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OF THE RIVIERA

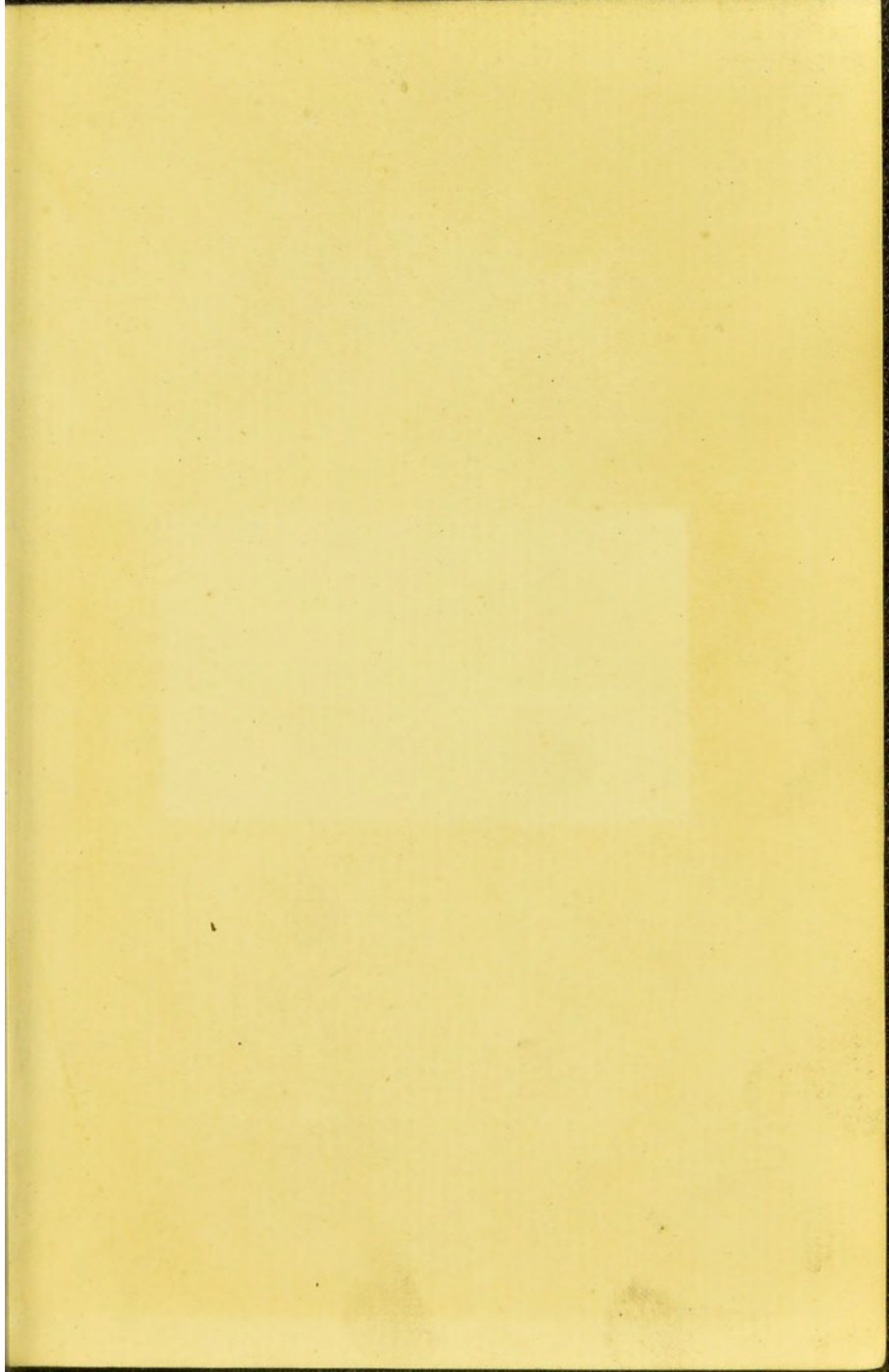


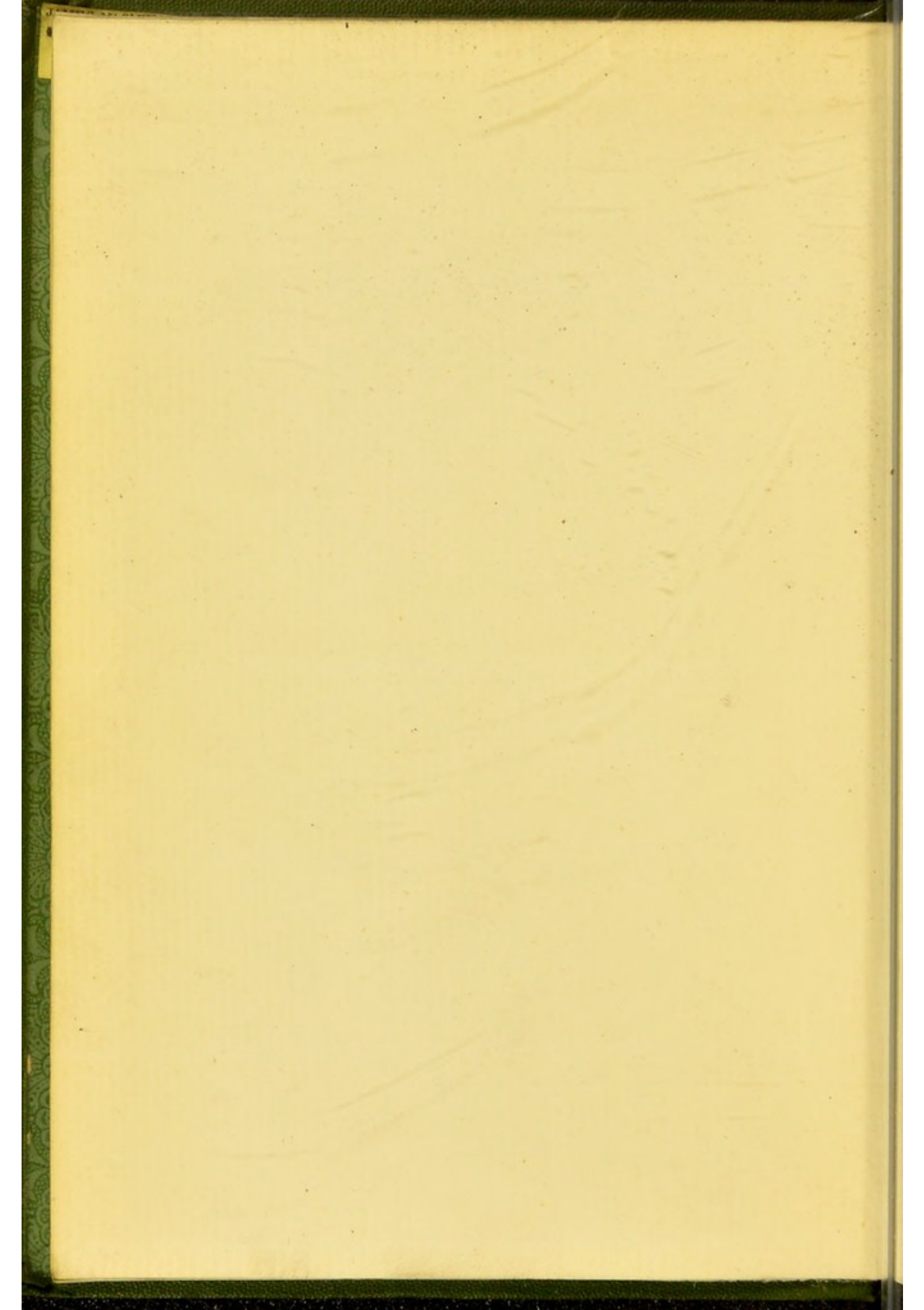
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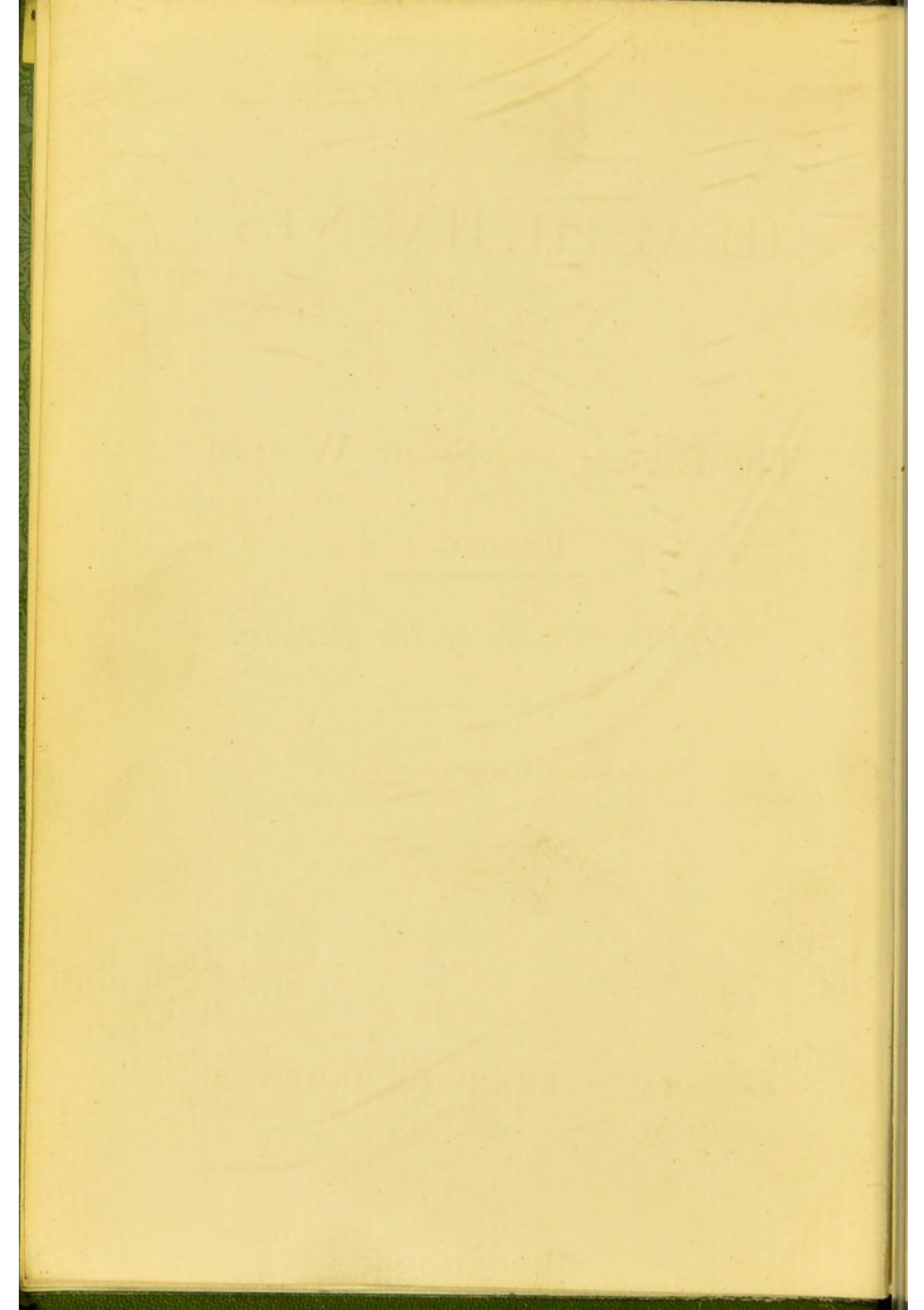


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Health Haunts of the Riviera.



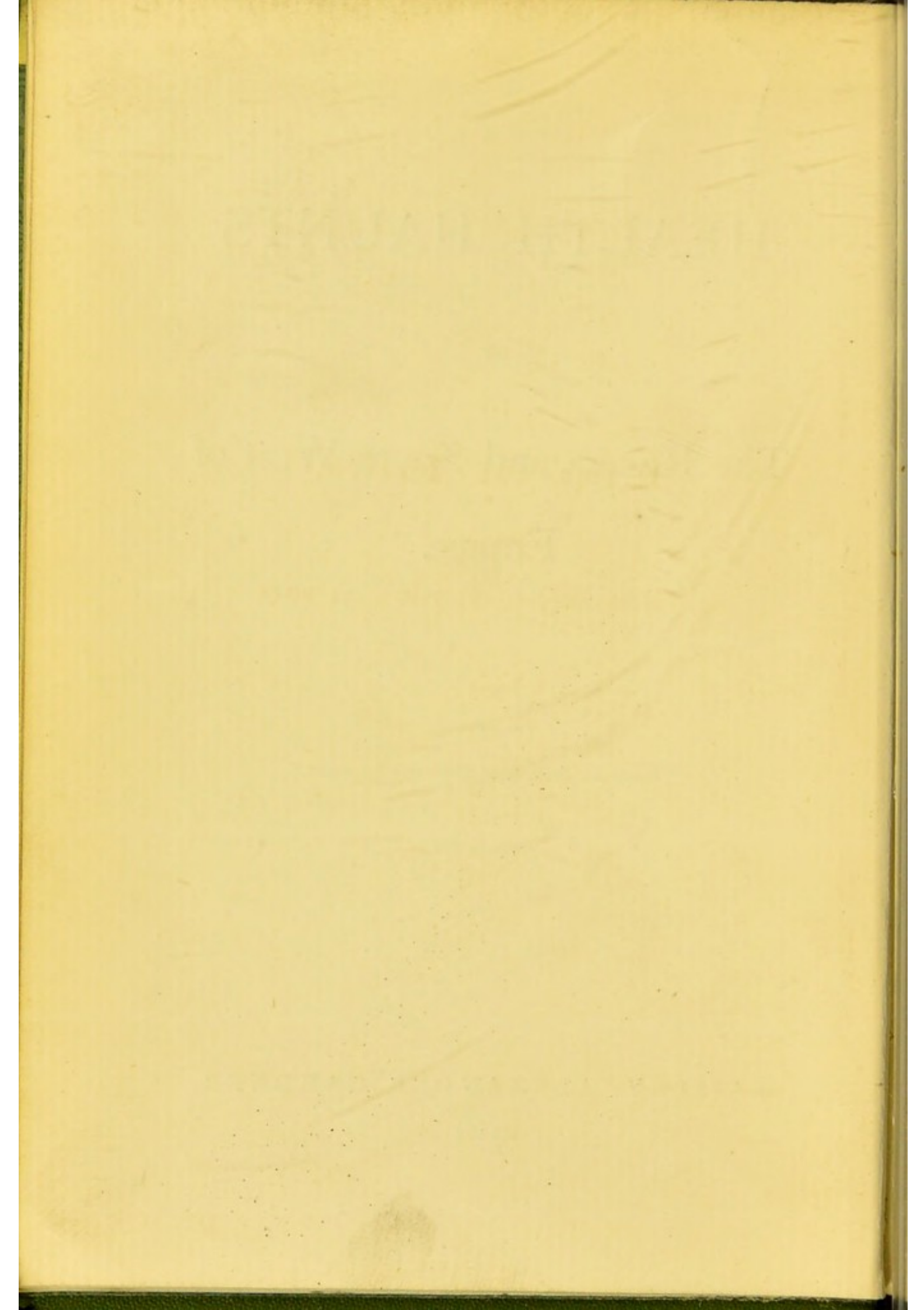
HEALTH HAUNTS
OF
The Riviera and South-West of
France.

"Hic ver assiduum, atque alienis mensibus aestas."

Georgics II., 149.

PAISLEY: ALEXANDER GARDNER.

1881.
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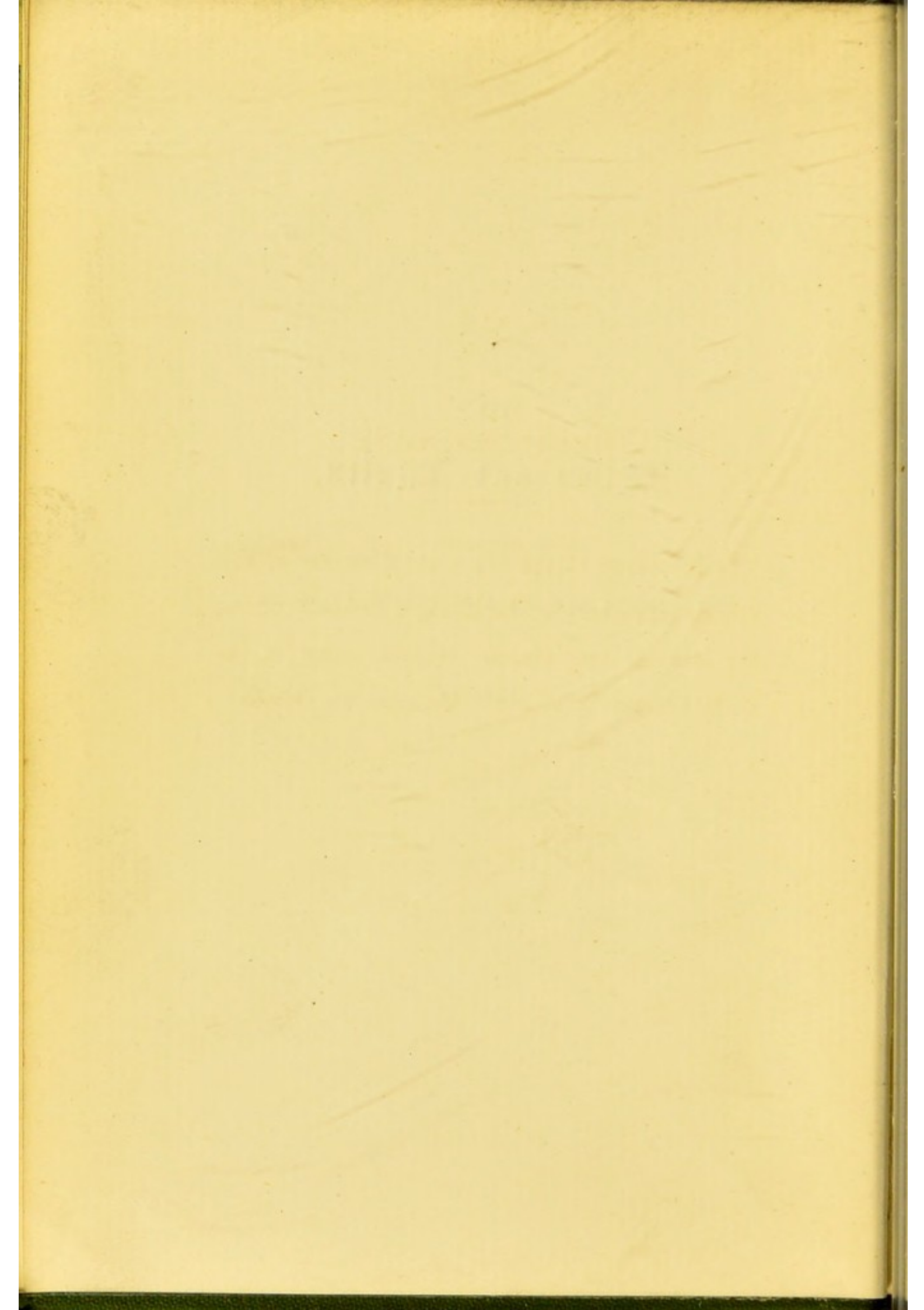


TO
Elma and Helen,

IN MEMORY OF

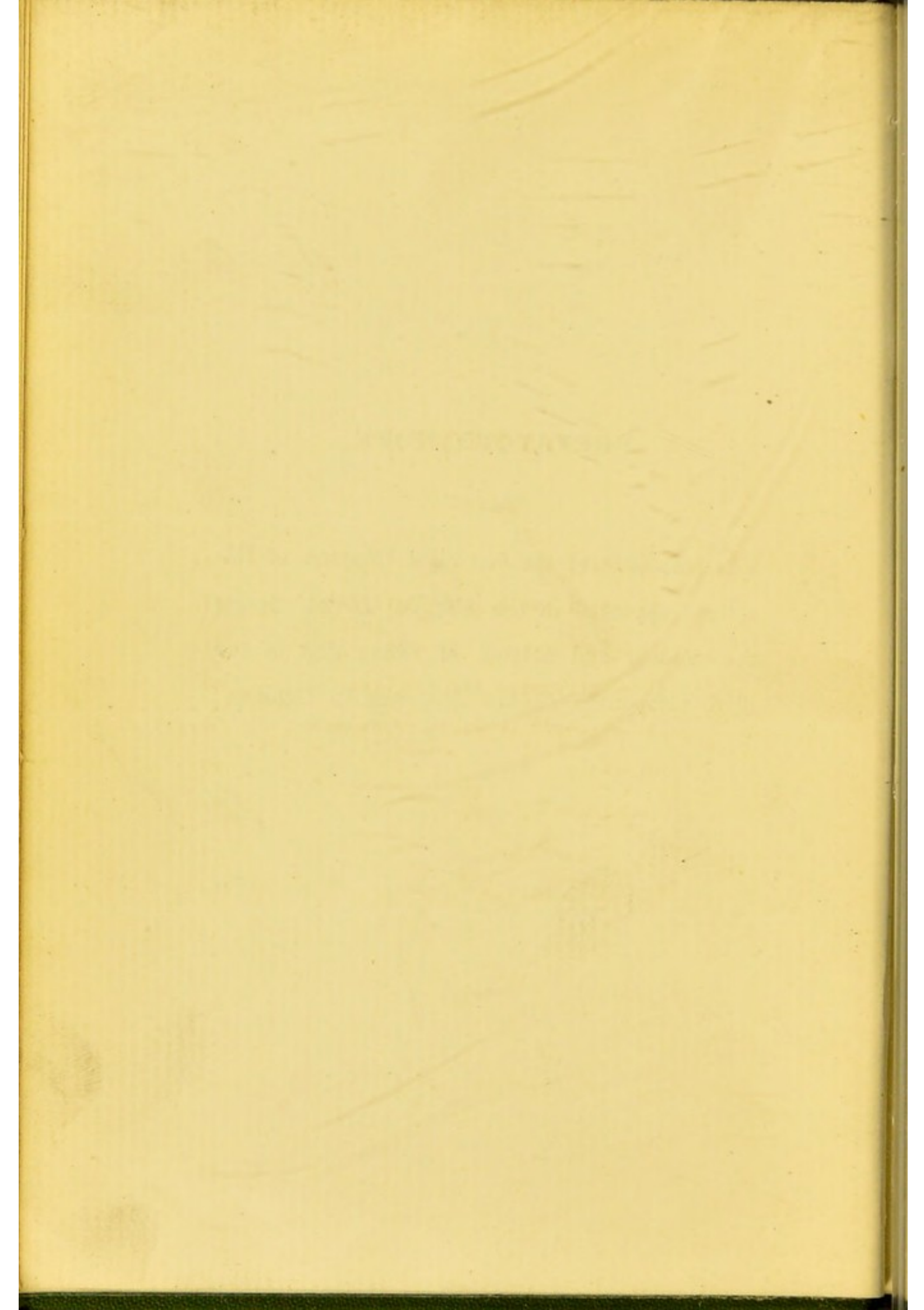
MY WINTER ABROAD AND THEIRS AT HOME

IN
1880.



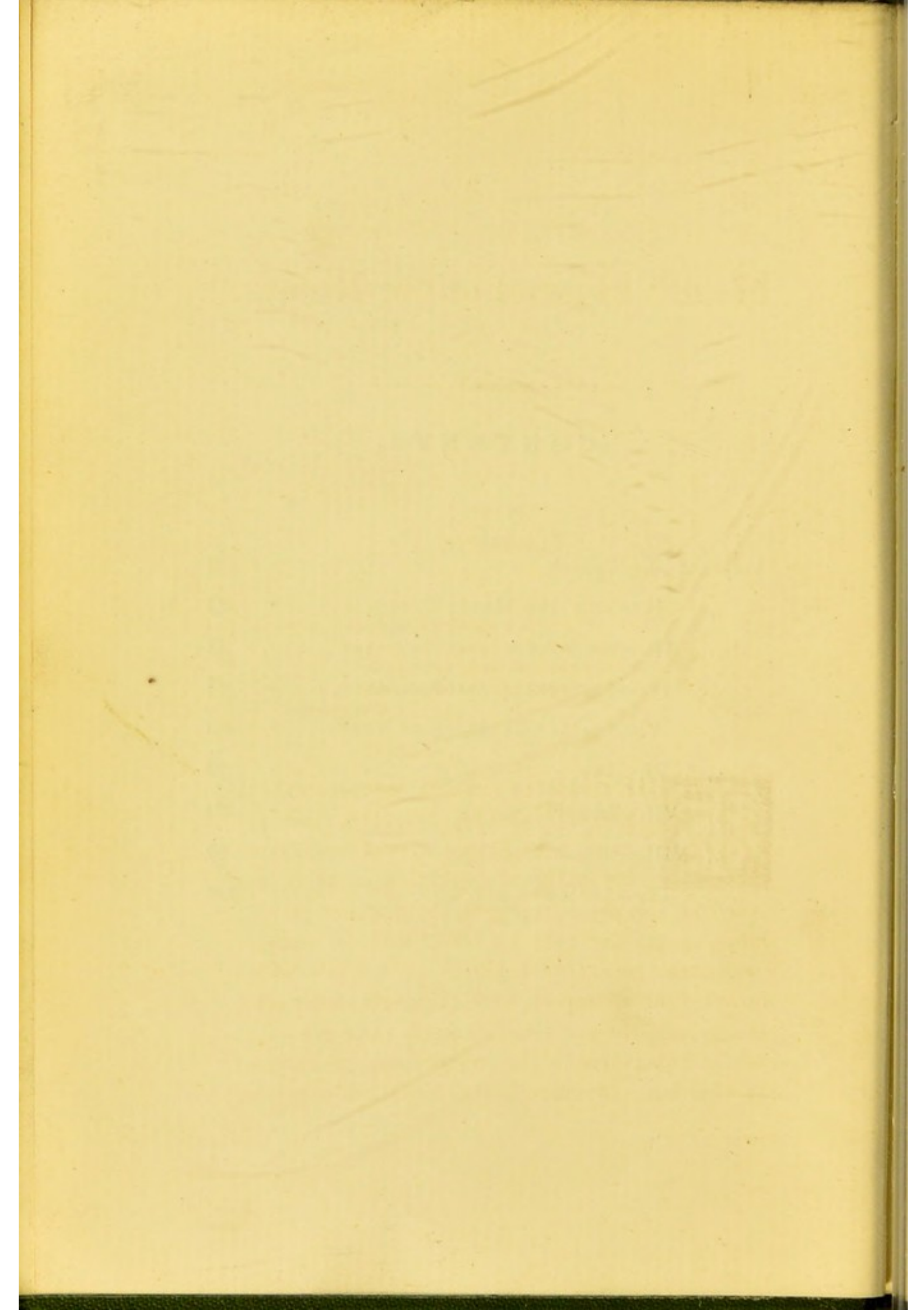
PREFATORY NOTE.

THE substance of the first eight Chapters of this volume appeared in the *Glasgow Herald* during the summer and autumn of 1880; that of the ninth Chapter in *Fraser's Magazine* for October.



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Health Haunts of the Riviera.

I.

Cannes.

"It is a goodly sight to see
What Heaven hath done for this delicious land :
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree !
What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand !"

Childe Harold, ii. 15.



THE middle of January, 1880, found London still densely befogged, and the news from France told of nothing but ice and snow. At last came tidings somewhat less discouraging to the searcher for sunshine ; so on the 15th we took the tidal train to Folkestone, *en route* for Paris. The mists which shrouded the metropolis were dispersed in the open country, and the sun gleamed feebly upon the white cliffs at Folkestone. The channel was smooth and the wind fair, and nobody seemed to think of getting

sick except the foreign contingent, of which there was a large number, bearing about them the usual marks of habitual tobacco, and of shrinking, like worsted stockings, from washing. One of the sickest was a French gentleman, whom I overheard, at the Folkestone station, addressing to one of the railway guards, who had declined to carry down to the pier the heap of bundles with which the foreigner was encumbered, the scathing question—"You cannot! *What is you?*" To this query, sounding as it did "the abysmal depths of personality," the railway official offered no reply.

There is nothing I like so much in itself, and as giving one assurance of being again on foreign soil, as the savour of the French mustard in the *buffet* at Boulogne. It seems to recall long-faded memories of *noctes coenaeque Deum*, and to "live within the sense it quickens" with a higher than merely olfactory influence. As the *testa semel imbuta* long preserves the odour of the violet or the rose, so the palate once accustomed to this refreshing pungency never loses its relish for it. To my tongue it is all that the bells of Shandon were to the ear of Father Prout.

A glimpse at Paris and at the gaunt shell of the shattered Tuileries, which, when I last beheld its walls, was the proud home of undetected Imperialism, was enough. We left next evening amid fog and gloom, by the "Rapide," for Cannes. The Rapide is not so swift as its name suggests, and the 650

miles between Paris and Cannes consume fully 21 hours. We passed through a long belt of snow between Fontainebleau and Lyons; but the sun rose next morning, as we approached Avignon, in a bright sky, and shone on dry and dusty spaces of bare ground and stunted olive yard. At Marseilles the sun was strong. The run along the coast by Toulon and Frejus, with an ever-increasing richness of vegetation on the one side, and the purple Mediterranean breaking on its wave-worn rocks on the other, was very enjoyable. The end of a long journey was approaching, but the fatigue, that might have been felt under other circumstances, was quite lost in delighted contemplation of the charming views presented, in rapid succession, as the train skirted the shore and gradually neared the town of Cannes, in which for some little time we proposed to take up our quarters. It was what in Scotland would be called "a pet day," faultlessly beautiful, realising all that one hears and reads of as to the wonderful sunshine and colouring of the South. The sky was one great sapphire vault, with hardly a cloud to break the vast expanse, the sea of a rich, deep indigo, while near the shore it assumed a pale aqua-marine hue scarcely less exquisite. The warm-toned, reddish-brown rocks contrasted admirably with the colour of the water, and with the creamy wavelets that circled round their bases; and we passed one lovely little bay after another, some quite wild and lonely, others having a few red-tiled houses

nestling picturesquely in the clefts ; while on the landward side great masses of olive trees stretched away in every direction, lining the sloping hills—villages and church spires peeping out here and there ; the whole landscape so rich and sunny that it was difficult to remember that it was the month of January, and that most of the winter was yet before us. Presently a corner was turned, and the town of Cannes lay full in view ; and if the impression then formed of its beauty and attractiveness was a very high one—higher even than we had previously been led to anticipate—I can most truthfully say, after a month's intimate acquaintance with it, that I have seen no cause to lower that favourable estimate.

There had been, however, a very long continuance of dry weather, unbroken even by a shower ; and on a nearer inspection we felt a little disappointed at the whitened appearance of the trees and shrubs seen over the low walls, as we drove up a road thick with dust, to the Hotel des Anglais, which stands a good way from the sea, on the eastern slope of the hill above the town. In seeking a home by the Mediterranean, one naturally pictures it close to the classic waters of "the Great Sea." But at Cannes "the gay Provençal shore" is so polluted by the outfall of sewage that it is shunned by all experts. It is really disgusting to see charms of climate and beauties of nature destroyed by human sluttishness. Every town of the

Riviera empties its drains upon the beach of its tideless sea, and leaves the contents to fester at their leisure. Mr. Ruskin's lamentations over the defiled pools of Carshalton might be repeated by the margin of every Provençal and Ligurian stream. Each "old poetic mountain" may still breathe inspiration around; but the universal discharge of the refuse of the olive mills turns the once sparkling waters into brooks so greasy and foul that no fish, except a *poisson d'avril*, would ever think of passing through them, even though the glassy fountain of Bandusia lay beyond. This nuisance, bad as it is at Cannes, is not so very bad there as it becomes further east, where the olive is still more predominant. To see this noble and ancient tree in all its glory, you must go to Mentone and Bordighera. It is there no longer the stunted, close-pruned object it is near Marseilles, nor parcelled out into groves and gardens as at Cannes. It is the tree of the forest. From the hill of Bordighera you look down upon a plain more than two miles long and about half a mile broad, which is one deep, undulating sea of olives; out of which rises here and there a red roof or campanile, like a ruddy island amidst the grey-green waves. Some of the trees are of immense age and great size, and have, no doubt, sheltered the Roman helmets from the sun, as the legions marched of old with "thundering tramp" along the Via Aurelia to and from Gaul or Spain. The wood of the interior of the tree decays as it grows old, but the bark lives

on and closes over the waste of the internal tissues, while from it and from the aged roots fresh saplings constantly spring to renew the youth of the parent stem. Year after year, and age after age pass away ; the children that gathered the berries in their childhood fall into their graves, and new generations fill their places, and still the olive trees, that were their forefathers' care and delight, cast their calm shadow, and bear their rich burden of fruit, and add their contribution to "the oil that maketh man's face to shine." This constant renewal of health and fruitfulness ; the strange witchery of the grave mild light that flickers among their branches, and of the wonderfully delicate shadows cast by their slender sprays of pendulous foliage ; the union of hoary age in their knotted and corrugated roots and trunks with the vernal youth of their upmost and outmost branches, give a character to these trees, a venerable and yet tender grace, which is possessed by no others ; and, to my mind, always throw a spell above all other "forest charms" around the chosen emblem of grey honour and peaceful rest.

The process of gathering the berries and making the oil is probably unchanged, since the days when Moses (or whoever according to the latest "Free" criticism, wrote Deuteronomy) prescribed that when the gatherer had beat the branches, he was not to go over them again. This command, however, is not obeyed in the Riviera, where the branches are beaten time after time, each beating bringing down only

the berries which are at the moment ripe. The first ripe are the best, and afford the richest oil. Those that do not fall till late winter or early spring are smaller in size and harsher in flavour. At Grasse, an aged, narrow-streeted town near Cannes, famous for its scent and sweet-meat factories, I saw the operation of extracting the oil in all its stages. The mill was a dingy building in a "close." A party of mules arrived at the door laden with sacks slung across their backs. The sacks were quickly removed, while the mules stood with drooping heads, and that look of sullen contempt for all human institutions, peculiar to the mule. Why is the mule such a morbid and morose beast of burden, never relaxing, like the more cheerful donkey, into playfulness, and only showing heightened temper or quickened circulation by new accesses of obstinacy? Can it be because he knows he must always be a domestic outcast, and that no lively colt shall ever frisk around him as its sire, no gentle filly ever soothe the trouble of his declining years? It were perhaps to inquire too curiously were we to enter on this question. To return. The sacks were carried upstairs and rapidly emptied, the contents in a few minutes descending through a shoot into the mill below, where an instrument like a magnified hay rake, and a large broad wheel, revolving vertically, crushed them into a rough pulp. After about five minutes' crushing, the pulp was lifted out in flat round baskets, made of a kind of coarse grass, which

were piled, six or seven deep, under a press exactly like a huge cheese-press. When baskets enough were piled, the screw was tightened, and, as the press descended, the oil flowed out below in a rich yellow stream into jars ready for its reception. The first out-flow needs very little subsequent purification. The refuse of the berries, however, is subjected to two successive squeezings and other manipulations, which produce two kinds of oil progressively inferior to the first. It is the scum thrown off in these processes that makes such a mess of the streams of the olive districts.

The cork tree is another spécialité of the Cannes hill-sides. It has a foliage of a deeper green than the olive, and the bark, when young, is of a rich copper hue that contrasts effectively with the leaves. When the outer skin is old enough, it is cut off—to stop the bottles and float the nets of half the world—and the tree then renews its covering and clothes itself afresh. Enviably capacity! If one's worn and battered integuments could be painlessly peeled off, and nature trusted to replace them, who would not seek thus to renew his cuticle? Who would grudge the discarded leather to the use to which "imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay," may have ere now been applied?

Lord Brougham is the patron Saint of Cannes. At the inauguration of his statue, last year, they actually had a hymn "*à Lord Brougham*," in which his guardian spirit was invoked. He possesses two

statues in the town, as well as a tall tombstone in the cemetery; squares, streets, and cafés are called after him; his long nose decorates the shop windows in triumphs of photographic and ceramic art. The natives may well revere his memory, for he *made* Cannes as a winter resort of the British. When he came to it first, about fifty years ago, to pass the time during which the Sardinian Government enforced a quarantine under some scare of cholera, and so prevented his entering Italy, it was a little old burgh, clustered round its small port, and under the shadow of its medieval church and castle. It is now a lively town of hotels, shops, and villas, scattered over the sunny hill-sides for a length of nearly three miles, and, year by year, is stretching farther inland among the valleys and up the heights. It is emphatically the British colony of the Riviera. The hotels and villas are occupied by the English and Scotch almost exclusively. The French visitors (I mean visitors as distinguished from residents) are very few. There are hardly any Germans or Russians, and no Americans worth mentioning. The Germans prefer Mentone and San Remo, and the Russians and Americans haunt Nice. But the "Anglais" (the Continental name for all Britons) seem to love the shores and slopes of Cannes, and have certainly managed to combine there the many advantages only to be obtained by wintering in a Southern climate, with a large amount of the comforts

and conveniences generally considered indigenous to the British Isles.

Cannes is far too well known to need much description, but for those who may not have chanced to visit it, we may just say that it is built round a wide bay, the two horns of the semi-circle being on the right hand the lovely Esterel Mountains, and on the left a long tongue of land called La Croisette, built on almost to the end. A wide and handsome boulevard runs along the shore for about three miles, forming a very beautiful drive. It is planted with trees at intervals, and there is a footpath on the side next the sea. The principal streets and many large hotels and public buildings adjoin this boulevard; behind them, at a very short distance, the railway intersects the town, after which are a few straggling streets and rows of houses, and then an almost interminable collection of hotels and villas,—some larger, some smaller,—set down in every imaginable position, without the slightest relation to each other. Nearly all are surrounded by gardens, full of olives, orange, and fig trees, and a great variety of very handsome shrubs and flowering plants; the effect produced by all this greenery being very refreshing to the eye as it gradually wanders up the slopes beyond the town, and comes at the end to the olive and pine-crowned heights, that guard the dwellers below from much of the cold wind, that blows across the snow-covered maritime Alps towering in the extreme distance. As seen from certain

points, those pure snowy ranges are very striking and majestic, contrasting admirably with the greener hills in front, and forming a beautiful background to the view of Cannes, when approaching it from the west. But the greatest charm of the neighbourhood lies in the Esterel, whose bold outline, not unlike that of Arran, closes the western horizon, and behind whose purple screen the sun sets in a splendour of crimson and gold, and in delicate tints of the rainbow, that no painter, however skilful, could ever hope to imitate, leaving at the close an "after-glow" soft and brilliant as that seen at Rome, while the sky long retains its rose and amber colouring, and then fades through lovely shades of deep and deeper violet into the darkness of night. I have seen many beautiful sunsets, but never any more gorgeous than some of those behind the Esterel.

The climate of Cannes is usually a very dry and bright one. Exceptional seasons there are undoubtedly. The winter of 1878-9, for instance, was a very wet one, but that is rare. There is almost always bright sunshine and a very agreeable amount of warmth in the early part of the day, but after three o'clock it begins to be a little chilly, and this goes on increasing, till by four or five it is decidedly cold. I speak now of the regular winter months—December and January, with a part of November and February. Occasionally, days will occur so cold that invalids should not think of venturing out of doors ; but in general, from ten o'clock till half-past one or two, the temperature

is most enjoyable, though even then due precautions must be observed, and sunny places selected for the walk or drive. In the shade, there is always a perceptible difference; and prudent people usually carry a light shawl to throw on if necessary. Persons in good health need not be so strict; though it is always wise to be careful; and after sunset few should remain out. The additional length of the day, daylight being excellentfully an hour longer than with us, is also an immense advantage in winter. Many who are not invalids have now begun to find a winter home in Cannes, and for people of this class it is peculiarly suitable. Lovers of sunshine and a clear atmosphere, they fly from the northern fogs and frost; and no doubt on the Mediterranean the difference is marvellous. We had nearly a week of sharp weather on our first arrival; though, even then, it was fairly warm in the forenoon. For several weeks there had been no rain, and the dust was at times disagreeable in the open roads. It then rained heavily during two nights, showers which we *heard* but never *saw*; only their effects were visible in the brightened foliage and flowers, and the disappearance of the dust. The weather then became warm, and we were sitting without a fire and with open windows, when all England and Scotland were skating busily, or else losing their way in dense and unwholesome fogs; and so it has continued ever since. Rain has been almost unknown; those two wet nights

and two unlucky wet days during the Carnival comprised all the bad weather we have encountered; all else has been like a remarkably fine English May or June. It cannot be denied that this is extremely pleasant; and Cannes offers this inducement to its many visitors, along with numerous other attractions of divers kinds. For the gaily disposed there is abundance of very good society—dinners, dances, musical parties, and the fashionable lawn tennis. All the best hotels have a tennis-ground, and tableaux and amateur theatricals are of frequent occurrence. There is a club, or “cercle,” to which strangers can easily obtain admission; there are public gardens and a very excellent band, which performs frequently. To the lovers of seclusion and of a quiet life it offers a variety of very beautiful scenery, long sylvan rambles through the olive groves and vineyards and on the pine-covered hill sides, drives and excursions to a number of interesting places—the potteries of Vallauris, the perfume manufactories of Grasse, the Hermitage of St. Cassien, and many quaint old towns perched on distant mountain ridges, as well as the valleys of the Esterel, and the islands in the bay. One of these, Ste. Marguerite, contains the fortress in which “The Man with the Iron Mask” was confined, and from which the hero of Metz escaped, or rather was allowed to escape. In the other, St. Patrick is said to have lived and preached, for some years before he was known in Ireland.

The first headland to the east of Cannes is the fortified point of Antibes, near which Napoleon landed from Elba. Beyond Antibes lies a wide bay on whose farther side is Nice.

II.

Nice, and Monte Carlo.

"Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring crowd."

Enid and Geraint.

"Solus sua littora turbat

Circius, et tuta prohibet statione Monoeci."

Lucan : Pharsalia ; i 407.



WHEN I knew Nice first, before the cession, it was a bright little Italian town, not too *towny*, with a shore comparatively unpolluted, and the unsophisticated country close at hand. The French can say now, "Nous avons changé tout cela." 'Tis Nice, but ancient Nice no more. It is Paris at the seaside—Paris in miniature, and in perpetual fête. The Promenade des Anglais, which used to be a pleasant walk by the shore of the much-sounding sea, is now a gaudy and crowded street of clubs, hotels, and villas. Parisian boulevards intersect the town. Bustle, noise, meretricious glare and display, have blasted Nice with excess of light. Anyone who should go thither now for health would be "far left to himself." The increase of sewage has defiled the beach ; the growth of the town has destroyed the retirement of

the favourite old quarter of Carabagel ; and the tumult, dust, and disquiet of a large and bustling population have banished the peacefulness which is favourable to health, the "alma quies" which is dear to the wearied nerve and labouring chest. And, in point of fact, invalids are beginning to recognise this. "Year by year it becomes less fitted for a health resort," writes Dr. Sparks, whose book, "The Riviera," is the last, and one of the best, of the medical works on that subject. While it is declining as a resort for the unhealthy, it is rising to a bad eminence as a haunt of the sinful. Dr. Sparks puts it mildly when he closes his chapter on this city with the words, "To learn morality, in any sense of the word, we must not go to Nice." Without going so far as a friend of mine, who says "it is the wickedest place in the world," I should certainly decline to give it any certificate of character. The worse factor in its moral condition is the neighbourhood of Monte Carlo. The "Monte Carlo lot"—Russians, Germans, French, Americans, British—make Nice their chief headquarters. There the Muscovite forgets, for a time, Nihilism and Siberia ; the Teuton makes ducks and drakes of his share of the indemnity ; the Frenchman (and still more the Frenchwoman) contrives the latest forms of fashionable folly ; the Yankee lackers his Republican roughness with a varnish of Old World vices ; the Briton stakes and loses his national character for manliness and principle. The old road to Monaco from Nice was, and

is, one of the loveliest in Europe—mounting right up to the tower of Turbia, thence looking down on the mirror-like basin of Villa Franca, and then descending in skilful zig-zags to the rock on which the little town stands. But now-a-days the devotees of the gambling tables and the pigeon matches have no time to look at scenery, and they rush along—underground half the way—by the railroad. As an ingenious Yankee puts it, travelling by that Mediterranean line is like driving through a flute and looking through the holes. At all the finest points of the scenery you are plunged into a tunnel. There is a special train which, early in the afternoon, conveys the Nice—not nice—contingent to the august principality. From a moral point of view the cargo is unlovely; even from a physical it is not attractive. If “beauty born of murmuring sound” can pass into the face, and stamp the body as “the unpolluted temple of the mind,” so can an ugliness, which is independent of mere features, brand its deep mark into the corporeal part of the natures that “worship the beast.” A worse type of expression could hardly be seen than that prevalent in the Monte Carlo train. The “forehead villanous low;” the sharp, cruel eye, trained to watch the rapid dealing of the fatal cards, the whirl of the roulette, and the terrified spring of the pigeon from its basket; the heavy jaw of the bully; the acquisitive nose of the Jew; the painted eyelid and powdered cheek and “tired head” of the demirep; the greedy leer of the Phryne

of the boulevards—all are there. There too, sad to say, the owners, often, of names that in other days were the warrants of all that was chivalrous and noble, and that have left their mark on notable passages in the histories of ancient kingdoms, Austrian, French, British, and other. “*Noblesse oblige.*” It were better, I think, that personages, whom the usage of non-Republican societies calls noble and great, should respect the traditions of their rank and order. If they don’t, who will? Are there no poor about his lands, that that Magyar magnate, Count Weissnichtwo, need scatter his gold so lavishly on the rouge-et-noir? Are farmers in Hyperborea so prosperous, that my Lord Rosemary should stake the rents he draws from them on the revolution of that silly wheel? Is age so honourable and virtue so easy, that the Duchess of Montrouge can afford to risk the still remaining credit of the name she bears among these *roturiers* and *intriguanes*? Worst of all, perhaps, is the not uncommon mixture, in the female gambler, of devotion and dissipation. The real Catholic and the “Anglo-Catholic” afford exhibitions of this unlovely combination. It seems indeed to be one conspicuous result of modern ritualism and sacerdotalism, that it fosters in English women a frivolity, linked with superstition, that bodes ill for the character of their children. A lady who confesses and practises penances and attends the pigeon-shooting matches. What a *Lusus naturæ*! *Desinit in piscem mulier formosa superne.* A day

which begins with "early celebration," and ends at Monte Carlo. *Proh pudor!*

The principality of Monaco, governed by the great and good Grimaldi, is now reduced to the square mile or two containing Monaco proper and Monte Carlo. Up to 1848 it included Roccabruna and Mentone. Men of Mentone in middle life have already lived under four different *regimes*. They were first subjects of the Grimaldi, then of Piedmont, then of the French Empire, and now of the French Republic.

Leaving Nice by train, you pass through a tunnel to the beautiful little bay of Villa Franca, a favourite station with Russian and American cruisers. You go underground again, and presently emerge to the view of a rocky headland, like the Castle rock of Edinburgh flattened at the top, and planted in the sapphire sea. This miniature cape bears aloft the tiny town of Monaco. On its farther, or eastern, side lies a deep bay, beyond which, at the distance of less than half a mile, on another and lesser promontory, stands Monte Carlo. The bight of the bay, between its two horns, is lined with hotels, cafés, shops, and lodging-houses. The slope of Monte Carlo is crowned with the large, heavy mass of the Casino, which contains the gambling-rooms, concert hall, theatre, and other saloons, devoted to the pleasures and follies of the society which frequents them. Close by are more hotels and the pigeon-

shooting enclosure. Every vacant space of ground is bright with flowers. Palms, eucalypti, cactuses, orange trees, shelter the walks. Turf, more like the greensward of England than the dry grasses of Italy, spreads a verdant carpet under the foliage.

All this, we are told, is the work of M. Blanc, the "patron" of the Casino, and of whom the French *mot* says, or said, during his reputable life (he is no more)—"*Soit il rouge—soit il noir ; c'est toujours Blanc qui gagne.*" But it was not M. Blanc who built the palace, and laid out the gardens, and made this erewhile barren brae gay with blossoms and bright with the greenest turf in the Riviera. Those who really did it, and who keep it up now that it is done, are the dupes, the blacklegs, the courtezans of Europe. M. Garnier designed the sensuous details of the architecture (he who planned the Grand Opera of Paris.) M. Blanc acted as *entrepreneur*, and gave his "*clarum ac venerabile nomen ;*" but this Devil's University of Monte Carlo, with its classrooms and chairs for Professors Belial and Mammon, is, in sober truth, the erection of those that I have named. Yet they, and the unreflecting multitudes who haunt these classic halls, throng them in ever-increasing numbers, and seem to think that fortune is always going to reimburse them for their spent money and wasted days. "*Victuri semper ; vivimus nunquam.*" The fortune is always with the table, whether at roulette or rouge-et-noir, or the whole thing would collapse. Those who win, win

from the other gamblers, rather than from the table itself. The side that loses, and the numbers that lose, simply pay forfeit to those that gain: the drain upon the bank is rare and slight. At the roulette, out of 36 numbers only one number can gain the full stake of 36—four others, at the most, may gain a fraction of it. At the rouge-et-noir the one colour is usually as deeply covered as the other, and of course only one can win. The cards are dealt out in two rows, and the colour of the card, in either row, which brings the number nearest to 31 wins. Thus, if the first row ends with a red card making up the number to 27, and the next with a black making it up to 30, the black wins. “*Couleur gagne, rouge perd*” would be the cry: for “*noir*” is never named. The euphemism of “*couleur*” is substituted for the native hue of the whole transaction. There are six tables at the Casino—four roulette, where the lowest stake is five francs; two rouge-et-noir, where the lowest is twenty. They are always crowded, Sunday and week-day, with a grave and earnest ring of players (some of them elderly women in black, like tradesmen’s widows,) playing with much care and seriousness. Some people make lucky *coups*; the great majority, of course, lose. A British dowager gained £400 the other day, and a German visitor £2000. He went back to his hotel, hired a band of music, and bought a lot of balloons, and amused himself by sending up the balloons to the strains of the band. Re-

cently there are said to have been several suicides. One was that of a young naval officer, who had been sent ashore with a sum of money to settle accounts at Nice or Villa Franca. He went to the Casino, lost all his own money, lost all he had in charge, and then shot himself. These things never appear in the newspapers. It would not suit the purposes of the Grimaldi and the "Direction," to let the public have a glimpse of the secret ruin that is wrought.

People say, "Monte Carlo may not be a moral or elevating influence; but men will speculate and will play. It is no worse than gaming at a club." To the members of the club it is, perhaps, not so bad. At Nice, at anyrate, the stakes at the club are higher than are allowed at Monte Carlo; but the club is private; it is not open to women; the mischief that may occur there is of no public example and contagion. It does not exist for the sole purpose of play, nor is it supported by the profits of play. It is not an instrument of wholesale demoralisation. Monte Carlo is. It is a gross and public scandal and evil, and in these days of spirited foreign policy I can imagine no more wholesome exercise of the "ascendency" of our diplomacy, than our bringing pressure to bear on France for the extinction of Monte Carlo. The great Grimaldi must do what France bids him. He has no real independence. It is a disgrace to the Republic, that under her protecting wing this spiritless pander to European vice should be allowed to shelter the sharpers expelled from every other

haunt on the Continent, and to fatten on the wages and spoils of iniquity. The winnings of the tables pay a heavy toll to him, and, in fact, form his civil list; but as he sold his sovereignty, in all but name and show, to France, so no doubt he would sell his interest in the Casino, and could be got rid of. His palace is at Monaco, where I saw his army of sixty men being elaborately drilled under his windows one sunny forenoon.

If Monaco and Monte Carlo were cleansed of Grimaldi and Blanc, they would be among the very best and most alluring resorts on the Riviera. The air is delightful, and the scenery exquisite. But decent people object to the neighbourhood of the tables and their crew. At Nice, and even at Mentone, the bad influence is felt and dreaded. At the *table d'hotes*, where there is a section of the "Monte Carlo lot" among the guests, the conversation, consisting of anecdotes of the play, wrangles about pigeon matches, scandals of the Casino, is felt to be very offensive; and the hotels, where those most do congregate, are shunned by parents and others who have charge of young people, or who themselves regard the whole affair of gambling and pigeon-shooting as disgraceful and disgusting. The reckless selfishness of the tables and the unmanly and unsportsmanlike cruelty of the shooting matches go naturally together.

The view of Monaco and Monte Carlo from the railway, as you go on to Mentone is lovely, especially

towards night, when the crest of the rock of Monaco, the sides of the bay, and the slope of Monte Carlo sparkle with hundreds of lights, that glitter through the clear air and are mirrored in the placid sea.

III.

Mentone.

"The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
 The waves are dancing fast and bright ;
 Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
 The purple noon's transparent light :
 The breath of the moist air is light
 Around its unexpanded buds ;
 Like many a voice of one delight,
 The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,
 The city's voice itself is soft like Solitude's."

Shelley.



SINCE the cession of Savoy and Nice to France the Italian name Mentone has been, officially, Frenchified into Menton. This is by no means an improvement, and I prefer to stick to the old nomenclature, which still survives among the foreign visitors to the charming little town. Mentone is much more compact than Cannes. Its old town is older, darker, narrower than any part of Cannes ; its new town is less extended, ornate, and gay. It has an air of quieter life and less active motion. High and steep hills of grey and reddish rock rise close behind it. Right in front rolls the deep blue Mediterranean, whose shore here is less defiled than at Cannes, Nice, or

San Remo. Among the hills run several winding valleys full of olive yards, and groves of orange and lemon, and in spring carpeted with anemones and violets. A broad esplanade is laid out along the shore, and behind it is a range of gardens, villas, and hotels. As you look seaward the view on the right is bounded by the low olive-covered height of Cap Martin; on the left by the bright headland of Bordighera, whose white houses glitter in the sun. The West Bay is divided from the East, which is the more sheltered and warm, by a rocky spit that protects the small harbour, and forms the last joint in the ridge or backbone on which the old town is built. The main street of Mentone runs along the West Bay at the back of the gardens and hotels, and is prolonged into the East by the Quai Bonaparte—a work of the first Emperor. I was told, before leaving Cannes for Mentone, that I should find the latter relaxing, and climatically inferior. Only far gone invalids were taken there. “Cannes is for the living; Mentone for the dying,” was one epigrammatic warning. I was agreeably undeceived. I thought the air not less, but more elastic and bracing, than that of Cannes. One could walk further with less fatigue; and alike beside the shore and up the hillsides breathed a fresher and more saline air. In the valleys, of course, the atmosphere was not so keen, and on the sunny side of the glen was often too warm for comfort; while in the shade it was chill, with just a suspicion of damp. There are not many

roads fit for driving at Mentone. In fact, the road to Italy, that to Nice, and the road that threads the "Turin Valley," exhaust the list; but the mule tracks and footpaths are innumerable, and both roads and paths have the vast advantage over those of Cannes, that even in the driest weather they bear comparatively little dust.

The great range behind Mentone rises in the "Berceau," a bare, wild scalp of limestone, to the height of 3500 feet, in the "Grand Mont" to 4400, and throws out spurs which descend to the town itself. One of these is crowned with the cypresses and tombstones of a crowded little cemetery; another with the convent of the Annunziata; along the spine of a third winds the path to Castellar. These lower ridges are intersected by deep valleys, and their sides are terraced out into gardens and groves of olive, lemon, and orange. The vine is scarcely grown at all. The largest valleys are those of Gorbio, which lies farthest west; of Cabrolles, through which the Borrigo torrent finds its way; of the Carrei, another torrent with wide gravelly bed, nearly dry except after heavy rains; and the Val de Menton, nearest the east. In these valleys, and on the slopes surrounding them, there is a larger growth of the lemon than any where else in France or Italy. It is the staple of Mentone. The legend is that Eve, when leaving Paradise, "with wandering steps and slow," plucked this fairest of Eden's fruits and hid it in her apron, telling Adam that she would plant

it in the place that they might come to which should look like the garden of the Lord. The forlorn couple came at last to Mentone. Then Eve planted her lemon, and said to it—"Prosper and reproduce here the savours and blessings of Eden." And here accordingly, the Mentonese believe that, ever since, verdant and blooming, with its leaves of glossy green and its fruit of pale gold, the lemon has flourished, and borne the crops that gladden the hearts of its husbandmen all the year round; for it has no single or stated harvest, but blossoms and ripens at all seasons. There are, however, three principal gatherings of the fruit—in winter, in spring, and early in summer. There are also three kinds of cases in which it is packed, and three degrees of ripeness at which it is pulled, according to its destination. The lemons that are to be used in France are not pulled till they are almost ripe, and are packed in boxes holding from 400 to 450; those for Britain and the North of Europe go into a smaller box, and are gathered when half ripe. Our Transatlantic cousins get the fruit that has hardly begun to change from green to gold, packed in cases of 360 each. The average export to Europe and America from Mentone is between 50,000 and 60,000 cases. This year the trees have been woefully nipped by a severe frost. Eight degrees of frost kill the lemon; eleven, the orange; fifteen, the olive.

At Mentone, and all along the Riviera, the Australian eucalyptus is rapidly taking a front rank

in all plantations. Although it has not been known there above 30 years, if so long, there are already several splendid specimens at Mentone; and there are at Cannes, trees fully 50 feet high, and thick in proportion.

The popular recreation at Mentone is to explore the valleys and hills on donkey-back. It is a great shame to associate with the name of the asinine race any lack of intellectual qualities, or of moral qualities either. The cuddy is an animal essentially intelligent, reflective, patient, willing, and not devoid of humour. He has considerable firmness and steadfastness of purpose—a human characteristic, which, when exhibited in a four-footed ass, it is ungenerous to stigmatise as obstinacy. In the biped it is often the object of much praise. The donkeys of Mentone, though rather slow in pace, are extremely sure-footed and enduring. Many of them are very handsome. If they have a fault in climbing the steep paths—more stairs than paths—that mount the hills, it is that they will, even when there is no room for it, act upon the theory that a diagonal line is preferable in ascent to a straight one. It was amusing, though to the rider highly inconvenient, to observe the careful zig-zags of about a couple of steps each with which they insisted on winding up the route to Ste Agnese or Gorbio. But the donkeys were Conservatives, and, like many greater men, only made the mistake of carrying out their theory on too narrow a platform.

One of the finest rides is to Castellar, a grim old village near the base of the Berceau. Another is to Ste Agnese, a walled village of about 550 inhabitants, perched on a steep crag 2000 feet above the sea. The track to it ascends from the edge of the Borrigo torrent, and winds along through olive groves and pine thickets with their dense brushwood, until at last it scales the bare and abrupt slope near the summit, in a series of stairs, which both in going up and coming down are very trying to the rider.

There are many villages like Ste Agnese among the Mentonese hills—one of the most picturesque is Gorbio; another and larger one, overhanging the road to Monaco, is Roccabruna. They are all perched on the tops of crags, and from below look mere crows' nests; but when you pass through their massive old gateways and into their narrow lanes with their iron-stanchioned windows, you are surprised to note how large they really are. As you lift your longing eyes to Gorbio, while the donkey painfully masters the stiff ascent, you see only a church spire and a gable or two cresting a high and narrow peak; but, when you enter it, you find the dark and tortuous little streets opening on a handsome *Place*, with a church, a *Mairie*, a feudal castle, part of which is still occupied, and a lively population of more than 500 people. Security from the marauders of the coast led the population of the valleys in the good old

times to take to the hill tops, and even there they were not safe from the fierce attack of the Saracen corsairs. Many of these impregnable looking eyries have been taken and retaken after fiery assault. Castellar was carried by the French and Spanish in the war of 1747, and was again held by Massena in 1802. Gorbio was the scene of a bloody conflict between the French and Austro-Sardinian troops in 1746. Roccabruna was seized by the Saracens, and afterwards by the Genoese. The ruins of an almost inaccessible fort dominate Ste Agnese, and tradition connects with them the name of a Saracen chief, Haroun, who laid his grip on these regions in the tenth century. Even the humble convent of the Annunziata, on its lower height between the Carrei and the Borrigo, occupies ground that was, hundreds of years ago, a military strength. The little chapel here is profusely festooned with *ex-votos*, recording the gratitude of pilgrims who have been saved from disease or danger by the intercession of Our Lady. Everything about it is very plain and simple. The only note I took on my visit was of the motto on the face of the convent clock, "Omnes feriunt ; ultima necat." All (the hours) strike ; the last slays—rather a striking conceit. The present occupants of the Annunziata are Capuchins from one of the Genoese convents, who took refuge here when the Italian Government suppressed the religious houses in 1866. We saw them wandering about their olive yard in their dingy brown cloaks, and picking up

the berries that lay on the ground ; and above them, flitting among the branches, attracted perhaps by ecclesiastical company, was the only specimen of the Scriptural locust that I encountered on the Riviera.

The smaller streams of Mentone are much defiled with olive refuse ; and the larger water courses are so devoid of water as to present little else to the eye than beds of rough shingle. Wherever a deeper hole or channel has collected a little water, it is beset by washerwomen. Near the mouths of one or two of the torrents that divide the town, art has assisted nature by conducting the scant supply of fluid into a long trough, at the sides of which these women kneel, and wash and belabour the clothes committed to their charge. The water looks so horribly foul that one is inclined to ask how the clothes are ever cleaned at all. They do come back from the process, however, bearing evidence of purification, and also in their broken buttons and frayed edges of having been severely handled. As I was passing along one day I stopped to watch the washing, and to listen to the babble of the tongues of about 20 washerwomen. As I did so I saw an old randy, who was kneeling by the margin, seize a shirt which from its texture and colour I was persuaded was my own, souse it once or twice in the trough, take it out, lay it on a flat stone, and beat it vindictively with a large wooden "beetle," then wring it furiously and pitch it into a corner. After

witnessing this operation, I ceased to wonder at the smashed buttons and frayed edges.

At Mentone, and indeed all along the Riviera, one is struck with the good looks of the people and their well-to-do air. Beggars are rare, and you seldom see rags. The men are fine, active, muscular fellows, with dark eyes and hair and swarthy cheeks. The women are handsome, though their habit of carrying loads on their heads is apt to stunt their figures ; and they lose their looks early. The men seem to regard the women as the proper burden-bearers, and let them toil along under every sort of load. At San Remo I saw four women carrying a large piano on their heads—one at each corner, stepping out like a grenadier ; while the piano, upside down, held its legs aloft with a comical look of helpless imbecility. There is a considerable admixture of Protestantism amongst the people, and at Mentone there is a large Protestant congregation. On one Sunday there I heard old Mons. Meillé, of Turin, preach, who is regarded as a great light in the French and Italian Reformed Churches. He belongs to the Church of the Waldenses, which has maintained for so long in Italy a solitary and courageous witness for purity of faith and worship. The church at Mentone is not in connection with the National Reformed Church of France, but with the body called “ L'Eglise Libre,” which has left the National Church (the National Church is, like the Roman Catholic, recognised and subsidised by the State). Beza's Confession and

two or three of the prayers of the National Liturgy were, however, used in the service ; but the ministers wore neither gown nor bands. At Nimes, where I afterwards attended service in a fine old church, with a large congregation, the minister—who was the most eloquent man I have heard for many a long day—was in full clerical fig, and used the Liturgy of Geneva throughout ; and on my remarking, when I waited on him in the vestry, on the difference between his garb and ritual and those I had observed at Mentone, “Ah,” said he, with emphasis, “*we* are of the National Church, and use the National Liturgy.” I suspect it is the tendency of Dissent to lapse into disregard of the external and historical ; the Dissenters would probably say because they pay more attention to the real “root of the matter.”

Scotch Presbyterianism is throughout the Riviera, at Cannes, Nice, Mentone, and San Remo, represented by the Free Kirk ; and I nowhere saw a gown or a band among the brethren who filled the pulpits. I regretted the somewhat slouching service which one occasionally witnessed, as calculated to give strangers a wrong impression of Scottish Presbytery. In the National Zion, at least, it is not usual to see a worthy minister officiating in a loose frock-coat, and lounging familiarly over the side of the pulpit, with one hand stuffed deeply into his breeches’ pocket. I don’t think either that I ever noticed the formula—“We

will sing the whole of this hymn, *if you please*." But these, after all, are motes in the sunshine of Free Church glory, and that active organisation deserves much credit for having so promptly and adequately occupied these stations ; only I would that English and Americans should not regard the Free Church—as of course they are tempted to do—as the chief representative of Scotch religion ; the Free hymnal as the latest type of Scotch taste in hymns ; or the Free (and easy) mode of conducting the service as the best embodiment of Scotch ritual.

On the Riviera I always preferred to worship either in the French Church or the Free. I confess I found the Anglican service, with its great length, rigid sameness, feeble sermons, and feebler fumbings after Romanism, tedious and unedifying. To have an invariable liturgy is as bad as to have none at all ; and among strangers, and when in search of health, one feels the inflexibility of the prayer-book all the more. One Sunday, in the French Church, the pastor, before prayer, told his congregation, very simply and touchingly, how their old sacristan (who had held his office ever since the congregation was formed) had, on coming home the evening before, found his son, a young man of 19, whom he had left a few hours before in full health, lying on his bed dead. "Our friend Maurice," said the pastor, "is always near us when we pray here ; let us pray for him and his afflicted family," which he accordingly did with much feeling. But had he been an Angli-

can parson, he could not have done so without the leave of the Bishop of London, or of Gibraltar—I don't know which, but certainly one or other of these apostolical dignitaries.

At Mentone people do not shun hotels near the shore as they do at Cannes ; and some of the best, such as the Victoria and the Westminster, overlook the Promenade du Midi close to the beach of the West Bay. In the East Bay, the Hotel des Anglais is the favourite, and is the residence of Dr. Bennet, who has written a book about Mentone, which has brought many a patient to him and many a visitor to the town. On the slopes behind the town are the Iles Britanniques and the National, new and very fine hotels.

Mentone is so peculiarly blessed with sheltered walks and winding valleys that you need never face a cold wind, if such should blow ; but cold winds are not common, and even the scourge of the Riviera, the (north-west) "Mistral," is seldom felt. The mean monthly temperatures of the winter before last were, for December, 44·02 ; January, 47·2 ; February, 49·6 ; March, 51·5. In the year 1860 there were 98 families of "strangers" in Mentone ; in 1878 there were 1331—of which 543 were British, 141 Germans, 69 Russians, 67 Americans, and a good many Swiss, Dutch, and Scandinavians.

A great inducement to early rising, with residents near the shore, is the hope of beholding Corsica. That island is from 90 to 100 miles off, and its lofty

peaks can only be seen before sunrise. On one or two mornings we were fortunate enough to enjoy this vision. Far over the wine-dark sea, grey and ghost-like on the verge of the dawn, loomed a range of tall serrated mountain tops. As the light brightened they took a warmer colour for a few quick minutes, and then faded softly away, "as the sunrise splendid came flashing o'er the sea."

From sunrise to sunset the day at Mentone was, as long as I stayed there, full of sunshine. We never had a wet day. Only once, I think, was it even cloudy, and that was when the Sirocco blew, dull and oppressive, from Africa.

IV.

Bordighera and San Remo.

"I will see before I die
The Palms and Temples of the South."

Tennyson.

"What an Eastern look those waving palms give the hill of Bordighera! One might believe one's self in Asia Minor."

Dr. Antonio.



IT is a warm and bright forenoon when the carriage draws up at the door of the Victoria Hotel, and receives the slender allowance of baggage which we are going to take into Italy. A pleasant party of our "co-mates and brothers in exile" clusters round to see us off, and with some, who are also moving eastward, we make tryst to meet at the Hotel Beau Rivage at Bordighera, ere we step in and drive off. The road to Italy lies along the sunny East Bay of Mentone, and near the end of it crosses the railway, which has passed in a tunnel under the town, and begins to ascend the brow of the cliffs that overlook the sea. An old road, part of which is said to date from the days of ancient Rome, diverges on the right towards the shore, and leads to the "Rochers

Rouges," bold, red rocks overhanging the beach, and containing a deep cave, wherein were discovered a good many flint implements and the skeleton of a pre-Adamite man, which is now in the museum of natural history in Paris. The upper road presently traverses the Pont St. Louis, which spans the deep and gloomy gorge forming the boundary between France and Italy, that, previous to the cession, lay at the Var, to the west of Nice. At the one end of the bridge are a French sentry and sentry box, and at the other their Italian counterparts. There is a stout square stone by the roadside, on one face bearing the word "France," on the other "Italia;" and a little further on is the Italian "Dogana," where you fall into the clutches of the Custom-House officers. If you travel by rail, the examination of baggage is made at Ventimiglia, but on the road it takes place at the frontier. We were gently dealt with; but some of our friends who had fruit in their carriage had to hand it all out—to be eaten, I have no doubt, by the officials, though they professed it would be burnt. The dread of introducing the *phylloxera*, which has devastated the vines of Southern France, has established a rigid prohibition of all fruits and flowers at the frontier of Italy.

The twelve miles of the far-famed Cornice, which stretch from Mentone to Bordighera, offer a panorama of varying and splendid views; on the right the dark-blue sea, foam-flecked here and there, and shooting into breadths of green and purple as it nears the

shore ; the shore a succession of crags and rugged rocks now tawny, now grey, here bare and wave-worn, there festooned with sea-weed, with an occasional little bay of shingle or yellow sand dimpled into the rough outline of the coast ; on the left sometimes tall cliffs and "scaurs," with empty water-courses seaming their sides ; sometimes rich and quiet olive groves, groups of lemons and oranges, patches of garden, slopes of scanty grass, deeply receding glens, cottages, and high up the crowded gables and the church towers of the villages, whose lonely isolation and "pride of place" recalled again and again Tennyson's picture of the eagle:—

" He clasps the crag with hooked hands ;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world he stands.
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls,
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls."

We pass on the left the tasteful gardens of Dr. Bennet ; farther on the handsome school-house built by Mr. Hanbury for the children of the villages ; and then the charming terraces, alleys, and flower-borders of his villa, which demand and repay a visit. The villa stands on a little headland where a deep glen opens to the sea, and commands a splendid view to east and west, while the slopes and embankments, in which the ground is laid out, are a mass of rich and varied colour—roses, geraniums, anemones, violets, verbenas, chrysanth-

mums, with eucalypti, olives, fig, orange, and lemon trees, palms, cactuses, prickly pears, aloes, a maze of flower, blossom, fruit, and foliage in exquisite contrasts and combinations.

The next point of interest is the old town of Ventimiglia, with its fortifications frowning above the road that passes over a draw-bridge and ditch and within the ramparts, out of which grin cannon ready to sweep into annihilation any force that should advance against Ventimiglia from the French side. The railway burrows under the town in a tunnel. At the station, near which an old Roman amphitheatre has been recently unearthed, the traveller by the iron road may observe a considerable confusion as to the time of day at any given hour. At one side of the entrance hall a clock indicates French time—at the other a second clock proclaims Italian time, and the unofficial clocks and watches mark Ventimiglian time. French time is that of Paris, and is nine minutes in advance of Greenwich. Italian time is that of Rome, and is 41 minutes before Paris. Ventimiglian time, like the time of all the towns on the Riviera, is the solar time of the place. The difference everywhere between local and official time, which latter is kept by the railways and the post office, is apt to embarrass the traveller.

Beyond Ventimiglia stretches a forest of olives; and on a little cape jutting into the sea at about three miles distance stands Bordighera. That cape

seems to catch all the sunshine of every day. Wherever else shadows might lower, Bordighera was always bright.

The beach is sandy here, and well adapted for bathing. Among the olives, and on the slopes of the hills that rise about half a mile inland, there are charming walks. Violets, grown for the scent distilleries of Grasse, abound on every side. One would say Shakespeare must have trod these paths before he wrote—

“That strain again, it had a dying fall ;
O ! it came o’er my ear, like the sweet south
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.”

But the speciality of Bordighera is its palms. “The feathery palm trees rise” in Oriental profusion, along the shore and the highway and in the gardens of the town. The tall lonely stem and crowning tuft of leaves have a quaint outlandish picturesqueness ; but I cannot say I admire the palm. The leaves are a profitable article of commerce here, and are exported in quantities to the Catholic countries, for use during Passion week and on Palm Sunday. Bordighera sends heaps of them bleached yellow, and woven into pretty patterns, to Rome. A family in the neighbourhood claim, or claimed till very recently, the monopoly of supplying the palms to be used in the Apostolic Palace, a privilege dating from the year 1584, when it was accorded to their an-

cestor by Pope Sixtus V. The Pope's architect, Fontana, was engaged in erecting in the Piazza di San Pietro the obelisk which now stands there. When the day for the final elevation was fixed, Fontana told the Pope it would be a most ticklish business, and he dreaded the pressure and noise of the crowd that was sure to assemble, as it was indispensable the workmen should be able to give undistracted attention to his slightest word or signal. Upon this, the amiable Vicar of Christ promulgated a decree that whosoever uttered a sound during the elevation of the obelisk should suffer death. The operation consequently proceeded amid profound silence. The great pillar rose, laboriously, towards the perpendicular, and was nearly erect, when a crack was heard ; the upward motion stopped ; then the heavy mass began to sink slowly inch by inch. Fontana looked on helplessly ; but suddenly a voice rang out from the heart of the crowd, "Water ! water !—wet the ropes !" The water is brought, thrown on the ropes, which—according to the laws of water and hemp—tighten and bear upon the column, and the work is done. The inestimable hint proceeded from Bresca, a sailor of San Remo, who was seized and marched off by the Swiss Guard, for his disobedience to the Papal edict of silence. The Pope, however, though a tyrant, was not such a fool as to punish the man whose quick wit had saved his obelisk ; and receiving Bresca graciously, he promised to grant him any favour he chose to ask. Bresca,

who was not ambitious, begged the concession of the exclusive right to supply the Apostolic Palace with palms. The Pope issued a brief to the desired effect, which Bresca's descendants still possess, I believe.

This story, with many another legend of the Riviera, is told by Ruffini in his delightful pastoral, "Dr. Antonio," which has rendered Bordighera, San Remo, Taggia, Castellaro, and the adjacent coasts classic ground. When I was last in the neighbourhood, I had the pleasure of knowing the good doctor, who was believed by his friends to have supplied the original of the portrait of the Neapolitan patriot, and whose pleasant presence must be remembered by many of the *habitués* of Nice before the Monte Carlo invasion. Nice afforded him a refuge in his days of exile, and at last a grave.

There are more showy, larger, and more pretentious hotels at Bordighera than the "Beau Rivage," but none really more satisfactory. It is the first you come to as you drive from Ventimiglia, and looks rather bare and gaunt; but it has the great advantage of immediate proximity to the sea and access to a fine sandy beach, and a splendid view westwards to the very Esterel. There are no other houses between it and the sea, or that break the view. At night it was charming to watch, close at hand, the slow moonlit-heave of the waves as they rolled on the shore; and far away the sparkle of the lights of Mentone and Monaco, under the dark beet-

ling brows of the mountains. The rooms were very comfortable, the *cuisine* was good, and the hotel had that air of homely quiet which has vanished from the great caravanserais on the beaten track ; while Signor Guglielmo, the landlord, and his servants manifested a friendly interest in the comfort and pleasure of their guests, that, in the ordinary "manager" and greedy waiters of the fashionable hotels, is often conspicuous by its absence.

The servants in the Beau Rivage were all natives. In almost all the other hotels I visited on the Riviera, the majority of the waiters and *concierges* were Germans. One might suppose Germans would not be popular in France as servants, or in any other capacity ; but there they are in swarms, serving diligently, keeping sober, and speaking two or three languages, not with elegance or grammatical accuracy, but well enough to serve the needs of Italian, English, or French interlocutors. Nothing strikes one more, after a few years' absence, than the increased predominance of Germany on these southern shores, since the French war. There are German visitors, German churches, German shops, shopkeepers, servants, and gutturals, where the like were neither seen nor heard, before the days of Bismarck and the German Empire.

The old town of Bordighera occupies the crown and ridge of the cape, and is very old, dark, and grim. The streets are as narrow as an Edinburgh "wynd," and, like those of San Remo, are crossed

overhead by frequent arches, that look like little bridges high in air, and are popularly supposed to be a protection against the force of earthquakes, though I have never heard that earthquakes are so common or so strong on the Riviera, as to require special antidotes to their violence. The new town spreads along the shore on either side of the cape, but chiefly on the west, where are the railway station and the hotels, and where a handsome boulevard, dotted with villas, has been cut (through the dense olive groves) from the high road near the shore up to the centre of the old town. The most imposing of the villas is that owned by Mons. Bischoffsheim, the great banker of Paris, and recently occupied for several weeks by the Queen of Italy.

The climate of Bordighera is, according to the medical authorities, one of the mildest and most equable on the Riviera. There is little rain, and the only wind to which it is much exposed—the south-west—seldom rises to a gale, and never brings cold with it. The mean temperature of the winter of 1878—which was not a favourable specimen—was, for November, 52·0; December, 45·0; January, 48·0; February, 49·6; March, 51·0. In 1879 March was the same, January was 49·6, and February, 49·6. The great olive-covered plain, on whose edge the new town is built, is on its surface a bed of very porous sandy clay, below which is a stratum of shingle—an ancient sea beach. The ground is thus admirably drained. The water, part-

ly from springs, partly coming by an aqueduct from the hills, is excellent. One or two streams descend from the hills, and would be bright and sparkling but for the olive refuse which defiles them.

The characteristic feature of Bordighera is its Cape. The other health haunts of Liguria, Cannes, Nice, Mentone, San Remo, are all on bays; Bordighera is on a headland, standing well out into the sea, commanding the coast view far and wide, and getting freshly blown upon by the stimulating sea breeze. At the same time, such is the configuration of the hills behind the plain and near Ventimiglia, and of the cape itself, that the new town on the west is sheltered from the north, the east, and the west winds, and enjoys the keen circumambient sea air without the risks of exposure to the weather. Bordighera exhibits none of the fashionable attractions of Cannes, Nice, or Monte Carlo. There is no club, no theatre, no pigeon-shooting; but for those who like tall palms and hoary olives, meadows thick with flowers, rambles by winding brooksides and up pleasant hills, the stretching sands beside the many-twinkling sea, and the free and healthful life to which these minister—there are all the materials and elements for its natural sustenance and enjoyment around this fine little town, for which I augur a prosperous future. The only mischief is that as soon as it gets admitted to the regular list of winter resorts, and invaded by the British host, its simplicities will disappear, its quietest nooks will be built

upon, and it will become loud and flaunting like its more worldly sisters. It will possibly even institute pigeon matches and a Ritualistic Anglican chapel.

Between Ventimiglia and Bordighera two or three little glens, such as those of Borghetto and of Valle Crosia, wind up into the hills. Near Ventimiglia, and larger than any of these, is the Valley of the Nervia, in which lie the ancient villages of Campo Rosso, Dolce-Acqua, and Pigna. Pigna, far up the valley, and within easy access of the snow-clad ranges of the Maritime Alps, possesses sulphur springs which are gaining fame, and will doubtless by-and-by be a favourite bathing-place. In the meantime the road to it is so rough as to scare away all invalids. Even to Dolce-Acqua, which lies in the level of the valley, before it begins to rise towards the hills, the drive involves an amount of jolting enough to divide asunder the joints and the marrow.

It is a very old village, with a venerable bridge of one wide span uniting the two banks of the river; and overlooking the closely-piled mediæval houses is a gloomy castle of the Dorias, now in ruins, bearing in its site and aspect a striking resemblance, on a miniature scale, to Heidelberg. We spent a pleasant day at Dolce-Acqua, with several friends from Mentone and Bordighera, but were distressingly haunted by the juvenile population of the place. Every child in Dolce-Acqua, I think, swelled our cortege, and tracked our steps up street and down wynd, and into castle and across bridge, and stood

around us when we stood, and watched us when we ate and drank. They candidly admitted that the schoolmaster had the fever, and that consequently there was no school ; so that they had uninterrupted leisure for the study of the manners and customs of the British visitor.

“San Remo,” says Dickens, in his amusing but exaggerated “*Pictures from Italy*,” “is a most extraordinary place, built on gloomy, open arches, so that one might ramble underneath the whole town”—a curiously inaccurate and inadequate description even of the old town, which had not, in Dickens’s days, sprouted out into the hotels, esplanades, and gardens that now surround it. The old town, “piled deep and massy, close and high,” and full of the narrow streets with the connecting arches overhead, which we found in Bordighera, occupies a ridge sloping down to a small harbour, and descending on the east abruptly into a valley rich in olives, on the west falling in a gentler declivity to the sunny crescent of the bay. Modern villas and hotels stud the shores on either side of this ridge, which projects slightly into the bay, dividing it—as at Mentone—into two segments east and west. In the rear of the town is an amphitheatre of hills, the highest of which, Monte Bignone, reaches an elevation of about 4000 feet. The Cornice Road forms the main street, and on it and the streets behind it are some fine old palazzi, the town-house, the theatre, several churches, and many very aged houses with quaint carvings

about them, and especially some beautiful specimens of hammered ironwork, in their lattices and doorways. There is a greater air of dignity and ancient grandeur about San Remo, than any other of those "towns of the coast." This dowager look, which it wears, was rather burlesqued on the day of our arrival by the festivities or tomfooleries of Mid-Lent, which were in full swing. Mid-Lent is made the occasion of a minor carnival; and there were great crowds in the streets, throwing about flowers and *confetti*, and making much good-humoured uproar and confusion. Some of the carriages, that drove up and down, were so covered with flowers as to look like moving flower-beds. A few cavaliers in fancy costumes would have presented a picturesquely mediæval appearance, had their efforts to stick on and evident dread of tumbling off not changed the sublime into the ridiculous.

As at Mentone, donkey rides are much in vogue at San Remo, as the paths up the valley and mountain sides offer lovely views, and the carriage roads are very few. In fact, except the drive to Bordighera—seven miles off (which is not equal to the drive between Bordighera and Mentone)—and that towards Alassio eastwards, there are hardly any. A new road branching off from the Cornice to the Madonna della Guardia—the church which crowns the Capo Verde, the eastern headland of the bay—is in good order for driving, and offers a splendid view when you have gained the top of the Capo Verde, and gone past the church, towards the mountains. A

deep green valley opens before you, with a stony river bed dividing its olive groves and gardens. The sides are steep; and perched on the two highest peaks, each right opposite the other, stands a little walled town, old and hoary. The valley, as we saw it, was steeped in sunshine; the walls and roofs glared in the strong light, and answering each other across the hollow, a chime of bells rang out from the towers of the two churches, with a clang and jingle that sounded clear and delicately resonant through the bright keen air.

San Remo is not improved, to my mind, by being the principal resort of Germans on the Riviera. As a general rule—to which there are, of course, captivating exceptions—a German majority in a hotel does not add to what we call in Scotland its “amenity.”

The hotels have the name of being dear, with which my experience corresponds; though a little French *pasteur* whom I knew, and who was staying at some mysterious “howf” in the middle of the town, assured me his expenses did not amount to seven francs per day.

The climate is very much the same as at Mentone. The markets are good; so is the water. I should not, however, compare the place as a residence either to Mentone or Cannes.

V.

Across the South of France.

"Oft while I live,
 If once again in England, once again.
 In my own chimney nook, as night steals on,
 With half-shut eye reclining, oft, methinks,
 While the wind blusters and the drenching rain
 Clatters without, shall I recall to mind
 The scenes, occurrences, I met with here
 And wander in Elysium."

Rogers, Italy.



FROM San Remo we took the railway back to my dear Mentone, getting unsatisfactory glimpses, as we bowled along, of palmy Bordighera, the Olive Forest, the Nervia Valley and its distant Alpine crests, and undergoing a tedious detention of three quarters of an hour at Ventimiglia. At Mentone we stayed a few last days, revisiting chosen spots, loitering over favourite views, buying photographs, "in memoriam," of scenes on which the sun will shine as gaily when we are far away, but the very thought of leaving which seems to becloud our sky; saying adieux to friends whom we hope not to forget—although one of them parted from me without

a tear, but wept when the time came to say good-bye to that fascinating Abbé, whom the Protestant males of our party regarded as a wolf in the fold. Addio, Mentone ! adieu, Menton !—my bright, my beautiful, olive-girdled, lemon-crowned, violet-scented "*beata e bella*"—when shall these eyes see thee again?

It was on leaving Mentone I witnessed a scene in the waiting-room of the station, that was very touching in its way, and very French. A corner of the room was filled by a party consisting of an old gentleman, an elderly lady in widow's weeds, a younger one, a middle-aged gentleman, and a servant girl—all in deep mourning. All were going to travel by the train except the middle-aged gentleman, and all were affected at the parting except the old grandfather, who sat—while the rest stood round him—with the dull impassivity of age. There was much affectionate speech, with many tears ; and at length the middle-aged man—whom I took to be the widow's brother—thinking that the final moment had come, threw his arms round the widowed lady and kissed her tenderly on each cheek ; then did the same to the younger one ; then, the old gentleman having risen heavily to his feet, he embraced him in the same way, giving him a good hearty smack on each withered old jowl ; then, as I was standing close by, looking on with much sympathy, either blinded with his tears, which were streaming freely, or carried away by his feelings, or taken with my sympathetic expression, he was about to seize

me by the hand, and possibly to kiss me too, when he suddenly recollected himself, and with a little bow and a tearful smile drew back, and forsaking me, advanced to the maid-servant. He took her hand in his and shook it warmly, leaving in it a coin of I know not what value, which the girl made a feint of returning to him, with a word and gesture which deprecated such liberality, upon which he again took her hand in one of his and pressed the coin back into it, and patted it with the other. He then stepped back a little way from the circle, looked me full in the face, wiped his eyes, threw out his chest, settled his hat, and was again the Frenchman and the citizen. Picture any canny Scot going on in this effusive fashion.

Past Monte Carlo and Monaco, past the mirror of Villa Franca, and the boulevards of Nice, past the gravelly Var and the cape and fortress of Antibes (of old Antipolis), and we are again at Cannes. Many of our old friends are still at the "Anglais." We see them all. We have a lovely drive, and a climb to the "Croix de Garde," whence we look down on the valley stretching away on the one side to Grasse, on the other to the Esterel. We take here, too, a few last looks and farewells, and then *en route* for Marseilles.

We do not stop at any of the towns on the way ; although Frejus, with its Roman remains, and Toulon, with its strong fortifications, and Hyères in its neighbourhood, might have offered induce-

ments. Hyères is much liked by those who visit it ; and the Hotel "des Iles d'Or" is highly praised ; but the sanitary conditions are said to be faulty, and one hears of outbreaks of typhoid.

It is more than 2,400 years since a band of emigrants from the Ionian city of Phocæa founded Massilia, now Marseille, or, as we spell it, Marseilles. The Marseillais are proud of their descent ; and could their Ionian ancestors see the great seaport now, they would be proud of their descendants. Still it is not a place to linger at ; nor would the commendation which Tacitus applies to it, as the scene of Agricola's studies, hold good in these days—"locus, Græca comitate et provinciali parsimonia mistus et bene compositus." The Greek connection is still asserted in some of the local names, and in the pompous inscription on a bust of Homer which crowns a public fountain, "Les Phocéens reconnaissants à Homère, 1803." Modern romance has illustrated its "Monte Cristo" and "Chateau d'If," and French Republicanism owes to the fiery spirit of its sons the thrilling "Marseillaise." The finest view of the city, harbour, islands, and coast, is from the terrace of Notre Dame de la Garde—a church festooned with *ex-votos*, and more popular with sailors than probably any other on the shores of the Mediterranean. It used to be a quaint little kirk, homely and simple ; but has recently been enlarged and remodelled into a big Romanesque edifice, not half so interesting or picturesque.

The traveller, who has ample time, should not fail to visit, from Marseilles, the four towns of Arles, Orange, Avignon, and Nimes, which contain, within themselves and their immediate neighbourhood, a richer collection of Roman monuments and remains than are to be found anywhere out of Rome. The best way to do it is to take the railway first to Arles, then to go on to Avignon, from which Orange is easily visited; return to Avignon, and drive thence by the Pont du Gard to Nimes.

At Arles there is, besides other vestiges of the Roman dominion, a grand Amphitheatre still in fair preservation, and not unworthy of the "Rome of Gaul," as Ausonius calls this city. At Avignon the Roman relics are less striking, but it is full of mediæval and ecclesiastical interest. The vast Papal Palace recalls the schism and the exile of the Popes. In the cemetery stands the tombstone of John Stuart Mill. Orange, 40 miles by rail from Avignon, and about four miles east of the Rhone, was formerly the capital of the petty principality which gave a title to the princes of Nassau. Probably most of the admirers, or haters, of "the glorious and immortal memory" of Dutch William are unaware that his name of Prince of Orange, borne to this day by the heir apparent to the crown of Holland, was derived from this little town of Southern France. The principal glories are of older date than the house of Nassau—the chief being the splendid Roman theatre and the triumphal arch. You can drive from Avig-

non in less than three hours to the Pont du Gard, and from the Pont du Gard to Nimes in little over two. And if at Nimes you go to the Hotel de Luxembourg, you will find yourself particularly comfortable, and can look over the Place, from your front window, to the great Amphitheatre, "Les Arènes," as they call it. Nimes is a flourishing town of over 60,000 inhabitants, a third of whom are Protestants, and is full of well-preserved Roman remains. The Amphitheatre, although rather spoiled by so-called "restoration," is externally little altered from its ancient completeness; and next to that at Verona is the most perfect Roman amphitheatre in existence. The "Maison Carrée" is quite entire, and might to this day be applied to what was, no doubt, its original use of a Temple, or a Court of Justice. The great Paestan Temple is more imposing and majestic; but I have never seen any ancient building more exquisitely graceful and symmetrical than this Corinthian edifice, with its fluted shafts, and rich frieze and cornice. Not far from it are the Roman Baths, much altered and "restored," and the ruined "Nymphæum," to which the waters of the ancient reservoirs still flow, from the Fountain of the Nymphs. On the hill above stands the huge Tour Magne, of immemorial age—possibly pre-Roman. In the town are two of the ancient gates—the Porte d'Auguste, founded B.C. 16, and the Porte de France. In the Museum are well classified collections of urns, monuments, sculptures, and other classical relics;

and a good gallery of paintings, among which the British tourist is sure to single out Delaroche's powerful picture of "Cromwell lifting the lid of Charles's coffin," and gazing on the murdered King. The peculiarity of the remains of the Roman dominion at Nîmes is that they are all in the very midst of the busy population of to-day. The vast wall of the Amphitheatre lifts itself above the roofs of crowded streets and spacious boulevards; the Maison Carrée stands in a square of modern houses; and the Baths and Nymphæum fill the centre of the public gardens. The Past and the Present stand face to face—much to the æsthetic advantage of the former. And all these grand monuments of the ancient race were built for the use and adornment of a mere provincial town, of so little account that its name is all but unknown in classical literature. For it the Maison Carrée reared its graceful columns, the Amphitheatre opened its huge circle of twenty thousand seats, and the Pont du Gard stretched its majestic aqueduct across the Gardon, sixteen miles away.

The greatest sight in the neighbourhood of this city is undeniably the Pont du Gard. When I visited this grand old bridge, the disaster on the Tay was still recent, and possessing one's imagination as it did, I could not but throw my impressions of the Roman bridge into a shape which connected its majestic remains with the deformed ruin of the British. Here is my memorandum on the two bridges.

“They both are ruined ; but the ruin of each has its own character, and tells its own tale. The traveller who passes safely through Fife, and gains the margin of the broad Tay, sees stretching from the southern shore a thin iron road borne aloft on a long line of slender piers, and marks that at a point about half-way over the iron road becomes invisible, and the piers are snapped across, and stand up out of the swirl of the river, shattered and useless, with nothing to connect them with each other and with the land. He learns that ‘the company,’ being anxious to develop their traffic, built a bridge, which was thought to be one of the greatest achievements of an engineering age. It was believed to combine cheapness, efficiency, stability—all, in short, that should characterise a successful railway bridge. It stood for several months. It certainly *looked* dangerous, and some people were (they said afterwards) always of opinion that its fall was—like that of the Established Kirk—‘a mere question of time ;’ but its owners had confidence in it, and for a while it carried its burdens well. If it vibrated too much under a passing train, or shook more than had been expected in a gale of wind, nobody heard about it, so the public did not take alarm. At last came one dark Sunday night, in December, that brought with it a tremendous gale. The wind blew harder and harder, until, a little after seven o’clock, a tornado, such as had seldom, if ever, been witnessed there before, raged down the channel of the Tay and smote

the bridge. At the moment a train, with about 70 passengers, was crossing ; and, as the girders and piers gave way, the train and all its hapless crew were plunged into the roaring waves below. The bridge had played its owners false. It crashed down into the river, and left the wreck we see. Then began an investigation into the causes of the disaster. Various causes were assigned. Some men averred that it was a 'judgment of God' upon Sunday travelling, though how they knew this does not appear. Others, with perhaps more successful interpretation of the meanings of so great a calamity, maintained that it was a judgment upon wretched work ; for in the course of the investigation, some ugly facts were discovered about the character of the materials employed in the bridge, and the way in which the work of building it had been done. It was alleged that the iron was inferior in quality ; that holes in beams and girders had been stopped with putty or cement and painted over ; that 'lugs,' which should have been all of one piece with the rest of the metal, had been made separately and then merely burnt in. These tricks and shams had been known, apparently, among the mechanics, as likely to make the bridge unstable, but no one thought it his duty to tell. If the inspectors saw anything amiss, it seemed not to be disclosed. The reports of the investigation suggested a heartless indifference to the character of the work, and a greedy desire to get it simply done and paid for. So the bridge was built, and opened, and

used for a time, and then it fell—‘and great was the fall of it.’

When—if you are at Nîmes—you have seen the Roman Arena and the Maison Carrée, you may take a carriage and drive to the other bridge to which I have referred. About 12 miles from Nîmes, the rather dusty and featureless road turns into a valley lying green and flat between low ranges of hills, and with a pretty river flowing through it. After driving about a mile up the valley you see, high in front, stretching across from bank to bank, a stupendous bridge, with three rows of arches of warm, cream-coloured stone, and looking at once as stable as the rock and as light as air. This is the Pont du Gard, built some 1600 or 1800 years ago by the Romans to carry the water supply of Nîmes across the river Gardon. Nîmes was but a provincial town—Nemausus—and this vast structure was only wanted to carry to it the water drawn from among the hills on the farther side of the valley, about ten miles off; and yet there it stands to this day—a building that no force of nature, short of an earthquake, could overthrow. There are three tiers of round arches; in the lowest tier there are 6 arches, in the second 11, in the highest 33. The span of the first and second tiers is the same; that of the uppermost is much smaller. The canal for the water is enclosed in a kind of tunnel carried along the top of the highest range, covered with great slabs of stone and lined with cement. In the rest of the work no mor-

tar or cement is used; and the blocks—some of them of enormous size—are fitted to each other so closely that you could not put the blade of a knife between them. The cement of the waterway is not like some I got from a British workman lately, and which has already peeled off in large flakes. It is so hard and compact that you can scarcely crack it with a hammer. The height of the bridge is 160 feet, and its length along the top 882. But that human violence has broken a little bit off each end, and that the lapse of 15 centuries, or more, has elsewhere choked the waterway, it might still be conveying the pure streams of the Airan and the Ure across the valley, to lay the dust of Nimes. No one knows who built it, and antiquaries assign it to dates varying from a few years before Christ to two hundred after him. It was only one out of scores of works executed throughout the great Roman Empire, by the old masters of the world, for the generous purpose of providing for the health, or comfort, or pleasure of the people. It was built by pagans. No law of Christian morality, any more than of economic science, had ever been imparted to them. They were not, like the builders of the Tay Bridge, citizens of a 'Bible-loving' State, and members or 'adherents' of evangelical churches. Yet they seem to have come nearer to the ideal of honest work than the Christian artificer. Whatever their hand found to do they did it with their might. On their foundation they did not build 'wood hay

'stubble.' 'A set of slaves, rendering forced labour,' do you say? Perhaps they were; perhaps they weren't. Even if they were, they did fairly what they had to do. There was no 'scamping' of work among them. Their overseers saw what was done, and how it was done, to some purpose. A sense of honest intention laboriously fulfilled reigned over that bridge, as its huge blocks and graceful arches rose into the air, and spanned the valley above the green waters of the smooth-flowing Gardon. 'Every man's work shall be tried of what sort it is.' This work of theirs stands acquitted. Time, human violence, 'elemental war,' have stormed against it in vain. A thousand years hence it will in all likelihood be standing as it stands now. Where will be then our cast-iron bridges, which inspectors will not look at, and workmen will not tell about? I enter into no theological questions about the 'souls' of the two sets of builders; but I commend to the Christians the lesson of the pagan building."

From Nimes our plan was to cross the country to Pau; but one would think the French railway companies were in league to prevent such a journey,—so slow and ill-fitting were the trains. The whole distance might be covered in a day, did the trains go at a smart pace, and correspond with each other. As it was, we had to spread the time over three days. Our first stage was Montpellier, which is about an hour and a quarter by rail from Nimes,

and where we wished to stop in order to see the town, which, before the Riviera came into vogue and St. Brougham discovered Cannes, was the ideal health haunt of the British invalid.

The country between Nîmes and Montpellier is flat; the vineyards, among others those of Lunel, are uninteresting, and the olives are the close-cropped olives of the west, not the umbrageous trees of the Riviera. To the north stretches the low undulating line of the Cevennes, renowned for the insurrection of the Camisards, of which these mountains were the scene. Montpellier stands on a plateau a little above the plain. It wears an air of faded beauty and jaded fashion, reminding one, in a rather dull way, of Cheltenham, though Cheltenham does not possess the historical interest of Montpellier, nor anything to compare in artistic and scientific value with the Jardin des Plantes, established by Henry IV.; the Promenade du Peyrou and the Grand Aqueduct—a sort of imitation of the Pont du Gard; the quaint porch of the Cathedral, with its two massive turrets; the Musée Fabre, founded by Fabre, an artist of Montpellier, and the friend of Alfieri, whose library of 15,000 volumes and valuable MSS. connected with the House of Stuart are preserved there. Montpellier also boasts of a University, founded in the twelfth century. Its medical school, in which the first teachers were Arabian doctors from Spain, is still ranked among the best in Europe. As a residence for people in search of health or pleasure, however, this town's day is

over. In situation, climate, beauty, and general attractiveness it cannot vie with its sisters on the Riviera.

Our next day's journey was to Toulouse. The railway passes by Cette, the great emporium and factory of wines of all countries. They are doctored here to suit the various markets, and are sent over the world in casks, of which we saw acres from the windows as we passed through the town. The Canal du Midi has its eastern embouchure close by; and Cette has thus direct communication by water both with the Mediterranean and the Bay of Biscay. As we travel along, we pass Pezenas, famous for its brandies, and Narbonne, whose honey is as celebrated as that of Hybla. They had it in the buffet at the station, and it certainly was very good, with a thymy flavour, which, however, I don't think is finer than that of our own heather. Further on, is Carcassone, on the Aude, a modern town, overhung by one of the darkest, grimmest, most feudal-looking old towns, towered and ramparted, to be seen in France.

It was nearly dark, and was raining—the first rain we had seen for weeks—when we reached Toulouse, and drove through the drenched streets to the Hotel Tivollier, which is famed throughout the South of France for its *cuisine*. Toulouse has been a great and notable town ever since Martial wrote of “Palladiæ non inficianda Tolosæ gloria.” It was famous under the Romans, and

then under the Visigoths, and later the "Counts of Toulouse" held independent sway there. It was a favourite city of the troubadours, and celebrated in Provençal song. It still flourishes in undiminished prosperity, watered by the sweeping Garonne, with an old cathedral, and seat of an archbishopric, a University, a military school, many manufactories, and a great trade. I did not, however, feel tempted to stay, or to trace out the localities of the final struggles between Soult and Wellington, which have left their record in the English graves and inscriptions in the cemetery on Montrave, where on the 10th of April, 1814, the last battle before the peace raged fiercely.

On leaving Toulouse, you soon come within sight of the great rampart of the Pyrenees, and within reach of that charming region which lies along the base of the mountains, and among their valleys and passes, where nestle Bagnères de Bigorre, Bagnères de Luchon, Cauterets, Eaux Bonnes, Eaux Chaudes, and other delectable retreats, less known but not less worth knowing. A spring and summer might easily be spent among them, and in the higher altitudes the hot weather is tempered, to a degree not incompatible with comfort and a due amount of bodily exercise. The railway skirts the edge of the Pyrenean heights, sometimes approaching it closely, giving fine views of the mountains and the varied plain through which roll the Garonne, the Adour,

and the Gave de Pau. We pass many picturesque little towns and villages, among others Tarbes, the headquarters of the French artillery; Lourdes, the theatre of the miraculous appearance of the Holy Virgin (of which more anon); and Coarraze-Ney, the scene of the rough and ready upbringing of the hero of this region—"the soldier of Navarre." As the shadows fall we glide into a valley watered by a placid river, beyond which on the left, and far away in the evening sky, gleam the snow-clad crests of a vast mountain range. On the right a low hill slopes upward from the river's brink, and is covered with the clustered buildings, terraces, and towers of a bright-looking town. The river is the Gave de Pau, the town is Pau.

VI.

Pau.

"This castle hath a pleasant seat the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses."

Macbeth, i. 6.



THE view from the terrace at Pau is one of the great views of Europe. It is worthy to be named beside the view of the Alps from Turin; of the Sierra from the Vega of Granada; of Genoa from the sea; of the Bay of Naples from Posilipo; which, among those that I have seen, stand out pre-eminent for impressive beauty. The broad terrace surmounts the brow of the low hill on which Pau stands, and is lined, on the inner side, with hotels, among which the "Hotel de France" has a notable name that did not seem to me deserved, either by the character of the accommodation or the fare. The charges were high, and the company at the table d'hôte was the dullest I ever fell in with abroad. On the outer side, the ground falls abruptly from the terrace wall to the lower level of the river bank. Beyond the river lies

a narrow plain, dotted with hamlets and chateaux, and smiling with vineyards and orchards. Above the plain, which is here not more than a mile wide, rise the undulating, richly-foliaged heights of the "Coteaux;" and beyond these again, at a distance of from 30 to 40 miles, stretches the grand range of the Pyrenees—the summits covered with snow, and the loftiest peak just opposite Pau, the Pic du Midi d' Ossau—soaring up to a height of over 11,000 feet. The town, of about 30,000 inhabitants, lies behind this terrace—the "Boulevard du Midi"—and is bright, clean, and picturesque, and full of historical interest.

Though Pau is commonly thought of as little else than a health resort, no town in France has a history more closely interwoven with the past glories and vicissitudes of the nation. It is now only the chief town of the Department of the Basses Pyrenees; but it was, of old, the independent capital of the State of Bearn. To Bearn in the 15th century was added the little kingdom of Navarre. Henry II., King of Navarre and Count of Bearn, married Marguerite de Valois, sister of Francis I. of France. Under her gracious sway the Castle of Pau—even then a venerable pile—became the rendezvous of the learning, the art, the literature, of the south of France, as well as the asylum of the doctors and preachers of the reformed faith, which its mistress had embraced. Calvin, Farel, and Beza were honoured guests; and Marot rehearsed to the

Queen—herself a poetess and musician—those psalm tunes with which his genius had enriched the Protestant ritual, and which are still used in the churches of France and Scotland. When we sing the “Old 100,” or the “Old 24th,” we revive the strains which Marot raised at the Court of Queen Margaret of Navarre, 300 years ago. Margaret’s daughter was Jeanne d’Albret—one of the noblest women of whom history bears record. Her son, by her husband Antoine de Bourbon, was Henry—the hero of Navarre and France. The old king, her father, was much engrossed with the hope of having a grandson to wear his crown. The future fortunes of the expected child depended on how this old gentleman should arrange his will. He put the will in a gold box, and, showing it to Jeanne, said, “This is the will, and it shall be yours if, during the birth, you sing me a Gascon or Bearnais song, for I don’t want you to give me either a peevish boy or a whining girl.” When, soon after, the King was hastily summoned to his daughter’s chamber, he heard her voice, as he hurried along, raising loud and clear the Bearnais chant—

“Notre Dame du bout du pont,
Adjuda mi in questa heure;”

and she sang on till the boy was born, when the grandfather eagerly carried him off to initiate him into Bearnese life, by the ancient ceremony of rub-

bing his lips with garlic, and pouring down his throat a few drops of the wine of Jurançon, a village of the plain. So began the stormy course of the soldier of Navarre, the hero of Coutras, of Arques, of Ivry, the scourge of the League, the champion of the Reformed Church, the Catholic King, the victim of Ravallac. There is no more chequered, more romantic career, stamped with a stronger and more vital individuality, in all history, than his. His gaiety, his gallantry, his glory, his pride of life, are still dear to the heart of France, and specially in his own region of Bearn. His marble statue stands in the Place Royale, with the legend on the pedestal—"Lou Noustre Henric," the cry of the peasantry who thronged the place when the statue was unveiled in 1843. In the galleries are pictures of his birth and his assassination. In the old castle, which, in spite of all "restorations," is still little else than the monument of Henry, they preserve religiously the large turtle "carapace," or shell, which formed his cradle. What Shakespeare is to Stratford, Henry is to Pau.

The castle stands at the end of the terrace, and beyond it, again, overhanging the Gave—which flows immediately below—stretches the park, charmingly wooded, and pervaded by shady walks, whence one can see, through the stems and the foliage, the distant Pyrenees. The castle is full of rare tapestries and rich old furniture. There are some fine chimney-pieces and bits of sculpture. Poor Abdel-Kader was kept prisoner here for a time, during which three of his chil-

dren died. The little exiles are buried in a weedy corner of the cemetery, with three forlorn miniature crescents at the head of their graves. When the virtuous Isabella of Spain fled from her dominions in 1868, she took refuge for a time in the Castle. From Marguerite and Jeanne to Isabella! what a "*descensus Averni*."

There are several handsome churches in Pau, and two very good picture galleries, a fine theatre, a large market, and immense barracks. In one of the older streets—the Rue Tran—a tablet on the front of one of the houses states that in that house was born, on January 26, 1764, Jean Baptiste Jules Bernadotte. He was born the son of a burgess of Pau, and he died King of Sweden. This is not so remarkable (for Kings were of cheap and easy manufacture in Napoleon's day) as that his family is the royal family of Sweden and Norway to the present hour, and not the least respected and respectable among European royalties.

The British muster in great force at Pau, though I was informed that, since the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank, the Scotch contingent has not been so numerous as before. The popularity of Pau as a health-resort is of long standing, and the later fame of the Riviera has not lessened it. To those that love the neighbourhood of the great deep it lacks a charm which nothing can replace. But it has plenty of its own. The Pyrenees are inexhaustibly beautiful, and their valleys offer delightful excursions.

The society of the town is very good. There are public lectures, concerts, assemblies, entertainment of every kind, social, intellectual, æsthetic. There is an excellent English Club, to which strangers are hospitably admitted on easy terms. There are three English churches, of varying types of ritual and doctrine, and a Scotch (Free) Church. There is a pack of hounds, with good hunting. There is a common near the town, where, in addition to cricket and polo, golf has recently and successfully been introduced. There is capital shooting—the better and more varied the further you advance among the Pyrenees, where in winter the sportsman may encounter even the wild boar and the wolf. For those who relish the cowardly diversion, I regret to say there are pigeon-shooting matches. Excellent lodgings are to be had in the town, and are not dear. The climate is warm and equable, and the air remarkably still. High winds are very rare. It is said to suit children singularly well ; and as the facilities for education are great, it is an admirable place for family residence. It also possesses the advantage of easy access. It can be reached from Paris in less than 14 hours, and from Bordeaux in about 4. At Bordeaux first-class steamers are always to be found, which will carry you home to the Clyde, or Mersey, or Thames, in three or four days.

VII.

Lourdes.

"The master of superstition is the people; and in all superstition wise men follow fools."

Bacon's Essays.

"Religion and gracious custom commanded me that I fall down loyally, and kiss the rock that blessed Mary pressed. With a half consciousness—with the semblance of a thrilling hope that I was plunging deep, deep into my first knowledge of some most holy mystery, or of some new, rapturous, and daring sin, I knelt and bowed down my face till I met the smooth rock with my lips. One moment—one moment my heart, or some old Pagan demon within me bounded—my bosom was lifted, and swung, as tho' I had touched her warm robe. One moment—one more,—and then, the fever had left me. I rose from my knees, I felt hopelessly gone."

Eothen; Chap. ix.



TRAIN leaves Pau about ten in the morning, and, ascending the Valley of the Gave, carries you in an hour to a point where, between the heights on either side, there is not much more than room for the river and the rails. Here the eye is caught with the tall spire of a large church, which stands high above the left bank of the stream. The hills rise steeply behind it, below is a long terrace overhanging the brink of the Gave, and shaded with trees; and immediately under the church a hollow

can be detected in the declivity on which it stands ; and in front of this, on the wide pavement of the terrace, there is a small crowd of people standing, kneeling, and moving about. The train slides past, and in two or three minutes stops at Lourdes. The station is a few hundred yards from the town, which you can see is a "little one" like Zoar, with an old castle frowning over it from the top of a rock, that rises out of the very centre of the clustered roofs. On getting out of the train, you step at once into the arena of religious excitement and supernatural association. "Sortie des Pélerins" meets your eye at the end of the station, and as soon as you pass out you are saluted with the cries of touters, guides, cab-drivers, owners of omnibuses "pour la grotte." The grotto and the miraculous apparition dominate Lourdes, infect its air, variegate its streets, employ its population. As we had a long day before us, we got rid of the dust of the railway, and put our minds into an equable and receptive frame, by taking, first of all, a drive for two or three miles up the valley leading to the bright and bracing health resort of Argeles ; then turned and drove through the town to the grotto. They are making a new road and special bridge over a watercourse that lies between the station and the grotto, for the benefit of the pilgrims to the shrine ; but in the meantime the way to it winds round the base of the castle rock, descends into the little vale of this watercourse, and then mounts on the one hand to the church, and

slopes along on the other to the grotto beneath. The road is lined on each side with restaurants, shops, and booths, the owners of which vociferously offer for sale candles (to burn at the shrine), rosaries, photographs, little images of the Virgin, in stucco or spar, and all sorts of devotional nick-nacks.

We began our inspection of the scene of the "cult" of Notre Dame de Lourdes, with the church. It is a large and handsome Gothic building, high in the roof, and with a lofty spire, a deep choir, but no transepts. Underneath is a capacious crypt. At the western end there is an open vestibule, on the one side of which stands a statue of St. Michael, on the other one of the Holy Virgin. As you enter the church you cannot but be struck with the gorgeousness of the decorations. The centre of the nave is festooned with splendid banners of silk and velvet, embroidered in every colour of the rainbow; and the chapels in the aisles are still more richly adorned with flags, trophies, tablets, jewels, orders, and crosses, of every size, colour, and design. The banners have been presented by towns, churches, confraternities, monasteries, &c., in every quarter of the globe. I noticed one from the Republic of Uruguay; one, with a golden harp on a green ground, from Clonfert, in Ireland—spelt "Irelande;" one from Brittany, with the inscription, "Bretons et Catholiques toujours;" and a host of others from all parts of Europe and America. On either side of the great door, after you enter, are two large marbles, the one

containing a narrative of the facts of the alleged appearances of the Virgin to Bernadette Soubirous ; the other the mandate of the Bishop of Tarbes, officially declaring the authenticity of the narrative, and authorising, in the diocese of Tarbes, "le culte de Notre Dame de Lourdes."

There are five chapels in each of the side aisles, between the entrance and the apsidal choir ; and these are hung with the most costly offerings, among which are conspicuous several rich bridal veils and wreaths, and many military orders and medals. In the crypt there are no banners, but there are numbers of tablets—one from Glasgow—with inscriptions recording the faith, or gratitude, of the votaries of Our Lady of Lourdes ;—such as "for cure effected," "for health gained ;"—one erected by a "father of a family" in acknowledgment of "health restored, a lawsuit gained, promotion obtained"—all by the intercession of Our Lady. In the crypt, too, are four or five confessionals, and altars, at one of which a priest was celebrating as we passed. Nobody was paying any attention to him that I could see, and an old woman was bustling about with candles, which she was fixing in front of one or two of the shrines. As soon as you emerge from the church, or descend from your carriage to enter it, a bevy of these old ladies rush at you with armfuls of these emblems of the burning and shining light of devotion, and no doubt drive a profitable trade. Right below the church is the grotto where the Virgin revealed

herself. The area in front of it is laid down in smooth asphalt pavement, and on a large flat stone in the middle is an inscription, bearing that on that spot Bernadette knelt when she saw the vision. Overlooking this spot is a little grotto in the side of the rock (a damp-looking rock, with plenty of weeds and wild flowers about it), within whose shelter the Virgin appeared. Her position is now indicated by a life-size marble statue of very poor artistic merits. Round the lower ledge and sides of the grotto is a perfect grove of crutches, and below quantities of candles gutter and blink. The stream, which arose, miraculously, at the base of the grotto is conducted through several little cocks into a trough, whence it escapes underground to the river, and where the faithful drink, and bathe their hands and faces in the salutary waters. On the left of the grotto a large marble records the legend, and farther off stands a shop, where bottles of the water and little histories of the miracle are on sale. There is always a gathering, large or small, in front of the grotto—some in prayer, some at the water trough, some looking on idly or curiously. While we stood by an angler came briskly along the broad, well-gravelled promenade, which leads from the town and stretches away under the trees by the river side. He stops, lays his rod on the parapet of the river-wall, and kneels down to pray for a blessing on his fishing. A large waggon lumbers up. It is stopped till branches are strewn in front of the shrine, which

shall save the pavement and deaden the noise, and then the oxen are driven gently past. A young girl and her companion—a youth of eighteen or so—of the upper class, evidently—are strolling along. When she reaches Bernadette's tablet she kneels, while he goes up, draws a cup of the water, and brings it to her. She drinks, he drinks, and then she rises, and they continue their walk. We looked on for some time ; tried the quality of the water, which was limpid and cool ; bought a bottle of it and some rosaries, which were extraordinarily cheap, and then walked up to the town, observing as we did so, near the church, the mansion erected for bishops and priests, and on the sunny slope across the river, the two convents of Carmelites, and Benedictines, recently built.

Now, here you have around this hole in a rock overhanging the Gave, and near the dull little town of Lourdes, at the foot of the Pyrenees, of which the traveller twenty-two years ago knew nothing except that its chocolate was said to be exceptionally good, and that its old castle had once been held by the English under the Black Prince—here you have the whole apparatus of an established cult. You have the scene of an alleged miracle distinctly marked out ; the legend categorically recorded ; a splendid church built over the site, costly proofs of devotion and faith enshrined in it ; religious houses for the use of the wayfaring visitor, and for the orders that have resorted to the sacred spot ; you have pilgrim-

ages from afar directed to the place, and you have formal ecclesiastical sanction for all this from the proper authorities. This is the growth of no more than two and twenty years. The fact is full of significance, and is worthy the study of those who are interested in the development of religious tradition and miraculous legend.

Marie Bernarde Soubirous, commonly called Bernadette, a child of fourteen, born of poor parents, and of rather weak constitution and peculiar ways, though of good disposition and pious tendency, went, on the 11th February, 1858, to gather wood among the trees on the bank of the Gave. Two other children were with her, but left her behind as they ran on through the wood. Bernadette was sitting on a stone, wondering whether she would follow them across a mill-lade which traversed the wood, and the water in which they had called out to her was very cold, when—just at mid-day—she heard an unaccustomed sound, and, looking up to the little cavern whence it came, beheld a vision. In the midst of a halo of splendid light stood a beautiful lady, youthful, tender, smiling, clothed in white, and girdled with blue. Her delicate feet were bare, and over them seemed to twine two golden roses. The lady, seeing the child amazed and frightened, smiled on her, made the sign of the cross, and, by a gesture, encouraged Bernadette to handle the beads of her rosary, and say her prayers. Her companions, looking back, saw her counting

her beads, and thought she was praying. "Look at Bernadette," they said—"she's at her prayers!" and then they ran on. Meantime, the apparition, after beckoning the child to approach, and then stretching out its hands as if in benediction and farewell, disappeared. On telling her mother and sister what she had seen, Bernadette was reproved for talking nonsense, and forbidden to go back to the grotto. Next Sunday, however, the veto was withdrawn, and Bernadette, along with some young companions, returned to the wood, fortifying themselves with a bottle of holy water, which they agreed should be used as a test of the character of the apparition, should it again be visible. It did reappear, but only to Bernadette. Her companions saw and heard nothing—except Bernadette's excited countenance and exclamations as she stared into the grotto and sprinkled the holy water towards it, crying out the while—"She is there. She smiles. Oh, she is lovely!" and so on; after which, the child became rigidly still, and recited her prayers. When she ended, the vision again vanished. That night all Lourdes had heard the story of Bernadette and the grotto.

On the 18th two pious women, thinking that this apparition might originate with some poor soul in Purgatory which sought masses for its relief, came to Bernadette's house in time to join in the early mass at half-past five, and then accompanied her from the church to the grotto. Again the bystan-

ders, like St. Paul's escort on his way to Damascus, were deaf and blind to anything supernatural—unless Bernadette's cries of joy and illuminated face might deserve that name. "She is there!" she cried. "She makes me a sign to advance," while the simple-minded pair beside her exhorted the child to ask the vision to tell what it wanted, and to write down its wishes on a piece of paper they had provided for the purpose. Bernadette took the paper, pen, and ink, from them, and advanced nearer to the grotto. Presently she returned with the paper to where her friends stood, and told them that the lady had said, "What I have to say I need not write. Only do me the grace to come here during fifteen days; and I promise to render you happy, not only in this world, but in the other." "Ask her," urged the women, "if *we* may come back." "They may, and others, too," replied the lady. "I wish to see many here;" and with this she was no more seen. Bernadette performed her promise, beginning with a visit the next morning, in which her father and mother and several neighbours accompanied her. As day succeeded day the number of her escort increased, till it was at length a great but orderly crowd. Naturally, much discussion began, and the worldly and rational condemned the whole affair as either an imposition or delusion. "The girl is cracked," said some. "She is hysterical," said others. "You must come with me," said the Commissary of Police, and he

marched her away to his office the next Sunday afternoon. He could do nothing more, however, than threaten her with the wrath of the "Procureur Imperial," if she continued to see her visions, and let her go. Doctors came to the grotto to watch her during her ecstasy, but could discern no trace of hysteria or catalepsy. Amidst a good deal of vague wonder, scientific ridicule, and official annoyance, Bernadette was supported by popular sympathy and the friendship of the parish priest, who seems to have been a kindly and sensible man, l'Abbé Peyramale. On some of the fifteen days the lady appeared; on some she did not. The observant crowd always knew the moment of the apparition by the sudden transfiguration and illumination of Bernadette's figure and countenance. Her face shone with a reflected glory, and her attitude and look acquired a dignity and refinement not her own.

On Tuesday, February 23, Bernadette arrived at the grotto by daybreak. A crowd of not less than 8,000 people pressed around, as the girl knelt at the usual spot before the grotto. The lady appeared and spoke to her. "I have to tell you a secret," she said, "which concerns yourself only. Promise me never to reveal it to any one." "I promise," said Bernadette. The lady then taught her a prayer, word by word, to be repeated to herself whenever she should appear, but never to be revealed to mortal. Then said she, "Go,

my daughter, and tell the priests that they ought to erect here a sanctuary and come hither in processions." Bernadette carried this message to the curé, with whom this was her first interview, as he, though protecting her by his friendship, had purposely held aloof from seeing her. The curé was not going to be inveigled into receiving orders from apparitions, without knowing what he was about. So he bade Bernadette tell the lady that she must make herself known. "If she be the Holy Virgin," said he, "let her give us a sign. You say there is a wild rose where she stands. This is February. If she wants a sanctuary built let her make the rose blossom." Bernadette, on going back to the good curé next day, had to confess that the rose had not blossomed. The lady had appeared ; but had only smiled and said nothing, on hearing the priest's message. Then she had said "Penitence, Penitence, Penitence ;" and revealed to Bernadette a second incommunicable secret, and vanished. This was scantily satisfactory. Next day, again, the 25th, she was visible and imparted a third mystery, also incommunicable ; and then told the girl to drink and wash at the spring, and eat of the herb that grew there. Bernadette was dumbfounded. There was no spring at the grotto, and she was turning to the river, when the supernatural voice cried, "Don't go there—the spring is here ;" and the visionary hand pointed to the bare and dry ground beneath the grotto. Obeying another sign, Bernadette grubbed in the earth

with her hands, and then rubbed them on her face. As she did so, a slight humidity manifested itself. The soil was damp and muddy. She then pulled and ate a sprig of herbage that sprouted hard by; while the crowd whispered to each other, "Poor child! she's lost her head *now*." But in point of fact this was the opening of the wonder-working spring. Next day a thread of water was purling down by the grotto; by and by it was as big as a child's arm. It must have grown since then or it could not afford the copious supply that is drawn from it now-a-days.

The rose never blossomed. The curé had to take the fountain instead of the flower. And he had a better bargain, for the very day after it sprang up the water wrought a cure upon Bouriette, a poor quarryman of Lourdes, who had blown himself up, and hurt his eyes so as to be nearly blind. He sent for some of the water, and his daughter brought him a few muddy drops. He washed his eyes with this new liniment, prayed, and was cured—the first of a long list of cures to be laid to the credit of Our Lady of Lourdes.

On the 2nd of March the curé received a visit from Bernadette once more. "She wishes you," said the child, "to raise a sanctuary at the grotto, and to come thither in procession." The curé conveyed the renewed message to his bishop at Tarbes, who resolved in the meantime to keep "a calm

sough," and take steps toward a formal inquiry into the whole affair from first to last.

The closing day of the promised fifteen was market day at Lourdes. The crowd was enormous; and the gendarmerie and garrison were on duty to prevent disorder. A gendarme, with drawn sword, made way through the dense throng for Bernadette, as she approached the grotto. There was a hushed yet excited expectation of some special manifestation; but nothing unusual took place. The vision appeared, repeated the demand for a sanctuary and procession, and vanished, leaving Bernadette to go home with her mother, downcast and disappointed.

On 25th March, the Feast of the Annunciation, an irresistible impulse carried Bernadette to the grotto. The vision reappeared. Hitherto, although general belief connected the vision with the "Mother of God," there had been no distinct declaration, on Bernadette's part, of any knowledge as to who the superhuman visitant was. This morning the child, like Jacob of old with the angel, earnestly besought the name of the unknown. After some delay, with an air and aspect more regal and superb than ever, and with eyes upturned as if beholding the inner splendours of heaven, the vision vouchsafed the reply, "Je suis l'Immaculée Conception." The sceptical Protestant may think that this rather ungrammatical announcement divulged the secret, in more senses than one; inasmuch as the promulgation of the favourite dogma of the immaculate conception, as an article

of Catholic belief had been made, by Papal decree, to a somewhat scornful and unreceptive world only four years earlier, in 1854.

Be that as it may, all that had gone before had only led up to this announcement; and this was enough for the curé, to whom Bernadette hastened with the new revelation. He understood it all now. The vision was the Mother of God. She had come to ratify the Pope's decree, to claim her proper honour, and to proclaim with her own voice her true title, to her Son's Church. The visions culminated in this supreme revelation. On the 5th April, Easter Monday, the Virgin appeared again to her little votary, who was so entranced by the spectacle that for a quarter of an hour, to the amazement of the crowd, she let the flame of the taper she carried in her hand play among her fingers, and yet without even singeing them. Only once again, on the evening of 16th July, did she see her celestial patroness. She felt the mysterious attraction draw her again to the wood beside the Gave. Access to the grotto had in the meantime been forbidden by the "prefect," who wished to "stamp out" the "superstition." It was twilight by the time Bernadette reached the meadows that bordered the right bank of the river, and coming to a point opposite the grotto, found a few other worshippers at their prayers on this spot, whence they could see the hollow on the farther bank. For a quarter of an hour they saw the girl remain in her kind of illumined ecstasy, on the ground, silent and

absorbed. She then rose, and spoke of the vision with profound delight, as more glorious and beatific than ever. This was the last of it. The beautiful lady of the grotto never appeared to her again. Bernadette, after all these marvels, seems to have continued to be the same simple, rather peculiar, but good little girl she was before, with uncertain health. She attended school for two years longer, and in 1860 was taken in hand by the Sisters of Charity of Nevers, who attended the hospital at Lourdes; and finally, in 1867, she took the vows and joined the sisterhood, under the name of Sister Marie Bernard. She is said to have died in their convent some years afterwards—out of her mind, say some.

Immediately after the last apparition, the Bishop of Tarbes appointed a commission of ecclesiastics, of doctors of medicine, and of *savans*, to investigate the whole matter. But popular credulity and devotion did not wait for Episcopal sanction. The flow of pilgrimages to the shrine of Lourdes, which is as yet unexhausted, had begun long before Monseigneur Laurence announced his decision, on the report of the Commissioners. On the 18th January, 1862, the bishop published the decree, which may be read at length on the marble tablet in the church, and which ratified, with the authority not only of the good prelate himself but of the Supreme Pontiff, the truth of Bernadette's stories of the apparition, and authorised the worship of our Lady of Lourdes. Further, the bishop stated that the plot of ground

containing the grotto had become his property, and appealed to the faithful for aid in building a sanctuary there, according to the desire of the Holy Virgin. The present gorgeous church—begun in 1862, and so far finished as to admit of mass being celebrated in it by 1866—is the result. Our Lady's desire for a procession was gratified in April, 1864, when an immense concourse followed the bishop to the grotto, where he bestowed his blessing on the newly-erected statue, which now decorates the spot. The cures of all sorts wrought at the shrine, or through the use of the water, are beyond recounting. The history of Bernadette, the visions and the miracles, is repeated in many publications, and guaranteed by the names of highly respectable authors, all of course of the Roman faith.

The time is past when contemporary evidence can either be obtained, or subjected to rigid scrutiny from unfriendly or sceptical quarters. The cult of Notre Dame de Lourdes is firmly established. Are her worshippers dupes? If so, who was the impostor? Was Bernadette the victim of hallucination; or one of the babes and sucklings out of whose mouth is ordained praise? I do not pretend to explain her, or her history.

We had a very good luncheon at an hotel overlooking the road to the grotto, where the waiter spread our table at a window commanding a pretty view of the river, the church, and the woods and hills. I found it difficult to realise that the Catholic

world believed the landscape I was looking at to be the theatre of an awful supernatural revelation. If there be anything at all in "the light that never was on sea or shore, the consecration and the poet's dream," there ought to have been some of it here, shining with mystic radiance over the valley ; but there was not. I could feel no greater faith in the Unseen, at Lourdes, than at any other dingy little town in France. I was not sorry when it was time to stroll up to the station to meet the train for Pau.

VIII.

Biarritz.

"Liquidæ placuere Baiæ."

Horace, iii. 4.



AFTER you leave Pau, the Pyrenees recede to the south-westward, and the scenery grows tamer. At Orthes, on the Gave, an insignificant-looking little place, you pass the scene of the penultimate battle of the Peninsular campaigns, in which Soult—trying to hold the road to Bordeaux—was dislodged by Wellington. At Peyrehorade, another station on this line, there was a *tête-du-pont* of much importance, from which also the French had to withdraw before the advance of the Duke. The Gave de Pau and the Gave d'Oleron here unite their streams, and flow on in considerable volume to join the Adour. "Gave," in the Basque dialect, means "water," thus—Gave d'Oleron, the water of Oleron. That dialect is of the same root as our Gaelic. An old Scotch servant, who had been with a family at Pau, told me she got on in her marketing very well with the little French she had learned, and "her

ain Gaelic." She found the peasantry understood many of her Celtic words and names. A Highlandman, a Welshman, an Irishman, a Breton, and a Basque would make shift to understand each other pretty well.

The Adour, which is a fine and ample river, "smooth sliding," like the Mincius, for several leagues above Bayonne, is there joined by the Nive, descending, as do the two Gaves, from the Pyrenees. Bayonne, famous for its hams and its bayonets, is a brisk and busy town, with strong fortifications, a very fine cathedral, and handsome and crowded quays. The town and its neighbourhood are full of stirring memories of the war of 1813-14. British skill and daring nowhere achieved more creditable results than in the passage of the Nive and of the Adour, and the investment of Bayonne.

The railway from Bayonne to Spain has a station at La Negresse, two miles from Biarritz, and there is a minor line, on which trains run every half hour, to the town of Biarritz itself; but for travellers with baggage, arriving at Bayonne, the easiest plan is to hire one of the small omnibuses which abound at the station, and drive out. The drive is about five miles, and should not cost more than 8 or 9 francs; and it has the marked advantage of lifting you and your baggage at the railway gate, and depositing you at the door of the hotel you are going to. Moreover, it is a pretty drive along a well-shaded highway, and as you pass through the town you

get a good idea of the river and quays, the public gardens, and the fortifications.

We had written for rooms to the much, and deservedly, recommended "Grand Hotel," but found on reaching it that the only ones disengaged, or likely to be so, did not look on the sea; so we transferred ourselves to the "Casino," a kind of *annexe* to the hotel, where we get a tolerable couple of rooms, whose windows commanded the whole bay, and whenever they were opened admitted the fresh wind, pregnant with Atlantic brine. There were large public rooms on the floor below, but they were little frequented, and the dining-room had the disadvantage of being on the other side of a court, which had to be crossed to reach it. They always gave us, however, a very good dinner and very palatable *vin ordinaire*.

The day after I arrived I found a tall, dark-bearded gentleman, whose pallid hue and black skull cap gave him the look of a cloistered monk, seated at one of the tables, and recognised in him the British Foreign Secretary, recruiting after an illness, and receiving, no doubt with disgust, the reports (which at this time began to make daily arrivals) of crushing Conservative defeats. Our French friends were much interested in the elections, and on the whole were on the side of Lord Beaconsfield. All the local papers contained the latest telegrams of the polls; but what with the usual slips of the telegraph, and the Gallic inability to spell English names, one was

sometimes puzzled to make out which were the constituencies and who were the candidates, referred to.

Biarritz ought to be Bonapartist, if any place in France is. The Emperor, or rather the Empress, made it. Before her imperial days, she used to come thither from Spain for sea bathing ; and it was then a little village, hardly known beyond the French and Spanish frontier. The place, which Mademoiselle de Teba had liked, became the favourite resort of the Empress ; and the "mixed multitude" that follows the fashion—whatever it be—rushed to these rocks and sands, bathed in the waves of the Atlantic, and basked in the meretricious sunshine of the Napoleonic Court. The Emperor built a large villa at one end of the bay, and reclaimed a waste and marshy piece of land around it, planting it with tamarisks and pines, and forming in the rear of the villa a kind of bosky wilderness, where the inmates could ramble, in shelter, and unseen by the watchful eyes of the Philistines who swarmed outside the park gates. The house stands empty and desolate now. We were shown over it by the *gardien*, an old servant of the Empress, to whom he seems devotedly attached. It was touching to see the hundred little evidences of the once familiar occupancy, the Emperor's writing-table just as he left it ; the books in the poor Prince's little library ; the nick-nacks of the Empress ; and more touching still, to hear the lamentations of the honest retainer over the exile of the mother, and the untimely downfall of the son, to see the tears in his

eyes, the impulsive gestures and appeals to Heaven. Here, at least, the dethroned had left kind memories behind them.

Beyond the "Villa Eugenie" the rocks rise high and rugged above the sands; and on the brow overhanging the farthest reach of the bay stands a tall Pharos, glittering white in the sunshine. The entrance to the Adour, across a rough bar, lies about three miles north of this lighthouse. The river has no estuary, but opens at once like a canal, upon the sea, as if the sandy beach had been suddenly split in two to make a passage for it. Looking across from the lighthouse, towards Bayonne, you can see the masts of ships moving above the sands and low pine woods of the coast; you watch them to the gap in the ridges, where the white surf marks the bar; and in five minutes they are out of the river, over the bar, and plunging on into the Gulf of Gascony. The Grande Plage, or chief beach, of Biarritz, extends for nearly half a mile, from the rocks below the lighthouse, to another headland and cluster of rocks, above which stands the town. The beach is a smooth expanse of yellow sand. A terraced walk runs along the top of it, and behind this are the extensive buildings of the bathing establishment. Beyond the rocky promontory, which is crowned with the Grand Hotel, the Casino, the Parish Church, and other edifices, there is another bathing-place—a deep cove, floored with smooth sand, between its walls of rock. Farther on, a pier, rather out of order,

stretches into the sea, and commands a view of the fantastic clusters of crags, boulders, and caves, over and into which the sea dashes and foams, roaring loud and spouting high. Round a point, yet further on, you come upon a stretch of sands several miles long, surmounted with sandhills and downs, the latter studded with villas and cottages, and trending away, in the distance, to the coast of Spain, which forms an obtuse angle with that of France, where the last spurs of the Pyrenees advance to meet the ocean.

The regular bathing does not begin till June or July ; but now-a-days Biarritz is constantly in season. The mild climate and the fresh sea air render it as attractive in winter and spring as the bathing does in summer and autumn ; and when I was there, in the end of March, the hotels and *pensions* were full. On Easter Sunday the Anglican Church, which is the sole representative of British Christianity, was crammed to the door. Prices rise, however, in the autumn. In spring they are much the same as in the larger resorts on the Riviera, perhaps a trifle lower. For two rooms, looking to the front, I paid 10 francs a day. Dinner was 4 francs and a-half, and breakfast, a large and substantial meal, three and a-half, in each case wine included. At Pau I paid for a single room, *au troisieme*, 8 francs a day, and 5 francs for dinner. At San Remo, for one room 10 francs a day, 5 for dinner, and 5 for *dejeuner*—neither with wine. At Bordighera, for one room, and a very good one too, only 5 francs

for dinner 4 and a-half. The variations in the prices of some things were rather odd. A water, called St. Galmier, is much recommended to the traveller, as the local waters are in many places not considered salutary. At Nimes we were charged 60 centimes for a bottle of this fluid ; at San Remo, 1 franc 75 centimes—a good deal more than double ; at Pau, 1 franc 25 : at Mentone, 1 franc 50. One met with other vagaries of price, but none so eccentric, I think, as this.

There are many interesting spots easily accessible from Biarritz, such as Cambo, on the Nive, with warm sulphurous and ferruginous springs ; Hasparren, famous through all the Basque country for its cattle markets ; La Rhune, a lofty peak, with a splendid view, and the scene of a sanguinary struggle between Wellington and Soult. But the finest excursion is undoubtedly that from Biarritz to Hendaye, whence the tour may be extended into Spain, Hendaye lying on the right bank of the Bidassoa, which forms the frontier. I got my passport viséd, as the British consul told me that since the Carlist disturbances, the Spaniards have been annoyingly particular about passports. In most countries you find the natives willing to endure your presence—even if they don't like you—for the sake of the money they hope to make by you. In Spain, however, you can't help seeing that the Spaniard would much rather want your money than have your company. Nothing is done to assist your

invasion of his land. You are looked on as a vulgar interloper, with whom the dignified Dons wish to have nothing to do. After some negotiation, I chartered a carriage, whose driver engaged to take us to Hendaye and bring us back, after giving us time there to cross the Bidassoa and see Fontarabia. One might go by rail ; but the hours are unmanageable and much of the scenery is lost. The drive is about 18 miles, through a wide rolling country of downs and uplands and valleys, almost every acre of which was traversed and skirmished over, in the British advance from Spain into France, in 1813. On the brow of the downs overlooking the sea stand the two bright little villages of Bidart and Guethary ; where the original hamlets of fishermen and "toilers of the sea" are getting ringed round with newer and larger dwellings, whitewashed and green-laticed, for the accommodation of the sea-bathing visitors. "In these villages," says a local guide-book, "residence is peaceful ; the life is modest, little agitated from without, and cheap." A high recommendation ; and these attractions must be heightened—if Lucretius be correct—by the spectacle of the restless Biscay waves, and the frequent stormy winds driving ship and shallop across the deeps.

" Suave, mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis,
 Et errâ magnum alterius spectare laborem ;
 Non quia vexari quendam est jucunda voluptas,
 Sed, quibus ipse malis careas, quia cernere suave est."

At one of the little churchyards which we passed the driver suggested our descending to see the tomb

of an "English Colonel," who, with many others, had been slain in the wars; but we forbore. Why make a brave man's grave a sight for tourists?

"Let never a living mortal ken
That a kindly Scot lies there."

St. Jean de Luz, where our Jehu insisted on our buying a bag of macaroons, for which he said the place was famous, is one of the prettiest little towns I have seen in France—bright, clean, well built, picturesquely situated at the mouth of the Nivelle, a river about as broad as the Leven at Dunbarton. The church is large and curious, dating from the 13th Century, but in internal arrangement differing from anything I have ever seen, except in another and smaller church, in a village near this. The choir is very highly decorated, brilliant with gilding, and adorned with statues in niches, rich windows, and much costly altar garniture; but the entire area of the church (one large nave, without aisle or transept) is perfectly empty and bare, while two galleries, painted black, encompass the whole circumference, as in a theatre, or as in that singular specimen of ecclesiastical architecture, St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh. The effect is queer. The other architectural sight of St. Jean de Luz is the Chateau Louis Quatorze, an old castellated mansion in a handsome little square, where the Grand Monarque lodged when he came hither to meet his fiancée the Infanta Maria Theresa, in 1660.

The road beyond St. Jean de Luz turns inland for a few milēs, and is charmingly shaded with tall trees. It winds along through a rich and fertile country that wears a look of peace and plenty. By-and-by it descends into the valley of the Bidassoa. Beyond the river to the left is the small frontier town of Irun. In the middle of the river—a winding and gentle stream about the size of the Nivelle—is the tiny “Ile des Faisans,” where a small obelisk, with an inscription, preserves the memory of the conference between the Spanish Don Louis de Haro and the French Cardinal Mazarin, of which this bank of sand and gravel was the scene ; France and Spain watching with keen eyes the little international platform, on which their interests for war or peace were held at stake. Below the Ile des Faisans a long railway bridge spans the Bidassoa, and near the French end of it are the station and custom-house of Hendaye. The town, or rather village, covers a gentle slope lower down the river side than the station. The river, here broad and shallow, and intersected with sand banks, meanders onwards to its bar, passing close under the walls of Hendaye. We went down at once to the jetty, where we got a boat to take us across to Fontarabia, which frowns over the passage, swart and grim, from the Spanish side. The tide was more than half out, and long spaces of sand were uncovered, among which we were punted by a man and a boy, who worked the boat. The man was quite old enough

to be the boy's father ; but this youngster, when we came to a financial settlement—and a very moderate one it was—asked a *pour-boire* for the “garçon.” “Which is the garçon?” said I—upon which he indicated his elderly friend ;—and “who, then, is the *patron*?” I asked. “Le patron ! c'est moi,” replied the youth, with much self-possession. He proved to be the son of the owner of the boat ; and acted as our cicerone, on the Spanish side, with an air of great experience and patronage, hitching up his red sash, and smoking his cigarette, with the easy air of a man, for whose abilities Fontarabia was all too narrow a sphere.

The passage of the Nivelle, and the battles near its banks, occupied five days of Wellington's campaign, in November, 1813, and cost him, in killed and wounded, nearly 3000 men. Sir Walter Scott was doing full justice to the penetrating power of Roland's enchanted horn, when he apostrophised it as heard from Roncesvalles to Fontarabia.

“ Oh, for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Roland brave and Oliver,
And every paladin and peer
On Roncesvalles died.”

The pass of Roncesvalles is many a long mile from Fontarabia ; but Sir Walter's verse has indissolubly united the two, in the imagination of the British travellers who visit this old and dilapidated strong-

hold—the “Fons Rapidus” of the Romans, and since their day a good deal knocked about in many wars. It figured last in the Carlist insurrections of recent years, in which the Basque provinces took a leading share.

My passport, after all, was not demanded, and the only official, who was on duty at the little pier at which we landed, let us pass with a courteous salute.

The High Street of Fontarabia ascends from the gates to the church, near which is an old, broken-down palace. The street is very narrow; the houses are very high, some of them marked with cannon shots, most of them having balconies and projecting lattices of very rich iron work, and all of them surmounted with deep overhanging eaves of carved wood. The church is common-place; but the smell in the half-rotten and creaking stair to the tower is not common-place. A more searching and pungent stench I never met with. Nor did I ever visit a more dismal, gloomy, grimy, decaying, spirit-stricken scene of ancient desolation and downfall, than this town of Fontarabia. Our guide, ere we left the church, proposed we should step into the “gallery,” to which we consented, in ignorance of what awaited us, which was really the thing most worth seeing in the whole place. We stepped out of a dingy vestry into this gallery, which was a little alcove outside the wall, and looking towards France. Opposite us Hendaye lay basking in the sun. In front the Bidassoa wound its blue way through the banks of

yellow sand ; on the right the valley sloped gently up toward the distant Pyrenees ; on the left a white line of foam, above a tawny sand ridge, marked the bar, and beyond it rolled broad and bright the azure Bay of Biscay. Behind us—unseen—lay the dirt and dreariness of Fontarabia. This view *from* it was charming.

We punted back again in the “all golden afternoon ;” and at the little hotel of Hendaye had dinner served to us, at the head of a long table in a long room, where everything was very good and cheap ; but the lonely dignity of our position—as sole and evidently honoured guests—was depressing.

The drive back in the evening was very pleasant. It was nearly dark when we reached Biarritz, and saw the red light of the Pharos flashing over the roofs of the town.

Biarritz was *en fête* both on Easter Day and the Monday following. The whole population seemed to be in the streets, the cafés were crowded, excursionists from Bayonne were rambling about, among them many soldiers of the garrison, yet I did not see one drunk man, or observe the slightest rowdyism or indecorum. One could not but contrast the scene with the rough brutality of a Scotch holiday, and feel humiliated by the contrast, and ashamed of the Pharisaic humbug of our pretensions to higher moral qualities than our continental neighbours.

The amusements of this Easter Monday included

races on a course near the Villa Eugenie, behind the terrace of the Grande Plage. The first was a donkey race, for which four cuddies were entered, but only two would run. The winner would not have won, had not the second ass, as often as its rider used his whip, stopped for a moment to kick. Had it smothered its resentment till the close, I think it might have secured the prize. The horse-race was rather a poor affair. The horse that ought to have been first bolted over the ropes, fell, and was left behind. Perhaps the most popular of all was the boy, dog, and umbrella race, run between two boys, each holding a dog in a leash, and carrying an umbrella in the other hand. The race was won by a curly mongrel—a large light-hearted dog—that evidently looked on the thing as a capital joke, caught the leash in its mouth, and trotted out in front of the boy, its head and tail well up, and taking long high steps like a horse. The second dog quarrelled with the leash, and not only declined to run, but every now and then tried to sit down, with the object, I rather think, of scratching itself. The various humours and incidents of the course afforded the large and good-natured crowd the liveliest satisfaction.

I did not feel so sorry to leave the shores of the Bay of Biscay as those of the Mediterranean. Still it was with regret we set our faces northward, and began the journey which was to take us far away

from the "splendours of the South," and these sunny havens, to harsher regions and stormier seas—

"Belluosus qui remotis
Obstrepat oceanus Britannis."

But, after all, "there's no place like home."

IX.

Arcachon and Dax.

"Nature is not effete, or so lavish, to bestow all her gifts upon an age, but hath reserved some for posterity, to shew her power that she is still the same, and not old or consumed. Birds and beasts can cure themselves by nature;—*naturae usu ea plerumque cognoscunt, quae homines vix longo labore et doctrina assequuntur*; but men must use much labour and industry to find it out."

Anatomy of Melancholy: Part. ii., Sect. 4.



THE British tourist and the British invalid are very gregarious. They follow the beaten track with a sheep-like docility, and leave to adventurous travellers, like Speke or Grant or Burton, the honour of discovering "fresh woods and pastures new." Thus it happens that of the two places whose names appear above, Arcachon is by far the better known, although its natural advantages are not so remarkable as those of Dax. It has come into vogue with the great flock that annually quits Britain for the South, and that goes whither the touristic or valedudinary bell-wethers lead it. Arcachon, however, is of comparatively recent discovery. In that standard work of 40 years ago, "Clark on Climate," it

is not even mentioned. The only places in France thought worth naming by Clark were Pau, Montpellier, Marseille, Hyeres, Nice, Villa Franca, and Mentone. Biarritz, the watering places of the Pyrenees, Cannes itself—the queen of the south—were “*terræ incognitæ*” to him. Had he lived till now, he would have needed to extend his list considerably.

The great charm of Arcachon lies in its sea and its pines. The town extends for about two miles along the shore of the “Bassin,” which is an inlet from the Bay of Biscay, and the green forest stretches away into the distance behind the town, which thus stands between the salt sea and the pines, inhaling the saline air of the one and the resinous balm of the other.

The British colony congregates chiefly in what is called the “*Ville d’Hiver*,” which stands higher than the rest of the town, and is more thoroughly sheltered by the forest. There is good sport among the woods, and a pack of hounds has been instituted. The secluded Bassin is well adapted for boating, either with oar or sail; and is famed also for its extensive oyster beds. The climate is mild and soothing; the soil is dry; and, notwithstanding the neighbourhood of the “mournful and misty Atlantic,” the air is free from damps and “haars.” Arcachon is easily reached either from Pau, Bayonne, or Bordeaux. Two hours of the railway carry you from Pau to Dax, whence, after junction with the train from Bayonne, two hours and a quarter more

take you to Lamothe, where you have to change carriages, and an additional half-hour—unless there be delay at this junction—sees you at Arcachon. The journey from Bordeaux, though only 34 miles in distance, occupies fully an hour and a-half in time, which, however, is very smart travelling for France, where people do not rush from place to place with our feverish haste and bustle.

“A ceux qui souffrent Acqs,” is the motto of the “Thermes de Dax,” where I found myself, on April 1, in compliance with an urgent telegram which had reached me a few hours before at Biarritz. A leisurely run of a little over an hour carried me thither from Bayonne. There was neither cab nor omnibus at the quiet little station, which stands about a quarter of a mile from the town; and as it was beginning to drizzle, I accepted a seat from the driver of the mail gig, who set me down at the door of the “Hôtel de France”—the chief Inn of Dax. The people here could tell me nothing of the friend whom I was in search of; and the aspect of the house and of the table laid for dinner was so uninviting, that I pushed on to “Les Thermes”—an establishment regarded with some perceptible jealousy by the landlord of the “France.” Dax is bisected by the Adour, which flows between green and wooded banks—if not with the “incredibili lenitate” of Cæsar’s Arar, yet with a very smooth and silent current, that does little more than keep the boats moored in it with their heads to the stream. Across the

bridge, to the right, is a massive old cluster of barracks ; and beyond these, separated from them by an open place and a small garden, stand "Les Thermes," a large and airy building with a central pavilion four storeys high, and two long wings of half the elevation. Here I found my poor friend, for whom the healing waters had possessed no solace ; and who, in his painful passage to the "dim kingdoms," had received from many of those around him, differing from him in race, language and religion, a kindness and sympathy which deserved grateful acknowledgment. As the friend of a patient I was at once admitted, although I did not intend to undergo the usual baths and medical treatment,—and for the few days of my stay I was made a welcome guest. There was a large and agreeable party at table, entirely foreigners, with the exception of one rheumatic Irishman. The accommodation, attendance and fare were excellent. We had *déjeuner* at 10.30, and dinner at six—each a substantial meal, with a bottle of good wine, and with more variety in the *menu*, than is now generally found in the large Anglified hotels of the south of France. The tariff was remarkable. The charge for board and lodging, for an invalid, is in summer 9 francs per day, in winter 10 francs ; for an officer, clergyman, or professor, 8 francs ; for the friend of a patient, 7½ francs ; for a child under ten years, 3½ francs. This includes everything, except lights, and such extras as one chooses to order—which are

extraordinarily cheap. The *bougie*, which is frequently charged a franc, costs 25 centimes; the glass of cognac, which I never got elsewhere under 60 c., costs 30 c.; café-au-lait and a roll, 60 c.; an excellent bottle of Barsac, from their own cellars, 2 francs. The baths are free to all the boarders; if you require medical attendance besides the baths, the charge is, in summer 15 francs per month—in winter 20 francs. One can live here, in short, in the greatest comfort—amidst pleasant society—enjoying daily baths, and, if necessary, the best medical advice, for about (allowing for all extras) 70 francs, or 2*l.* 16*s.* per week. Without medical advice or extras it would not exceed 55 francs, or 2*l.* 2*s.* One naturally asks how comes this generous and beneficent establishment to exist, “unhonoured and unsung,” at this little town of the Landes?

When Crassus, Cæsar’s lieutenant, waged successful war in Aquitania, among the tribes which surrendered to his arms were the Tarbelli, whose chief town was Aquæ Tarbellicæ, on the Aturus. The tradition of the town alleges that Augustus brought thither his daughter Julia, to bathe in the hot mud, for the cure of some childish malady, and so saved the life which, many a year afterwards, he called, in bitter anger, the “ulcer” of his own. The tradition may be held to account for one of the gates being called the “Porta Julia,” and the expansion of the name of the town into Aquæ Augustæ Tarbellicæ. Traces of the Roman occupation yet

remain, in two ancient gateways, and a fragment of massive wall. Dax followed the fortunes of its province, Gascony, during the period between the apse of the Roman dominion, and the final settlement of the French monarchy. Before the Revolution it held the rank of capital of the Landes. Since 1790, it has been simply the "chef-lieu d'arrondissement" of Dax; its population about 10,000, and its solitary historical distinction that conferred on it by its place in the campaign of 1813-14. Soult, retiring before the inevitable advance of Wellington, chose Dax, in the rear of his position at Bayonne, and commanding the road to Bordeaux, as the grand dépôt of his supplies and reserves, and carefully entrenched it. The victory of Orthès drove him eastwards upon Tarbes and Toulouse, and left Dax untenable. The garrison quitted the town, and joined his retreating army the day after the battle; and Beresford advanced unopposed to Bordeaux, while the Duke followed up his success by pursuing Soult.

During those ages of historical obscurity, Dax had never lost the local fame bestowed by its gracious waters. The name degenerated from *Aquæ Augustæ Tarbellicæ* to *Civitas Aquentium*, to Aquen, Acqs, and finally Dax—but its springs bubbled and steamed, without diminution of volume or temperature, from the days when the great Augustus brought his only daughter to seek their healing aid. It was not till early in this century,

however, that art and science began to interest themselves in the waters, and to take a methodical charge of them. In 1804 the great fountain was surrounded with a handsome wall, surmounted by an iron *grille*; and the boiling waters were gathered within the basin it enclosed to the depth of from 4 to 12 feet. Nine outlets were provided in the front of the wall, which dispense the water at the rate of 6,000 cubic feet per day. Its temperature at the surface is 172° Fahr. Vast clouds of steam rise above it, and drift away over the roofs of the town, dissolving into thinnest mist. One was conscious, while one watched them, of the same impression of the presence of a great and inscrutable natural force, with which one had looked at the pall of mist that droops above Niagara, and the smoke that hangs over the cone of Vesuvius. But here the force is only beneficent, from whatever Plutonic depths of Phlegethon it may ascend. It lends itself not only to the dignified task of healing the diseased, but ministers to the humblest daily necessities of mankind. The house-mothers from the adjacent streets (the basin occupying an open space of about 1,200 square yards, in the very middle of the town) run out and fill their kettles with water ready boiled. The baker bakes his bread with it; the public washing-troughs are close by, and the overflow of the fountain supplies them, before it empties itself into the Adour. The water is clear and sparkling; without any peculiarity of taste and smell; and is

soft, almost oily, to the touch. Its analysis gives the following results :—

				Gas in Solution.
Carbonic acid,	-	-	-	4 ^{cc} ·60 ^c
Oxygen,	-	-	-	3·55
Azote,	-	-	-	11·45
				19 ^{cc} ·60 ^c
Carbonic acid of carbonates,	-	-	-	0·04585
Sulphuric acid,	-	-	-	0·34382
Silicic „	-	-	-	0·02800
Phosphoric „	-	-	-	traces
Chlorine,	-	-	-	0·17465
Potash,	-	-	-	traces
Soda,	-	-	-	0·27478
Lime,	-	-	-	0·19983
Magnesia,	-	-	-	0·06454
				1·03147

There are traces, also, of manganese, iodine, bromine, and organic matter. The same analysis applies to the waters of two other springs, contiguous to the Great Fountain, the “Bastion” and the “Port.” Both of these are utilised for “Les Thermes.” The source of the waters of the “Port” was formerly called the “Trou des Pauvres,” and was renowned through the Landes for its cures of rheumatism.

Another and similar group of springs is found further down the riverside, at the “Baignots,” a small bathing establishment. The largest of these

discharges at the rate of about 12,000 gallons per day.

These waters—warm, soft, and soothing—are not the only therapeutic agencies of Dax. Like the dust of Zion, its very mud is precious. The deposits of mud, which are found in the vicinity of the hot springs, and in some instances mixed up with them, are supposed to have been formed in the course of ages, by the slimy *débris* left after the floods of the Adour. The mud is dark in colour, softly glutinous to the touch, without being sticky, and stains linen, &c., deeply. Mons. Serres, an analyst of repute at Dax, has detected much greater chemical varieties in the muds than in the waters; and has divided them into four separate classes, differing substantially from each other in the degree of their sulphuration, and the proportion of carbonates and organic matter.

In sinking a pit in one of the mineral salt mines of Dax, the engineer traversed a bed of mud lying some 65 feet below the surface, and a mile and three quarters from the Adour, and which was identical in character with the beds of comparatively recent formation. Analysis of the latter resulted in showing:—

Silica, -	-	-	-	-	7968.51 ^c
Alumin,	-	-	-	-	76.21
Proto-sulphide of iron, -	-	-	-	-	29.31
Magnesia, *	*	*	*	-	24.68

Chloride of sodium,	-	-	16.32
Combustible organic matter,	-	-	1.29
Iodine, bromine, potash,	-	-	4.71
			1,000%

No mud of the same kind has ever been found in France, or elsewhere, except at the little village of Prechacq, also on the banks of the Adour.

Generation after generation of rheumatic and ague-stricken Gascons had been content to roll themselves in the muddy and steaming ditches, and to bathe in the waters, under such simple shelter as was procurable, and with such rude appliances as the genius of the local Sangrado, or their own, suggested; but it was reserved for the originators of "Les Thermes" to concentrate under one roof all the therapeutic forces of the place, and to organise in connection with these a complete system of medical treatment.

The great establishment of "Les Thermes" owes its existence to the foresight and energy of two French doctors, Dr. Delmas and Dr. Larauza, who, after the most elaborate scientific investigation, recognised in Dax the promise of a beneficent and popular future as a health resort.

The great volume of the waters, the rare qualities of the mud, the singularly calm and equable atmosphere, the easy accessibility of the place, and its many resources for exercise and amusement, con-

vinced them that Dax needed only a capable administration to become "un grand succès." The large mansion was built; the grounds were tastefully laid out; and every device of science and skill was employed for the comfort of the inmates and the utilization of the waters. The house is erected over the spring known as the "Bastion," which spouts out inexhaustibly below, at 172 degrees of heat, and producing an enormous volume of steam, which, conducted to every gallery and chamber in the establishment, keeps each at an even temperature, by day and night, of from 58° to 64°. Two lofty glazed galleries surround the inner court, and afford an ample promenade for those who do not go out. Billiard-rooms, reading-rooms, *salons*, and a cheerful hall adjoining the front door, allow plenty of choice of occupation, outlook, and society. The view from the dining-room windows which overlook the Adour—

Sulphureis gelidus qua serpit leniter undis—

is particularly pleasant. Two large staircases lead to the regions of the baths, which occupy the whole of the lower storey. The bathrooms are conspicuous for their airy freshness and cheerfulness, and have none of that damp sepulchral gloom, which I have noticed, with a shiver, in certain hydropathic establishments nearer home. To give a scientific enumeration or description of them all is beyond my power. Let it suffice to say there are bath rooms

for the hot mineral waters ; for the hot muds ; for stove baths ; vapour baths ; for local applications of the mud ; for medicated vapours ; for different kinds of baths of the mineral water ; for sitz-baths ; for special douches, *vaginales*, *périnéales*, &c. ; for cold baths of the mineral water, and of ordinary fresh water ; and a large swimming bath fed by a constant current of fresh water. All the appurtenances are excellent ; the baths made of slabs of grey marble ; and the pipes, jets, and appliances for localising and adjusting the stream of water or vapour, most ingeniously dexterous. Among the most curious is the chamber for medicated vapour baths, with its adaptations for administering to the body an envelope of vapour charged with the prescribed medicinal agent, while the head of the patient dozes dreamily in perfectly fresh and unadulterated air. The 'Suc-cursale des Thermes,' containing a similar admirable assortment of baths, is intended for those who do not reside in the establishment ; and close at hand is a like provision for the poor. Near Dax, by-the-by, is shown the house which was the birthplace of that kind friend of the poor, St. Vincent de Paul.

The immediate effect of a bath, whether of water or mud, is seen in the rubefaction of the surface bathed—the heightened temperature, quickened pulse, and more or less profuse perspiration. The consecutive results are an increase of appetite, gentle and healthy perspirations, a feeling of supple and buoyant energy and capacity for exertion. Of course

the extent to which these effects are realized will depend, in a great degree, upon the previous condition of the bather. Dax does not pretend to work miracles, and to heal all manner of sickness and disease ; but it performs undoubted cures in certain disorders, and soothes and alleviates much suffering in others. The treatment, whether in the form of water or mud, is sovereign in all kinds of rheumatism ; in cases of loss of muscular power ; in neuralgia, which, if it had reached its present predominance in Burns's days, would have earned, instead of toothache, the distinction of being dubbed 'the hell of all diseases ;' in nervous ailments ; hysteria and hypochondria ; in certain cutaneous and bronchial affections. In all these the treatment has proved itself efficacious. In some cases of disease of the liver, and other internal organs, drinking the water is prescribed as well as bathing and inhaling.

There is one fatal kind of malady, that year by year sends hundreds of pilgrims from our northern shores, in search of relief and respite from 'the blight of slow decline.' Can Dax do anything for the consumptive ? This question is freely discussed in the little treatise which I carried away with me from 'Les Thermes,' to correct and supplement my memories of the place—'Titres Médicaux des Thermes de Dax, comme Station Hivernale.' I infer from the various opinions adduced that although hydropathy is not practised here in pulmonary cases, and the baths are therefore of no account in these, great

benefit has been derived from residence at 'Les Thermes,' attributable to the invariably even temperature and the mild and sedative properties of the air within the establishment; while without, the atmosphere is gently flavoured with two ingredients most wholesome to the lungs,—the resinous odours from the neighbouring pine forests, and the saline particles from the more distant Gulf of Gascony. At Pau, Cannes, or Mentone, or at that most breezy and bright of all the health haunts of the Riviera, Bordighera, the pulmonary exiles do not adopt any course of treatment. They resort to these places for the climate, and let it work its silent charm on them. The climate of Dax is as well worth trying as any of these; but it ought not to be tried by every class of invalid. Great pine forests shelter Dax from the north wind, and on the west stretch their protecting arms between it and the sea, which rolls upon the sandy shores of the Landes about fifteen miles away. The lofty Pyrenees, which line the southern horizon, break the force and cool the temper of the 'fierce Siroc.' The east wind, unlike our 'hard north-easters,' is a fresh and moderate wind that almost always accompanies good weather. This protection from wind, combined with its low situation, and the local warmth of its springs, imparts to the climate a remarkable stillness and soft humidity. The vicinity of the sea and the pine forests contributes to the air enough of saline and resinous emanations to prevent this moist and peaceful calm be-

coming too sedative. There are none of the extremes of heat and cold here from which one suffers at Pau, or Cannes, where ice lies in the shade and dust in the sunshine, and 'le devant brûle—le dos gèle' is a proverb. The equableness of the temperature is a notable characteristic of the climate. Invalids who need a stimulating climate should seek the Riviera. Those who wish a climate equable, lenitive, and tranquillising, should go to Dax.

Apart from its sanitary conditions altogether, the little town is by no means unattractive. There are Roman remains to be explored; one or two old churches, and several quaint old winding streets.

The British tourist, and the 'personally conducted tour,' have not yet rubbed all the Gallic angles of the place and population down. An entertaining market is held, weekly, in the Place, near 'Les Thermes,' where one may study the industries, the dialect, and the costume, of the Landes. There are capital roads for riding and driving, and many pretty walks by the riverside. The river is navigable from Bayonne; and abounds with fish—among which shad and salmon probably offer most sport to the fisher. The royal sturgeon is occasionally caught. No pleasanter stream could be embarked on for boating. Indeed the Adour, from Tarbes to Bayonne, offers a most charming canoe track, through a smiling country of corn and wine and flowers:

Ripas Aturi, qua littore curvo
Molliter admissum claudit Tarbellicus æquor.

Sportsmen whose ideas of 'la chasse' soar above the small birds, which the Frenchman does not disdain to persecute, will find among the forests the fox, the wild boar, and roe and fallow deer. The vegetation is superb: the magnolia and camellia flourish in the open air; the fruits, especially the peaches, are unrivalled. A native chronicler sums up his commendations of his favourite resort with 'Les femmes Dacquoises sont renommées pour leur beauté et leur coquetterie.'

Within easy reach of Dax, lie Arcachon, Bayonne, Biarritz, Hendaye, Fontarabia, the fatal pass of Roncesvalles, and the historic heights of San Sebastian.

The lines from Bayonne and Pau meet here; and little more than two hours will carry you to the capital of Bearn, where the chateau of the great Henry overlooks the Gave. In three hours you can get to Bordeaux, whence a railway journey of nine hours will carry you to Paris; or one of the many steamers that plough the waters of the Gironde will transport you to a British port, should you be homeward bound.

In these days it is so hard to light upon a spot within easy reach of Britain that still retains any picturesque individuality, where life is simple and cheap, and where the foreign element in society is not engulfed in the British, that it becomes a duty to impart the happy discovery when it is achieved. It is still more a duty when such a spot possesses also the exceptional hygienic characteristics which distinguish Dax.

The railway which takes you from Dax to Bordeaux traverses the great plain of the Landes—of old a desolate stretch of moor and lagoon, but now covered, for the most part, with pines and improved by drainage. Many of the pines, we noticed, were notched in the stem to draw off the resin—a little pitcher hung below the incision receiving the “odorous gum” as it drips out. Nothing could be more lonely and monotonous than the interminable vistas of pines—pines—pines, through which the railroad winds its way. At last it emerges on more open and varied landscape, and the forest gives place to the vineyard as we approach Bordeaux.

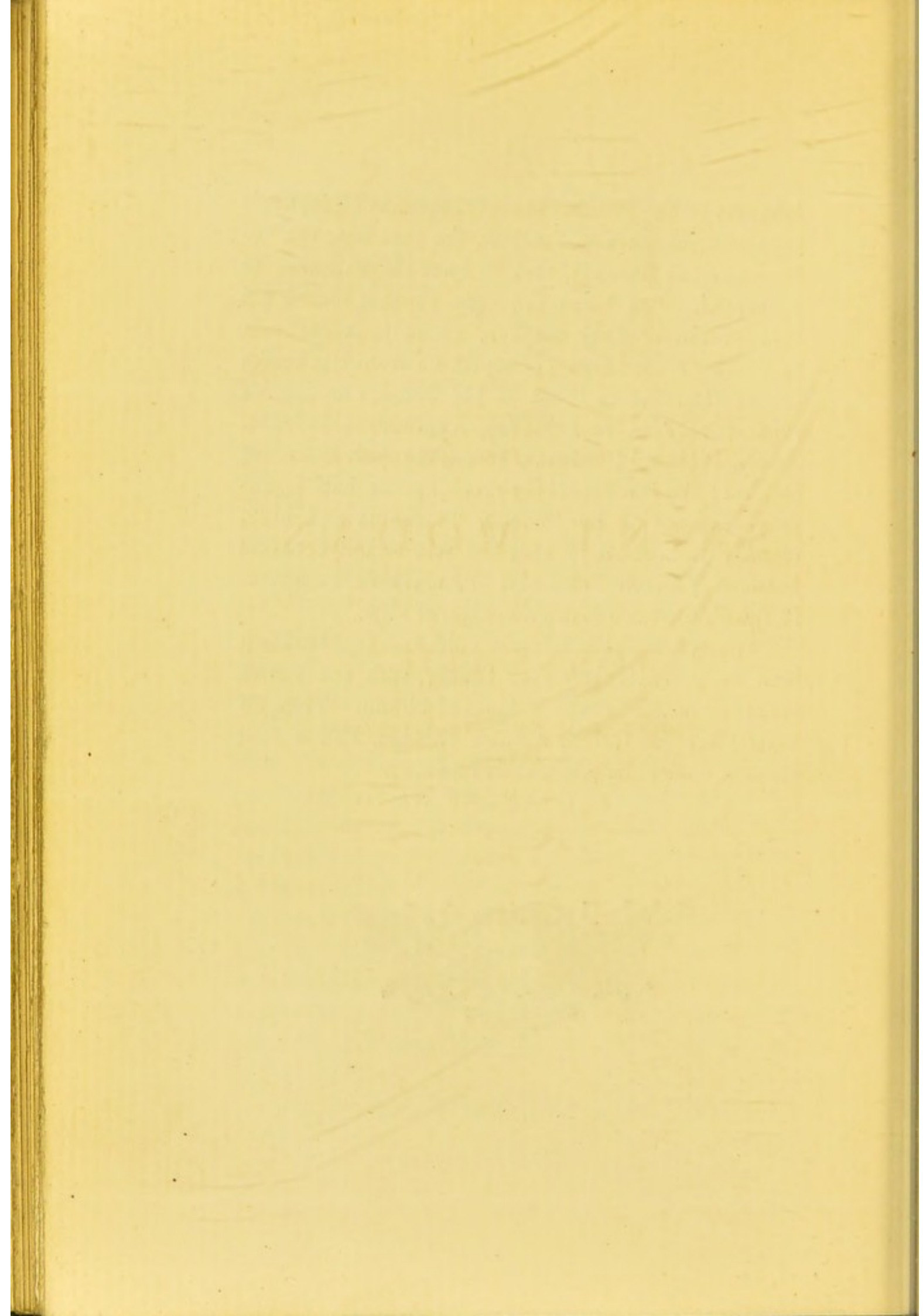
Probably few of the British visitors to that great and stately city remember that it was an English possession, for more than 300 years, “in the brave days of old.” Had we retained it, its rich vintages might have helped to redeem our national character from the charge of coarse and excessive drinking. At any rate, we should not have needed an international treaty to provide ourselves with a less lugubrious beverage than Gladstone claret. The Garonne is here a splendid river, broad and deep, joined by the Dordogne, and spreading out into the estuary of the Gironde. The bridges, quays, and streets are very handsome; and the Cathedral and the Church and tower of St. Michael are noble buildings. The museum, picture gallery, library, and theatre are all of a high class.

Had the weather been fine, we had intended to

join one of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's excellent steamers at Pauillac, the port near the entrance of the Gironde, and to have sailed thence to Liverpool. But when the time came it blew hard and promised "dirty weather," so we took the train to Paris. Nine hours conveyed us from the banks of the Garonne to those of the Seine, crossing, *en route*, the Loire, and passing Angoulême, Poitiers, Tours, Blois, and Orleans, all replete with historical interest; the last especially recalling the half legendary memory of La Pucelle, "virtuous and holy, chosen from above;" and the still recent conflicts between Von der Tann and D'Aurelle de Paladines in the Franco-Prussian campaign of 1870.

Paris again, which I left in cold and fog, budding into its vernal gaiety and beauty, with the flower stalls of the Madeleine a mass of bloom. Then an early start for Calais, a calm passage, and a safe landing under the white cliffs of Dover.



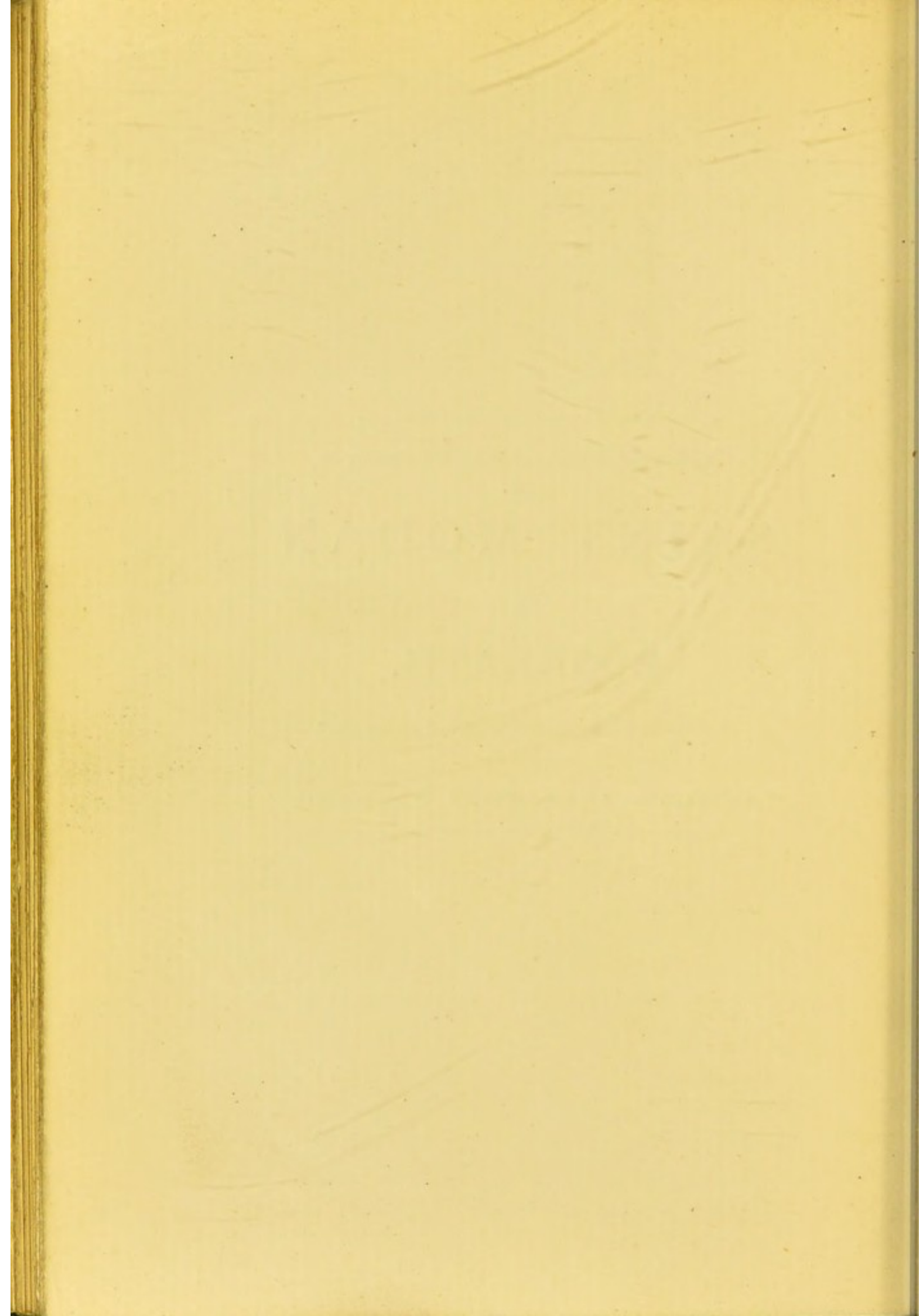


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