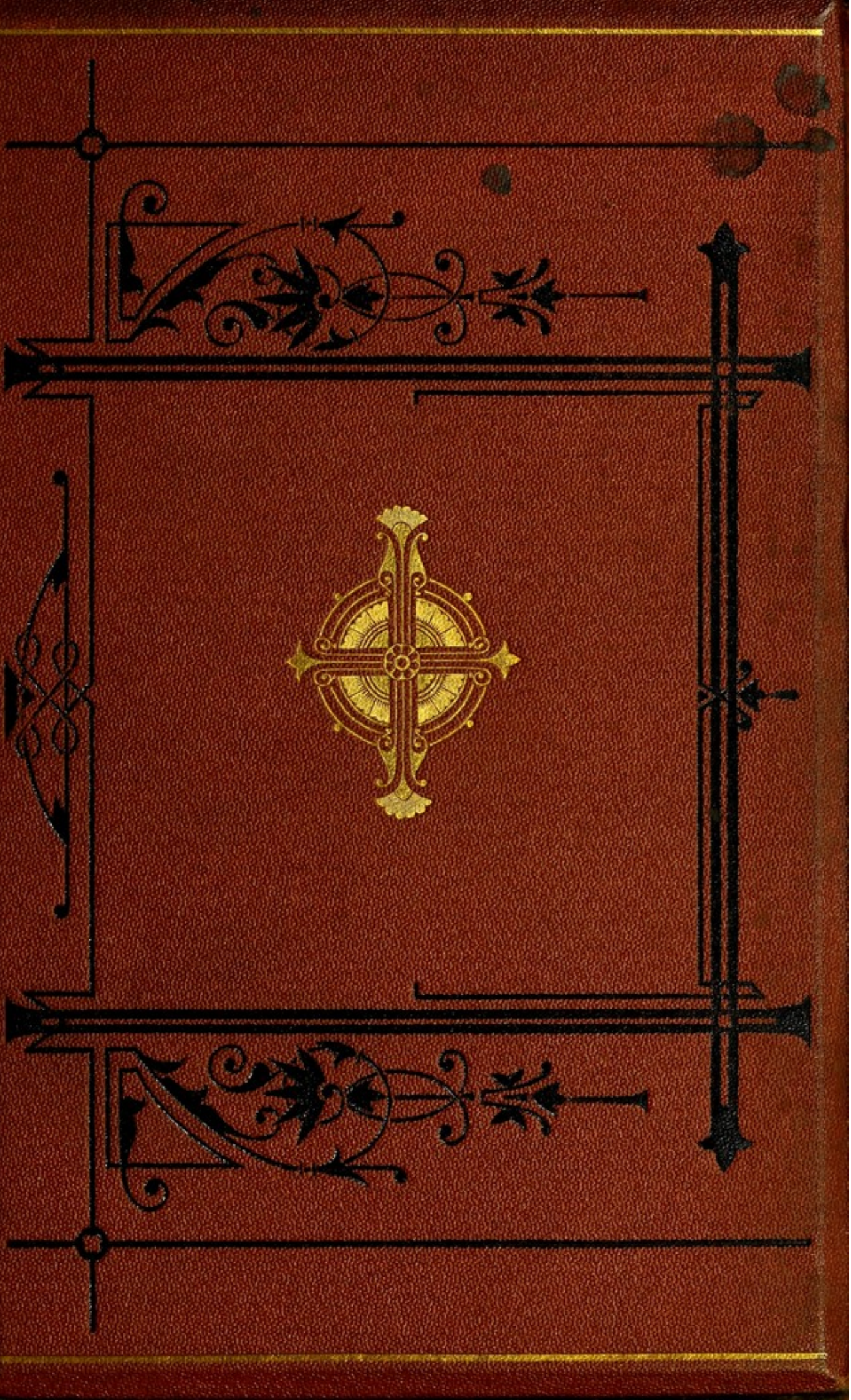
Wintering at Menton on the Riviera : a compagnon de voyage, with hints to invalids / by Alexander M. Brown.

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WINTERING AT MENTON

ON

THE RIVIERA

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A COMPAGNON DE VOYAGE

WITH HINTS TO INVALIDS

BY

ALEXANDER M. BROWN

"The grand object of travel is to see the Mediterranean"
Johnson's Table Talk

LONDON:
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PREFACE.

THESE Notes and Sketches, carelessly thrown together, I offer to the Reader as a memento of a sojourn in Menton, on the Riviera, whither I had fled in the autumn of 1871 to escape the inclemencies of our English winter, and to recruit from the effects of a long residence in warmer climes.

With returning health comes the desire to make better known the claims and resources of this sunny land as a health resort; and to those who may journey thither, may these pages of pleasing scenes and reminiscences prove a useful guide-companion, and serve to beguile an idle hour.

ALEXANDER M. BROWN.

CONTENTS.

WINTERING AT MENTON ON THE RIVIERA.

CHAPTER I.

A RUN UPON THE RIVIERA.

LEAVING our English home in mid-winter for the sunny south, en route for Genoa, forty-eight hours work a wondrous transformation. A cloudless sky, a vernal landscape, and genial atmosphere await the arrival, and it is consolatory to feel that for a season at least, an Alpine barrier shields one from the dread inclemencies of a northern winter.

Before entering the garden of the Riviera, Nice is necessarily the resting-place, and by consulting one of the multiplicity of guide-books it will be well to note the geographical position. We have greeted the shores of the sunny south, and rounding the seaboard by Toulon, Hyères, and Cannes, the terminal spur of the Basses Alpes is left behind. From Nice the continuation of these mountain ranges known as the Alpes Maritimes, skirts along the coast of the Gulf of

Genoa, trending north-easterly as far as that city, where they become the Apennines. For fifty leagues in this direction lies the journey, bounded throughout on the one hand by the wide expanse of sea, on the other by the eternal hills.

This known, then comes the choice of route, for happily there is a choice, the railway being now completely opened for all available purposes. This deals another death-blow to our old familiar friends the lumbering diligence and costly vetturino, a circumstance which must cause regret to the Italian *voyageur* of happy memories, as it dooms to neglect the celebrated route—certainly one of the finest in Europe—the romantic highway better known as the Cornice road, which, snake-like, steals along the Riviera de Ponente, gracefully following the Mediterranean coast in all its windings.

When the winter of home is at its keenest, loitering in these sunny climes is quite a summer feast. Impressed by the natural loveliness and fine historical associations embraced in those few leagues of travel, one feels tempted to indulge a moment's weakness, to cast aside all progress and the centuries, and in fancy traverse the bewitching scenery at a pace more gratifying to sentiment and art appreciation. Let the healthy tourist or the artist, therefore, be advised to shun the rail. Staff in hand, or seated comfortably *en voiture*, the highway is to be preferred, as no amount of speed repays the loss of the many charm-

ing coast and mountain views to be met with, and of a kind so unfamiliar to our islanders. For all not bent on commerce this way must ever recommend itself. The season of the year is so inviting; the bright and genial climate being in lively contrast, not only with our own, but even with that of Italy east and west of the Apennines in lower latitudes, so safely is it sheltered from the bleak winds of the north.

All being decided and the start made, Nice is left by the military road alluded to, which, traversing some ravishing villa properties, by a more than gradual ascent, winds round Mont Gros. This bold ridge commands a vast extent of view, embracing the old château and city embosomed mid her gardens, Cimiès, classic heights, her Roman ruins and monastery ; and until the highest point is reached the fertile valley of the Paillon smiling beneath us is seen in all its mystic windings, till lost among the Alps white with perpetual snows. Leaving Mont Gros and still ascending the shoulder of the Aggel, a mountain of 3000 feet, that runs into the sea, the scene is soon changed, nature shows in all her wildest moods. Bald bluffs and arid rocks naked and shattered by the course of time beset the path, while to the right and far below stretch the deep blue waters of the Mediterranean and a rugged shore. Arriving at the plateau of Eza, miles of coast line unfold themselves in panoramic beauty. At the base of Mont Soleia lies Portus Oliviæ of the ancients, Villefranche of to-day, with

the almost island peninsula of St. Hospice resting on the sea. Near, but divided by a deep valley terraced with olives, perched on its rocky summit, stands Eza and its ruined château, reminding us of Saracen invaders and of the terrible corsairs of later times. A few miles farther on and Turbia is reached. We hail with delight this strange old mountain village, marked by its massive fragment of the grand Augustan monument that tells of the Roman conquest of Liguria. Sitting on the mound of ruins at its base, we look far down upon the Portus Herculis of her day, the modern pigmy principality of Monaco. Old feudal stronghold! how strangely is her mediæval colouring dashed with the lights and shadows of our own times! On the sister rock sits gay Monte Carlo, the Homburg of the south, literally ablaze with flowers; and like atomies are lounging on the terraces the giddy spirits of beauty and fashion who daily and nightly crowd the concert halls and gambling tables of this retreat.

From this point the Cornice road begins to descend, and here best deserves its name. For any one who affects the sensational in driving, every wish may here be gratified. As you tool down hill, sharp turns, gorges, or overhanging cliffs threaten at every point, until you find yourself beneath the sun-baked village of Roquebrune clinging to its landslip, with the stern old château overhead. Another promontory doubled and you are

in sight of Menton, in the bay, seated in her amphitheatre of hills.

From this approach the coup d'œil of the town, with its modern faubourg and hill-encircled district, is really beautiful. The whole extent of coast line for some miles is seen sweeping from Cap Martin to the Roches Rouges in the form of a double crescent, the united horns tipped with the venerable Bastion advancing in the sea. From this point the headland on which the town is built, rising abruptly, forms the château mount, and still receding, joins the mother range, most picturesquely separating the two bays. Every feature is fine, and blended as a whole the scene is exquisite, and one sees at a glance the reason of its special salubrity and claims as a mild winter retreat. The locality abounds in much that is interesting, but a general peep at this southern littoral must suffice.

Throughout the whole extent of coast line between the Lesser Alps and surf, runs an irregular strip of plain, or gentle slope, which time has wrung from out the mountain and torrent valley. Here a tiny streak of civilization has for ages held its own along the margin of the sea, where "richest fruits and flowers of sweetest odour" flourish wildly in response to a very primitive cultivation, and everywhere lie scattered quaint old towns, villages, and hamlets, tenanted by a hardy, poor, but not unhandsome race.

At times the route winds through a veritable paradise. Look where you will, to hill-side, promontory, or ravine, all are industriously terraced and clothed with the olive, lemon, vine, and abounding in a charming winter flora. Wherever your footsteps lead, on the one side the glorious expanse of the blue, tideless sea—Shelley's "deep untrampled floor"—lies smiling and sparkling in the sunshine; on the other, the Alpine barrier chain, now rearing its rugged masses overhead and now receding into distant peaks, whose forms seem cut so sharply on the cloudless sky. The stern background at intervals cleft by the valleys is full of beauty. Rich vegetation clothes the slopes to giddy heights, and scarce conceals the pretty mountain villages and hamlets seen nestling at every stage. Bastion-like towers and ruined châteaux crown cliff and precipice, and amid luxuriant foliage the picturesque Italian aqueduct with its looped arch is seen sweeping round the crags or spanning the torrents and ravines; while speckling the slopes of the river bed, far as the view extends, coquettish villas and peasant châlets, white as the snow upon the distant peaks, peep from the clustering olives, vines, and citrons laden with their fruits and flowers. Such are pictures often met with in this natural fairy-land.

Traversing the military-guarded frontier by the Pont St. Louis, we are now on Italian territory. Another stage of seven miles, presenting less of

interest, brings us to the gate of Ventimiglia. Under the fortifications, but high above the sea, we dash through the old archiepiscopal ville, a place of higher antiquity than any other stronghold on the Riviera, and rich in Roman remains and middle-age associations. Here was the central seat of the Lascaris, the powerful scions of the Eastern Emperors; and here and hereabouts raged the long-protracted contests between the Genoese, the Counts of Provence, and the ever warlike Dukes of Savoy. The bridge by which we leave the town commands a splendid view of the position. Houses, convents, churches, and towers, stage themselves one upon another along the flank of the hill crowned by the imposing citadel and fortifications; while before us lies the valley of the Roya, the capricious waters of whose river find their sources in the Col de Tende, seen far off mantled in her snows. But the eye must not be weary. Less than another league and we are in full view of the Nervia valley, perhaps the loveliest, and next to that of Oniglia, the largest on the Riviera. A passing glimpse is caught of the fine old ruins of the castle of the Dorias with the village of the Camporossa and the picturesque Dolceacqua, with wondrous bridge scarce visible amid the perfect wilderness of trees and vineyards.

Bordighera and San Remo next come in sight. Here it is well to observe how a cunning combination of sun and elevation joined to a well chosen aspect enables

a comparatively northern latitude to revel in a vegetation almost tropical. A rival cultivation of the graceful date-palm of the East has long been maintained between these quaint retreats. This locality, as all the world knows, claims the hereditary and exclusive privilege of supplying Rome with the palm-leaves used at the annual great festival of Palm Sunday. But it is necessary to pull up and do San Remo, the curious old Italian burgh which shares—perhaps more largely than Menton—the preference as a winter home. The 13,000 of the busy population and the town present as strange a compound of things old and new as anywhere to be met with. The railway-station, modern Pension Hotel, and villas contrast most singularly with the general tone and with a style of architecture earlier by centuries, all possessing a thousand attractions for artist and antiquary. Her monks, old churches and the neighbouring shrines, the labyrinth of narrow streets and tunnel-like archways, everywhere leading to the upper quarters of this civic hive, are something novel in the way of cities built upon a hill. Surveying all, stands on the highest stage the lazar-house, that sad memorial of an institution elsewhere amongst us long since passed away. But much remains untold. The sunny skies, the natural beauty of the landscape, the sacred Lampedusa, Taggia, the fishermen, and native song, are they not all written in Raffini's sweet romance? The place is hallowed by his pen, and sentimental visitors in early summer will

find the scene upon the balcony, with all its transparent colouring, by no means overdrawn.

Farther on we have San Stefano, known for its fish, San Lorenzo, famous for wines which challenge comparison with sweetest Cyprus, and Porto Murizio, noted for its oil and pretty little harbour; the stage closing with the old halting-place, Oniglia.

Resuming the route the sterile Andorra is descried, a patch of coast certainly less lovely than the rest. This striking want of culture and unhealthiness is due, as the faithful hold, to the curse which lies upon it, since a Papal nuncio was murdered in the adjacent castello now in ruin. The dread influence and heathy look soon vanish, however, for Luisinano follows, the Arcadia of Madame Genlis, a name which the lovely girls still try to justify by wreathing their hair with scented flowers. So say the guide-books, but you will find this custom *à la mode* throughout the Riviera. Then comes Alassio, whose grottoes and dells still wear their sylvan charms fresh as when Otho's wayward daughter and her lover Alermo lived and loved among its shady bowers. Albengo follows, close sheltered by the hills with far extent of vineyards, and her feudal towers in ruins. And now for many leagues the onward route keeps almost level with the shore, and the sweet village of Fanale Marina quickly is left behind, and the rapidly extending city of Savona is only a stage ahead.

This portion of the Riviera supplies the sketch-

book with some of the finest studies of coast scenery we have yet met with. The sea-shore subjects are exquisite. The graceful stretch of sandy beach, boats drawn up, nets strewn about, groups of half-clad Neapolitan looking fishermen sleeping or smoking as they lounge in the shade of the pitchy craft or fishing gear, dodging the blaze of the noon-day sun ; such is the sea-side foreground. Behind is the stern mountain chain which Ariosto sang as vainly severing the barbarians from Italy. See them alternately receding and advancing, leaving there the undulating valley with distant prospects of the snowy Alps of Dauphiny and Savoy, or here presenting the rugged buttress to the sea which art alone has rendered passable. Where plain or space occur are seen emerging from the vine trellises and undergrowth the quaint homesteads, with their plastered walls and bastion aspect, flanked by ruins of former tenements, things old and new in rare fantastic medley. All bear a pleasing carelessness and largeness in detail matchlessly in harmony with the outward loveliness of the scene. The towns and villages are more Italian still, and mediæval in their style and ruins. Those higher placed seem crusted to the mountain side, the flat and massive buildings pile and cluster up the steep, crowding the belfried church with its frescoed front that shares in the general dilapidation. On all sides you have the olive and citron terraces, the parched rock and stony slopes traversed

curiously by walls and stairs and half-cut paths that twist and twine, losing themselves under rude archways or amid rebellious foliage up the unfenced heights.

With glimpses of scenic beauties such as these, varied with all the charms that sunset, moonlight, or twilight lend, the journey seems to close too soon. Though Noli, Spotorno, and Loano one by one are passed, the interest does not cease until the Pallavicini Palace and gardens may be said to close the run.

Random sketches such as these may not be best calculated to make us contented with our lot at home; but passing in a couple of days from the chills and fogs of November to what for form's sake we must call winter, with its summer air, though once visionary is no longer so. The revolutionary rail decides all this. The time has arrived when those with a love of adventure and an eye for the beautiful have it in their power to combine within the compass of their Christmas holidays the risks upon the Serpentine with sunny ramblings on the Riviera.

CHAPTER II.

MENTON AND THE LIONS.

FROM Nice some twenty miles along the Cornice road lies the little town of Menton, occupying one of the sweetest bays on the Western Riviera. From the brow of the ridge on which the old quarters stand, the town sweeps to the east and west along the shore where the Pian Gorge, the Menton, Carié, and Borigo valleys open to the sea. The ravined slopes of the amphitheatre, formed by an Alpine spur of investing mountains, gives to the background of its position a landscape beauty of the rarest kind. The terraced hill-sides to the torrent beds are clothed with the olive, lemon, vine; and here an English hot-house flora blossoms wildly in the open air. Such is Menton looking from the sea.

The old town as a whole is not remarkable, the arrangement and style of architecture being very similar to what is elsewhere met with along this coast, formerly exposed to the ravages of the Moors and Saracens. As to the modern or lower portion, it was commenced at a time when these piratical excursions were no longer to be feared; it is judiciously

arranged and accessible in all respects. It consists of two quarters, one extending westward from the Quai to the Borigo bridge, the other skirting the Eastern Bay. The Quai itself is the greatest piece of engineering the place presents. For its existence Menton is indebted to the treasury of France under the Consulate of Napoleon, who had an eye to business. It is a bond of union between the two bays, and forms part of the Cornice road.

The western approach lies through a beautiful avenue of plane-trees and public gardens on a smaller scale. Progress is the feature. With increasing reputation as a health resort both faubourgs are rapidly rising into importance. The Pension Hotel is the predominant edifice, with here and there some elegant private villa residences. Within the last four years the main torrents have been embanked, and a marine drive—the Promenade du Midi—made; and even the porte or harbour is making rapid progress towards completion. Though much remains to be done, the communal body of Menton deserves much credit for the enterprise and energy displayed in the way of civic improvements. Provision for a goodly annual winter colony of the ailing and pleasure-seeking class will soon exist, but with this the native tone and character of the place must cease, a circumstance to be regretted. Belgravias are to be found at home, and Homburgs at Nice and Monte Carlo.

But a few hours' loitering in the thoroughfares and

suburbs is necessary to enable us to form a correct view of the lions and attractions.

Leaving Carnolés, formerly the palace or seignorial residence of the Grimaldis, on the Western Bay, we pass along the highway, with its plane-tree avenues and gardens continued, till we reach the bridge of the Borigo, a torrent formed by the waters of the Cabrol and Castagnie valleys, a view abounding in much sweet and rugged scenery. The city proper now begins, and we find ourselves in the Rue Victor Emanuel. A few minutes more bring us to the bridge of the Carié valley, with its dry rocky bed. Here the prospect towards the mountains is magnificent. The castellated villas, the Turin road, and lovely avenue of trees follow the winding of the torrent until lost among the hills enclosing it on every side. Conspicuous on an adjacent summit is the pretty little monastery of Capuchin monks, the Annunciade, nestling among the olives and bosky vegetation. Though the trees still shade the street we are now within the town, which presents all the bustle and activity of civic life. Till we pass clear of the Rue St. Michel, the central thoroughfare, the scene is far from dull. The furious driving mules and donkey trains, dark-haired damsels, and straggling groups of oddly costumed foreigners, is quite enough to engage all spare attention. The restaurant, bibliothèque, and general magazines put in a strong appearance ; and articles of art, bijouterie, and luxe, judging from their liberal

supply, must find a ready market while the season lasts.

The market opening to the street displays its comestible and miscellaneous stores, and together with its native vendors requires a passing look. But the Place Napoléon, with its fount and broken column, is the school to study Menton characteristics in their purest phase. It generally presents the appearance of a fair, where the *gamins*, as also children of a larger growth, find excitement, and is the camping-ground of itinerant mountebanks and charlatans of all descriptions. Amid open stalls and tobacco roulette tables, the travelling electrician, Italian dentist, and pedicure vaunt to the curious their mysterious arts and marvellous cures. The gesticulation, wit, and volubility of this professional fraternity take immensely, as by trumpet sound or beat of drum they display the rosaries of royal corns, teeth drawn from imperial jaws, with badges and diplomas no power on earth dare question. The dog and monkey business also occasionally stars in this arena, a species of attraction for which these noisy, smoking, semi-Italian audiences express the liveliest appreciation. But it is time to leave this public rendezvous of Menton *οἱ πολλοί*, and see what is to be seen elsewhere.

The Cap is close at hand, and must not be omitted. Here stands the most conspicuous object on the shore, looked at from a distance, the Martello tower, or Bastion as it is called. This quadrangular mass, placed

on its reef rock washed at all times by the waves, has a very marked and picturesque appearance. It is said to have been the work of Honoré II., who, in addition to his fighting accomplishments, seems to have been a Titan in the way of building. However that may be, there is good reason for believing the structure is of an earlier date, though this gentleman may have done some restoration, as in the case of the Cathedral. It has long since retired from active service, latterly doing duty as a local prison, and now locked up wears quite an air of mystery. This forms the strong point of the parapet of the future porte, and commands an excellent view of the coast line of both bays.

The mercantile marine of Menton harbouring there is very limited, consisting of some lumbering fishing boats and *felouques*. Still at times the point presents an animated scene, and is a place of special interest for all when, in the sunny early morning, a French steamer or American barque is seen lying at anchor in the bay receiving freight. Lemons and wine are the staple commodities, and their mode of shipment is a sight to see. The next-to-breechless seamen with their birettas, pulling, hauling, shouting in the surf, remind one of the founding of a New Zealand or Fijian settlement, so total is the want or disregard of any common-place appliance of loading.

Having done the alleys of the Cap by passing the bastion blocks and outer works, we are now upon the

Place du Cap and ready to assault by escalade the upper quarters of the town, a perfect pigeon-holed and burrowed rookery. The entrance is through a portal archway, dismantled of its gates less than a century ago, and judging from its dingy shades very uninviting to the honest pad. But the Porte and passage is not without its glorious past. It was a twist of the Via Julia of the Roman period; this Strada Longa of the Middle Age, this Rue Longue slum, the curious visit in the present day.

Passing upwards through the narrow Strada, evidently built to exclude the light, though the *scalea* to the Place defeats that aim, the transformation of some faded greatness is visible at every step. Here a Boucherie usurps a vaulted military guard-room, there a *Débit de Vin* rejoices in a sculptured doorway. Inventories of the meanest native groceries desecrate the tessellated floors to the outer steps, and even the Grimaldi palace, with its marble entrance and staircase, gives shelter to a community of families of the poorest class. The mansion is worth visiting. It is also said to have been built by Honoré, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, from the débris of the Château palace of Jean, of very early date. It is a mélange of every kind of style, and easily recognised by the high windows and massive cornices at the eaves. An interior staircase, spacious for its time, and built with angular vaults, leads to the upper stages, where traces of decorative art may even now be seen. From the

eastern bay behind, fronting the passage-way, faint traces still are visible, when the bay is calm, of steps cut in the rock on which the route and houses stand. This was the family approach by sea before the construction of the Quai Bonaparte. The stairway rises abruptly in the rock to the basement quarter, entering by a gallery or subterranean passage; but time has played sad havoc with this ducal-looking tenement. But with a tinkle and clatter here come two mules with their firewood loads, disputing the dimensions of the street, and our exploration trio is compelled to seek refuge in the first recess to avert stagnation of this leading artery, ere the inspection is resumed. Although there is a thriving population here, things looked deserted. Since the opening of the Napoleonic route, traffic is withdrawn and commerce languishes; business being chiefly confined to antiquated female vendors of native fruits and keepers of windowless magazines of smallest calibre and deepest shade, a character it steadily maintains until we reach the opposite gateway in the ancient wall, now crumbling into ruin.

Now comes the highest flight. We take the nearest opening, a graduated gothic entry about the dimensions of a stable door, with a lateral niche and *Vierge*. The good old lady has unfortunately lost an arm, and the wreath upon her head has quite the tipsy cant that ill becomes less favoured mortals. Rising, or rather climbing, through transverse blocks, ruelles, and passages grim as the entrance to abandoned

city sewers, and leading God knows where, we make our way. There may have been originally some system in the arrangement, but on the principle that union is strength, the housing is so docketed, dove-tailed, and counter-arched, that all must stand or fall together. The extraordinary distribution of lights and shadows in this continuity of shafts and tunnelling has doubtless all the elements of art for amateurs, but such civic inconveniences are insufferable in the present age.

The animated nature too is curious. Dusky children crawl upon the interior doorways of this Noah's ark, and donkeys poke their heads from the darkest holes e'er meant for coaling purposes. Here women spin with distaffs still, and wrinkled crones, who have been shaking hands across a square, and stare upon us from the port-hole windows, seem old enough to have bewailed a son or husband in Algerian galleys.

By and by the ascent is made, and we find ourselves upon the plateau of the hill, surveying all beneath. This was the site of the feudal stronghold of the earlier Grimaldis, though now the public cemetery. The spot is pretty and well-chosen; the dwelling of the dead above and quick below strangely reverses the natural order in this life.

But the sun is sinking in the west. The Esterel Mountains begin to wear their evening shade, and the chilly breeze comes stealing from the sea. Impressed

by the beauty and extent of modern Menton, which spreads itself below, we descend by the hill pathway towards the Place, musing on a scene so changed. Not a century ago the town, as we have seen it on its peak-like promontory rising from the sea, was closed within its walls, the remains of the ruined Château crowned its summit, and the bastion on the projecting reef guarded a petty-port; the Roman road or highway, traversable only by men or mules, passed through the guarded gates, affording small communication with the outer world. Such was Menton even within the memory of some still living. From the old Château Mount her past and present can be better seen and understood than from any other point.

We now debouch upon the Place de la Conception, with the churches referred to in the following chapter, and look into the Communal College. This establishment, possessing a Principal and efficient staff of teachers, is well conducted, and imparts a liberal and varied education to the better class youths of the locality. On the lower floor, beneath the vaults of St. Michel, is the Municipal School, attended by some three or four hundred pupils of younger age. The discipline is good. Report bespeaks the Menton youth as apt, but exceedingly unruly, a point we shall reserve for a future page. Continuing the descent by the Rue de Collége, the Church of the Black Penitents, Hôtel de Ville, and Cabinet of Natural History

are passed. The last named establishment, though unpretentious, ought always to be seen, being the only approach to a museum the place possesses, and containing a small collection of great local interest. The worthy proprietor, M. Bonfils, an intelligent and enthusiastic amateur, by care and perseverance has amassed a collection of odds and ends, some of which are very valuable, especially the geological treasures. I allude more particularly to the fossils, shells, and flints of the stone period, found in the celebrated Bone caves of the Roches Rouges at Pont St. Louis, of which much more hereafter; it is time to say *au revoir* to M. Bonfils, and finish our excursion for the day.

Casual ramblings will include the Rue de Brêa, Casino, flower gardens, and perfumery distilleries. A pleasing hour may even be spent in moving about the back settlements of the western bay, exploring the high-walled lanes and alleys, orangeries in decay, broken aqueducts and rustic watercourses with the slaving women at the wash, a state of things which will soon be of the past as Menton advances in her new career.

The Rue de Brêa, which runs from the portal archway near the fountain to the Rue de Collége in front of the Hôtel de Ville, is a narrow street, comparatively modern, containing some important houses of

the last century, some of them bearing inscriptions of remarkable events and circumstances. At the entrance, over the doorway of the house in which the unfortunate General de Brêa was born, is the following inscription :—

AU GÉNÉRAL DE BRÊA,
NÉ À MENTON LE 25 AVRIL, 1790,
MORT À PARIS LE 24 JUIN, 1848.
POUR LA DÉFENSE DE L'ORDRE ET DE LA PATRIE.

PAR DÉCRET DU GRAND-CONSEIL
DES VILLES LIBRES DE MENTON ET ROQUEBRUNE,
AU 15 SEPTEMBRE, 1848.

Upon a wall a little further on is another inscription, in Latin, but so defaced as to be scarcly legible. It informs us that Pope Pius VII., on his return from exile, gave his benediction to the inhabitants from the terrace of the ancient Mairie.

Before leaving the Rue de Brêa there is yet another lion to rouse. This is the tenement marked No. 3, on the north side of the street. It is a lofty building, distinguished by a very handsome doorway opening into a spacious and what must have been in former times a highly ornamented staircase. Here for several days was the head-quarters of General Bonaparte, when in the memorable year 1796 he led the army of invasion along the coast to open his Italian campaign. In the principal room, such as you would scarcely expect to meet with in the street, the future emperor gave his receptions, and seems to have found

it sufficiently commodious, as a *soirée dansante* was given during his brief occupation. The house is, as it has been, a private residence, but with some little ceremony it is possible to gain admittance. To the curious this is a fact worth knowing, as everything associated with the marvellous little man must be of interest, particularly to those who feel the tedium of a Menton winter exile.

A description of the apartment may not be uninteresting to the ladies. It is double-windowed at both ends and hung with figured lace curtains. The smooth tile tessellated floor is partially carpeted in front of the sofa, which forms part of a rather antiquated yellow damask suite, and from the centre of the ceiling hangs a handsome chandelier, all little likely to have witnessed the great event. The features of the room the most remarkable, and sure enough in this respect, are the mural decorations. These are a series of bas reliefs of classic scenes in stucco, occupying panels and supplying the place of pictures A small dingy room adjoining was the great General's salle à manger, and beyond that is the chambre à coucher, still serving the purpose of a bedroom to some ordinary mortal.

Of the scanty memorials of this historic period M Pessy has preserved us one very characteristic and amusing, and here it is. The Porte or entrance to the town is suggestive of a curious anecdote. Upon the arch of the vault is to be observed a transverse

dint about half a foot long and nearly an inch in breadth, made by a sabre stroke. Observe, the occasion was in 1800. The Austrians, who occupied Nice, hard pressed by General Massena, were compelled to fall back on their entrenched position at Genoa, where a strong garrison had been left. One of them, more daring than the others, remained behind, amusing himself by greasing his boots upon the Place du Cap, by way of bravado. A hussar of the French advance guard observing the fellow, immediately gave chase. Reaching him under the archway he dealt him a cut with his sword, but the arch, being low, received the stroke. It is unnecessary to add that the Austrian, happy at having escaped the first blow, was by no means desirous of the second. He took to his heels with all despatch across the frontier and rejoined his comrades in safety. This unceremonious style of bidding him '*Ote toi de là, que je m'y mette!*' had so frightened him that he ran far and fast enough without stopping; they even say he is running still.

We must now step in and see the Casino. This is a species of clubhouse, rejoicing in the title of the *Cercle Philharmonique*, elegant in style but unpretentious, as compared with the magnificent institution of the same name which adorns the Promenade des Anglais at Nice. It was recently erected by a company in shares, and is under the management of an administrative committee. It comprises a splendidly decorated apartment for balls, concerts, and

other entertainments, called the Grande Salle de Spectacle et de Bal, a Salon de Réunion pour les Dames, Salon de Lecteur, billiard and smoking-rooms. Here a series of balls are annually given; they come off about Christmas and carnival times, on which occasions French officialism, *en uniforme*, musters strong, and even invalids take the liberty of violating medical prescription. Both publicly and privately the Casino is the means of infusing some social gaiety and spirit into the petites colonies des étrangers while the season lasts. Balls, soirées, and receptions are given by members to select numbers of visitors, as also by visitors to residents, complimentary or in return for attentions received. A *bijou* stage with theatrical arrangements is provided in the grand salon, where afternoon musical entertainments take place and are largely patronized, by Parisians and Germans more especially. The leading English, German, and French journals are received, which make it on the whole a valuable acquisition to the station.

CHAPTER III.

CHURCHES AND FESTIVALS.

THE Church and tower give tone and character to Italian scenes; in Menton, as in other towns along the Riviera, these edifices occupy a prominent position. On a small plateau rising centrally between the shore and the old Château, are situate the local sanctuaries, amid the pile of many-storied buildings clustered on the slope of the promontory that divides the bays. To this, the Place de la Conception, the ascent is by streets and passages, narrow and as badly lighted as any lane or alley of Old London, yet not without some rich associations of the days gone by. The Rue de Collége has its church of Saint Jean Baptiste or oratory of the Black Penitents, originally a Capuchin monastery; the Strada Longa has its porte, its palace, and the marble entrance and *scalea a riempe.*

The Paroisse or Cathedral, and the church of White Penitents from which the Place takes name, form two sides of the square; the third is an antiquated pile, with its tunnel-like archway leading still higher up the steep; the fourth is open and overlooks the Strada Longa below and across the housetops out to sea.

This is the spot where native nestlings most do congregate, and the favourite rendezvous of the *gamin Mentonais*. To while away an hour lounging on the terrace on a moonlight night, listening to the noisy urchins shouting in chorus the Garibaldian March or other chansons of the country, is quite a new sensation for the strangers of our fatherland with the slightest touch of the sentimental in their nature.

But we must leave the youngsters to their play and song, and look more closely to the churches. The minor chapels of the Penitents, with their inferior art and tinselled interiors offer little worthy of remark, though a visit of curiosity is well repaid. The Cathedral or church of Saint Michel however requires some notice. Like the generality of Italian buildings of the class, it possesses but little outward elegance. The belfry tower shows well enough from any point, while the chief adornment of the façade is a crude colossal statue of the puissant Archangel to whom the building is dedicated. This hazy saint is held in high repute by the town and its vicinity. The wondrous feat of slaughtering the dragon with the one hand while he holds the balance in the other, forms the strange device upon the ancient seal of the Commune. On entering the building the excellence of the interior is in pleasing contrast; there is much to be admired in the bold sweep of the vaulting, the graceful lighness of the columns and the rich frieze above their capitals. The vault of the choir, admirably

frescoed and rich in ornament, constitutes it one of the finest churches on the Genoese Riviera. The mother altar of the original building, which is now a simple chapel surmounted by the heroic saint, is chastely wrought with bas reliefs of purest art.

This structure was founded sometime about the middle of the fourteenth century, and plays an eventful part in the history of the terrible and long continued struggles of the feudal Princes of Monaco, Angou, and the powerful Republic of Genoa. Its walls have witnessed the assemblage of warlike conclaves and the signing of solemn treaties, when oaths of fidelity were given and received with all the pomp and circumstance of a ruder age.

Among its properties is preserved a curious souvenir of the sixteenth century. It is part of a Turkish lance taken at the glorious battle of Lepanto, where Honoré I. of Monaco so distinguished himself at the head of his galleys. That valiant prince presented to his favourite church the murderous weapon. A massive silver cross supplants its iron barb, and this curiously mounted symbol of the faith of peace is duly aired at all the fêtes and ceremonies.

It may be interesting to know that the unique old *scalea* which conducts us from the Rue Longue, is a work of the early part of the last century, the liberal and voluntary offering of the civic population, who performed the task with much enthusiasm. Later still the sacred edifice itself, which suffered much in

common with everything else during the infamous régime of the last princes, has been restored and decorated at the expense of a generous administration.

The mountain and plain communities of the Menton valley, like all other classes, campagnard or civic, of the Italian race, love much the display and ceremony of Mother Church. They are good Catholics and true; simple in their mode of life, they show a faithfulness to religious duties, probably as much the result of habit as conviction. The thing is inwarped with their history and social being, and harmonizes nicely with their ways and ideality. Every little campagne town or mountain village has its church and patron saint whose fête they celebrate; and the chief incidents of Gospel story are zealously observed with all that mediæval charm which our exclusive islanders but dream or read of in romance. No social feature has more of interest for the stranger than the religious life and observances of the land of his temporary sojourn, where faith and devotion is so much more deeply rooted than at home. There upon a little stage we see it all, with its season of joyous freedom or restraint, pleasingly exhibited throughout the year. The Romish tone of Christmas, Lent, and Holy Week; the Italian colouring of the saturnalia of the new year or of carnival, as seen in the town and its vicinity—have all their local points of special interest agreeably curious to observe.

The dying year gives birth to Noël ; and Christmas Eve, joyous with hallowed memories, gives signal-note of preparation for the festive hour in every Christian home. But midnight comes, and pealing bells are ushering in the day the holy Child was born. The simple burghers, young and old, fresh from the family wine and wassail and smelling strongly of mysterious cookery, hasten to the church to swell the welcome of the glad tidings. The scene within St. Michel's is "a caution," and something worth remembering.

The congregation has outgrown the capacity of the favourite place of worship, where the crowding and the heat now give rise to a variety of feelings anything but unmingled. The brilliant and attractive decorations of this annual fête show out in all their best. The graceful columns are swathed in red damask, and the mother altar is ablaze with lights, displaying to the best advantage the muscular and stronger points of the huge St. Michael surmounting it. This mythic personage is in his usual pose, spearing the dragon on which he treads, and judging from the expression of his face seems perfectly content with his success. Right in front of the choir rails, huddled, jostled, squeezed by a bronzy motley mob of youthful members of the rising Christian generation, sits an old man in his rough-spun coat and breeches of the pure Italian peasant cut, holding in his arms the white traditional lamb, emblem of the innocence of the newborn God. The poor little creature, that very evening fresh

from its dam and mountain fold, seems puzzled with the whole affair, and well content to be kissed and hugged by the urchins strong enough to gain the favour. Meanwhile the service of the hour continues, whose Noël chants at least are genuine if not refined, the Italian priest declaims the short discourse, and the ceremony closes. Now comes the hasty rush and scramble for the door, the elders anxious for the household cheer, the younger folks make towards the altar-rails, where the sacristan holds the semi-nude bambino, waxy and plump as missie's birthday doll. The kissing struggle is resumed, ears right and left receive most unapostolical cuffs in the securing of the emblematic favour. The joke is capital; even the gravity and stiffness of the English visitors give way before the comic drollery of this naïve phase of our common faith.

Then comes the fête des Rois, which may be said to begin the social season, and is the prelude to a variety of amusements and observances which continue with little interruption, and the world of Menton is astir until Easter. The ouvriers and peasantry enjoy themselves in their simple noisy gatherings; the little bourgeois have their reunions, while the *grand monde* hold court at the Casino. The women and children devoutly throng the churches, where a most impressive service takes the place of our hymn and homily of the occasion, and the little hill sanctuary of the Annunciade for a time becomes the scene of a continuous

pilgrimage; the devout, the curious, the younger fry on foot and donkey, enlivened by the sunshine and the song of birds, wend their way to visit the shrine and see the wonderful *Crêche*. This place is worthy of a visit; the lovely view it commands alone repays the toil.

On the summit of a terminal ridge which charmingly divides the Borigo and Cariè Valleys is situated the small antique chapel and monastery dedicated to our Lady of the Annunciade. Here stood the Château of Podium Pinum, the legendary guardian of the infant Menton in the days of yore. Many centuries ago a church usurped its place. Here, about 1600, a princess of the house of Monaco was miraculously healed of an incurable malady. In acknowledgment of this divine favour, due to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, the pious lady caused the earlier church to be restored and the fifteen grottoes built which line the pathway of the rugged ascent. The number of these resting-places is in allusion to the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, and they have an extra charm in being now in ruins. This is only one of the many marvellous recoveries and escapes from sudden death due to its Madonna. The walls of the primitive little chapel are almost covered with the ex-voto, from the burst gun-barrel to the broken crutch, with countless pictorial witnesses of special favours rendered in the hour of danger and of peril.

But the great attraction is the crypt or subterranean chapel, to which you descend by a hazardous flight of steps leading beneath the altar. On entering the vault-like apartment, by the aid of a solitary oil lamp which burns in front and the well directed light of day cleverly let through the rocky wall behind, you have before you, in an imitation grotto or cavern, the miniature representation of the birth-place of the Saviour and recorded accessories of the great event, the Magi and their frankincense and myrrh. In rude perspective of paint and paper you have in view before you all the kingdoms of the earth, in mountain, plain, or valley. The wise men of the east in elaborate costumes offer their gifts to the infant Jesus and his parents in the stall among the cattle. All the conceivable princes of the world, from every conceivable point of the compass, are busily directing their steps to the lowly spot. The King of Ethiopia, the Queen of Sheba, and Roman emperors are conspicuous in the throng of flower-girls, sailors, Saracens, and North American Indians composing this toy masquerade illustrative of the eventful scenes of Gospel story.

Here, day after day, with kneelings, beads, and prayer, the faithful whet their faith by looking on these childish things; and holy monks, with tonsured crown, cord-cinctured garb, and sandalled feet, perform their part with all the solemn gravity with which an enlightened English clergyman reads the account of the Creation or the Athanasian Creed.

The carnival season now runs its course, a miniature of what is to be met with in the outer world. Carnival day or Mardi Gras being over, for a time there is an end of revelry and social gatherings. The preaching orders are at work in French and Italian, zealously doing battle with Satan, the world, and the flesh. It is *Carême;* and peace and penitence reign in the little burgh till Holy Week, when the observance of the Death and Passion offers some excitement.

Precious in holy lessons for the true believer, and in interest for the liberal minded, comes *Jeudi Saint*, Good Friday's Eve, when the pious and penitent of both sexes and of all ages betake themselves to St. Michel's to visit the sepulchre, as it is termed. This attraction requires some remark.

The church is darkened, and at the extremity of the eastern aisle next the choir is arranged an illuminated representation of the Last Supper, with life-size figures fairly done. Before this scene from morning until night a continuous stream of worshippers devoutly kneel and pray in spiritual anticipation of the coming day. In the adjoining Church of the Conception late in the evening the interesting ceremony of the "*levabo*" takes place.

This is immediately followed by a procession of the Order of the White Penitents, with all the primitive pomp of cross, banners, lighted lamps and tapers. Conspicuous to the front is a group representing the

Saviour after the scourging, surmounted by an angel with extended wings offering the bitter cup, and borne upon a pedestal decked with flowers and lighted tapers. To the singing of chants and hymns the procession slowly moves along the steep and narrow streets, returning to the church when all is finished for the day.

The morrow is Good Friday, and further scenes of the divine drama of redemption appeal mournfully to the Christian soul. The Cathedral is draped with black, the altar and crosses are hung with crape in sign of mourning, a thousand tapers shed their pale and sombre light through nave and aisle, and every bell is mute. Christ is crucified. A tomb-like silence pervades the house of prayer, the veil of the Temple is rent, darkness overshadows the earth, the graves give up their dead, and the wailing music of the worshippers tells of grief and fear. As the day wears on the peasantry from far and near flock in to witness or assist at the great spectacle of the most solemn anniversary, a ceremony of the olden time which still exists in all its quaint simplicity.

As darkness and the night advance the faithful make their way through the narrow civic routes and archways leading upwards to St. Michel's, crowding the Place de la Conception and entrances to the church. From the doorway to the mother altar the crush and heat is overpowering; the music and devotion still continue, though now the ceremonial has reached another

stage. Christ has been taken from the cross and laid within the tomb. The body of the crucified Redeemer, with the crown of thorns, the spear wound, and bleeding hands and feet, lies stretched upon a bier before the altar, illuminated by a pyramid of lighted candles. For a time the sombre darkness and chanting of the prophetic lamentation still prevail. A monk of the preaching order, with tonsure and hooded robe, delivers the appropriate discourse, and the motley throng now crowd their way to the open air, and another scene begins.

After a short interval the priestly orders, the religious fraternities, and civic bodies, escorted by a guard of soldiery and military band, issue from the church in solemn procession, and, to the sound of instruments and plaintive chanting, thread the interstices of the queer old burgh. The steep and lane-like streets so curiously arched seem quite deserted ; the windows of the dingy lofty houses show here and there a faint illumination, and impart a strange and sad effect as the solemn cortège moves along. Standing on the terraced stairway of the Place as it overlooks the Rue Longue beneath, the sight is weird and impressive. In the gloom the star-like double line of lights lights up the faces, costumes, and gaudy insignia of the bearers, as they slowly stream from out one dismal archway soon to lose themselves within the shadows of another. Leading is the military

guard and band, followed in succession by the Penitents Black and White, in cap and cowl. Then come the priests in stole of office, followed by the body of the Saviour on the bier, borne along beneath a rich black canopy supported by silver staves, and accompanied by bearers of elaborately gilded lanthorns. Still other orders follow, and with the wail of the rude harmony of vocal and instrumental strains the whole affair is solemn and impressive. On arriving at the Place du Cap the procession makes a halt, the sacred bier is placed upon a kind of ornamental catafalque supported by four pillars prettily illuminated by variegated lamps, and lies exposed to the gaze of the devout or curious assemblage, who crowd the quarter from balcony to basement. Heads are uncovered, and at a given signal the body is slightly raised, the faithful kneel, the band strikes up, and the procession is resumed, and filing through the archway near the Fountain it regains the church before the midnight hour has struck.

At length the Sunday dawns, and all is changed. The bells from every tower ring out their merry peals, inviting the faithful to rejoice, for Christ the Lord has risen. Within St. Michel's the signs of wail and mourning give place to peace and joy. The richly gilded altars, lustres, and tinsel of the damask-covered columns are brilliant as with rainbow tints; and the swelling music of the "Gloria in excelsis Deo"

succeeds the *Tenebræ* and sadness of the divine prophetic echoes. As at Noël, social and convivial jollity is resumed, and for the following two Sundays among all classes festivities are well maintained.

In the beginning of May there is another religious festival of great local interest, the fête of St. Michel, the patron saint of the town, in honour of whom, as we have seen, the principal church is dedicated. At the two minor churches there is a special service for the day, and late in the afternoon their respective orders of Black and White Penitents, male and female, in their robes and insignia, from thence resort to the cathedral. Here a procession is formed, with the priesthood at its head, which passes through the main thoroughfare of the lower part of the town to visit the little chapel of St. Roch. Again along the lengthened line of the usual display of lighted tapers, are seen crosses, gaudy banners of the Virgin and the saints, and such like emblems of the faith. It is a pleasing sight to see the Menton damsels slowly move along, with their snow-white robes and flowing veils trimmed and embroidered in blue or red and wearing the sacred heart of their particular class, their dark eyes fixed upon their books as they chant the devotional hymn.

This pretty little fête is a pleasing addition to the joys of May, of Mary, and the flowers; and has a special

fascination for the young and unmarried Mentonais, who muster strong in holiday attire on the occasion. In the open spaces, such as that of the Place de la Conception, Place du Cap, and neighbourhood of the Fountain, no small amount of rough flirtation takes place among the livelier spirits unattached of the assembled crowd, the cheeks of the fair Penitents themselves as they file past not always escaping the smart of flowers or petite pebbles, which fly as thick as candied kisses at a youthful party gathering. It would seem however that the shying, jostling, and hunting is but the remnant of an earlier custom almost forgotten now, and of a much more serious kind. Though rude, as we are told, it was not without a certain trace of sentiment and romance.

In the palmy days gone by, in this sunny land of saints, the young and lusty peasants, prompted more by feelings than by flowers, with dreams of beauty and parental bliss drawn from the early paintings of the *décolletée* Madonna and her child, left for a day their mountain flocks, their olives, and their citron groves, to seek their *belle idéale* amid the dark complexioned damsels at the Holy Fête.

The object of the peasant's soft desires was chosen in the manner now described. A stealthy hit of a pebble marked a fair one as his own and future spouse, as the faithful shepherd marks the sheep at tryst or market. Where love and matrimony were concerned,

these brusque designs gave scope to quite as much of blushing and manœuvring as our more prosaic and conventional modes. From thence their fates were mutually sealed, and some three months later in the year, at the approaching *Fête Dieu*, marriage made them one.

CHAPTER IV.

HISTORY AND TYRANTS.

MENTON with its population of seven thousand souls can scarcely be said to have a history of its own. In written annals we only meet with it as an apanage of the principality of Monaco ; the destinies of which petty state it shared until 1848, when it fell under the protectorate of Sardinia, and in 1854 it finally became annexed to France.

On the rise of the Moslem power the shores of the Mediterranean everywhere fell a prey to these invaders. Along the Western Riviera colonies of corsair intruders secured a footing at various points, and under the leadership of powerful chiefs held sway for centuries. Almost every town or village claims a Saracen origin, and the fine old ruins which give them so much charm in part at least date from that period. During all the time of foreign domination the existence of Menton of course is very doubtful, and nothing is known with certainty of her small beginnings. Even the derivation of the name is a mystery. The eastern names several streets retain, give some force to the general tradition of its having been founded by a horde of pirates from

the isle of Lampedusa, lying between Malta and the coast of Africa, who about the close of the eighth century settled themselves upon the hill on which the town is built. The Arabic element existing in the native dialect would favour such a view. Others, more classic in their tastes, suggest a name and origin much more remote. Menton can certainly be wrung from "In memoria Othonis," but it does not follow that the burgh was erected to the memory of the Emperor. Vitellius and Otho did lots of fighting in the immediate vicinity, but despatches are altogether silent on the subject of the city. The question is of little moment, and it may with safety be taken for granted that the Saracens were driven from the country before the name was known.

This was achieved about 975, by Count William I. of Provence, aided by a certain redoubtable Giballin Grimaldi, who received in fief Menton and its territories as a reward for his services. Some years after these events the Counts of Ventimiglia came into possession; but they in their turn submitting to the Genoese, the sovereignty was conferred upon a noble family of the name of Vento. The political condition of the infant state, embracing Menton, Podium Pinum, Roquebrune, and territory, as recognised by the ceding powers, seems to have been very independent, possessing a currency and statutes of its own. Being, however, within the toils of the Guelf and Ghibelline factions it shared the fate of all engaged. The Duke of Angou taking part against the

Genoese in 1273, William Vento, Seigneur, was compelled to open the gates of the old château to the Seneschal of Provence. In the course of the following year Analdo Spinola, with the Genoese forces, repulsed the Provençals everywhere along the Riviera except at Menton ; but being unsuccessful in the capture of the town and citadel, the Seneschal retained possession till the termination of the war. In the course of these vicissitudes of rival powers and local claimants, the Seigneurs of Monaco soon came into possession. In 1346, in consequence of negotiations concluded between Charles Grimaldi and Emanuel Vento, the seigneury was ceded to the House of Monaco for the sum of 36,000 florins. In 1363 we find yet farther claims are in dispute. Within the walls of St. Michel peace was concluded between Rainier Grimaldi and Garibaldi de Recco in the presence of the chatelain of the town and other notables. Again in 1379 George del Carretto, Marquis of Savone, who had acquired from Rainier Grimaldi the half of the rights seignorial of Menton, took the oath of fidelity, faith, and homage of the inhabitants of the town. An assembly of the nobles was convoked by the Governor Chatelain, and two deputies, Raspando and Revelli, were charged to represent the city. The oath was taken in the Church of St. Michel. On his side the Marquis promised to secure to the inhabitants their freedom, rights, and privileges, et cetera, as had been done in this respect by all predecessors; and which does not appear to have

been a difficult thing to do at any time. The Mentonais seem always to have been the destined victims of ruthless lords. In 1466 an attempt was made to rid themselves of the Grimaldi dynasty by a political movement similar to that of 1848, but less successful still. The Castellan, by the authority of the Council General, formally demanded that they should be received as subjects of the Duke of Savoy. The offer was declined; submission to their lawful lord was the result.

During all these proceedings there seems to have been a wondrous division of property in this anything but happy family. Some years subsequent to this date, Honoré and Luc being co-seigneurs of Menton, Lambert, Lord of Monaco, bought up the rival interests and infused some energy into the government. His reign is far from the darkest in the family chronicle. In 1482, by permission of the Pope, he founded a church to the honour of the potent Madonna of Carnolés, and shortly afterwards most liberally endowed the convent founded by Martin, a Franciscan of Bologna. It is but justice to mention Thomas Schiavone, a distinguished brother who conferred much lustre on the Lady of Carnolés, and who in 1642 died, as he had lived, in all the odour of sanctity.

In 1504 there must have been no small bustle and excitement to welcome the return of Jean II. from the Neapolitan campaign, where, with the élite of his subjects, he had lent to Florence the signal service of

his experience and sword. This seigneur caused the château to be rebuilt upon the ruins of that of the Ventos, scarcely a stone of which remains to mark the spot.

In 1530 the town was embraced in the casual visit which Nice received from the Saracens. That city sustained a terrible siege, and both Roquebrune and Menton were reduced by fire by the rapacious enemy. From this date till 1814 the independent history offers little of interest. We see that Honoré II., the Famous, added to the importance of the place by building his mansion, the Bastion, and restoring the cathedral; but details such as these must give way to a review of the reigns of Honoré V. and Floristen, whose despotic régime brought about the memorable local revolution of 1848.

The principality of Monaco, absorbed by the great Republic in 1793, was restored to its legitimate ruler by virtue of the Treaty of Paris. Prince Honoré V. had scarcely returned to his petty state, from which the Revolution had driven his family, than he commenced a system of despotic government only worthy of a feudal age. The excellent historical summary of M. Rendu, whose authority I freely quote, goes on to say that this prince, being absolute master, suffered no reply to his commands. Heartless as avaricious, he wrung an annual revenue of 300,000 francs from his oppressed subjects, a sum enormous in a population of 6000 souls. He looked upon his princely rule simply as a

means of making money. He modified at will the French Code, which he had adopted, and his ordinances or even simple letters were sufficient to establish or abrogate new laws.

The first important act of his administration was to impose a duty on all native products passing out of the country. France and Sardinia, imitating his example, equally subjected the commodities of import to taxation. Four olive mills belonging to different private proprietors were absorbed as a princely possession, by an edict which enjoined at the same time all growers to have their olives treated at the establishment of the Prince.

A general monopoly of all articles of food, powder, hats, pipes, boat rigging material, was confided to the tender mercies of a Parisian speculator as sordid as his master. The monopolies of corn and bread, called the Exclusive, completed the series of exactions which overwhelmed the miserable country. No bread was permitted to be eaten except what was made of average flour, and produced by the miller and baker of the Prince. All, rich and poor, natives and strangers, were compelled to content themselves with the bread of sorrow. A special register, kept with rigorous accuracy, showed the quantity of bread consumed by each household. If the consumption of any family was not found exactly in accordance with the number composing it, proceedings were forthwith taken against them. Woe betide those who attempted to introduce

the bread of the stranger, the penalty being terrible. The poor peasant who went to work beyond the boundary of the principality dared not bring back with him a remaining morsel of his humble meal. The excise department was no less intolerant. If any dealer ventured to declare his weight less even by a kilo than the actual item, he saw his merchandize confiscated and suffered fine to boot; it was the same even if he declared it more. Glorious legislation; worthy of the middle ages!

Notwithstanding all this the surveillance of the coast was not so close as that of the town. The contrabandists plied themselves diligently, to the great satisfaction of the officials, who judged it better to receive small benefits than to draw upon themselves the maledictions of their fellow citizens.

The death of Honoré V., which took place at Paris in 1841, gave promise of a happier future; but his brother and successor, Floristen I., incapable of governing himself, ceded the reins to his wife, the Princess Caroline, an apt pupil of the school of her brother-in-law. The people demanded reform, the Exclusive was abandoned, and the tax on grain increased, which was a derision. The discontent gained strength as the despotism continued. Choosing a suitable occasion, the consuls of the town and the venerable curé of St. Michel, with an immense following, waited upon the Duke at Carnolés, the residence of Valentinois, and through the curé made a state-

ment of their needs and longsuffering. The Duke, intimidated by the civic muster, promised everything begged for, and all passed off in peace and hope. But all in vain ; every pledge was disregarded and popular indignation became desperate. Floristen, fearing he might lose all, sent from Monaco a battalion of Sardinians to force the community to submission. A grand mistake ; the general in command of the detachment, foreseeing the storm about to break, returned the same day without having made a threat. He informed his Government of the justice of the Menton agitation, of which he could not rest a spectator without effusion of blood, and demanded final instructions. The delay was short; he received orders to withdraw with his troops to Piedmont. The battalion had scarcely crossed the frontier of the principality when a proclamation appeared upon the walls of the town declaring Menton and Roquebrune henceforth free towns, and instituting a provisional government. This was on March 2nd, 1848. On the 21st of the same month a decree was signed by the principal citizens, who met in council and proclaimed the entire independence of the towns under the protection of Sardinia, which power forthwith sent a detachment to garrison the place. From this moment the iron grasp was stayed ; a new era of happiness and prosperity dawned upon the poor oppressed people of this naturally cheerful country.

The Duke de Valentinois, who had a short time suc-

ceeded his father, seeing with some degree of chagrin the greater part of his patrimony escape him, by means of money and false representations gained some partisans, and actually meditated a reconquest by a coup d'état of what justice and necessity had deprived Floristen. The result was as amusing as absurd.

The local historians give the following narrative of the escapade, well worth quoting freely:—

On the 6th of April 1854, having made a pretended departure for France, the Prince left Nice about two o'clock in the morning, in a magnificent carriage drawn by six horses, wearing his best uniform of the principality and all his crosses of distinction. He was accompanied by his aide-de-camp, also in full uniform, his physician, and a single valet. He arrived at Menton about six o'clock, and drew up before the Hôtel de Turin. The greater part of the townpeople were still in bed, but the few partisans awaiting him, judging the moment favourable, took the horses from the carriage containing the pretender, and triumphantly proceeded along the streets, shouting '*Vive le Prince!*' Their intention was evidently to conduct him to the old palace of the Governor, and there proclaim the re-establishment of the Prince's authority. But the opportunity, if it ever existed, had gone by. The Garde Nationale, hardly awake from their astonishment, seized their arms, rushed hurriedly into the street half-dressed, some only with their night-

caps, and quickly surrounded the voiture of the hero of the hour, who, vehicle and all, was straightway abandoned by his cowardly accomplices. On all hands menaces and curses were hurled against him. An aimed musket missed fire, a bayonet thrust was happily turned aside by an officer of the Piedmontese gendarmerie ; in fact the predicament was serious, and but for the timely interference of a small detachment of soldiers returning from drill, he must have been torn to pieces. At length, after many efforts, he was successfully released from the fury of the populace and conducted to the quarters of the gendarmerie. In the course of the evening, M. de la Marmora, intendant-general of Nice, the commander of the Gendarmerie Royale, and M. Faraldo, procureur for the King, arrived in Menton. After having upbraided the Prince for his audacity and received a pledge that no further enterprise would be attempted, they removed him from the town and beyond the reach of the populace. He was safely lodged in the Fort of Mont Alban, near Villefranche, but set at liberty some four days afterwards, on condition that he would for the future confine himself to French territory.

During this period the prosperity of the country continued steadily to increase, and general contentment accompanied the Sardinian connexion ; but the Franco-Italian war with Austria caused material changes in the map of Europe. On the 28th of February, 1861, an affirmative return of 639 votes in

695 assured its annexation to France, who paid the Prince of Monaco the sum of *four million francs* in recompense of lost territory—territory which the father had justly forfeited and the son had never owned.

An historic notice of Menton would be incomplete without some allusion to the difficulties and dangers which beset the movement for the Sardinian protectorate, subsequent to the declaration of independence. The house of Monaco and its partisans, by influence and intrigue with the French Government and their close relation, Louis Napoleon, at its head, gave rise to endless embarrassment and delay in settling the question. According to certain ideas, often disregarded of late, the Monaco harpies were legitimate monarchs. To powers fresh from a revolutionary crisis, the recognition of a patriotic state in revolt was a matter requiring a policy of much delay and caution, but negotiations were in good hands. The political emergency called forth an able leader to the rescue. This was Carlo Trenca, a man of good Menton stock, and administrative genius qualifying him for higher spheres in the arena of European politics. True to his native country, his life and talents were devoted to its interests, and during the years of hope and fear her future destiny entailed he distinguished himself alike by an ardent defence of public liberty and the encouragement of popular educational instruction. Justice has been done in the due recognition of his diplomatic abilities by the

statesmen of the respective governments concerned in the negotiations, and his name must ever stand first upon the roll of his fellow citizens.

From the chassying of Prince Floristen until the final annexation is one of the most interesting little episodes of the history of our own times, played out, as it was, with all the elements of patriotism, intrigue, and diplomacy, on a draught-board chequer principality certainly the least in Europe. It is curious to think of this epitome of a greater power, with all the storms and calms of a national kind to record ; but the end was gained. Under a judicious government, with peace secured, the people of this insignificant out-of-the-way territory now can smile at their oppressors in the enjoyment of the fruits of their own labour.

It is much to be regretted that Carlo Trenca has not survived the interval, to enjoy the consolation of seeing his efforts crowned with such success. This generous and good man succumbed to a painful malady June 20th, 1853. Surrounded by his family, the highest honours of interment were conferred by a sorrowing community, and eulogies pronounced by his leading compatriots and fellow citizens.

A few years' deliverance from the rule of tyranny and oppression, and all was changed. The Mentonais were now soon in the position of saying, with Hamlet, 'Look on this picture, and on that.' Under the régime of the house of Monaco the revenue direct and indirect extorted for its special use amounted

to 300,000 francs, which was almost entirely squandered in Paris or beyond the frontier of the principality. On the other hand, for the free and municipal administration the revenue from both towns was somewhere about 80,000 francs only, all of which was expended within the territory. Civic negligence and individual misery gave place to the work of public improvements and popular industry.

In Menton alone great changes were accomplished, considering the handful of population. The hospital was enlarged, and confided to the care of a religious sisterhood as devoted as intelligent. The schools of primary instruction, which shared in the general degradation, had their teaching staff of one quickly increased to nine. A school for young girls, conducted also by the sisters, like that of the Salle d'Asile, was established, affording gratuitous education. The church of St. Michel's, totally neglected by the Princes, was restored at a cost of 35,000 francs. The public cemetery, which had been allowed to remain waste land, was increased to meet requirements, and assumed the beautiful appearance now so much admired. Improvements were made to facilitate the harbour trade. The water supply, which had been defective and uncertain, was largely increased. Streets were repaved ; a more extensive attempt was made at lighting the town by gas ; the route de Turin was opened up, thereby securing a civilized communication over the Piedmont valley, with many other

undertakings, and entailing a cost to the communal treasury astonishing for its small resources. This was the work of the free commune under the Sardinian protection; since annexation to France the changes which have taken place are even greater, while the new faubourgs and other modern features are subsequent to that date.

CHAPTER V.

THE EAST BAY—PONT ST. LOUIS.

HAVING become familiar with Menton, its history and institutions, the winter resident, if disposed to devote a few hours daily during the fine weather to visiting the most important places and objects of interest in the vicinity, will naturally, among the earliest of his rambles, explore the East Bay and its neighbourhood.

This sunny haven is overlooked to the west by the old château hill on which the town is built; from this point the waters of the bay in a graceful curve sweep the base of Mont Berceau with its double peaks and terraced slopes. Passing thither by the Quai de Bonaparte, one finds himself immediately within another realm. Completely sheltered from the north and west — with all their rude inclemencies so much to be dreaded—this is the hot-bed of the locality, and the quarter of some of the finest and most extensive hotels and pensions of modern Menton. These elegant buildings line the route, which lies along the shore, and here, at the Hôtel des Anglais, is the winter quarters of Dr. Henry Bennet, well known for his

charming and exhaustive work on the winter climates of the Riviera. Having cast a look upon the old defensive town walls straggling up the château steeps, we soon come upon the Pian Gorge, which is best approached in passing near the chapel of St. Jacques close by. This ravine marked the French and Piedmontese frontiers till 1793, and played a memorable part during the sanguinary conflicts of the French Republic and the Reign of Terror. The Menton refugees, whom wealth or opposition had rendered victims of the revolutionary agents, often found security on the neutral territory, and in the night time used to steal across the boundary at peril of their lives to see their families; a display of natural affection too frequently repaid by death. Next comes Garavan; this, prior to annexation, was the frontier customs quarters of the Piedmontese Government, but has now become a fashionable faubourg of the city.

In this locality it is proposed to establish a bathing station on a grand scale, and certainly there is no more eligible situation on these shores for such a purpose. Every natural condition as to climate and position which could possibly favour the scheme exists, and a little enterprise seems all that is required to secure for it the widest reputation and success. It is to be hoped that ere long wealthy speculators will be induced to make the experiment.

From this point we reach the base of the red sand-

stone precipices which rise to giddy heights along the route, a feature that becomes more and more appalling as we near the Pont St. Louis, where the Cornice road literally scoops itself from out the cliffs which overhang the shores; a natural and artificial arrangement which continues until we gain the commanding headland and the Grimaldi tower. This locality, though rugged in the extreme, abounds in an interesting vegetation. Revelling in all the genial influences of a southern exposure, and protected from the killing winds from every other quarter, it may well be termed the "warm terraces," for winter can scarcely be said to have an existence here. Its scanty soil is terraced with the lemon to a considerable height above the level of the sea, and rejoices in its fruits, flowers, and perfume at all seasons. Here the violet, harebell, and red valerian blossom in the later and earlier months of the year. Even then unwonted animal and insect life is active; the dragonflies are on the wing, the hybernating lizard may be seen basking in the sunshine, and the swift-winged martin is a constant resident.

An easy walk of half an hour now brings us to Pont St. Louis, the bridge which with graceful span unites at this point the territorial boundaries of France and Italy. This Napoleonic structure leaps the torrent at an elevation of upwards of 130 feet, and affords a view of the coast and mountain gorge at once grand and bewildering. The waters of the picturesque

ravine and lovely cascades, from time immemorial have sent to the lower lemon grounds unlimited supplies for irrigation purposes; indeed, the fine old aqueduct we see in the torrent bed beneath us is said to be a Roman work, and even if not, little of its interest would be lost. In the crevasse this class of structure serves a variety of objects. One of these, though hardly credible, is that of forming an expeditious by-way for the villagers of the *hameau* of Grimaldi, situated upon the shoulder of the mountain bluff beyond. This goat-like track, where hands and knees are needed in ascent, winds upwards through the chasm and overhangs the rushing torrent. This path has rarely been attempted by the stranger. Some years ago one bold enough to make the venture came to grief and an untimely fate, the body being some time after found among the rocks below. But the gap abounds in tales of terrible as well as tragic incident. A cross on an adjacent rock points out one fatal spot. The sad story is also told of a young Grimaldian peasant mother, with her child upon her head, as is the custom of the country, having slipped from the giddy precipice, when both were lost.

The cavern which one observes near to the escarpment most difficult to clear is associated with many a bloody scene. During the wars of the first French Revolution already alluded to, the patriotic peasant bands known by the name of the Barbets, had here their mountain haunts, and many are the tales of death

and destruction which they meted to the soldiery of the Republic in their guerilla raids. The operations of these francs-tireurs, like those of more recent times, were not always either scrupulous or legitimate; too many were actually robbers. As story has it, one of these, professing to be a refugee, made this cave his home, and during his assumed concealment found means to win the heart of a beautiful peasant girl of the village Ciotti in the valley near by. One day, while the two lovers were seated together in this gorge, a solitary traveller passing along the route below arrested the attention of the refugee, who, being in reality a robber, stole from his sweetheart's side and slew him. While rifling the body he suddenly heard a shriek replying to his victim's moans. The confiding and unsuspecting girl, witnessing the deed, and horror-stricken, in frenzy threw herself into the abyss and perished. The assassin soon after was taken and suffered for the crime.

A little further, as we rise above the Roches Rouges, we reach the elevated headland with the grim mediæval watch-tower on the cliff; and still higher up, half-hidden among the trees, is the village of Grimaldi, only to be seen from the beach below. Little is known of the origin of the tower; it is rude in style, and supposed to have been a watch point or guard redoubt of the old Lords of Monaco. This spot commands a magnificent view of the Eastern Bay and counter bastion sitting on the sea. From the

Berceau all the coast-line is seen in boldest outline; to the west far as the Esterel Mountains, while to the eastward is embraced the stern seaboard sites of Martola and Ventimiglia, where Bordighera terminates the view. Dr. Bennet, a practitioner already referred to as resident at Menton in the winter, has become proprietor of the ruined Grimaldi tower, and here much of his leisure is spent in gardening and professional relaxation. It is surprising to see what this enthusiastic horticulturist has accomplished within a few years on this barren rock. With judicious management the sunny point of scanty terrace soil exhibits a rich and varied collection of flowers and shrubs, and has been made a place of special interest for the English residents.

CHAPTER VI.

CASTELLARE, THE CHATEAU AND THE FETE.

TO-MORROW is the 20th of January, and comes to us in as fine a spell of bright and bracing weather as ever graced an English autumn. The dinner is over, and amid the bustle and chatter of the well-lit *salon de lecture* or drawing-room of our pension, the livelier spirits draw together as if by attraction of affinity, and in Italian, French, and German the inquiry goes round—Who's for Castellare? The annual festival of the patron saint is to be celebrated; a happy chance to cultivate the beautiful and good combined. A sprightly muster of males and females of the nations named, and one Englishman, fill up the list of volunteers, and the little party is complete. "Bonne nuit; beaux rêves!" escapes from sweetest lips as all retire to sleep it into morning.

An early hour brings with it the Menton damsels and the donkeys. The pack mules' panniers are amply stored with the day's supplies, ladies' wraps, sun-shades, sketching blocks, and other items meant for waste or wear which constitute the excursion miscellany. The

start is made, and with a mid-day sun and cloudless sky above our heads, in single file we thread the rocky pathway which overlooks the town. Soon as the topmost ridge is gained, at every turn views offer us a fresh surprise as we slowly twist and twine upon our wayward steeds along the crest of the mountain spur dividing the Carié from the Menton valley. Through clumps of stunted pines we ever and anon on either side see down the lemon and olive terraced slopes into the torrent beds away below. Though mountain peaks are tipped with snow the citron blossoms still. In the sunshine and the fresh clear air the dragon-fly and insect tribe are on the wing pursuing each other in the sunny path, and all goes merrily as a school-day feast.

But there are other tastes than those of sentiment to gratify, and a choice of a spot for rest and déjeuner is proposed. Where thought and feeling are one, choice is not difficult. A general dismount and scramble now begins, and the mysteries of the panniers are explored. Eggs, fowls, fruits, bon-bons, vin de pays, sans la carte, are in demand. Skirts are tucked and the ladies busily at work, while swells *en garçon* lend a hand. Bottles are uncorked, each takes his seat upon the grass, the repast begins, and for a time our olive shade becomes the scene of a little Babel gathering whose confusion of tongues is polyglot and would puzzle the best of lexicographers. Judging from the expressions of the Menton maidens, with their donkeys standing by,

they are also quite of this opinion, and quietly criticise the marvel in their native patois, a thousand times more unintelligible. When fun and frolic have subsided and the echoes of the laughter died away, and each concludes, though very differently expressed, that justice has been done to the good things, as les Anglais say, a move is made by some of our fair amateurs of the pencil to indulge their skill, and the lords of the creation blow a weed. Our elevated camping-ground, clear of the trees, commands a splendid range of valley and investing hills, teeming with landscape subjects of the richest kind, and as the pleasing hours glide on, some fairish sketching has been done to swell the list of our mementoes. But our winter day-dream is soon disturbed. The jack-mule Juan's braying has awakened all the spheres, and is the bugle-call to mount. A short but stiffish pinch, with a little more donkey coaxing, brings us to the mountain village.

Castellare lies at the western base of the Berceau Mount. Situated upon an eminence some fifteen hundred feet above the level of the sea, its position forms a snug retreat. As yet no dwellings are visible for olive-trees and undergrowth, but we saunter along. The vine-clad tower mounds, the ruined walls and fosse which still surround this place of shady memory, in the Middle Ages the scene of many a bloody conflict. Here long time ruled the house of the Lascaris, descendants of the Byzantine emperors, who after-

wards became the powerful Counts of Ventimiglia. During the war of the Austrian succession this strongly fortified fortress suffered more than one disastrous siege by cannonade. In 1747 le Marquis de la Minas entered at the head of the allied French and Spanish troops, partly razing the defences. During the Great Revolution it became notoriously the terrible retreat of the robber bands of the Barbets, whose arms so often proved fatal to the soldiery of France, and in 1792 the place was doomed to destruction. It narrowly escaped this fate; political events alone preventing General Massena from carrying the design into execution. But all is changed since then; spears are turned into pruning-hooks, and the peasantry enjoy the shelter of their vine and fig-tree in happiness, contentment, peace, and hardy industry.

The donkey *sentier* approach is left behind, and our gipsy-looking cavalcade, more closely grouped, now jog along the narrow street-way of the village leading to the old château of the Lascaris.

It is the festival of St. Sebastian. All seems deserted. With the exception of a solitary gendarme and a jackal-looking dog, each living thing is in the church, and not a sound is heard except the laughter of our party or a stray patois interjection from out some dingy archway cabaret. The play of sun and shadow along the lane-like route scarcely relieves the sombre aspect of dilapidation, largely shared in by the noted stronghold that shows a sad depreciation of the light of

other days. But much that is interesting has survived the ravages of war and time, and calls for a halt and general inspection.

Some crumbling walls and a kind of modern tenement is all one sees of the seignorial cradle of the Counts of Ventimiglia. Here the frontier excise staff are quartered, and play sad havoc with interiors once thought good and even curious now, to meet their fiscal exigencies. The remaining frescoed work of one or two apartments shown, it is said is from the pencil of the distinguished Italian painter Carloni, whose works we see in the palace of Monaco, and dating from her palmy days of fighting, piety, and pillage. The styles of the two painted *salles* are in queerest contrast. In the one, besides the double-headed eagle over the arms of the Lascaris, you have the mural subjects sacred; in the other, profane and mythologic. The chief, and much the worse for wear, is the Feast of the Gods, where Jupiter and guests, in loudest-coloured robes, regale themselves most lustily with fruits and wines, and probably a song. While indulging in a little art criticism fancy feels somewhat tickled at the notion of Olympian banquets in this hill hive of degenerate sons of cut-throat Saracens.

Followed by our steeds and bronze ear-ringed, flat-hatted escort, we soon direct our footsteps towards the sanctuary, not far from the palace. Pictorial interior included, it is an excellent specimen of the little Italian village church. The musical ceremonial of

the fête occasion has just finished, and it would appear that *tout le monde* assisted, for numbers of the devout were in the act of getting from their knees upon the steps and crowded entrance of the doorway. Leaving the church, in holiday attire like a rustic school let loose, the young and old alike seemed happy and elated, and the deserted village soon showed symptoms of reanimation. It was evident that some great demonstration was *en train;* but all unversed in the jumble of Arabic, Italian, French, and other elements which go to constitute the Doric Mentonais, it was quite impossible for us to learn its whereabouts and nature. The mystery, however, was not long in revealing itself, for strains of instrumental music, of a kind, broke upon the ears of both the donkeys and the riders of the party, more especially of the former, who immediately began to show much interest in the proceedings and a lively disposition to share in the general feeling. Moving with the current of attraction, clearly setting in the direction of the Place, we quickly found ourselves in the alley we had left, struggling to effect a passage and dragging by the bridles our rebellious light-weights through a crush of talkative and happy people. At last we reached the place of public rendezvous, herding with the expectant villagers, and just in time; for a number of young peasants of the locality, headed by an apparently impromptu band of music, consisting of two violins, an old bassoon, and tambourine, made their appearance, and a novel

custom now began. The leader of the gang, carrying on his arm a small basket lined with rose satin and filled with cockades and little flags of the national colours, passed round the assembly; and while his fellow on the right fastened the favours to the button-hole of every coat he could lay hands upon, coolly as uninvited, the other on the left held in his hand his hat—in other words, received the money. As this went on the others of the group were mingling with the crowd, presenting bouquets to the fair ones—who, by-the-bye, were very dark—with all the gallantry the young Castellarian is master of. The fair strange visitor is just as likely on occasions such as these to receive her favour too, unconscious of its claims, for it would appear, if once accepted, she is the donor's partner for the first dance of the *fête champêtre* now about to open, and which concludes the festival. With lots of noise and frolic, moderate indulgence in the mountain wine and winter orange crop, with bread of very questionable manufacture, all shared in by the young ones, home and foreign, the presentation ceremony closes. Forthwith the music is resumed, a space is cleared, and the dance begins. Some minutes more and the place becomes the scene of a general swing and whirl, and the indigène and stranger join with all the liveliest spirit possible.

But the sunset glow is on the amphitheatre of hills, and freshening breezes from a bluest sea, of which we catch some glimpses through the trees, remind us

it is time to go and reach the shore ere evening's close.

Passing through the old porte which faces the hills our little band is quickly lost in the shadows of the Menton valley, with the high walls of the spectral-looking village overhead looming from amid the trees. A long hour's journey along the precipitous ridges on the homeward route is not without peril, and requires some caution. It was curious to see ass and rider in straggling line carefully groping their way by declivities and escarpments of haziest footing, as the favourite Arabic encouraging endearment of "Esa Montebello! Alla Lizette!" of the Menton donkey-driver was heard from time to time. But the old château is soon in sight and the mule track now is good. Soon we descend the crabbed streetways of the town, and find ourselves once more upon the Promenade du Midi, well pleased with Castellare and the village fête of St. Sebastian.

CHAPTER VII.

ST. AGNES—THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS.

THE fine old ruin yonder crowning the central summit of the amphitheatre of hills, and which we see so sharply cut against the sky from every point upon the shore, is the château of St. Agnes. Its history is all unwritten, and such hints as we have respecting it are but faint echoes heard from out the centuries.

Long prior to the close of the tenth century the coasts of Provence and Liguria were visited by adventurous and hostile expeditions of the Moorish corsairs. Menton, Eza, St. Hospice were in their power, and from the Gulf of Sembracai to Old Castellare no Christian could traverse the *Alpe summa* without paying tribute to these rulers. These marauders seem to have preferred the highest and most inaccessible positions for their strongholds and retreats. That of St. Agnes, from its acknowledged strategic importance, would appear to have been the last relinquished. After 972, when Count William of Provence and his confederates completed the expulsion of the Saracens, the position continued to be held by feudal

chiefs as an apanage of the powers of Angou or Genoa, as fortune favoured the contending factions. During the Middle Ages little is known of it, but in 1530, in the reign of the remarkable Seigneur of Monaco, Augustine Grimaldi, whilome bishop of Grasse, a genuine specimen of the Church militant, it still existed as a fortress and place of some importance. It seems that this fighting and intriguing cleric, for some state reason, took to coveting the château, and during the absence of the Duke of Savoy treated with the governor of Nice for its purchase. The sum stipulated was 4000 écus d'or, part of which was already paid when the deputies of the vicariat of Sospel, of which it was a possession, and of the syndic of Nice, appeared before the governor solemnly protesting against the validity of alienation. The justice of their suit the Prince at once recognised, the annexation scheme was blown to the winds, and the amount advanced given back. The place has been abandoned and dismantled long ago, but as a halo of romance surrounds it still, it has become for visitors quite a favourite point of pilgrimage.

On a charming day in early March, about an hour before noon, in social band we set out on excursion and gaily enter the Borigo valley. Well mounted on our goodly Menton thoroughbreds, we quietly pace along the left flank of the ridge which divides the Primevere and Castagnie valleys, where much variety of view relieves the scrubby sameness

of the track. As we approach Mamelon-Vert a landscape of the richest kind soon breaks upon the sight. The pretty little village of Gorbio, picturesquely seated in the centre of the bewitching amphitheatre, is upon the left, Cabonelle and Garillon upon the right; and the eye sweeps the deepest dells of the Val de Castagnie with its bushy slopes and sweet associations, while away above us is the Saracen retreat literally hanging on the verge of the precipice.

We are now about halfway on our route, when suddenly the path assumes the perpendicular, or something closely approaching it; but happily the difficulty is surmounted by a donkey zigzag track, a sort of Jacob's ladder and a termination just as ill defined, when we find ourselves rapidly advancing on the village of St. Agnes nestling behind the shoulder of the hill, with its sun-baked tenements crusted to the rocks and the ruins of the old château overhead.

The village, which from the bay is hidden from sight, is a sad type of the class, consisting only of a single street formed of low houses half in ruins. We enter by a guarded archway and file along the street amid the rickety buildings until we reach the Church of St. Agnes. The little chapel is dedicated to Notre Dame des Neiges, a singular misnomer, unless it be that this hill community have the glorious privilege of seeing snow at the distance of the farther mountains for some months of the year, for the fall is slight,

and seldom on their own rocks or roofs even in the severest winters.

The little sanctuary is remarkable for nothing save its poverty, unless it be the annual festival of the patron saint whose name it bears. The celebration takes place on the 21st of January, the day following that of Castellare, a circumstance to be regretted, as it is equally interesting in its own way, and the fatigue of doing both is more than enough for the ordinary tourist. Though more primitive than the latter, it enjoys a wider reputation on the Riviera, probably for the reason that, like many other desirable pleasures of this life, it is less attainable. However that may be, the number of those who find themselves there on the occasion is considerable, and a curious medley they are. We are even told of the halt, maimed, and *malade étranger* being escorted thither on arm-chairs and stretchers; but the general mode of transit is the donkey, consequently the favourite animal is at a premium on this particular *jour de fête.*

The proceedings commence with the religious ceremony in the church, after which comes the curious scene of kissing the relics. This devout process has to be gone through by holding in the hand a golden ball which lies upon the altar. The article of course is not the real material; it is simply a piece of wood hollowed out, gilded, and with a slit upon its surface, through which, when the pious act is finished, the believer is expected to pass his mite, which goes to

the coffers of the church. This is followed by a religious procession of the villagers, which makes the round of the small amount of rugged footing that this elevated home presents. The little place is *en fête* throughout the day, but the feast and fare is of the simplest kind. The odd feature of the gala event is the apple, which is the delicacy, and article of general consumption. The fruit is quite exotic here, and on this holy occasion, as on All Hallow-eve at home with us, it seems to be associated with some religious legendary notion, but beyond the fact that it is so no reason can be given for its origin.

Gaining the space a little higher up we arrive upon the Place, that indispensable accessory of the Italian mountain village. This is simply a shelving plateau or escarpment that overhangs the valley, with a look-out towards the bay. It is partially surrounded by a natural breastwork or parapet, and, backed by the rocky peak on which the ruin stands, is scarcely wide enough for the performance of a roundelay with safety, but is sufficient for the recreation purposes of the younger progeny.

Those interested in the geological phenomena of the locality visit this spot to witness more closely the effects of an earthquake with which the place was visited on the night of March 4th, 1802, and which detached an immense mass of rock from the brow of an adjacent mountain.

Here for a short time we leave the escort, donkeys,

and supplies, and some of the most daring continue the ascent towards the château. The feat is difficult, but can be accomplished by the healthy, even of the ladies. We take the pathway near the chapel, and after some hard climbing clear the shattered walls and scramble upon the ruined fort, still sufficiently preserved to show the extent and general arrangement. The view that meets us is magnificent. Menton on the bay, ridges, valleys, and torrents, spread themselves beneath us in all their beauty, and we see at once the advantages of the position as a stronghold for predatory gangs. The building of the château is associated with a beautiful romantic legend of a certain Saracen corsair and a Christian maiden named Anna; but the St. Agnes of the church and the lovely Moorish captive have got blended in so extraordinary a way that romance or tradition is alone capable of reconciling historical difficulties; and the story is better left to the keeping of these sources.

But time is on the wing, and we must regain our party with all the speed that caution will admit of. Due appreciation having been shown to our moderate supplies, and no small amount of curiosity awakened as to the crumbling ruin and its antecedents, there is a general demand for the legend of St. Agnes, and the literary member of the party, well skilled in Abel Rendu's novelette, good humouredly complies by giving his own version of the story, the simpler of the two, and as likely to be the true one.

THE LEGEND OF SAINT AGNES.

It was in the long ago, when war was waged and blood was shed between the Crescent and the Cross, a mighty Saracen held sway along these shores. His strong-girt château frowned from peak to plain, and ruthless bands were ever at his call. It was not to his birth or wealth he owed his power, but to his might, and hate for all who kissed the Cross. His courage, like his skill, was strong, and his hard heart no pity knew, nor feeling but revenge.

He had been nursed within the desert tent, his childhood soothed by tales of darkest deeds. His playthings were the spoils of ravished lands, his sports were cruelties to Christian slaves.

They fondly watched his growing love of fame and eager listening to the tales of bearded Moors grown old in lawless life, mute as a lion waiting on its prey. Ere his young arm had strength to wield the sword, he swore upon the ashes of his sires, with hand upon the Koran's sacred page, undying hate towards the Christian race.

Lithe from the desert, among the Moors of Spain he showed his valour in the victories won, and mothers wailing for their daughters lost hissed curses upon Haroun's hated name. At length, grown wearied of the tented field, he sought for conquest on the tideless sea. Barbary's galleys with their corsair hosts swept far and near the sunny main, the homeward laden

with their captives fair and strong-limbed men for slaves, and riches of the west; the Moslem banners streamed on every coast. In all Liguria, between the nearer Alps and sea, the Eastern yoke was on the Christian's neck, and terror reigned in all the higher lands and solitude was in the valleys there.

One evening, by the setting sun dread sails were seen upon the main, and through the stillness of the midnight hours the signal fires lit up the summits of the circling hills. 'Twas Haroun with his hosts. The bronzed marauder from Melilla's porte, where ruin marked his wandering course, with booty laden and triumphant song bore for the Gulf of Peace.

Among the captives was a lovely maid of Provence, of a high degree, spoil of a galley sunk upon the way. The fight was terrible and strong; her father and her brother both were slain, despite the effort of the desperate girl. Her youthful courage won the corsair's heart, and love and passion claimed her for his own.

Rare was the beauty of this luckless girl, and every grace adorned her face and form; a charm was round her, and full many a heart had throbbed in vain to win her smiles.

Set captive on the Moslem's deck—how changed! She sighed for death, and looked upon the waters to the west, but the sun had set and sadness filled her soul; grief wrapped her like a winding-sheet.

The Saracen was lavish of his cares, and sudden fear and hope alternate wrung his brow; mysterious

longings filled his heart. Haroun the conqueror was captive now.

Dark flashed the eye of Haroun's Moorish maid, the black-haired Sarah, mistress of his heart, to see his growing passion for the slave; and direful mutterings took the place of song, and winning smiles were changed for dubious looks.

"Oh my heart's lord," urged Sarah in his ear, "what grievous spell has wrought this havoc with our love? Why stays my Haroun from his Sarah's side? Why turns his eye away?"

"I am but sad," the troubled Haroun said, "and choose to be alone. The spirits of my fathers speak to me of mischief yet to come."

"And do they say you wander from the faith?" was Sarah's hot reply, "and give your heart where faithful Moslem ought to give his sword! I know you love the pale-face captive maid."

"By Allah, no!" exclaimed the fierce-tongued Moor, and raised his threatening hand.

The shades of night concealed his dread revenge, the splashing of the waters and a moan was heard; but never from that night did Sarah see or land or sea or Moor or captive maid.

And Haroun built his castle on the hill, with keep, and gate, and bastion guarded well, choosing the towering peak, the only one as yet unsullied by the infidel. And Moslem chiefs from far and near swore fealty to their lord; and there was revelry

in these mountain halls. There guilt was planned of raids by land and captures by the sea ; and towns were sacked, and spoils were stored, and captives led in chains. War was the pastime of this tawny band.

But Anna pined, pent like a dove within the eyrie of the vulture Moor. She smiled not when he came with victory in his eye, she only saw the blood-stains on his hands and marked the wildness of his look ; so wide the gulf between the Moslem and the Christian maid. Strong in his love he tried, but tried in vain, to lead her with him into Islam's fold. She spoke of Christ, of Calvary, and the Cross, and strove with power to win him to the faith. And Anna stole upon him like a dream, armed with a double grace—the matchless form which fires like wine the weak, the mind so pure that subjugates the strong. She stirred new life and light within his soul, and round him wove a spell he could not break, and sadness shaded him by night and day.

For what was fame if Anna did not smile, and what was treasure if she shared them not ? His sword hung on the wall, his ruthless hordes went out on bloody quest without their chief.

For hours he sat beside the captive girl, and Anna smiled to see him at her feet and dally with the cross upon her lap, till custom made it pleasing to his sight. And Christian faith, so graced by Christian maid, stole to his soul as love grew in his heart.

The struggle came at last, he needs must go to lead

his clamouring hordes to further fields of rapine and of war, or fly a convert with the Christian maid. He swung his sword upon his thigh, and stole to Anna as she knelt before the cross—the cross he knew so well. His wild name trembled on her lips and mingled with her hopes.

He came to bid her evermore adieu; but Anna swayed with gentlest grace, and turning to the Moor, a sweet smile won him and a prayer saved.

Close by her side he knelt, and madly vowed he loved her as he loved his inmost soul. She was his heaven and there he placed his hopes; he hence would be a convert to her faith.

"Haroun, I'm thine," was whispered in reply.

'Twas midnight by the lofty castle watch, and Haroun traced some writing on the wall, of Islam's doom; then, leading Anna and a chosen guard, he passed the portal and descended to the shore, where boats lay waiting ready at his call. Ere morning's dawn the gentle breeze had sped them on their way far from the Gulf of Peace; nor backward look towards the looming cliffs which Haroun ever cast, stayed their good barque, till fair Marseilles received them in its port.

Scarce had the rites of holy Mother Church within St. Victor's stately abbey walls received their vows—made Haroun Christian and their two lives one—till full of goodly grace good Haroun died and left his bride alone. He did not live to see the scattering of

his tribe where late he ruled. Heaven was to him even merciful in this, for with his flight the old Ligurians knew the Moslem power was gone.

Years after William of Provence had hurled the Saracen from out the land, and the prophecy of Haroun was fulfilled, the saintly Anna buried all her woes and sighed for exile in her mountain home. She sought the vale of Castagnie, near Haroun's hill, the hill where she had wept and prayed. She built a chapel near the village there, and spent the evening of her days in vigils, fasts, and prayers, to win the Moorish race to Christ; and when she died the peasants could not think her dead, they sought her footsteps on the hills and in the vales, but she had passed away.

The story being finished and time too limited to allow for the excursion being continued to Mont Baudon or the Aiguille, not far distant and frequently embraced in the day's doings, the question of descent has to be considered. There are several routes open to the choice; the least perilous, unfortunately, is by no means the one to be preferred for interest and beauty, so we risk the hazards of the journey by the Val de Cabrol.

Returning through the village we pass the strange rocky rampart on which is fixed the cross seen from such a distance, and which marks the position of the hamlet, everywhere concealed from sight between

the mountains and the shore. The puzzle is how, in the nature of things, it could have come there. Under the existing order it seems impossible for mortal man to reach it. To interrogatories on this point the savant of the donkey escort suggested that it might have been before the earthquake, which is not at all improbable. But it is well that the voyager should know that it also might have been before the Saracens, eras which define the hazy history of these regions, and, like the Scotch Sir William Wallace or the devil, sufficiently account for every conceivable anomaly. Bidding adieu to this anything but cheerful nook we issue from its dungeon-looking entrance, and passing the rustic grotto chapel soon find ourselves again in the region of the olives, and our difficulties are ended for the day. Though compelled to dismount from time to time, it is not always possible to escape the dangers to man and beast it does not do to think of at the moment ; but our patient industry is well rewarded by coming in sight of the hameau of Cabrol, with the foliage and perfume of its citron terraces, as we reach the bottom of the valley.

The little settlement consists of a few poor dwellings and a small red-coloured chapel, with further exterior representations of the spiritual genius, St. Michel, still slaughtering his dragon. Further on we cross the pretty rustic bridge which spans the torrent, and are now safely clear to follow the charming valley to the sea.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PLAINE DE LA MADONE—GORBIO AND THE VALLEY.

LEAVING Menton by the avenue on the Nice road which sweeps along the Bay, the suburb lying between the opening of the Borigo and the Gorbio valleys, sheltered by the Colline de la Madone, invites attention. This locality is not without some classic features, and the soil is sacred by the many associations of the earlier ecclesiastic stages of her history. M. Honoré Ardoino, the distinguished student of the history and botany of the Maritime Alps, in his lucid little brochure on the antiquities and origin of Menton, throws much light on the chronicles of its past and present. Here, near to the charming villa property of M. Medicin, the present mayor of the city, stands the old church which was founded in the fifteenth century, and which in the sixteenth became celebrated as the Chapel de la Madone. This humble little sanctuary is not without its legendary associations. It was near to it in 1529, when a visitation of the plague ravaged this portion of the Mediterranean coast, that the saintly Thomas Schiavone, already

alluded to, fell a victim to its taint. As the story told in monastic chronicles has it, the good old priest, of whom many marvels and wondrous works are recorded, when returning one night from his devotional offices at the chapel of St. Ambroise to the church of Carnolés was struck with the pestilence even unto death. Attracted by a vivid and supernatural illumination of the way, some of the faithful approached the spot, and found the body of the saintly Thomas in the attitude of prayer. It was duly deposited in the former mentioned chapel. But it would seem that a repute for holiness and miracle-working power may, like the possession of any other gift, give rise to human jealousy and envy. Some of the inhabitants of the neighbouring town of San Remo, where there was a branch establishment of the Frères Cordeliers, of which Thomas was a shining light, paid Menton a visit under cover of the night, and carried off the body, and had it carefully interred within the precincts of their own church. In these latitudes the dust or bones are held in high esteem.

A little farther on is the beautiful villa and garden of Carnolés, a later Menton residence of the princes of Monaco. About the middle of the sixteenth century Honoré II. made a donation to the Franciscans of the Church de la Madone and the gardens, which seem to have been abandoned by the Cordeliers. This Franciscan brotherhood built their convent there, and occupied it till time with her caprices turned them

out, and gave it up to secular uses. With certain alterations and improvements it has long done duty as the Casino or Villa de Carnolés.

Continuing our walk along the highway we approach the Pont de l'Union, which crosses the Gorbio torrent. Here it is well to enter the garden property of the St. Ambroise family, and leisurely examine the classic remains which report has consecrated to Diana, now serving as a tumulary chapel. Art has done little for this simple fragment of Roman masonry. Upon an angle of a building close to the edifice, or all that is of it, there are the mutilated remains of an inscription, with the following letters still traceable—

Terlvllino
E V
——vllinvs

Taking to the donkeys, and pattering up through the well-paved passage-way adjoining the Villa Victoria, we enter the Gorbio valley. Bidding good-bye to the smiling Plaine de la Madone just explored, we mingle with the scene concealed within the mazes of the romantic valley, where nature revels in the wild profusion of richest landscape beauty, at every step unfolding newer and sterner prospects. Threading the admirable mule-track, and clear of the old oil-mills with their charming ivy-clad archway, we trail along the terraced hollows laughing with their floral riches, and every fairy nook is blushing with the gay anemone.

Enclosed with hills on every side, we pilot our way to the sound of the rushing torrent in the ravine. We eye the ruined aqueducts, peasants' châlets, and mill-steads, here and there nestling amid the trees, for simple industry is visible everywhere, giving variety and animation to the dull seclusion. Man is not idle here, but adds to Nature in her bounteous fruitfulness. Every handful of the scanty soil is carefully bestowed, and the route leads on through the fullest blending of the gigantic olive and lemon laden with the golden fruit, the greener foliage of the shaggy fig-tree adding freshness to the tints and colouring of the scene. Ascending and descending amid scenery such as this, and still clinging to the bed of the torrent, some hour and a half brings us within sight of the village of Gorbio, picturesquely perched upon the plateau of a rocky buttress which stands out boldly from the sombre background formed by the Monts Garillon and Bausson, which almost invest it, and the sharp-cut peak and shoulder of l'Aiguille is seen towering in the distance.

We cross the rustic bridge and pursue the ascent, which becoming still more and more Swiss and Alpine, makes stronger demands upon the muscular reserve of man and animal. But the old wall and porte are soon reached, and our lively party crowd the bench beneath the shady trees of that village haven of rest—the Place ; the spot of all others for those reflectively disposed to contemplatively draw parallels between

the social state of mankind here upon the upland heights and life in London.

The meagre black-robed curé, with shovel-shaped hat, is staidly taking his constitutional in company with a worthy of the village. Dark-eyed children begrimed with dust and sunshine, are rollicking about, or staring at *les étrangers*, and evidently admire the superior grooming of our donkeys. The sun-blistered sundial on the wall (for here upon the hills clocks are an anomaly) affords a hazy notion it is now past midday and time to break upon supplies. This duty done, then comes an hour of rambling among the wreck and racket of this singular settlement.

In gazing around the amphitheatre of hill and mountain which surround us, we seem to stand upon an island of a mountain lake which the genii have let out; and to strengthen the impression the torrent from the hill gorge beyond divides, embracing on every side the rocky mound on which the village sits, to meet again a little way below. We are told in days gone by it was a remarkable strategic position, a point which no one will dispute, I apprehend, for who would ever think of fighting there? Yet we read that in 1746 Gorbio was the scene of a terrible and bloody battle between the French and Austro-Sardes, on which occasion the celebrated General Govani met with death. No wonder that he did, and thousands more besides. Where could have been the base of operations? Was the conflict waged in rank and file

in all this rough-and-tumble of precipice, ravine, creek, and gully? Taking Gorbio by escalade, if there was anything approaching a defence, must have been a work of Hercules, unless since then the place has been sadly shaken out of shape. But some say that history lies notoriously, and one may be permitted either to question the account, or reduce it to the proportions of a picket skirmish.

But this was a nest of fighters centuries before Govani fell. The fort-like ruins which crown the heights and overlook the valley approach attest all this. It was a formidable fortress of the old Lascaris, the scions of the fighting Counts of Ventimiglia, and formerly the château occupied nearly all the space the village covers—that is, all there was to spare. The old walls still remaining display the arms of the Lascaris and a specimen or two of the antiquated ogive windows, with their cross-barred iron gratings. Several apartments are still maintained in habitable state, and curious to examine. A descendant of this great family, the Countess Alberti, retains possession of the premises, and, strange to say, shows her attachment to the cradle of her house by taking up her quarters within the shattered walls when she yearly visits the estate, a shelter scarcely worthy the inheritor of such a name.

Gorbio, like the Italian mountain village generally, must not be judged of or associated with anything that is modern in the way of human settlements. Any

charm or beauty it possesses consists entirely in its mediæval quaintness, its rudeness and dilapidation. From the portal archway as you enter from the Place, until you look out from the ruin-crowned precipice towards the sea, embracing the scarred and crumbling tenements, vaulted streetways, cavern-looking passages, and rustic church, would be Doréanly dismal in the absence of the laughing sunshine and the bright Italian skies. The two or three hundred peasant population gathered here are as novel to us strangers as their homes, their language, manners, customs. All are strange, but in their primitive condition wants are few. With all their poverty and ignorance, apparently there is more of earthly happiness than we see in our own colder clime in an equal number of the same class of society. All this leaves little room for pity or moralizing, and to the voyager, with his interest still fresh and some artistic taste, nothing can be more delightful than loitering amid these haunts and homes of the Italian frontier race.

So as to avoid the difficulties and dangers of the same route homeward, the excursionist should be advised to return by way of Roquebrune. The mountain track is excellent both for pedestrians and donkeys. It leads onwards by the village fountain, where washing-women most do congregate, and twines along the vine-clad slopes, commanding many lovely views from many points. In two hours Roquebrune is descried, and you are once more within the confines of civilization.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CASCADE, AND THE HERMIT'S CAVE.

EVERY winter resident of Menton must be familiar with the names of these two wonderful natural formations ; and most of those possessed of sufficient physical stamina, make one pilgrimage at least to the waterfall, which constitutes the source of the Carei torrent.

Many a happy excursion was made in the course of the season to this favourite spot—our party on the day we chronicle being strengthened by two American friends, who, in their enthusiasm for nature and for art, had visited almost every fall and cavern, from Niagara and the Mammoth Caves of Kentucky, to the dripping sources of the Rhône.

There are two routes leading to these sights, one by the heights of Castellare, the other by the Turin road. To go by the one and return by the other affords an interesting day's journey, and is not too much for one of ordinary walking powers.

Staff in hand, and duly armed with flask and sandwich, we give the precedence to the Turin road, and enter the valley at an early hour, the sun rising

joyously from out the deep, and everything seeming to favour our design.

If Switzerland has her Lauterbrunnen and Savoy her Chamouni, Menton can boast her Carei valley. Of all the vales which the Maritime Alps embrace in their rocky realm, there is no other more deserving of our admiration. The landscape contrasts are so striking, and art and nature so blend themselves, that almost every element and variety of scenic beauty lies hid within its folds. Looking from the shore, the railway viaduct and modern villa which crown the opening of the valley, but add fresh charm to the picture.

As we pass through the magnificent plane-tree avenue which lines the left bank of the torrent, we have the monastery of Our Lady of the Annunciade looking down upon us, and from across the dry bed of the river, the vine and olive terraced slopes of the Castellare ridges are shutting out the city from our view, backed by the mother Mount, the Berceau, who wears a deeper shade from the dews of early morn and the still fresh verdure of the spring-time. The picturesque oil-mills of the Monaco Princes when in power are soon passed, and wider prospects of the valley now present themselves as we trace the sinuous windings of the Turin road till lost among the hills. In the distance, peering from its nest of verdure, is the steeple of the rustic chapel of St. Roman. Vineyards clothe the uplands everywhere,

and pine clumps fringe the outlines of the crowding hills. From near this point the route now rises boldly, and the village of Les Monti, almost concealed from view by olive plantations, is passed. Here the aspect of the country changes : the olive and lemon grounds are left behind, the vines alone are on the slopes, and the stern mountain ranges bound the horizon before us and on every side.

A good hour's walking brings us within sight of the objects of our tour. On the side of the valley directly to our right is the Cascade ; the waterfall is not quite visible, but there is the gorge rending the mountain side, overshadowed by the sun-scorched peaks of the Berceau, on whose flank, close to the ravine, are piled the village ruins of Old Castellare, abandoned some centuries ago. This was the parent of the present village, nearer to the sea and more accessible. It is rather rough work gaining the opposite side of the valley from the Turin highway at all times, but with care it is passable enough even for donkey parties. The vaunted passerelle, or rather impromptu bridge, it may be concluded, is either a myth or is long since washed away by floods ; no traces of it now are visible. We had to wade the torrent as best we could, but this was a paltry preface to subsequent achievements. Skirting the base of the heights, which we have held in sight so long, we quickly reach the simple bridge which spans the torrent at its birth as it gushes from the chasm, and now are in full view of the cherished

objects of the day's adventure—a wild and rugged scene.

The Cascade, called by the peasantry of the district the Gourg dell' Ora, is an almost perpendicular ravine, as weird, but on a much grander scale than that of the precipice of Pont St. Louis. It is formed by the drainage waters on the heights, and which, gathering volume and force as they descend, bound in cascades down this rocky gulf, gradually deepening the chasm as the centuries roll. It ought to be visited after a rainfall to see it in its beauty. Still, at any season the view is pretty.

To the left of the Cascade, some two or three hundred feet upward on the rocky facing, shaggy with rock rose and wild myrtle, is situate the Hermit's Cave, a mysterious grotto known in the locality by the name of the Balconetta, or Little Window. Legend says a pious anchorite once occupied the cavern, which is probable enough.

Those who have visited the place describe the crude masonry of the front wall of the cavern pierced by a frameless window-opening, and the remains of a crude inscription in red letters, the mysteries of whose hieroglyphic-looking signs no linguist can possibly unravel. But at the side of the doorway is another, which satisfies all curiosity by informing us of the name of the gentleman who long since tenanted this solitary retreat. It runs thus :—

Cristo la fece.
Bernardo l'abito. 1528.
Dieu la fit. Bernardo l'habit.

It has been remarked as strange why the anchorite, who was indebted to the Creator of all things for his rocky abode, did homage to Christ, in preference, for the blessing. M. Passy naïvely observes, the reason is very obvious: in this superstitious country, as in many other better-informed quarters of the earth, Jesus is synonymous with deity; at any rate among the devout and illiterate, and to that class no doubt the recluse belonged.

The interior consists of two apartments, the first rather spacious; the second, which is less inviting, is on a much smaller scale. On the authority of those daring enough to explore its mysteries by lamp-light, it is rich in stalactites and crystals, both varied and rare; but these did not possess sufficient inducement for us to do further damage to hands and clothing. To sit at the entrance of the deserted cell, contemplating the view of Castillon, l'Aiguille, and the valley far below, while we blow a weed, is a delightful noonday occupation; but he must be lithe of limb who ventures on the undertaking, and for the ordinary tourist the feat should simply be avoided.

The return is certainly the easiest part of the feat, though every caution is required to avoid the fatal casualty of a summary descent.

Resuming the journey homeward by the mountain route, it is necessary to cross the bridge and continue the pathway leading up along the flank of the Condamine; and passing through Castellare, Menton is reached, the strongest feeling conscious of both hunger and fatigue.

CHAPTER X.

ROQUEBRUNE—THE CHATEAU AND THE PASSION PLAY.

ROQUEBRUNE, a village of a few hundred inhabitants, overlooks the Cornice road some four miles to the west of Menton. It is the sister-town, and claims to be the elder of the two, but we find them twins at least in all the varying fortunes and written troubles of the later centuries. It is said to have had a very ancient origin, and was probably a strong position of the old Ligurian race ere Cæsar crossed the Rubicon. Some time after the Romans and Saracens in turn had held possession, it fell into the hands of the Lascaris of Ventimiglia, who for a long time governed there ; but these rulers being driven out by the Genoese during the Guelf and Ghibelline contentions, it underwent rough treatment, and was finally added to the estate of the Grimaldis by consent of both parties. About 1363, William Lascaris, Count of Ventimiglia, ceded all claim to this portion of his dominions in favour of Charles Grimaldi, Lord of Monaco, for the sum of 16,000 golden florins. From the date of this transaction till our own day this family

has enjoyed undisturbed possession, with the exception of occasional unwelcome visits from Moorish corsairs from across the main.

The place does not seem of much importance, still it has been honoured by all the horrors that international or feudal war could possibly bestow. Provincial seneschals, Dukes of Angou, Genoese admirals, and Saracens had all in turn a shy at it. And last of all, in 1530, to crown their middle-age experiences, the Moslems, returning from the siege of Nice, desirous evidently that Roquebrune should keep old Menton company, took an impressive farewell of the Riviera by leaving it a pile of smoking ruins. Wriggling from dust and ashes, she again continued to be linked with Menton, and until 1848 shared the misrule of the Monaco domain, at which time their plucky Lilliput revolution enabled them summarily to dispense with princely incumbrances and constitute themselves free towns under the protectorate of Sardinia. In 1861 its communities, like all others of Nice and Savoy, showed a native patriotic spirit by voluntarily ceding their territory to the flag of France; and here its independent history ends.

About the close of February, all serene and fair, our party determined to devote a day to this old mountain burgh and its vicinity. The long-eared cattle were forthcoming, the mount was excellent, and off we went. Carnolés and the property of Banstron being passed, we leave the Cornice road, jogging along

the dry bed of the torrent, and are quickly lost in the shadows of the olives.

Aurora is two or three hours in advance of us, sowing her treasures by the way. Every opening in the foliage is aflood with light, and genial sunshine bars the pathways. The terraced sward is dewy and green as an English lawn. Everywhere the violet and primrose in sweet profusion strew the silent glades, and as we sniff the perfumed morning air, all lingering taste for Moet or Moselle soon vanishes. But adieu to social vanities. In the absence of snow to indicate the elevation, we are now above the luxe line of the Riviera, and for the moment live in other spheres and times.

The little hill oratory of the *Madonna della Pausa* is soon reached and the first stage of the ascent is finished. Here the halt and rest is well bestowed, and we indulge in spiritual draughts by staring through the iron gratings of the single vaulted chamber, elaborately frescoed with highly imaginary illustrations of the state of Christian souls departed. Right in the centre behind the altar, St. Ursula guards with her mantle the pious virgins ; to the right is hell with its *mise-en-scène* and *dramatis personæ*, to the left purgatory presents to the faithful its obvious contrast, while from above the holy Mary receives the souls made just. The designs are said to belong to the fifteenth century, but have been retouched of late ; their age, if not their art, must justify the renovation.

Another short spell of mounting among the pomegranates and myrtles, and we are at the antiquated portal entrance to the town. This opens upon a natural terrace with a fine old parapet, and commands a splendid view of the whole sweep of coast line from Cap Martin on to Monaco. As we make our way along the narrow street towards the fountain, some faint idea of the arrangement of the place becomes apparent. Here again you meet with all those features of the hill town of the coast. It is on a much smaller scale than old Menton, but has a greater air of cleanliness, and the paved stoneways are in excellent condition. The village is rude and quaint in its construction. The vaulted stairways and precipitous alley-looking streets everywhere burrow the packed and lofty houses, throwing about the lights and shadows in the most fantastic ways and furnishing rarest fields for the artist. The whole architecture and style of the settlement so terraced, twisted, arched and twined would argue the liveliest anticipation of a similar catastrophe to that with which legend associates its infancy.

The village is built upon the rough-and-tumble of a landslip, a position as strange as interesting, and the puzzle naturally arises as to whether its founding was before or after the event. Superstition and tradition, the learned sages of the past, have long since clearly solved the difficulty, for we are told that one particular night—no one has remembered when and history does

not mention how—Satan in capricious mood had given the hill a hitch, and the villagers awakening were surprised to find themselves a-down the slope much nearer to the shore, and their earthly home securely propped by a sturdy bush of broom. The explanation of the phenomenon may be simple enough, but it is not easy to perceive how the Blessed Virgin has escaped the credit of the very providential check, the only *lache* in this way which can justly be placed to their account. If the local belief has as little fact as science to recommend it, at any rate it is original and will hold its own. The railway and telegraph now between them and the sea may strengthen their feeling of security, but are not likely to affect their geological theories or faith much more than they do our own.

Leaving the safety of the village to the keeping of the story, it is easy to assure ourselves of the slip or subsidence of the lands it now occupies. Immediately behind and higher up the hill, which at this point consists of a sort of plum-pudding or conglomerate formation, there is every evidence of its original position, and the movement must be attributed to some trembling or convulsion with which the quarter has been visited.

Advantage has been taken of the enormous masses of tilted débris on which to place the keep and surrounding ramparts; those on the landward side are cut or hewn vertically with the walls and foundations of the château, and must have rendered the stronghold im-

pregnable on every side to the arms and artillery of the fifteenth century.

But the château or castellan residence is the chief attraction of Roquebrune, and requires some special notice. We leave our donkeys to their meditations near the fountain, and effect an entrance by the antiquated portal. It is no easy matter to scale to what was formerly the castle court, but once gained the look-out to the coast and sea is truly beautiful.

The fortifications of the place are totally dismantled or in ruin, but the fine old scarred and time-worn stronghold still holds its ground, and strongly reminds one of the donjon keep or tower of the Scottish borders. The building as it at present stands consists of three stages, and is flanked by two towers now in ruin also. The portes and entrances facing us are of the narrowest and abruptest kind, and quite in keeping with the rude character of the structure.

On a lintel placed between a grated window and an opening underneath, upon the square tower looking to the east, with careful scrutiny it is possible to trace a sculpturing in relief representing a bishop's mitre with the armorial bearings of the Grimaldis ; it bears the date August 17, 1528. There seems to be no doubt this memorial alludes to the restoration of the château at the period mentioned, and at the instance of the fighting and intriguing Augustin Grimaldi—whilom Bishop of Grasse, Abbé of Lerins, Councillor and Almoner to King Francis I. of

France—regent and tutor to Honoré Prince of Monaco.

In the first stage is the well-like vault, that painfully reminds one of the musty dungeons of our feudal manors of England of the olden time. The second and third stages, which seem to be appropriated to the purposes of village stores and donkey quarters, even harbouring the poorer peasantry, consist of low-roofed, cellar-looking apartments, loop-holed, and much in want of light. The battlements have entirely disappeared, but from the flat-roofed summits the prospect is magnificent; in doing a cigar while lounging on the parapet a pleasing hour soon passes. We overlook the village clustering on the rugged slope; above and beneath in wild profusion are its terraced lands; while far along the rock-curved bay are Monaco and Monte Carlo, sheltered by the Aggel and the mountain ranges, with the Cornice highway winding round their flanks, away behind and far above rear the hills that divide us from the Gorbio valley. The scene is full of beauty.

The view engages my thoughts and attention; but our military friend admires the strategic reserve, and in confidence declares that with one Armstrong duly mounted he could have kept the mediæval world at bay. But what of the vibration of the first report, my volunteer artillery lieutenant? Your town and citadel must have vanished with the smoke, and slipped like something from a tailor's goose, to

join the rocks and shingle on the shore. He shied the butt of his cigar to fall some hundred feet below, and surrendered the position.

Before leaving the ruins, it is well to take a look at an antique fragment mingled with the rubbish of the enceinte of the old fortifications. It is a tray-shaped stone, bearing a Roman inscription still legible, which may be rendered thus :—

MANIO AVELIO FILIUS LUCII MANII FABII
PATERNIS DECURIONIS QUI VIXIT
ANNIS XVIII MENSIBUS X DIEBUS XIX
MANIUS AVELIUS MANII FILIUS
MARCELLUS ET COMISIA TRANQUILLINA
PARENTES FILIO PIENTISSIMO

It is impossible to say if this is the original position of the tablet, which some pious father has raised to the memory of a well-beloved son in the land of the stranger; but it is more probable that it has been transported from the ancient Lumone by some one interested in antiquities.

Returning with careful doubling in the descent, we regain the terrace of the church, the only one the town rejoices in. To the left of the approach you observe upon the lintel of a meagre doorway of the Grande Rue an antique morsel of twisted or twined fluting in stone, bearing the monogram of Christ. The tourist connoisseurs have pronounced oracularly on the quality of the treasure, and lead us to believe that it is a fragment of an ancient sarcophagus, which

is very probable; the ciphering may have quite as clear a reference to the unknown god as to Him whose initials it bears. As a fact, it would not be unique; throughout the Riviera one often meets with sculpturing and inscriptions of the heathen temple doing service as the ornament and symbol of the Christian shrine. Again, upon a wall immediately in front of the sanctuary, beside a painting of the Virgin, is the armorial shield of Dominique Galvano, Count of Drap, one of the later Bishops of Nice, no doubt a man of mark. But here is the church: nothing remarkable, and quite in keeping with the place. Its small interior is surprisingly attractive, with its marble flooring, red damask drapery, and pictorial restoration—the work of the liberal administration of the independent régime. Upon the vault of the grand nave are the life-sized frescoes of Saints Augustin, Louis, and John, of very medium quality as works of art; while stowed away beneath a private chapel altar, reclines the crudest image of our Saviour—a property of the grander ceremonial occasions. Upon the interior wall one remarks a peculiarity: the illustrations of the saintly hierarchy give place to the portraits of the donors, male and female, and on such a scale that these far from spiritual subjects monopolize the most of the canvas. It strikes one that local taste rather than artistic choice must have had to do with this preference for sinners rather than for saints. Judging also from the free-and-easy nature of the

festival performance, undue religious latitude must reign in this out-of-the-way community, an idea that leads us to the character and sociology of this hill-side tribe.

Of the shrewd, square-built Roquebruners some good stories are told, and one that taught a liberal lesson and illustrates their whilom credulity is worth preserving. It would appear that one night, long before the age of reason, a wicked wag, of native birth and mighty ventriloquial powers, determining to play off a practical joke at the expense of Mother Church, concealed himself within the village presbytery, and in a feigned celestial voice (whatever that might resemble) revealed to the mystified and startled curé where he would find a case of precious reliquery hidden in a cavern near the shore. The worthy old priest, knowing his office too well to question the authority, announced to the assembled multitude the glad tidings from the pulpit. The joy and bustle of young and old was something wonderful to witness. In full procession, with naked feet and lighted tapers, the villagers betook themselves to the cave, and, sure enough, the box was there. With pious care and honour it was removed, and placed before the altar in the church. The following day saw it duly forwarded to Monaco, the chief seat of spiritual jurisdiction in the pigmy principality. It was opened with all form and ceremony; but behold, beside some musty bones, no gold or silver thing was there, and rage

and chagrin was the climax of the whole affair. From that time hence the poor curé's visionary reputation was entirely gone, and the parishioners for ever lost their faith in relics.

Though Roquebrune is a move above the stream of active life, she breathes the spirit of progress, and twenty years have wrought a wondrous change in her economy. Enjoying all the blessings of the modern French communal system, security, industry, and a simple form of education show everywhere their best results. If her peasantry are not remarkable for cleanliness, there is comfort and happiness within their homes. Their scanty terraced soil yields good returns in wine and oil, and now no lordlings prey upon the fruits of their time and labour; it is piping times of peace with all within the little commonwealth, busy as ants upon their hill.

Like all his ancestry, the Roquebruner, hardy as his rocks and ardent as his sun, clings unceasingly to the modes and usages of the days gone by. Some of these customs are curious enough in their own quaint way. As we have seen, they have a taste, though never deeply rooted, for the so-called holy—a failing which has been sorely tried, and with which they are sometimes twittingly reminded by their neighbours.

The jour de fête of the country is the great occasion of display, and their quasi-sacred mannerisms come forth in all their force and beauty. Here still exists, with every mediæval charm and point, a curious

custom it would be almost criminal to omit. This is the passion play or allegorical procession of the death and passion of our Lord. The burlesque performance takes place at the annual festival, on the 5th of August. Now that a reactionary taste and interest are setting in for everything associated with the religious and social phases of the Latin Church of the Middle Ages, the Roquebrune exhibition may naturally be expected to share with the Bavarian Ammergau in odd dramatic notoriety. The day of the performance of the serio-comic drama is the most eventful in their yearly calendar, and the attraction draws immensely. If after a certain hour the church is empty, certainly the streets are full. The peasantry from far and near come to swell the audience. Here a citizen of the world or a Chinese philosopher would find excellent opportunity of observing the sacred made profane, and the loftiest ideal reduced to the meanest capacity. Every scene of the closing act of the Christian drama of Redemption is awkwardly portrayed with guise and costume of the most ridiculous description, and worn by native artists who perform their parts, if not with grace, at least with all the gravity it is possible to imagine. The following scrap of the entertainment's programme may suffice to furnish those curious on the subject with some idea of the nature of the play so many go to witness :—

PROGRAMME OF THE PROCESSION.

First comes Christ No. 1, advancing slowly, preceded by an angel who presents to him the cup of bitterness. Judas follows, still holding in his hand the price of the betrayal; from time to time he gives his Master the perfidious kiss, and signifies that He is indeed the King of the Jews.

Then comes Christ No. 2, with features worn and weary, attached to a column; he is surrounded with a guard helmeted and brandishing their lances; a ferocious tribune, mounted on a raw-boned horse, is in command.

Again comes Christ No. 3, crowned with thorns, followed by Herod, who advances slowly and with measured steps, under shelter of a showy-coloured umbrella. On his heels is Pontius Pilate, publicly washing his hands, to show that they are clean.

And again comes Christ No. 4, accompanied by Simon the Cyrenian, dragging with much force a heavy chain, and preceded by the instrument of punishment. He shoulders a huge cross, and, while staggering under its terrible weight, the conducting rabble threaten him with fury.

At length comes Christ No. 5, represented by a huge wooden crucifix; the lance that pierced his side, the sponge, the cup, and the vinegar; the cock that crowed to Peter sits perched upon a pole, and accompanied by the saintly Maries weeping and wailing.

Nothing is wanting of all recorded accessories to complete the scene, and the rear of this lot is brought up by Adam and Eve in modern habiliments, and between the pair the apple plays its part, the cause of all our woes. The two last individuals, who close the procession, are wrangling about the clothes, and drawing lots who shall win and wear them. The performances finish, and the curtain falls; in other words, the sun goes down.

For those who understand a joke, the cool gravity with which the absurd parody of the scenes of Calvary is played is irresistible. It would seem, however, that the calm and serious has not always been maintained; for we are told that, some years ago, the persecuting guardsmen carried the poking and despiteful usage of the Lord too far, when the impromptu Redeemer, abandoning his characteristic patience and humility, pitched into his adversaries manfully. Since then the rougher usage, and very properly so, is only farce.

But we have tarried long enough at Roquebrune; and having done justice to a quantity of the good white wine we bid the place good-bye, and soon find ourselves once more upon the Cornice road, and near the sounding sea.

CHAPTER XI.

CAP MARTIN AND THE MONASTERY.

THIS Cap forms a favourite suburban drive, and may be embraced in the Roquebrune excursion, to which, without adding much to the fatigue or length of time, it affords great variety, both as to objects of interest and scenery. With this object it will be necessary to descend from the Cornice highway precisely at its junction with the Monaco road; it is rough, but quite passable for pedestrians and animals. This being done, we take the track which lies across the brushwood space of lavender and juniper, and which separates you from the old Nice road, in classic days the Imperial Roman highway, of which all traces must soon be lost. The visitor will now find himself upon the promontory of Cap St. Martin, lovely still as a seaside woodland, though but a shadow, we are told, of what it was many years ago, when thickly timbered with gigantic caroubier and larch. But the speculators have been here at work, and these have long since disappeared. Still the old point is wild and bushy, and the favourite resort of Menton *gamins* when on lizard-

hunting expeditions, a peculiar juvenile pastime of the locality at certain seasons of the year. An excellent carriage-way sweeps round the sounding shores, which makes it most inviting for the invalid and less adventurous of the *colonie des étrangers* or winter residents. Besides the beautiful coast views on every side and mountain masses never hid from sight, there are objects which are interesting and deserve to be visited.

Close to the route we have preferred is situated the remains of a Roman monument, supposed to be sepulchral, probably the place of interment of some patrician family. It is said to have belonged to the little city mentioned in the Itinerary of Antoninus by the name Lumone, and which tradition places in this locality, though not a trace remains to mark the spot except this solitary fragment.

The ancients gave to this kind of structure the name of *opus reticulatum.* It is built of Roman brick, the façade presents three arched niches, and the condition of the vaulted portions even now would favour the idea that they had been frescoed originally. The base is of the same material, arranged symmetrically in equal thickness, mosaic-like, and in alternate lines of black and white of diamond shape, continued to the height of the edifice. Above the arches extends a double line of bricks, forming a projecting band, and a little higher up is a vacant space,

which gives the impression that a tablet for an inscription, or something of the sort, had once been there. The remains of the associated walls, which pass some distance behind, are well defined, and enable us to form an idea of the original arrangement of the building, which has evidently been of importance.

Away before you, nearly in the centre of the headland, is the semaphore rising from amid the trees. It marks the position of the monastery of St. Martin, on whose garden-grounds and ruins it is situate, everywhere concealed by scrub and undergrowth.

Of this old religious house nothing now remains save the crumbling walls and a portion of the chapel and refectory; the convent bells have not been heard for centuries. The past history of this ruined establishment awakens much of antiquarian interest. Unfortunately the local guide-book simply tells us it had seen the early period of the Christian era, and is frequently alluded to in the chronicles and archives of the Abbey of Lerins, on which it was dependent.

Abandoned and destroyed, reliably no one knows when or how, legend as usual steps in and supplies some missing links. An old tradition very current in the country throws light on its decline and fall; and as it shows more clearly still the shrewd character of the Roquebruners, whose hill home over-

looks the haunt, it well deserves to be retold, and thus it runs :—

When the Saracens first made their appearance in Liguria, spreading death and terror among peaceful and happy homes, the renown of the many religious houses of the coast attracted the attention of the rapacious adventurers, and supplied them with the loveliest captives and richest spoils. The inmates of this convent, dreading for themselves the fate of so many others, judged it prudent to be assured of the assistance and protection of the neighbouring population of Roquebrune in the hour of peril. This was accordingly done, but—can it be believed?—fickle fortune thwarted all their wise designs. Like true imitators of the doubting saintly Thomas, who naturally wished to see before believing, the fancy struck them of putting the fidelity of their protecting allies to the test. Consequently on one occasion, at the dead of night the alarm bell was rung, the agreed-on signal of distress. The villagers, true to their engagement, by scores leaped from their beds by summersault to hear the dismal chime, armed themselves, and hurried downward to the rescue of the monastery. But what was their dismay when, instead of finding enemies to oppose, they were welcomed by shouts of laughter from the whole community, assembled to enjoy the joke at their expense. The explanation which necessarily followed, it would seem, was by no means satisfactory to the wounded feelings

of the Montagnards, who returned in dudgeon, swearing hard between their teeth to pay them out at the earliest opportunity. Alas! the occasion too soon showed itself. Some six months thereafter, two galleys manned with armed Moorish corsairs stole to the Cap under cover of the night. A landing unopposed was soon effected, and the ferocious Saracens rushed upon the walls. The monks and sisterhood by toll of bell again appealed to Roquebrune for aid, but her wary children declined to budge, and allowed the pirates to devastate, and carry off the nuns and nunettes unopposed.

So goes the story; it is to be hoped it is untrue. But, after all, the circumstance was not unusual in the times alluded to, and as there may be more than wit or humour in the legend, the visitor can well award a sigh to the innocent victims of a misplaced confidence of the olden time.

Having done the sights, we seek the route which leads to the city, and quickly find ourselves among the olives, some of them the finest and oldest by centuries to be met with in the district. Near to the old Roman road, which we must once more tread before we regain the town, is pointed out the site of the celebrated aristocratic olive-tree, the summer evening rendezvous of the Menton privileged society of the last century; but the great Revolution came with all its fury—the favourite tree was declared to smell of the *noblesse*, and was cut down.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO.
ROULETTE, SAINTS, AND RELIQUES.

MONTE CARLO.

OUR itinerary having hitherto been confined to the ceded territory, it is now proposed to extend the operations of our winter's campaign to places within the limits of the principality of Monaco. As there is much to be seen and done in order to experience fully the various pleasures this little country has in store, many journeys will be necessary, and in various capacities; one day as the simple tourist of ordinary tastes and interests, another as the antiquarian, or again another as the fashionable lounger, for there are strong temptations to change of character here. This being the charmed sphere of the *flaneur* and the gambler, it is scarcely possible even for the best regulated mortals to escape its influence, which acts like a contagion, and one quite naturally finds himself coquetting with the risks of roulette or trente-et-quarante, never intended in the day's or evening's

transactions, and when on principle the least disposed. But we must cross the frontier.

Having hugged the mountain by the Cornice road, some short distance beyond Roquebrune we arrive at the wayside Chapel of Saint Roman, which marks the actual territorial boundary. Here crowd themselves along the rocky shores the scenic charms of gorges, ruined aqueducts, and picturesque oil-mills, interspersed with elegant modern villa views, such as are described in the opening chapter, and sufficient to gratify the most wayward fancy. But our team of bell-harnessed sturdy little ponies tear along like fury, and half an hour lands us by the *jet d'eau*, in front of the Casino of Monte Carlo.

This earthly paradise, gardens of Armida, or any other poetic term which the littoral press and guide-books please to apply, more than realizes expectation. Here nature and art united have accomplished wonders. The situation and character of the position combines all that constitutes the perfection of landscape beauty. The mountains, sea, and clear blue sky, the ardent sunshine cooled by the fantastic and luxuriant foliage of the shady palms, caroubiers, and gigantic olives; add to these the orange, fig, and vine, marvellous horticulture, and the balmy perfumed air, and the idea of the picture is complete.

It is in this Eden, "where all save the spirit of man is divine," that the evil genius has established his material palace—the Casino, the *maison de jeu.*

The financial house of Blanqui and Company have created here an oasis of pleasure and excitement on the margin of mercantile civilization, and keep their saloons open to the world in the style of Baden, Homburg, and Wiesbaden.

The Casino was constructed in 1862, on the plateau of Spilugues, which now bears the name of Monte Carlo. The establishment is specially favoured by a railway-station, and a beautiful approach for vehicles of every description. The building possesses two elegant façades, which respectively look to the south and north, the former opening upon a magnificent parterre and terraced esplanade, which overlooks the sea. The *salle de bal et de concert* occupies almost the whole length of this portion, and is very elegant in style. The north façade faces the Place de Casino, and with the Hotel de Paris, range of restaurants, and billiard-rooms, forms three sides of the quadrangle. Seen at a distance, ablaze with flowers and rejoicing in its almost tropical vegetation, the scene is lovely. On clear moonlight nights, when lit up with its myriad lamps, the effect is simply magical. All that can be said of the Isola Bella, of the Lago Maggiore, is here distanced. Judging from the society and surroundings it will not be difficult for the stranger who is not a patron of this establishment to conceive of the brilliant gaiety of tone and character of the entertainments of this winter palace of the Riviera. Bals costumés, réunions dansantes, operas, and concerts follow each

other in rapid succession throughout the season. The celebrated artists and artistes, lyric and dramatic perform to gay and crowded assemblies at regular intervals; and every day, afternoon and evening concerts are given by its numerous and well-organized orchestra. A spacious reading-room completes the list of attractions, so that every taste may here be gratified.

The moral phase of this rendezvous of gaiety and fashion is an endless theme for moralizings and discussions, and the forms which virtuous indignation assumes are at times amusing. For example, it has been stated seriously that if the valiant chevaliers of the Grimaldi ancestry, who won so many titles and so much honour in slaughtering Turks and Spaniards, were to witness all this gallantry and gambling, they would be shocked, and would summarily drive the daring, flirting, speculating votaries from out the realm. The end might justify the means, but moral susceptibility was never known to be a particular virtue of this house of Monaco. If all that history tells be true, the country seems to prosper better under the present régime, in every respect, than it has been known to do under any rule of the past. If there is more of vice there is a thousand times more of virtue, and wealth, and comfort with it, more generally enjoyed. People need not play unless they choose, and shooting pigeons may not be a very noble pastime, but it is at least more harmless sport than

shooting human beings, which seems, if all accounts be true, to have been the favourite pastime of these not very ancient worthies. Leaving the main points of this question to the moralist, Monte Carlo is a lion of the south, and we may be legitimately permitted to doubt whether the moral beauty of the communities of the little principality, or Mediterranean coasts of France and Italy, will be marred by the prosaic and less romantic crowd who finds its way thither to indulge in the innate human pleasure of losing or winning. Its presence can influence but little the simplicity and primitiveness of its native population; and by attracting wealth and refinement to the locality it may assist in adding to the civilized necessities of the many retreats less known along the shores.

From the terraces of Monte Carlo we look down upon the graceful sweep of route which skirts the bay dividing us from Monaco. The beautiful villa property of La Condamine, lying beneath the sheltering masses of the Turbia heights, displays the brightest colours, and is fragrant with the sweetest fruits and flowers. Amid endless gardening and terracing, elegant villas, hotels, and pavilions are springing into existence as if by enchantment, and everywhere add to the charms of the avenued curve of this bewitching marine retreat. Occupying a prominent position among these things of new creation is the extensive bathing establishment, also under the administration

of the Casino, and which offers every attraction for the pleasure-seeking and luxurious strangers from the northern capitals. Everywhere the magic wand of Blanqui and Co. shows its powers of transformation. The lounger must be hard to please who cannot gratify his tastes and caprices in this gay elysium.

We talk about time working wonders. On this small sphere just fancy for a moment a hirsute Jean Grimaldi, fresh from damaging the crescent at Lepanto, with his gilt-pooped bristling galleys casting anchor in the pleasurable and sparkling waters of the bay precisely as one sees it now. The valiant ancestor of the house of Monaco would very naturally conclude that dreams or drinking must explain the cause of all this wealth and modern gingerbread creation. Here, where fairest beauties in fantastic costumes disport themselves, pleasure yachts are swinging at their moorings, with specimens of picturesque fishing craft seemingly more for ornament than use. Here in days of yore, within this bay of refuge of the fast and fashionable, rode the Grimaldian fighting frigates ; galleys that at times played havoc with the enemy from the Gulf of Genoa to the shores of Catalonia, measuring shot and boarding-pike with the finest fleets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, either doing business on their own account or in the remunerative service of one or other of the greater European powers.

CHAPTER XIII.

MONACO.

THE *voyageur* of the Riviera who has not visited Monaco verifies the adage of having been to Rome without seeing the Pope. It is the lion rampant of the Ligurian shores. The town and stronghold occupies a plateau lying at the foot of the bold mountain bluff known as the *Tête de Chien.* Its rocky base, on all sides perpendicular, rises some hundreds of feet from out the sea, and forms the natural glacis of the ramparts on the landward side, or point of contact with the coast. From the Cornice heights it looks more an island than a promontory, while from the port below, with its belt of grim walls and bastions everywhere investing the sun-scorched buildings, the whole thing simply reminds one of a mighty fortress.

Passing upward through the old arched portes or gateways named Antonine and Neuvo, we find ourselves upon the elevated castle square, or Place, in front of the façade of the palace, with its antique and military-guarded entrance. The battlemented parapets on either side oppose the view, and sundry

bronze cannon of heavy calibre (certainly dismounted) and pyramids of bombs and balls lying along their lines, give to the place quite a "no-surrender" air.

It is singular to observe that here, where the fighting Grimaldis realized their fond ideal of the impregnable fortress, an important town should be contained; in fact, a city in miniature, if not more. Here we find a Church and State, a press and telegraph, and such establishments public and private as mightier states rejoice in. But there is this anomaly—which makes it quite Utopian—there are no imposts or inland revenues to levy or collect. Wandering in the narrow streets and intersecting streetlets, consisting of clean-looking Italian houses, one will never find himself oppressed for space, unless it be on fête occasions. The some fifteen or sixteen hundred inhabitants who find themselves together there have ample room to roost between the Promenade St. Martin and the Place, where the visitor will do well to devote some pleasing hours to inspecting the holes and corners, highways and byways, of this remarkable locality.

The town possesses three churches. The Black Penitents, or Oratory of the Visitation, is an edifice of which something may be said. It was founded by the Princess Charlotte de Gramont in 1673. The interior is large, and in keeping with the taste of the period. The twisted agate columns of the mother altar and a few of the pictures are worthy of notice.

The celebrated allegorical procession of Good Friday used formerly to leave its precincts; but this half-Pagan half-Christian spectacle has been suppressed, and is not likely to be resumed in our time. Some twenty years ago the Bishop of Nice issued his interdict, considering it a scandal; and though lingering on for a few years, it had evidently outlived its time, so that Roquebrune is now without a rival on the coast in this respect.

St. Nicholas is the parish church, and claims to belong to many epochs. According to some authorities it was originally Pagan; according to others it dates from the ninth century. In the choir is an inscription belonging to the seventeenth century, which date may be the more correct. The chapel connected with it is consecrated to the interment of the princes of the principality. The Church of St. John the Baptist must not be omitted; it is destined to become the cathedral, but as it at present stands it would require some renovation to recommend it.

So much for the churches. The Monagasque Patron Saint, Devoté, whose fête they celebrate on the 27th January, will be referred to in the notice of the shrine of the lady, and the early Christian legend of her life and martyrdom.

Things new and secular as well as old and ecclesiastical deserve inspection. It would be unjust to Monaco to part without expressing a few words of praise to the merits of the Ecole des Filles, Salle

d'Asile, and the hospital—institutions excellent both as to management and internal arrangement, though small and scarcely sufficient to meet the wants even of this little state. These establishments all enjoy the blessing of the kind direction of the Dames de Saint Maur.

We must now gratify our admiration with the beauties of the Promenade de St. Martin. This was the work of Honoré V. The delightful shades the bowery shrubberies afford are most inviting in the noonday sun, as you lounge amid the gaudy terraces of flowers and vegetation, eastern and tropical, and on the southern aspect descending nearly to the waves. From this point of view it is bewitching. It is scarcely possible to fancy any connexion with the shore whose rugged masses almost overshadow you. Looking down from the rocky elevation, nothing meets the senses but the moan and sparkling of the deep blue waters lashing the base of the flower-decked crags at a giddy depth below. Endless are the varieties of flowers and plants which deck these hanging gardens. And surely little can surpass the beauty and grandeur of the coast and mountain scenery looking towards the land. Stand where you will upon the ramparts, which everywhere in snake-like coils warp the rugged flank of this leviathan-like rock, the eye commands a landscape rich in beauty and panoramic in extent.

On our round, at the extremity of the Rue Lorraine,

we cannot fail to observe a pretty little edifice in its garden. A sad interest surrounds it. It was built at the desire of the beautiful Marie, wife of Antonine I., and here that charming princess condemned herself to voluntary retirement, when—not without cause—wedded life had become intolerable to both. She called it "My Desert," a name it still retains.

Having now made the round of the city, we attack the palace, castle, pavilion, or what you will, for it seems a medley of every fortified conception between this and the last Crusade. The arrangement is quadrangular, on the one side galleried throughout. Looked at from the south, its crenellated towers between the archway and the wings or extremities gives it quite a Moresque aspect. But the whole establishment, externally as well as internally, has undergone such patching and remodelling within the century, that if the decapitated Doria's ghost were permitted to revisit the haunt, it would be hard for him to recognise it, or find the chamber where he killed his uncle, or t'other where he slew his brother, for there seems to have been rooms for every purpose in this invincible Grimaldi fortress. But we must pass the guards and look at the interiors.

From the court of honour on the western side is a massive stairway double remped, of polished marble with balustrades, leading on to a balcony or gallery elaborately frescoed with the twelve feats of Hercules, said to be from the pencil of Carloni. Upon the length

of the façade opposite is a frieze and panel painting, also in fresco, by Caravaggio. The subject is the triumph of Bacchus, with his following of satyrs and bacchantes, the whole composition presenting a loud and somewhat travelling entertainment character; but doubtless this was all in keeping with the dramatic character and events of the old Monaco proprietors. The apartments shown are very handsome and elegantly furnished, and contain besides a very fair collection of the Grimaldian ancestry and other portraits. The Salle de Grimaldi, with its wondrous marble mantelpiece, said to have been cut from a single block, is the chief attraction; it bears a Latin inscription to the following effect :—

"He who pretends to know God, and regards not his commandments, is a liar."

A curious sentiment for a feudal house who never knew or acknowledged any law, human or divine, save their own, or that of the king or emperor they for the time being served. There is likewise shown a chamber which may have some interest for the English visitor, if not for the German, as herein died the Duke of York, brother to George III. There is a legend, given by the not at all times reliable historian of Monaco and its princes, relating to this event, it may be well to mention. When the Duke was dying, a pleasure yacht, which had followed the vessel of the prince, hove to at the Grotto, situated upon the rocky

shore near to the citadel. A beautiful young damsel landed, and the craft set sail. Whilst the malady of the Duke continued a white phantom was seen constantly sitting at the entrance of the cave, her gaze fixed on the old château. But one day it happened that the English vessels moored in the port hoisted the death signal; the same day the shade was seen to disapppear like a halcyon on its flight away to sea.

The private gardens of the palace, which occupy the fosse, courts, and terracing of the old fortifications that barricade the citadel from the neck of land, and stare upon the hills, are even more interesting than the palace itself. It is as difficult to find the pathways as it is easy to lose them in threading the mazes of this garden labyrinth, so beset is it with bastions, turrets, and galleries inextricable—the unbuckled armour of this powerful stronghold. Those interested in the furniture of classic highways have here an opportunity of satisfying their curiosity by examining some excellent specimens of Roman mile-stones, which stand near the portals of the fairy nook.

So much for the kennel; now for a retrospective look at the stock and lineage of the *Cerberi* who for centuries have kept guard at the gates.

This history of Monaco, like that of mightier European states, can also claim her Greek and Roman periods. It is said to have been founded 590 years before our era, and the pagan temple forms the base of more than one of her now existing edifices. About

the tenth century a certain Giballin Grimaldus, fighting under the flag of Count William I. of Provence, rendered powerful aid in the expulsion of the Saracens, and received in recompense the lordship of this strong position, and such was the origin of the tiny modern capital and municipality.

The chronicle of the Grimaldi race is a literary and antiquarian curiosity, abounding in the richest materials for the sensational Middle-age romance. The leading members of this noted family have their names linked, as warriors, statesmen, and priests, with the most stirring and eventful periods of Imperial, French, and Italian history.

Rainier II. figured at Versailles among the great admirals of the day, having under Philip le Bel gained against the Flemish the sea-fight of Zeeriksee. Jean I., admiral of the Duke of Milan, vanquished the famous Carmagnole; Jean II. distinguished himself at Lepanto. Charles I. fought the English off Guernsey. Another, Rainier III., measured strength with Du Guesclin; while Honoré III. hacked and slew with great success at Fontenoy; and so on by the page.

But, as already hinted at, these mighty chiefs were sometimes guilty of mighty meannesses and very despicable deeds. For example, in 1523 the palace was the scene of a terrible family tragedy. Lucien Grimaldi, himself the assassin of his brother whose title and possession he usurped, was assassinated in his turn by Barthélémi Doria, his nephew, lord of

Dolceacqua, who threw his body, pierced with many wounds, upon the marble staircase of the palace court. Again, in 1604, Duke Hercules, noted for profligacy and disregard of the virtue of his maiden subjects, expiated his crimes by a just resentment at the hands of a band of his parental lieges, who threw him from the southern precipice into the sea. Unfortunately, force of feudal law and vengeance followed this meritorious act, and a goodly number of injured fathers were compelled to leap from the rock and share the fate of their lord.

The reigns of the later princes, Honoré and Florestin, and their misdeeds, have been already given in the historical sketch of Menton, and the dismemberment of the principality in 1848. Since then the successor of these worthies has abandoned every claim to the ceded territory, so that this geographical bijou, consisting of its town and about three miles English of shore, is all that remains of a principality certainly one of the smallest in Europe.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SHRINE OF SAINTE DEVOTÉ.

HAVING explored the principality and its curious capital, it now remains for us to make the pilgrimage to the shrine of the Patron Saint. The oratory dedicated to this ancient protectress is situated in the torrent gorge of the valley of Gaumates, easily approachable, and but a short way from the villa of La Condamine. It is built upon a narrow shelving space in the rocky bed of the chasm, where all around in heavy floods the rushing waters foam on every side. The humble little chapel which replaces the original church, though neat, is an object scarcely worthy of the noted old monastic establishment with which it was formerly connected.

The historical notices of this religious house or monastery are interesting. It was very important in the middle age, being dependent on the Convent of St. Pons. In later days, however, time and indifference impoverished its community; as centuries rolled on the monks of Gaumates were compelled to abandon it and retire to head-quarters; now some

scanty ruins scarcely mark its site. The Monaco seigneurs and princes were its distinguished patrons. As a *quid pro quo*, one of the monks they had the feudal privilege of choosing enjoyed the honour of officiating in the parish church of the capital at the first vespers on Devoté's eve, and opening the ball by celebrating mass the following day—the fête de jour of the virgin saint, which was the greatest annual occasion of the country. It would seem this favour was well appreciated, though acknowledgments were mutual. The priestly offices being finished, the brotherhood presented the princes with artichokes of their own growing, in return for the opportunity offered for addressing the faithful and three days' fêting and patronage at the Palace table, forms which were maintained till some time close upon the commencement of the French Revolution. The princes with their people have always remained true to their national saint and her oratory, while the accompanying yearly festival is still celebrated with much social bustle and ecclesiastical pomp. The original building in which were enshrined the holy reliques of Ste. Devoté had undergone much patching and restoration; but finally it was doomed to give place to the present, when the remains of the female martyr were removed, and portioned out between the parish church in the capital and the college of the Jesuits of Bastia, the Corsican town which had been witness of the martyrdom. This saint was held in high esteem;

the old coin of the realm bears her effigy. The chronicles and histories of St. Pons, Grasse, and Nice contain full and particular accounts of her life and martyrdom. The legend given in the saintly records of Lerins is an excellent specimen of early Christian literature of the class: as it is remarkable for the pious spirit and sublime simplicity it breathes, we make no apology for reproducing it precisely as it stands on the page of monastic record.

LEGEND OF SAINTE DEVOTÉ.

In the days of Diocletian and Maximian there lived in Corsica a young virgin named Devoté, a Christian from her infancy. Having learned that a cruel President was coming to persecute the Christians, Devoté betook herself secretly to the house of the Senator Euticius, as much from fear of the Pagans and their sacrilegious ways as in the hope that under his protection she might freely follow the religion of the Christ.

The blessed servant of the Lord Jesus, trained in the practice of every virtue and versed in pious readings, sang night and day hymns and psalms to the glory of God. She gave herself up to austerities of every kind. Ever mindful of evangelical precepts she meditated unceasingly upon these words: "Happy are those who hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled." She controlled her thoughts and subdued

her body by abstinence, and none could persuade her to relax the rigour of her fasts and vigils. Candour was in her eyes, and her face shone with rays of divine splendour.

These fasts and mortifications of the Corsican virgin did not escape the attention of Euticius. He called her near, and said to her, "Young woman, why waste thyself by fasting, and torment thy life with prayer and watching?" "I do not torment my life," replied the young girl; "but I nourish myself with a thousand sweets, for God, who reigns in heaven, fills me daily with his gifts and all good things." These words filled Euticius with a pious fear; he dared say nothing more, and from that time he could not bear the brightness of her face.

A little time after this, arrived in the same island, followed by a fleet, the cruel President, to sacrifice to the gods. The most important men of the island assembled; the Senator Euticius was amongst them, and they proceeded with the sacrifices and offering of incense to the idols. At these tidings, Devoté, who bewailed their blindness, sighed in secret. In the middle of the feasting, and while the bloody President talked of persecution, one of his agents informed him of a young girl living in the house of the Senator who slighted the gods and refused to sacrifice. The President, addressing Euticius, said, "I learn that you lodge within your house a young woman who shuns the altars of our gods, and honours I know not what

Christ, whom the Jews have crucified." The Senator answered him, "Yes, the young girl of whom you speak is deaf to entreaty and persuasion, and will not even bow her head to the gods." "Deliver her to me," replied the President; "I shall make her render to the divinities the honours which are due to them." "If you gave me all your wealth it would not equal such a treasure," was the reply of Euticius, for inwardly he loved the girl.

As the Senator Euticius was very powerful, the President dared not act openly against him, and therefore he caused him to be poisoned secretly. He then sent his satellites to his house, with orders to seize the young woman and to lead her to his tribunal. Whilst they led her thither, Devoté sang the words of the psalm, "My God, come to my aid; hasten, O Son, to succour me!" When she was in the presence of the President, he commanded her to sacrifice to the gods. The worthy virgin of Christ replied, "Each day sees me serve the true God with a pure heart. As to your gods—gods of wax and stone—I deny them; they are only human masques, who neither see nor hear." Then the barbarous magistrate, transported with rage, ordered that they should shut her mouth with a stone, calling to her to cease blaspheming the gods and goddesses. He even wished that the people should bind her hand and foot and drag her upon the sharp stones, so that her members might be dislocated. But the intrepid virgin, still

speaking, said, "I give grace to thy holy name, O Lord my God, who hast found me worthy of the crown of martyrdom." Then with a strong voice she cried, "God of virtue, who soundeth heart and loins, who spake and it was done, who ordered and all was created, accept the prayer of thy servant, receive into the number of the elect Euticius, thy servant, whom the barbarous and cruel President, that worshipper of demons, has killed because of me."

These words, which he considered as so many injuries, he would not listen to. He ordered her hands to be bound and her body hung upon the beam. During the punishment, she cried aloud, "Lord Jesus, receive me: it is for you I die!" and a voice from on high was heard to say, "My worthy servant, thy prayer is received: all you ask for shall be given." At that moment a dove was seen to leave her mouth and fly upwards to the heavens.

The President being informed that the soul of the young maiden had already fled, took counsel with his satellites, and ordered that next day her body should be delivered to the flames. At the same time two Christians, Benenatus a priest of Savoy, and Apollinare a deacon, whom persecution had compelled to take refuge in the caverns, were warned in a dream to transport the body of the blessed virgin out of the island. When they had conferred with a certain mariner named Gratian, accompanied with a number of virgins they carried off the body during the night,

and placed it on board a barque, and embalmed it; then setting sail, they directed their course towards Africa. But a tempestuous wind of the south drove them to the northward. The frail barque, which had been a long time left dry upon the shore, leaked exceedingly, and all night they struggled vainly with the tempest. At dawn of day sleep overcame Gratian, who said to the holy brother Benenatus, "Arise, keep watch while I repose." During his sleep, Devoté appeared to him, and having touched him, said, "Arise, Gratian, for the storm ceases, and the sea is calm; the barque will cease to leak, and be no more tossed about by the waves. Thou and thy holy brothers watch well; and when you see a dove pass from out of my mouth follow it with your eyes, and sail until you come to a place called in Greek Monaco, and in Latin *Singulare*, and there shall you bury my body." When watching attentively they saw a dove leave her mouth, and precede them on their course. Following it they came to the place the saint had spoken of. Arriving near Monaco, in the valley of Gaumetes, the dove rested not far from the church which is erected there in honour of St. George, and there the pious Christians deposited the body of the very blessed Devoté, virgin and martyr for the faith of Christ, the sixteenth day of the calends of February, under the reign eternal of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be all honour and glory throughout the ages of ages. Amen.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BONE CAVES OF THE ROCHES ROUGES: THE TROGLODYTES.

FOR those who find pleasure in scientific observation, this district, with its mountain chains, affords a very varied and extensive field of geological research, within a narrow area. The general formation of the locality is limestone, stratified and unstratified, sometimes rich in nummulites and other fossils. This cretaceous stratum composes the higher as well as lower ranges, which at an interval of a few miles east and west of the Menton basin is flanked by a species of plum-pudding, or conglomerate, that shows in hilly masses at those points where the lesser Alpine spurs forming the amphitheatre break boldly on the coast. Nearly midway and close to the shore, in a terminal buttress of this unstratified bed, are situate the Bone Caves of these Roches Rouges, or red rocks. This is no misnomer. The traces of iron seem to be unusually abundant in the limestone here. From the action of the atmosphere together with other causes the reddish colour it assumes is remarkable at great distances both by land and sea. These

caves or grottoes are five in all, and serve to illustrate, though on a much smaller scale, the natural cavities generally, from the great Mammoth Cave in Kentucky to the Devil's Hole in Derbyshire.

It is many years since these caverns began to attract attention, and to M. Antoine Grand, of Lyons, the credit is due of having first introduced them to the notice of the scientific. In 1858 M. Forel, a Swiss geologist of note, examined several of them with care and zeal. This gentleman in 1860 published an elaborate memoir of his investigations, his industry having been rewarded with the happiest results. S. Moggridge, an Englishman who regularly winters at Menton, and a botanist of some repute, has also devoted attention to the examination of the soil and detritus contained. The quantities of remains, organic and inorganic, these cavities contain is astonishing, clearly showing the immense period of time they must have afforded sheltering retreats to man and the inferior animals.

Though no remains of man had yet been discovered, the presence of flints and polished stones and organic vestiges strongly aided the solution of the problem of the antediluvian existence of our race, and its contemporaneity with animals once natives of those regions, though long since extinct.

By a happy circumstance the conclusions long ago given to the world by Forel, Boucher de Perthés, with others who examined the remains, have recently been

borne out by the discovery of a human skeleton almost entire, found deeply embedded in the calcareous and animal accumulations of the larger of these caverns. As the skeleton claims to be of wondrous geological antiquity, it is now to receive the attention of the leading minds in the special department to which the subject and question belong.

As M. Forel's name is chiefly associated with the subject of the grotto, a few extracts from the work alluded to may be of interest even to the general reader :—

"On entering for the first time I was struck by the presence of flint flakes, and suspected the existence of instruments or implements of the Stone Period. My expectation was not deceived; on examining the soil I discovered a large number evidently fashioned by the hand of man. I found also a great number of bone fragments, teeth of animals, shells, and pieces of shell-fish mingled with bits of charred wood.

"There could be no doubt I was in one of the retreats formerly occupied by the aboriginal inhabitants of Liguria; and I saw that, notwithstanding the changes produced by later cycles, there still remained sufficient traces of the primitive race to establish the fact. There was here an object of study, and from a double point of view, archæological as well as palæontological.

"The objects collected were found chiefly in the third and fourth caverns, commencing from the Menton side. The third measures about six metres in breadth, by ten in height and fifteen in length. The soil rests in its primitive state. The flints and bones are met with throughout its thickness at about a metre and a half in depth. Below this there are neither bones nor flints.

"The fourth cavern measures about two or three metres in breadth at the opening, fifteen in height, and twenty-five in length. It enlarges itself considerably as you advance into the interior. The level of the soil seems to have been lowered somewhat; judging, at least, from some calcareous incrustations or deposits attached to the walls, and which also contain fossil bones. One may be permitted to assume, though there is nothing positive, that the scooping has been caused by the action of running water. The cavern yielded a number of flints and a considerable quantity of bones, distributed in a superficial bed of the thickness of half a metre. The unearthing beneath this stratum did not lead to the discovery of any object of importance.

"I have collected the animal débris fit for examination, and have submitted it to my excellent friends M. Emilien Dumas, of Sommières, and Professor Pictet, of Geneva. Thanks to the valuable assistance of these two savants, I have been enabled to identify the following species :—

I. The Deer (*Cervus elephas*).
II. The Goat (*Cervus capreolus*).
III. Sheep (*Ovis*).
IV. A ruminant of a size smaller, not known.
V. The Ox (*Bos primigenius*).
VI. The Horse (*Equus caballus*).
VII. The Boar (*Sus scrofa*).
VIII. The Wolf (*Canis lupus*).
IX. The Fox (*Canis vulpes*).
X. The Cat (*Felis catus*).
XI. The Rabbit (*Lepus cuniculus*).
XII. An animal of the order of *Cetacea*, represented by a fragment of vertebra. The fragment is very incomplete, and must have been brought thither, as there is nothing to indicate that the sea had penetrated there since the period the débris was deposited.

"Besides these mammifers we have recognised a great number of shells serving as nourishment for man, and belonging to species actually living. These are — Dentalium elephantinum, Patella punctata, Pecten jacobæus, Petunculus glycimeris.

"All lead us to believe that the débris is nothing more than the waste accumulation of the produce of the hunting and fishing, and whatever served the cave-dwellers as food and nourishment. This appears from the fractured state of the bones, clearly the work of man's hands, and with the object of extracting the marrow, an action which cannot be confounded with the crushing of the carnivora.

"We have collected a large number of fragments of flint, among which we recognise the spear, hook, javelin points, and a quantity of instruments called *wedges* or *knives*. All these implements are small in size and rudely fashioned. They seem to have been made by simple fracture and are entirely free of artificial polish, which may be a further proof of higher antiquity.

"All tends to the conclusion that the caves of Menton had long been inhabited during the Stone Age, or prior to the knowledge of the use of metals. But that period, where has it commenced or where has it finished? The solution of the first part of the problem relates to a mighty and important question which has not as yet been resolved scientifically, and which never can be in all its extent, that of ascertaining the remoteness of the epoch when man made his appearance on the earth and in this particular locality."

Such is the summary of the scientific explorations and notices of these caverns prior to 1871. Towards the close of last year, in company with a friend of scientific proclivities, I first paid them a visit. We took the old Roman road which runs along the shore, so far as that ancient route is visible at this point, for what with railway cuttings and the inroads of the sea, material changes have taken place there since the decline and fall. On arriving at the spot we found the principal opening was undergoing careful search

by a commissioned expert and staff, but as an opportunity offered the interesting cavities were duly examined and a small collection of flints and bones got together. On the departure of my fellow-visitor I promised to keep him *au courant* with the proceedings and results of the investigations then going on. Towards the close of March of the following year human remains were brought to light. The following communications relate to the circumstance of the discovery of the scientific treasure-trove, and as they may be of interest I give the letters as originally penned :—

"Menton, April 2nd, 1872.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Within the last few days the entire population of Menton, with its *colonie des étrangers*, has experienced quite a new sensation. In its midst an ethnological discovery, unique in its kind, has just been made, which in all probability will prove as puzzling to the scientific as it is curious to the mass.

"At that point where the spur of the Maritime Alps which forms the Menton amphitheatre dips into the sea, right on the Italian frontier, are situated the Bone Caves of the Roches Rouges. The harvest of flints, bones, and other vestiges of primeval man and the lower animals these cavities yield was years ago made known to the world by the labours of Forel, Boucher de Perthés, and other authorities in this fascinating field of human knowledge. The more recent investiga-

tions of local geological aspirants have succeeded in unearthing still further the hidden treasures of the rich deposits of these hearths and homes of earlier man, and at length to-day the occupant himself, begrimed with the dust of ages, is brought to light.

"Deep in the excavation a human skeleton, large and rude in its proportions, complete, and in a wondrous state of preservation, lies perfectly exposed in its primitive bed of calcareous detritus. It is quite possible this may not be exactly the preadamite man himself, but as a claimant to the title it is questionable whether he may not find in these latter days more supporters than the Tichborne one. But we shall see.

"Judging from the appearance of his surroundings there is no evidence of forced interment. There he lies, or all that remains of him, in an attitude of calm repose, precisely as if he had quietly gone to rest and slept the sleep of death. Near and around the ghastly remains, in position as they lay, are arranged a few flint and stone implements of chase, war, or domestic use, mingled with the charred wood fragments of bones, shells, and other evidences of the household economy of this long-lost brother of the Stone Period. From the pointed weapon to the partially roasted cockle, all tell us of this remnant of the old Ligurian stock, 'in his habit as he lived,' ere 'Romulus was suckled or mighty Memphis fell.'

"That as it may be, the precious bones will shortly

receive thorough consideration in all their relations, historic and palæontological, and we await the decision of the French savants with much anxiety.

"To your northern friends of scientific tastes it may be gratifying to know that the most reliable information we possess, from English sources, respecting the geological claims of the locality favoured by this discovery, is chiefly due to their countryman by adoption, the late Professor Rogers. This gentleman devoted careful attention to the examination of this portion of the Mediterranean coast, and to him we are indebted more especially for unravelling the peculiar geological features of the Menton section of the Riviera, a part of Southern France which is like to become more familiar to the English public for many reasons.

"It may be well to add that the subject is not without its political aspects. Although the object of discovery is in the hands of France, its position is on Italian territory, and can only be approached by passing a militarily guarded frontier; and much may be said on both sides. Possession of the old bones, however, can influence but little the question of the temporalities in the one case or territorial occupation in the other; and both nations being sufficiently engaged with these more important matters, rival claims to the relics are not likely to give rise to any present material alteration of the map of Europe."

"May 12th, 1872.

"DEAR SIR,—It will be gratifying for you to learn that the recently discovered Troglodyte of the Roches Rouges has at length been added to the vast collection of the Museum of Natural History of France, and is destined to become an object of interesting discussion among the leading savants of the day.

"If you remember, at the time of our visit, which may also be called scientific, an examination of the larger cave was in progress, the operations being conducted by M. Rivière. This gentleman is charged with a commission from the Minister of Public Instruction of the French Government, to study the palæontology and prehistoric evidences of this portion of the Maritime Alps. He has been successful in amassing a goodly collection of remains of value, and after months of diligent search in the Bone Caves has been fortunate enough to unearth this Troglodyte.

"It would seem that M. Rivière, who is an enthusiast in his work, met with many obstacles from the first in carrying out his investigations, nor did they cease after he had become owner by purchase of the rocks and cavities, which, strange to say, considerations of proprietory rendered necessary. Freedom from interruptions was short, for, as hinted at in my former letter, there were obviously questions international and extraditional liable to crop up, and entail government interference. Sure enough this state

of things was soon realized, and for weeks it was far from certain that M. Rivière would be allowed peaceful possession of the old bones after having found them.

"No sooner had the wonderful discovery of the fossil man been noised abroad, and official inspections duly rendered by Monsieur le Ministre and numbers of the scientific class, than prompt measures for removal to French territory—a leap across the torrent—were undertaken. But our friends were reckoning without their host. Tidings had reached the ear of the Italian authorities of the treasure, bustle, and fuss; and one fine day an armed guard, consisting of two of Victor Emmanuel's infantry, quietly took their post at the entrance of the cavern. The operation of unearthing and packing still continued, but there the soldiery remained day and night, to be seen of all the curious, stolidly leaning upon their rifles, smoking the cigarette, as indifferent or oblivious to the immensity of their charge as those who kept watch at the door of the sepulchre.

"It is not easy to conceive of M. Rivière's state of feeling during all this. Throughout, the affair was both sensational and ludicrous; but one could not help sympathizing with the discoverer. For weeks he and his assistants, barricaded in their trenches, quietly carried on the work of exhumation, examining the surroundings, and finally preparing for removal.

"By the time the arrangements were completed, diplomatic intervention made successful progress,

and within the past ten days prohibitions have been withdrawn, the Italian Government sanctioning the extradition of the denizen of an earlier world.

"Every merit is due to M. Rivière for his judicious management of the unearthing, and details connected with the discovery. The most ardent supporters of Troglodyte and Preadamite theories may rest satisfied that nothing has been neglected which can possibly give good effect to the high claims of the man of the Roches Rouges. The earth and detritus in which the skeleton was embedded—the charred wood, shells, and implements of flint or stone—accompany the remains; and to complete the *ensemble* of evidence, a series of photographic views, correct and of excellent impression, truthfully illustrate the positions and stages of disinterment.

"I am most anxious to see M. Rivière's report with reference to this find, and which is to set all controversy at rest. From notices and hints appearing from time to time in the local journal, not without authority, it is said that a mass of proof is arrived at which favours a high antiquity, and leads to the conclusion that the Troglodyte specimen relates to a period when the reindeer still tenanted the south of Europe, and glaciers filled the neighbouring valleys."

"May 20, 1872.

"MY DEAR SIR,—As the ruling taste decides, publicity is the modern reward or penalty due to impor-

tance. Every personage whom public interest favours now-a-days is interviewed, and the Troglodyte man of Menton ought not to be an exception. For many centuries he has suffered no intrusion, and now emerging from his antediluvian obscurity, it is but proper that he submit to the usual ordeal of cross-examination and inspection.

"We have had the good fortune of witnessing with awakened interest the process of the disinterment of this strange memento of a bygone age. Subsequent visits have made us more familiar, affording an opportunity of noting well the features which link him with our common humanity, and gaining fresh glimpses of his mode of life and of a physical order of things long since passed away, which form the startling problems of geological speculation.

"This representative of the Stone Period, who seems to have outlived the prime of life, is well proportioned and of unusual stature. He lies upon his left side, in an attitude of calm repose; his limbs slightly flexed, and the fore-arms folded upon the breast, so that the hands are crossed beneath the chin, a pose which at once relieves the mind of any idea of violence or forced interment. The jaws are closed, and show a set of teeth well formed, complete, and in good preservation; their clenched state alone speaks of a last convulsive movement. It seems remarkable that their crowns approximate, that is, appear to bite upon the level, a dental arrange-

ment reminding one of the herbivora, with whose dentition a learned professor finds here some aspect of analogy. What strikes the uninitiated most is their perfect soundness, presenting not the slightest trace of decay or fracture—a fact that would go to confirm the recently advanced opinion, that caries of the teeth is the product of civilization, and tends to develop itself in proportion as man rises superior to the conditions of animal life.

"Judging from the anatomical proportions, the skeleton is that of a man, one who had lived at an epoch long ere civilization dawned on European races, tenanting the shelving rocks and caverns of nature's excavation, fashioning and using as implements of chase or war, chips of flint or other stone, polished or of the rudest shapes. His whole surroundings, artificial products and associated organic remains that include the reindeer and great cave bear, point to a period of which history gives no record, and of whose secrets the drifts and rocks alone bear testimony.

"The ribs, crushed by the superincumbent accumulation of earth and stone, have suffered much, while the vertebræ are slightly displaced and somewhat deficient; the feet and hands, however, are well preserved, and apparently large in their development — an adaptation which may be considered consistent with the primitive condition of the race. Strange to say, this mortal was in life the subject of a

surgical injury. His left fore-arm near the elbow—*à la hauteur de l'avant-bras*—has been fractured. A natural callus, well formed, presents itself at the seat of injury, showing an admirable repair. Should this view be correct, it is probably the earliest observed example of skill-unaided recovery of the kind in the human subject.

"In the most primitive races the love of ornament, if not of dress, exists, and even in the vital days of this specimen there is presumptive evidence that such a taste prevailed. The skull, massive and well formed, is studded abundantly with a number of small marine shells of the species *Buccinum Naritacium*, accompanied with some premolar teeth of the deer; all are perforated, and from the quantity of the former still adhering with something like regular arrangement, they give the impression that they formed during his life a part of a net or suchlike head-dress. Below the superior tuberosity of the left tibia were collected upwards of forty shells of the same kind, also pierced with holes—suggestive of a bracelet for the limb. These facts are curious as throwing light on matters of dress and taste; but they also show (if that particular should be of any value in the inquiry) that the owner has suffered no disturbance and lies as first embedded.

"It would appear, however, that the remarkable peculiarity with respect to costume is not to be left unique. Another skeleton has at this time been

disembedded, which likewise exhibits a similar kind of ornamentation. This Troglodyte was discovered in the Grotto of Dordogne, at Laugerie Basse, on the bank of the Vezère, and near to the celebrated Grottes des Bizzes. The shells in this instance were more generally distributed, but also pierced as if for the purpose of attachment; facts which must be of special interest to ethnologists, as they open up fresh points of research.

"It may be that a closer examination of the conchological phase of man's antiquity and primeval condition will compel us to modify in some measure our present views in relation to the social history of our rude progenitors. At all events these specimens can scarcely be considered Troglodyte in the strictest sense of the term, and for the following reasons:—

"Near the Menton skeleton, besides the shells alluded to, were found two others which are remarkable; these are the *Pecten*, and of different species. One, the *Pecten jacobæus*, is peculiar to the Mediterranean, the other, *Pecten maximus*, belongs to the shores of the Western Ocean. The presence of the latter would lead us to the belief that the subject and his confrères in their day and generation must have had relations with both seas which wash the coast of Europe to the south and west. Was there at this epoch a kind of infant commerce, as we see even now on other continents, allying tribes and races different in many respects, and far removed from each

other? Did they barter, buy, and sell precisely on the principle that man does now, from the lowest to the highest type? Possibly so. It is hard to be believed, but the idea of such rudimentary commercial relations existing, and having extended from sea to sea, has its probability strengthened by the fact that the skeleton of the Grotto of Dordogne presents this shell anomaly still more strongly marked. Among shells of the adjacent ocean origin there are others, it would appear, exclusively Mediterranean, given on high authority as the *Cypræa rufa*, *Cypræa lurida*, and which still abound in southern waters; facts which are very significant if the remains are admitted to possess any interest at all in a geological point of view.

"It may be well to state, in reference to doubtful features, that the remains of the *Ursus spelæus*—supposed to have been the earliest of the great mammalia which disappeared—accompanying the skeleton, occupied a lower position than the relic itself, and consequently may be of little weight in deciding the question of antiquity. Still the time the bones have remained embedded may have been immense.

"Geological changes, as we know, have affected but little the geographic relations of this portion of our continent as they existed at the epoch speculation on the subject touches; and as the course of the coast-line leaves the localities indicated far apart, all would lead us to infer that in the case of the man of Menton,

as well as him of Dordogne, the shells in possession are proofs of traffickings extending from shore to shore.

"What gives further weight to the notion of pre-adamite trading is that the species of shells referred to—called by the French *les porcelaines*, and the most brilliant of their kind—are admirably suitable for the body ornaments of savage fancy. Such considerations are not unimportant; and it is to be hoped that the skeleton of the Laugerie Basse, like that of the Roches Rouges, will find itself within the same museum, when possibly comparative examination may add to existing knowledge of the subject."

CHAPTER XVI.

CLIMATE OF MENTON.

THE climate of Menton, like that of the Riviera generally, is remarkable for its dryness, brightness, and hot sun. Throughout the seven months of summer the heat is uniformly extreme for our islanders, and varied by little or no rainfall. During the five months of so-called winter, the prevailing quality of weather is such as is experienced in the more sheltered seaboard retreats of the south of England in the autumn season. Correctly recorded observations extending over a period of ten years bear out this estimate. The mean annual number of days of sunshine with unclouded skies is 214; those when cloudiness is occasional 45; those in which the sun is obscured or scarcely visible for clouds, rain, or hazy vapour, which hang upon the hills, never descending to the plains, are about 24; to which may be added the remaining 82 of sunshine and shower, many of which are really genial.

As to the winter, it must be owned, as it concerns us more especially, the rainfall confines itself almost exclusively to the five months embraced in the invalid season

beginning with October and ending with May. So that this season is far from being free from the variations and objections often felt by the delicate and enfeebled, with all their depressing influences, even to the extent they are at home. The mean temperature of the months as shown by the best authorities, and extending over a period of the four severest months, gives for November 54°, December 40°, February 49°, March 53°; returns which will be found correct. When the air is still, a summer heat often prevails during the day in finer weather, though in the shade and within doors the mercury seldom rises above 60°. But scientific instruments are not the gauge of climate in a sanitary sense, and enlighten us but little as to the susceptibilities accompanying diseased conditions of the human system, or even of those in health. In consequence of that peculiar dryness of the atmosphere of the sunny south, a degree of coldness is often felt even in the finest and brightest weather, quite incommensurate with thermometric indications; a fact all ought to know who purpose passing a winter there, and those have themselves to blame who suffer from neglect of due precautions. It may be observed, with reference to the search for perfect climates which has become almost a medical mania of the day, that the most temperate are not necessarily the best, not with a view to recovery only, but even for prolonging life—a remark which applies almost equally to consumption as to diseases generally

marked by debility as an element. It ought to be remembered that, with the exception of the pleasing and cheering influences which should be held in view in change of climate, no new element is added to the medium in which we live and move. Extremes and the more objectionable conditions of the home climate alone are what are sought to be diminished.

With all its vaunted security from biting winds, and its mountain shelter from the northern blasts, Menton lies most invitingly open to the south, south-east, and south-west, and winter winds from these directions can be chilly enough at times. When the Atlantic is encumbered with ice floes from the north, and there are other causes of atmospheric disturbance at work to modify and lower the temperature of the European coast, no littoral station of France, no matter what may be the advantage of position, can possibly escape their effects, nor residents fail to be reminded of the season that prevails. At Menton winds are especially a source of trial and discomfort to the new arrival, usually impressed with exaggerated expectations as to the calm and genial air of the locality. From the peculiar arrangement and distribution of the mountain range with which the locality is invested, it is at all times difficult to know with certainty from what direction the winds blow, at least as regards the primary currents; but they are felt upon the level of the shore, and that should be quite sufficient information for the invalid to act upon. Inconvenience is what he must

expect to experience daily in all weathers from this cause, and it is well he should learn something practical respecting their character and prevalence.

What tells so keenly upon the weak and susceptible is the land breeze which regularly at sundown steals from the mountains towards the sea? Between the subsidence of the night land wind and the rise of the day breeze from the sea, and again between the subsidence of the day breeze and the setting-in of the night land wind, there is a period of tranquillity or calm, at all events in the finer or more settled weather. The period of atmospheric repose very uniformly lasts throughout the winter months from eight to eleven a.m., and from five to seven p.m., or according to the length of the day and power and brightness of the sunshine. These are the seasons of the day when chronic sufferers take advantage, and with safety, of the many blessings this delightful station has to offer. These particulars are lucidly treated by Dr. H. Bennet in his "Spring and Winter Climate of the Riviera," and ought to be carefully studied by the invalid.

Of the climate of Menton probably too much has been said and written, but after all, the fact can scarcely be disputed that it presents the mildest winter season of the south of Europe. As the strongest proof of this, it ranks with what botanists term the warm temperate zone. There forms of vegetation foreign to countries beyond the Alps make their

appearance, and plants there survive the summer which nearly everywhere the winter's frosts nip or kill. Added to all these facts, many hybernating animals and insects of more northerly latitudes lead a lively and active life throughout the winter; from which may naturally be inferred its great geniality and superior acceptability as a winter residence for the suffering and delicate of our fellow-beings who are in a position enabling them to escape the inclemencies of the English winter months.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CLAIMS OF MENTON AS A WINTER STATION. HINTS TO INVALIDS AND THEIR ADVISERS.

SUCH are the characteristics of the winter and spring climate of the Riviera in all its sameness. When stripped of the pictorial and would-be scientific elements so general in their application, the claim of Menton as a superior resort is still a reality. The consulting physician and intelligent patient need scarcely be reminded that a tropical climate, even if desirable, nowhere exists within the temperate zone. Wherever our southing leads, to Menton or to Naples, we are still in Continental Europe. For three or four months of the year it is winter everywhere, with snow upon the nearest mountains and ice-flakes in the warmest valleys. With all the bright and bracing weather and freedom from English fogs and Scotch mists, the continuous winds from sea or land, rains, and an atmosphere at all times chilly in the absence of sun or fire, have all to be experienced throughout the season.

It would therefore be well to guard against

that large amount of semi-romance to be met with in brochures and more pretentious works on medical aspects, local climatology, and the like; for the most part the production of medical practitioners who are interested or enthusiasts in their views. In high colouring they are aided by a few English migratory friends, who usually winter with them; a class that add to the blessing of good health a taste for artistic or scientific dabblings, and mountaineering on a small scale, and who are naturally prone to see things on the brightest side. Those to whom these writings address themselves are especially the delicate and invalid, eager in pursuit of health and readily impressed with accounts of localities likely to lessen the cares and efforts of living, or which may promise a recovery. But with all the superior claims to salubrity the place possesses, they can no more ignore with safety to themselves, the dictates of caution and moderation in all that concerns them, than in the more favoured health resorts in England they may have left. The difference of latitude is but trifling, the season is still the same, while the causes which modify the prevalent inclemencies are much more local than generally represented. Let the invalid rid himself of fancy expectations of every sort, think of the conditions of the home he has left behind him, and consult prudence in all things. In medicine at least, remedy and recovery does not always consist in sacrifice or submission to

the discomfort of extreme measures, call them by what name you will.

The class of patients who frequent this quarter are generally victims of chest affections, or other maladies characterized by constitutional debility. These ought surely to be guarded in their mode of life, and dressing more particularly. In the winter months, beginning with December and ending with March, the woollen under-clothing and broadcloth of English winter wear can never be dispensed with, even in the finest weather. At any time a change of wind or difference between sun and shade will show us the value of overcoats and wraps of every kind. The Mentonais, if not too particular in other respects, is careful as to clothing, and may be seen in the finest days with his spare covering thrown gracefully over his shoulder, when neither damp nor rain is thought of. During cold winds, and that peculiar chilliness accompanying sundown which tells so electrically, the peasant as naturally draws on his Italian jacket as the proprietaire muffles himself in his cloak. Our fellow-islanders, to whom at any season sunshine is a novelty, are liable to forget it is still winter, and severe enough within a day's journey. Faithful to prescribed rule or capricious fashion, they live and move in a manner as utterly opposed to physical and sanitary needs as is possible to conceive; both sexes, at all ages, affecting an eccentricity of style and costume as ridiculous as inconvenient. On a sharp, clear December morning it

is amusing to meet our fellow-countryman among the hills astride a donkey, beneath a huge white umbrella and harnessed with botanic cases. Besides the goggles and odd clothes, he wears a formidable hat and puggaree, for which he cannot even plead the sufficient French excuse of having been in India. Near him is the little Mentonaise damsel carrying his block, stock, stick, and other impedimenta. To the uninitiated his delusion is that of doing the Pyramids and feeling very hot. This love of sunshade and fear of sunshine, so amazing, does not prevent him committing a thousand extremes in other respects. In the case of the ladies, boots of the period, as elegantly slight as those of the gentlemen are fashionably heavy, with dresses to match, slight and flimsy as for summer air without wind, which have no existence there; frequent out-of-door fêteing, pic-nic, and gipsying, the best English weather would scarcely justify; and, added to all this, the *à la mode* church-going excess, with all its formality and display, though none to please but themselves, and serious risks are run. Still, it is respectable, and the only passport to the set. Children also suffer from the same cause, conventionalism being all the more irksome that they have no choice in the matter. With every facility for enjoyment the juvenile ought to expand. Sunny rambling by hill and dale, the donkeys, and the pebbly shore, with all its charms, are there; but style and cherishing of the bazaar toy haunts them at every turn. They are only

in some degree more artificial than their elders, and suffer even more from what is unsuitable in dress. You meet them on excursions daily at the sunniest hours, half clad, with an atmosphere at something like freezing point, when the addition of a cloud upon the sky would drive them to the rug or near the fire. The prevailing mania becomes positively painful when good health or recovery from serious illness is the object.

With the advantage of a well-sheltered position it must be remembered that, like all other coasts, the Menton sea-shore is very windy. Tender subjects hoping to escape the evil will be disposed to think it especially so; but the objection may be lessened by religiously avoiding all residences lining the marine promenade of either of the bays. For yet other reasons the pensions situated near the valleys and on the slopes are to be preferred; the aspect still is southern, the view more varied, and one is freer of the noise of the sea, a source of much discomfort to the majority of patients, weak and morbidly susceptible. The music of the Mediterranean, from the sad moan to an incessant cannonade, soon palls when heard beneath your bedroom windows by night and day for any length of time.

To the new arrival the choice of a residence is of first importance, though overlooked or altogether ignored by the wintering practitioner on theoretic grounds often extremely fanciful. This compels us to

allude to other points of the same class of objections and fallacies on which it is well the invalid should receive enlightenment.

The counsel of those who inculcate a spasmodic return to a more natural mode of life as the only means of securing recovery or prolonging existence, if not to be totally condemned, must be accepted with a large amount of caution, as much discomfort and many disappointed hopes arise from this cause. In the case of the weak and susceptible, the chronic sufferers trying to rid themselves of Indian fever taints, and the consumptive of every shade, the too liberal use of hypothetical remedies, indiscriminate use of the bath in one form or other, sleeping with open windows—a process of ventilation amounting to exposure and fraught with the gravest danger—these and such as these are simply absurd under any circumstances, and require much more moderation in prescription than is generally observed in the system now in vogue at Menton. This is the medicine of interference, and it is needless to say where it all leads to. Even if it were shown to be non-prejudicial, but salutary in some respects, it would not compensate for the absence of many other requirements of chief importance, and for which there is no possible provision as yet for those not more than ordinarily wealthy.

I allude to the want of domesticity, home comfort, the entire social elements to which the invalid may

have been accustomed. Though only some forty hours by express from home, he finds himself struggling with the difficulties of a language as foreign as the country. The formal hotel pension takes the place of the genial household, with its elaborate regulation dietary compressed in two meals, déjeûner and dinner, irrespective of individual necessities. In larger establishments not exclusively English the society of your *salon de lecture* presents a veritable social medley of nationalities, tastes, and dispositions, from which it is impossible always to exclude many specimens of the rising generation, a state of things that ill assorts with the wants of those in quest of health, and little calculated to add to happiness or comfort. The bedroom arrangements are still less flattering. As a rule the apartments are small, the maisons undergoing a subdivision consistent with the largest return in profit for the season; the partition walls are seldom thick enough to bar one's own expressions of uneasiness, and quite thin enough to be constantly reminded of your neighbour's. Again, the few appliances are a novelty in the wake of the nineteenth century for a place approachable by the locomotive. Coal is a rarity, wood the staple fuel, stoves seldom to be seen, andirons and tongs of most primitive type, with smoky chimneys in unlimited supply; a state of things worthy of the days when Honoré II. was Prince of Monaco, notwithstanding all the luxe and elegance with which it is associated. It is proposed that a theatre be added to

existing attractions, but if the class of patients who have hitherto resorted thither are to be induced to return, let us hope improvement and reform will show itself in some more useful direction, and for which there is ample scope.

No doubt, for people with adequate means such objections can all be easily remedied; but to a lone visitor of either sex, and to whom economy is an object, this is what they must expect to meet with. For the genuine invalid, the fixed daily charge *en pension* is a delusion. At present, Menton is the Eldorado of hotel proprietors and expensive medical attendants. There is even an understood penalty attached to dying, in some instances as high as twenty pounds sterling. With all these facts before them, it remains to be seen whether English physicians—conscientious of course, but misled by highly-flavoured reports—will continue to recommend this change so freely, and really with so little regard either to position of patient or stage of his malady. In the absence of specific climates as well as of specific medicines, when recovery is hopeless, would it not be well to let such sufferers end their days in the bosom of their own families, rather than die uncared for and alone among strangers?

What is specially wanted in these rising stations on the Riviera are establishments on the principle of the sanatariums such as are to be met with at the various spas and mountain stations at home and

abroad. There the invalid in every stage of phthisis might find a home, the requisite attendance, be constantly under the eyes of a judicious medical adviser, and free from the bustle of change inseparable from the more public pension hotel, no matter how select. The enterprising itinerant physician and maison proprietor will do well to take the hint, or their occupation will be lost. San Remo and other quarters are now in active competition with a view of sharing the monopoly. The attractions of the landscape beauties of Menton have as great a charm for the pure pleasure-seeker as her genial climate has for the invalid, and Monte Carlo is but fifteen minutes off, all threatening invasion by a different class, and one that will quickly put an end to the peace and tranquillity of the present sweet retreat, when the wintering medical man with his clients will be driven to seek new fields to the eastward, where similar difficulties may renew themselves.

The arrangements of what may be termed the medical season require some comment. The more variable quarter of the year being past, and March has filled the valleys with her flowers, the *colonie des étrangers* begin to turn their thoughts homeward, and active preparations are in progress for the exodus. With increasing inducements to linger in this sunny land, and little of interest in the Roman Carnival or Easter ceremonial, so attractive to the pleasure-seeker of the Nice communities, the retreat

seems early. But this is easily explained. The wintering physician, who commences operations early in October, leaves Menton about the beginning of April, the German and French betaking themselves to Switzerland, where they remain till late in June, the English direct for London. Their following necessarily is guided by their movements. For the patient's sake this is to be regretted. The irksomeness of care and caution is being gradually thrown aside; a warmer sun and more genial atmosphere add a great charm to life, no matter how faded, and is fruitful of hopes and lasting benefits. For the majority of invalids who refuge at Menton during the so-called season, neither the latter part of April nor May is too hot; and those who are induced to leave earlier have much to regret, as they have seen only half the beauties of her landscape.

The sensible sojourner will disregard this rule, which is simply one of fashion. The necessity of change, the desire to rejoin home and family, added to the more agreeable and increasing temperature, are doubtless strong and natural inducements. But hasty departures are likely to be followed with very useless regrets, and an undoing of all the benefits the winter sojourn may have effected. To delay the return for a week or two by taking the direction of the Italian or Swiss lakes will not always suffice, as too many have experienced to their cost in the severity of the present year. After a season of springtime, which the Mentonais call

winter, April with its genial warmth brings with it all the happiest impressions of a poetic summer. But how limited is its range! Beyond the Western Riviera nature is certainly not quite *en fête.* However it may be in France and Italy, in England at least a winter still prevails, with biting winds and fogs, and disappointment is only intensified when thinking of the blessings prematurely left. Flattering home reports as to the season are nothing to the point. Expe-riencing for months together a cold and miserable atmosphere, one is very apt to think it warm when the temperature simply passes freezing point. But the least delicate, who have enjoyed from October a bright sky and the thermometer ranging from 50° to 75° Fahr., are not liable to be deceived, and can scarcely run the risk with impunity. These reasons ought to be sufficient to point out the necessity of a longer Menton season, and avoiding England until the summer has thoroughly set in.

These remarks would be incomplete without some reference to Monaco. The establishment of Monte Carlo, with its concert-hall and lovely gardens, is a great attraction, and much frequented. The run by rail or highway is as short as delightful, and it is to be feared that many of the loungers with sufficient remaining vitality, too often find pleasure in the excitement of the gaming-table. This pastime is far from conducive to good health or recovery. With the

practice, whether habitual or occasional, the peaceful, tranquil mode of life prescribed becomes impossible, while the inevitable result is loss. The only true counsel is to avoid it, even as a thing of curiosity; but how few there are indifferent enough, or possessing sufficient moral courage, to follow this advice!

APPENDIX.

I.

THE following extracts are from the brochure of Chevalier Honoré Ardoino entitled, "Du Sanctuaire de N.-D. de l'Annonciade et de l'Origine de Menton." To those interested in the antiquities and past history of the town and its vicinity, some passages will be found of great value :—

"Au sommet d'une riante colline qui sépare la vallée de Careï de celle de Bouirig, à une demi-lieue de Menton, s'élève une antique chapelle dédiée a N.-D. de l'Annonciation. Cette colline est aujourd'hui encore désignée sous le nom de *Pépin*, bien que celui d'*Annonciade* ait dans ces dernières années généralement prévalu. A défaut d'autres preuves historiques, ce nom seul de Pépin et la tradition orale avaient suffi pour accréditer l'opinion que cet endroit ait été occupé au XI^e^ et au XII^e^ siècles par un hameau mentionné dans les anciennes chartes sous les noms de *Podium Pinum* en latin, de *Poipino* en italien, et de *Puypin* en français, ce qui signifie *collines des pins*. . . . .

"Il importe d'établir avant tout qu'il existait au moyen âge deux *Podium Pinum* liguriens : l'un situé à l'Est, l'autre à l'Ouest de Vintimille.

"Le premier se trouve mentionné près de San Remo, Ceriana et Bajardo, en 1130, dans les annales de Caffaro, et en 1131 dans une Charte conservée aux archives de Turin. On croit que c'était le village appelé maintenant *la Colle de San Remo*, situé sur le promontoire qui porte aujourd'hui encore le nom de *Capo-pino*.

" L'autre est celui qui nous occupe. Divers documents insérés dans le *Liber Jurium* de la ville de Gênes le mentionnent dès 1146, et semblent déterminer suffisamment sa situation dans le territoire actuel de Menton ; ainsi, le 30 juillet 1157, Guido Guerra, comte de Vintimille, fait donation à la République Génoise *des chateaux de Roquebrune, Gorbio, Podium Pinum et Castillon*, et le 5 septembre 1177, Othon, comte de Vintimille, en confirmant la donation de ces mêmes châteaux, *cum curiis et pertinentiis ipsorum*, les reçoit à titre de fief par la République. . . . .

" Le comte Othon de Vintimille possédait, en 1147, pour sa portion d'héritage, les châteaux de Roquebrune, Gorbio, *Podium Pinum* et Castillon avec leurs dépendances, plus Garavan et les Cuses. Il céda ces deux quartiers au Monastère de Lerins, mais il garda le reste à titre de fief de la République Génoise. Il faut croire que parmi les dépendances de Puypin se trouvait la colline sur laquelle Menton fut plus tard bâti, et que l'on trouve désignée dans quelques chartes de cette époque sous les noms de *mons Othonis*, colline d'Othon, en l'honneur du maître qui y avait peut-être son château. M. le professeur Rossi pense, avec raison, que c'est bien là l'étymologie de Menton, et si nous avions sous les yeux les manuscrits originaux du XIII^e^ siècle je ne serais pas étonné d'y lire *Montone* qui dégénéra bientôt en *Mentone*. Cette colline resta attachée à Puypin lorsque Garavan et les Cuses furent aliénés, ce qui se trouve précisément conforme à la délimitation territoriale de la commune de Menton, dont les bornes à l'Est ont toujours été à Garavan jusqu'en 1860 ; fixation de limites qui daterait ainsi de l'an 1177.

" Mais la colline d'Othon n'était pas alors habitée ; elle l'était 70 ans plus tard ; c'est donc dans cet intervalle qu'il faut placer l'origine de Menton.

"Notre version, appuyée sur un manuscrit authentique qui

est la cause première de cet opuscule, et dont nous parlerons bientôt avec détail, consiste à ne voir dans la fondation de Menton qu'un déplacement de Puypin. Les habitants de ce village attirés par la proximité de la mer et par une situation plus avantageuse pour la pêche et pour le commerce, auraient transporté leurs Pénates sur la colline d'Othon ; d'autant plus, que presque tous les habitants des côtes de la Méditerranée, qui avaient dû, à l'époque des Sarrasins, se retirer sur les hauteurs ou dans les vallées abritées, purent se rapprocher du rivage dès que la sécurité commença à renaître dans les esprits. Nous ne pensons pas nous tromper de beaucoup en disant que cette migration dut avoir lieu entre les années 1200 et 1230.

" Cet événement, qui ne manquait certes pas de précédents analogues, devait avoir, deux siècles plus tard et dans nos environs même, des imitateurs : je veux parler du Castellar. On voit encore aujourd'hui les ruines du vieux Castellar haut perchées dans la montagne parmi les rochers gigantesques et presque inaccessibles avec lesquels en les confond de loin ; s'il n'en est pas ainsi des ruines de *Podium Pinum*, dont toute trace a disparu, cette différence est due aux conditions bien autrement avantageuses du terrain, aussitôt défriché et envahi par la culture de l'olivier, de la vigne et du citronnier.

" La migration des habitants de Puypin sur la colline d'Othon ne fut pas, du reste, aussi complète ni aussi rapide que celle des habitants du Castellar. Avant l'abandon définitif de l'aînée, près de cent ans devaient se passer pendant lesquels les deux villes-sœurs ne formèrent en quelque sorte qu'un seul pays, soumis aux mêmes Seigneurs et traversant les mêmes destinées. . . . .

Quant à *Podium Pinum*, je le vois paraître pour la dernière fois en 1216, lorsque Georges Vento, chassé de Menton par

la faction contraire, fut réintégré, avec l'aide de Percivalle Doria, dans sa Seigneurie de Menton et de Puypin. A dater de cette époque il faut croire que ce village fut complètement abandonné, puisqu'il n'est même pas nommé dans l'acte important par lequel Emmanuel Vento et ses neveux vendirent, en 1346, tous leurs droits sur Menton à Charles Grimaldi, Seigneur de Monaco.

II.

"*Période de la Phthisie dans laquelle le climat de Menton peut être utile.*

"La connaissance de la période de la maladie dans laquelle le climat peut être utile aux poitrinaires a été l'objet de graves études. Nous ne partageons pas l'opinion du docteur Wahu, qui affirme, dans son excellent livre intitulé *le Conseiller médical de l'Etranger à Nice*, que 'le climat de cette ville n'est avantageux que dans la première période de la phthisie.' Nous ne sommes pas d'accord non plus avec le docteur Bonnet de Malherbe, qui juge la tuberculisation curable à tous les degrés. Arrivée à sa troisième période, la maladie n'est, à notre avis, susceptible ni de cure ni de frein, et l'art doit se borner à en mitiger les symptômes. . . .

"Il y a des médecins qui pour se défaire d'un malade importun, et pour qu'on ne puisse pas dire que celui-ci est mort entre leurs mains, envoient un poitrinaire désespéré dans un pays étranger. Ces médecins ignorent donc qu'il n'y a rien de plus cruel pour un malade que d'abandonner la patrie, les parents, les amis, pour traîner un corps épuisé, presque un cadavre, dans des régions éloignées, et y rendre le dernier soupir entre les bras de personnes étrangères? . . .

"Sans doute, l'influence d'un climat différent de celui sous lequel on a contracté une maladie peut être d'un puissant secours pour sa guérison. Cela est vrai surtout de quelques climats méridionaux. Une simple possibilité

de succès doit vous déterminer à rechercher les bienfaits de cette influence ; mais croyez aussi qu'elle devient impuissante *devant certains degrés* de maladie, et, dans ce cas, ne risquez pas d'en précipiter la marche par les épreuves fatigantes d'un voyage ; n'échangez pas les soins affectueux de la famille, la douceur des habitudes, l'aisance et le repos du *chez soi*, contre les impressions incertaines d'une existence nouvelle, éloignée, plus ou moins solitaire, contre le regret peut-être de ce que vous avez quitté. . . . .

"Les malades étrangers présentant les signes de la phthisie que nous eûmes l'occasion de soigner, à Menton, dans le cours de huit années, furent au nombre de deux cent cinquante. Dans ce nombre cent douze étaient à la première période, soixante-douze à la seconde, et soixante-six à la troisième.

"Sur les cent douze cas de la première période le cours de la maladie fut suspendu dans soixante-deux, de manière à pouvoir faire espérer une guérison ; dans cinquante autres cas, le mal poursuivit sa marche. Parmi les malades présentant les symptômes de la deuxième période, seize reprirent des forces et un embonpoint qui pouvaient donner des espérances sérieuses ; chez les cinquante-six autres, le maladie continua jusqu'à son terme fatal. Enfin, les soixante-six qui arrivèrent étant déjà à la troisième période, furent tous, un peu plus tôt ou un peu plus tard, victimes du mal, quoique plusieurs eussent éprouvé, sous l'influence du climat, un soulagement capable de leur faire espérer la guérison, et qui a évidemment contribué à allonger leurs jours."

Dr. J. D. Bottini.

III.

It is well that those given to mountaineering should know that within a day's journey in any direction there is a wide field open to their ambition in this department of athletics. The winter residents cannot all be invalids and convalescents, and doubtless many of the votaries of

muscular Christianity will yearly find themselves upon the scene, and panting for the peaks. They will not find any of the nearer mountains with a greater elevation than 5000 feet; but if that should not be sufficient, those in the background rise higher still, until in the parent Alpine chain of Dauphiny and Savoy we find them attaining an altitude of 10,000 feet.

M. le Chevalier Ardoino, who has closely examined the course and distribution of the Alpine spurs which divide and break upon the shores of the Riviera at this point, informs us that the most important of the secondary ranges, which parts from the central chain of the Maritime Alps, detaches itself at Mont Clapier, to the west of the Tend, and runs in a direct line towards the sea. Arriving at the Col de Braus, beyond the village of Castillon, the chain divides, forming the semicircle of the Menton basin. One wing of the division, marking its course by the summits of the Rasel, Grand Mont, and Bress, ends in Cap Martola, a few miles to the east of Menton; the other, indicated by the crests of the Cimie d'Ours, Aiguille, Aggel, and Tête de Chien, terminates in the Cap de l'Aglio, a little to the west of Monaco.

The demands on courage and endurance in scaling some of the summits of this lesser belt described, if not quite equal to Alpine Club ideas, ought to satisfy all ordinary aspirations in this way. The peak of the Berceau and Aiguille annually receive some climbers; the Grand Mont, which is a greater undertaking, is less frequently attempted.

THE END.

Savill, Edwards and Co., Printers, 4, Chandos Street, Covent Garden.