning and the waxing moon.
At length the charm dissolv'd. He clasp'd his son,
With heav'nward eye, that said, 'Thy will be
done ;'
Then cried 'Poor lost Louise! my joy shall be
'To love thee still, and still to weep for thee!'

Now high and warm the summersun-beam grew,
And southern breezes through the valley blew:
The plane-tree once o'er Julian's cottage spread,
Now raised from sinking heaps its well-known head.
His heart is touch'd; his toil renew'd with pain:
Shudd'ring he quits it—trembling turns again;
And sees, in thought, from 'mid the ruins borne,
That face all livid, and that bosom torn.

He hears a cry beneath—his name! — ah no!
'Tis sure the old delirium of his woe.
Again! —that plaintive voice young Conrad knows,
And screams ' My Mother!' With redoubling
 blows,
Breathless, they delve; they reach the unbroken
 door,
Cheer'd by the voice they faintly heard before.
Now twine the mother wan—the sire—the boy,
With speechless language, and with weeping joy.

I saw that husband, and that rescued wife;
Both now to joy restored, and one to life.
A blooming home again around them grew,
With days that blessings numbered as they flew.

THE END.

ERRATA and CORRIGENDA.

- Page 15, note †, l. 14, for *serenety*, read *serenity*.
Correct p. 16 by p. 33.
62, and *passim*, for *Magland*, read *Maglan*,
63, note, for *this country*, read *Savoy*.
65, l. 13, for *are*, read *were*.
70, l. 14, for *Messeurs*, read *Messieurs*.
74, l. 20, for *2^d*, read *3^d*.
82, note, l. 13, for *etherial*, read *ethereal*.
84, l. 3, for *status*, read *afflatus*.
107, l. 3, for *idylls*, read *idyls*.
—, l. 25, for *Reposior*, read *Reposoir*.
116, l. 16, } for *spinnage*, read *spinage*.
118, l. 11, }
120, l. 12, for *rigourously*, read *rigorously*.
152, note †, l. 4, for *know*, read *knew*.
154, l. 20, for *herdsmen*, read *herdsman*.
159, note *, l. 7, for *butter-milk*, read *whey*.
182, l. 16, for *boy*, read *servant*.
186, l. 10, for *plaister*, read *plaster*.
225, *last line*, for *pernier*, read *premier*.
228, l. 18, insert *that*, after *whole of*.

