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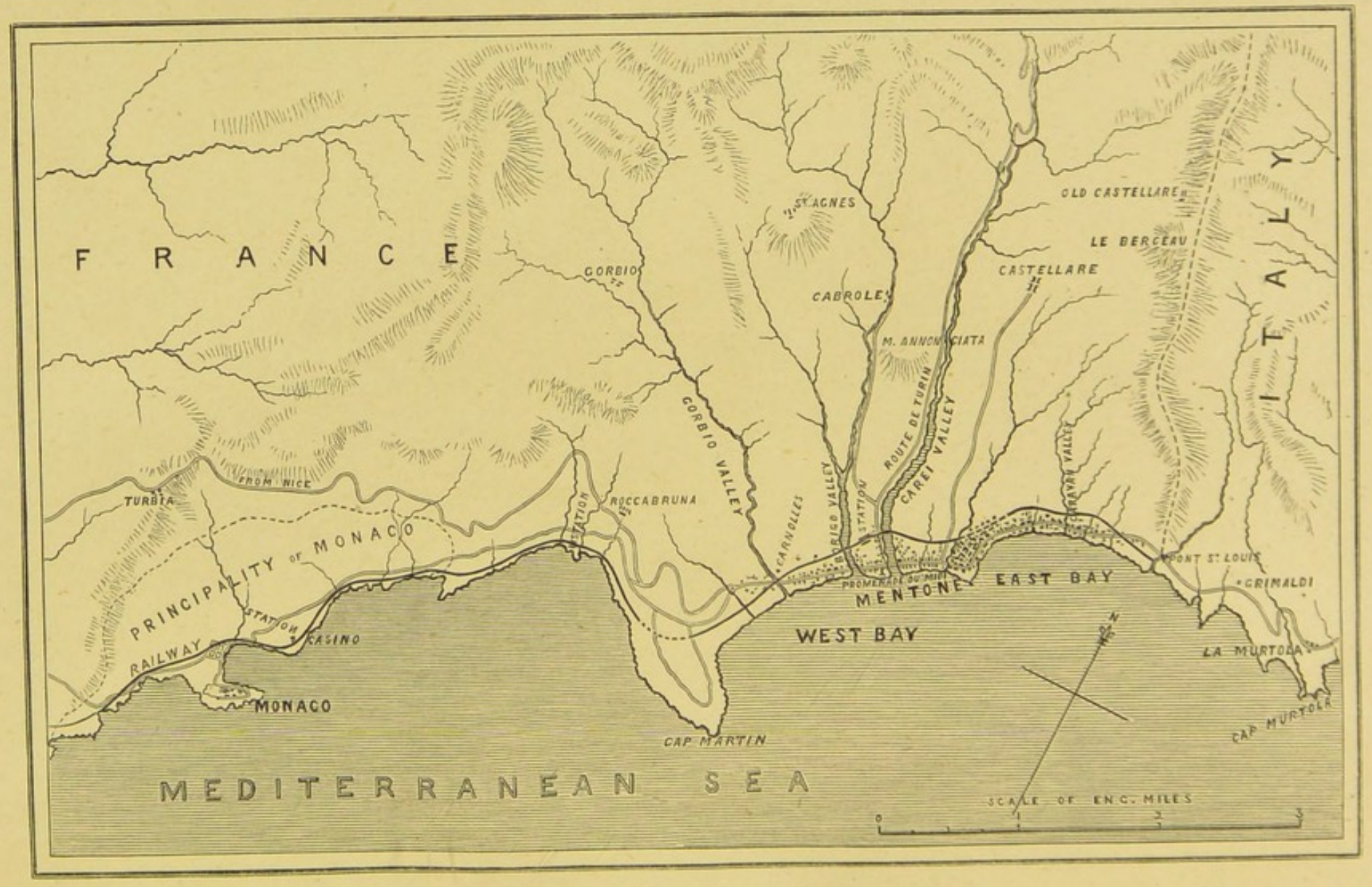
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ST. AGNES
OLD CASTELLARE
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M. ANNONCIATA
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GRAVE VALLEY
CORBIO VALLEY
CARNOLLES
BORRIGO VALLEY
STATION
ROCCABRUNA
FROM NICE
TURBIA
PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO
STATION
RAILWAY
CASINO
MONACO
CAP MARTIN
PROMENADE DU MIDI
MENTONE
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WEST BAY
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WINTERING AT MENTONE

BY

WILLIAM CHAMBERS

UNDER THE OLIVE TREES

BIBLIOTECA
COLL. FAC.
MED. EDIN.

LONDON
W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 PATERNOSTER ROW,
AND HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH
1870

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PREFACE.

WITH health impaired by a strain of three laborious years as LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh—and more particularly enfeebled by a malarious fever caught in the course of making explorations with a view to sanitary improvements in the older part of the city—I sought a restorative by a visit to Mentone (or Menton, as the French prefer to call it), in the winter of 1868–69. The object of my visit was gained; but having been so indiscreet as to enter on a new term of office, in the hope of helping to carry forward the city improvements, in which I might be excused for taking some special interest, my health again unfortunately suffered, for which and other reasons I resigned my post, and again proceeded to Mentone; this time making a longer sojourn, with corresponding advantage, in the winter of 1869–70. A result of these efforts to secure the benefits of sunshine along with perfect tranquillity on the shores of the Mediterranean, is the present small work, the preparation of which furnished a degree of amusement when far from home and accustomed pursuits. If it aid in directing attention to a subject of importance to many—the hygienic value of passing the winter in the south of France—I shall be satisfied. The book is of course non-medical, and will not supersede the necessity of consulting professional advisers.

W. C.

GLENORMISTON, *May* 1870.

WINTERING AT MENTONE.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN autumn has drawn to a close, and unmistakable symptoms of winter are making their appearance, the swallows are seen to wing their way from England, and betake themselves to the sunny regions on the shores of the Mediterranean; thence returning to their northern haunts when nature is reviving under the genial influence of spring. The example set by these sagacious birds is not unworthy of being followed when circumstances call for and permit an escape from the cold, the fogs, the rain, and sleety drizzle of a protracted winter.

Without undervaluing the comforts of an English fireside, when frost dims the window-pane with its beautiful efflorescence, I am on the whole disposed to think that health is best secured by a reasonable amount of outdoor exercise in the sunshine; but that enjoyment is unfortunately denied on anything like a salutary scale to those who are enfeebled by pulmonary or bronchial affections or by advancing years, in any part of the

British Islands. No doubt, much may be done to avert the evil influences of winter, by means of warm and well-ventilated rooms, having windows facing the south, in a sheltered and airy neighbourhood. Various places can be pointed out in the south of England recommendable as winter and spring resorts for invalids—none, perhaps, better and more agreeable than the Undercliff in the Isle of Wight; but there is this to be said of the whole of them—that they less or more participate in the humidity and variableness of our British climate. By no contrivance can we get rid of a certain dampness in the atmosphere. Inside the best constructed and best warmed dwelling, we still breathe the outer air, however much it may be qualified; and as regards persons of delicate constitution, who require a light and dry atmosphere, this may prove a serious objection. Cold, damp weather is, in short, the great enemy to health, and when we recollect that in all our large seats of population the cold and the damp are aggravated by a smokiness in the general atmosphere—to say nothing of sudden changes of temperature and other unsanitary conditions—the malignant influences of winter are greatly intensified.

Invalids who propose wintering abroad will, of course, consult their medical adviser with a view to selecting a locality suited as far as possible to their respective cases. With such counsels I do not interfere. The persons in whom I take a more special interest, or at least to whom I can speak more freely, are those who, advanced in life, stand in need of a remission of ordinary pursuits, along with that salutary re-invigoration of constitution which may be brought about by a change from a cold and moist to a dry and buoyant atmosphere—from a peculiarly variable, to a comparatively steady, climate—from a cloudy to a brilliant sky—from dinginess to sunshine. As to how many are swept away by refraining from taking a step of this kind, let the

authoritative statistics concerning the mortality of the late severe winter testify.

When any man on the shady side of middle life has the fortitude to look around to note the number of his old and valued friends, he is shocked to find how meagre is the list. One after another has disappeared, from no other perceptible cause than that their physical powers, originally vigorous, had succumbed in the feverish, and we might almost say, insane, battle of life. Too long and too diligently have they stuck to their professional pursuits, or been fascinated by the allurements of society, taking relaxation only by fits and starts, and seemingly under the impression that they have still a long career before them. Having realised a fair competence, they might very well ask themselves why they should continue to toil, to speculate, and to rack their brains, when a life of comparative ease and reflection would in all respects be more becoming. This is exactly the question, however, which they never put. The upshot is well known. Through sundry real or imaginary entanglements, their day of safety is past. A cold, foggy, drizzly November finishes them; and at about two o'clock on a wintry afternoon, they are, in all the pomp of hearse and carriages, decorously conducted to the burying-ground. That is why people advanced in life have so few old acquaintances about them. They had forgot that Death is always busy laying about him with his scythe, and that the art of long living consists pretty much in knowing how to keep out of his way.

A celebrated French writer on hygiene has a theory that dying at anything under a hundred years of age is all a mistake —that it is people's own blame, or the blame of their progenitors, if they die earlier. Far be it from me to dispute the accuracy of this very cheering though somewhat irreverent theory. I would allow a handsome discount of ten per cent., and take

ninety as a fair age to attain to. The method of living till ninety, however, is either not understood or very slightly acted on. Lord Brougham was acquainted with it. He saw there was a knack in giving fair-play to the system by means of an annual restorative. Every year he went off at the right time to Cannes; cheating alike the winter and the grave-digger as long as flesh and blood could do so. Other individuals, making the necessary sacrifices, now adopt a similar policy. They leave and return to England with the swallows; by which not unpleasant contrivance they spin out their lives, if not to ninety, still to something considerably beyond what, to all appearance, was to be their allotted span.

In contemplating a residence abroad for four or five months, it is, as just hinted, all important to go to an appropriate place. Besides consulting medical advisers, it might be well to peruse the well-known work on *Climate* by Sir James Clark, and also the singularly comprehensive and entertaining work of Dr J. Henry Bennet, entitled a *Winter and Spring on the Shores of the Mediterranean.* In his own person, this ingenious author exemplifies the benefit of stopping in time, and taking a long annual relaxation in a genial climate. He tells us that five-and-twenty years devoted to a laborious profession, and the harassing cares which pursue a hard-worked London physician, broke down his vital powers. In 1859, he became consumptive, and strove in vain to arrest the progress of disease. The choice was either retirement, with the faint hope of restoration to health, or within twelve months Kensal Green Cemetery. He chose wisely to relinquish a large and lucrative practice, and to take the chance of benefiting by a residence in a climate suited to his special condition. His book may be described as an exhaustive research in quest of such southern climates as may be best adapted to the assuagement of certain bodily complaints,

including general debility. He describes his visits to various parts of France, Italy, and Spain, bordering on the Mediterranean, to Corsica, Sicily, and also to Algeria; his narrative being everywhere interspersed with such a variety of anecdote and adventure, as well as of remarks on the vegetation, natural history, and geography of the countries visited, as gives it an interest to the general reader.

Summing up, he says, the health regions may be divided into three sections. First, the mild and dry, in which are comprehended the Western Riviera, and the east and south-east coasts of Spain; second, the mild and moist, to which belong Corsica, Sicily, and Algeria; and third, the west coast of Italy, which appears to occupy, meteorologically as well as geologically, an intermediate position. It may be safely concluded that no person from Great Britain who seeks merely for an agreeable winter resort, would from choice go to a place reputably moist. We have plenty moisture at home, and do not need to search for it abroad. What we want is, a mild dry atmosphere, with as much sunshine and scope for outdoor exercise, without recourse to greatcoats, as can possibly be procured within a reasonable distance, and which abounds in the attributes of civilisation. As may be learned from Dr Bennet, latitude is not all in all. This original inquirer says very candidly that 'five degrees of south latitude do not make up in climate-questions for want of protection from north winds.' It might be added that, besides protection from cold winds, we also need good house accommodation; for without that, the best climate in the world can be of no use to visitors. There is another important circumstance, and that is, the discomfort of a voyage on a sea so capricious in its moods as the Mediterranean; for which reason alone, we may leave Algiers out of present consideration.

The doctor has evidently a high notion of Corsica as a

health-resort; but there again is the drawback of a sea-voyage. Coming to the mainland, he speaks approvingly of San Remo, which lies about twenty miles to the eastward of Mentone. There, I can say something from experience. On visiting it in January 1869, I found it a dirty, old-fashioned Italian town, which had not even got the length of gas-lighting, though some improvements were going on. Further, it had no public promenade along the beach, and that I hold to be indispensable in any health-resort of the English. Nice has a long and handsome promenade of this description. Cannes has likewise high claims on account of its amenities—so high that it is entitled to be spoken of as by far the most aristocratic and expensive of the continental winter resorts.

From the configuration of the coast, Hyères, Cannes, and Nice lie farther south than Mentone, but that advantage is more than counterbalanced by the superior shelter from cold winds enjoyed by Mentone; for, as has been observed, a full exposure to the south, along with shelter on the north, is worth several degrees of latitude. After all, Mentone can modestly boast of being situated in latitude 43° 45′ N., or upwards of twelve degrees south of Edinburgh. It may be deemed a conclusive proof of Dr Bennet's appreciation of Mentone, when we know that among all the Mediterranean health-resorts he has chosen it for his habitual winter residence; and that, after ten years, he has to outward appearance overcome the malady which drove him abruptly to this species of exile. My own experiences, poor in comparison, point to Mentone as a place, all things considered, where any one not encumbered with expectations as to social intercourse, and not fastidious on a few points which will be particularised, may advantageously pass the more dreary months of winter. It is, however, not what this or that one says of a place, but the unerring testimony of Nature, as

demonstrated in the contour and vegetation of the district, which decides its character. So far, as will be shewn, Mentone is highly favoured, and Art, under considerate direction, is alone needed to complete its recommendations. Unfortunately, the journey thither will to many be a serious objection as regards not only distance but expense. The easiest way it can be performed may prove too fatiguing for some invalids, but taken leisurely, there is nothing in it to deter persons who are able to bear railway travelling.

There were times, not long ago, when travelling through France was tedious and painful. Those were the days of diligences and passports, and many other things that were very disagreeable. In the present day, such has been the material and social progress of the country, that travellers will find matters not greatly different from what prevails in England. There are railways in all directions; the hotels are frequently on a scale of great splendour; at very nearly the whole of them on the main routes English is spoken; and everywhere visitors are treated with marked civility. We all know what Paris has latterly become—the finest town in the world, an attraction to strangers from all parts of the earth. So lately as twelve years since, the railway from Paris was not pushed beyond Marseilles. There it long remained, and to those who wanted to get on farther, there was no help for it but to take the diligence, or hire a carriage specially for the purpose. I can remember hiring a *voiture* with a pair of horses to go on to Nice, and of being nearly three days on the journey, including stoppages of two nights, one of those nights being spent at Frejus, in one of the worst and dearest hotels I ever set foot in. Now all this is changed; there is a railway from Marseilles by way of Toulon, Cannes, Nice, and Monaco to Mentone—the trains going several times night and day to suit the convenience of travellers. There are likewise

telegraphic wires the whole way, by which messages can be sent in advance to bespeak accommodation at hotels along the line of route.

In making their way southwards, there are many who drive on hurriedly, never stopping night or day, as if under a vow to get to their journey's end in the least possible time. My plan is to stop a night, or, it may be, two nights and a day, here and there, for which there are several good opportunities—as, for example, at Paris, Dijon, Lyons, Avignon, Marseilles, and Nice. The only drawback on these stoppages is the annoyance experienced at the stations as concerns luggage. After getting your ticket, you have to see your luggage weighed, paying for the same a small sum; and then on arrival at your destination, some time has to be spent in a cold *salle* until the whole of the luggage has been arranged, and you can claim your own. The way to avoid these wearisome detentions is to get your luggage registered and sent on by the *grande vîtesse*, or quick goods-train, to your final destination, be it Nice or Mentone, where it can be reclaimed. Sending it by the *petite vîtesse* is cheaper, but as it may not get to the end of its journey by this slow train for several weeks, the *grande vîtesse* should by all means be adopted as preferable. Following this plan, a traveller may take along with him into the train a portmanteau or carpet-bag sufficiently small to be accommodated under the seat, also any small bundle to be placed in the rack overhead. The torment of waiting for luggage is, I observe, driving the French into the practice of taking cumbersome articles with them into the trains; and on several occasions I have experienced personal inconvenience from their expedients. Professedly, dogs are not permitted to be taken into the carriages; but the rule on this point is not on all occasions strictly adhered to. Ladies may be seen with favourite lap-dogs, either carrying

them openly, or in small baskets, without challenge. For such indulgence, much depends on the complaisance of the guard.

The preferable route from London is by Folkestone and Boulogne, and it will save trouble if tickets are taken at Charing-Cross station direct for Paris, getting luggage ticketed accordingly. The steam-boats between Folkestone and Boulogne, though well managed, are certainly poor in comparison to what they might and ought to be; but there is nothing superior in the Channel service, and all we can do in the meantime is to make the best of them. At the railway terminus at Boulogne there is an excellent restaurant, where travellers have a choice of refreshments, tastefully served, and with a composure which pleasantly contrasts with the hurry and confusion which prevail on the English side of the Channel. Any one, going or coming, who has occasion to stop for a night at Boulogne, may be safely recommended to the Hôtel Christol, a comfortable and well-conducted establishment not far from the railway terminus. On each of my recent trips, I spent two nights in Paris at the Grand Hôtel du Louvre; a night at Lyons in the Hôtel de l'Univers (good, and near the station); and two nights at Marseilles in the Grand Hôtel du Louvre et de la Paix. The reason why I remained more than a single night in Marseilles was to note the extraordinary improvements which have taken place within the last few years. If we except Paris, no city in France has been so much changed for the better as Marseilles. Its new streets and boulevards are a sight worth seeing, and so is its new port of Joliette, constructed at a great cost with much engineering skill. The most surprising novelty, however, is the system of water-supply, effected by bringing the waters of the river Durance a distance of sixty miles by means of tunnels and aqueducts, at an expense of fifty-two millions of francs. One of the aqueducts, that of Roquefavour, measures as much as

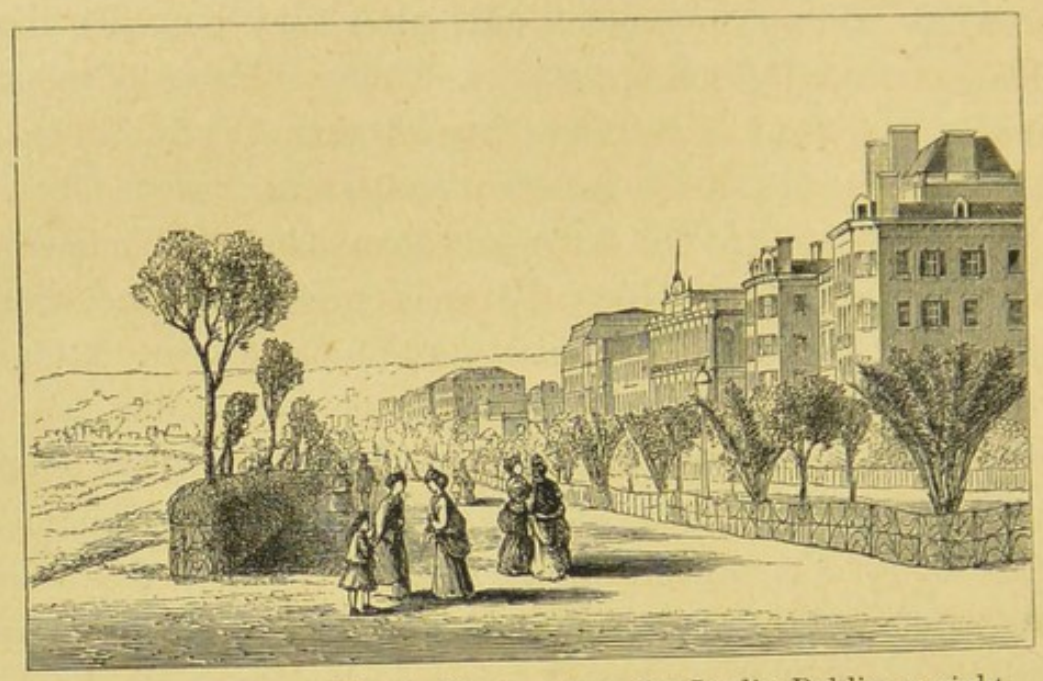
four hundred mètres in length by eighty-two in height—a gigantic work, creditable to French engineering, which may compare favourably with some of the grandest of recent undertakings in Great Britain.

Quitting England towards the end of October, and pursuing the journey across France to the shores of the Mediterranean, a visible change of climate usually occurs about half-way between Lyons and Marseilles. We leave the cloudy northern skies, and get gradually into the serene sunshine of the south. The sensation of warmth increases during the day, and at night a lustrous planet shines almost like a moon in the star-spangled heavens. The vegetable world assumes new forms. The mulberry-groves remind us of silk-worms and the tasteful industries of Lyons and St Etienne. Approaching Marseilles, tracts are covered with almond-trees, which, on our return journey in spring, are seen to clothe the country with a mantle of delicate purple blossom. Passing onward, the aloe and prickly pear grow by the wayside, and are planted as hedges; and we observe that in the fields the small tufted plant producing the yellow *Immortelles* (a species of *Helichrysum*) is cultivated as a branch of husbandry. The railway from Marseilles, though only a single line, has been a costly and remarkable undertaking, for it is carried through numerous tunnels and along heavy embankments near the sea-shore. No doubt, we lose the picturesque scenery of the Estrelles by this modern method of transit; but yet we are afforded glimpses of many beautiful valleys and rocky mounts, garnished with fig and orange trees, these last coming prominently into notice on crossing the Var and getting into the vicinity of Nice. The olive, first seen as a shrub in Provence, now attains to the dimensions of a tree, which, planted profusely on hill-sides, imparts a greenness to the landscape even in winter.

Nice, 'the Queen of the Mediterranean,' has suddenly risen into beauty and importance. Facing the south, close on the sea-shore, with a fringe of verdant hills on the north, its situation has raised it to a high rank as a winter health-resort, and its reputation in this respect has been augmented by vigorous efforts, public and private, to render it attractive to strangers. Formerly, visiting the town while it belonged to Italy, there appeared to be a general stagnation. Great endeavours had stopped short, and there was obviously much half-done work. In the hands of the French, a new spirit has been infused into the place. Streets just begun have been completed, and handsome quays with boulevards stretch along both sides of the Paillon, over which several new bridges have been thrown. One of these deserves to be styled something more than a bridge. It is so broad as to afford space for a public garden, in the centre of which is erected a statue of Masséna, a native of whom, as of Garibaldi, the Nizzards are justly proud. Nominally, the Paillon is a torrent, but it usually is little else than a bed of dry gravel; the only water in it being a few puddles, in which numbers of women are seen washing clothes in the ordinary continental style. The Paillon offers a fair specimen of one of those numerous torrents in the Riviera that are flooded only on the occasion of snows melting, or heavy rains falling in the mountains, when, rushing impetuously down, the tumultuous waters bear all before them.

Looking to its crowds of fashionable loungers, who come to it professedly for health, but seemingly as much for amusement, Nice may be styled the continental Brighton. One thing, as at Brighton, has greatly added to its fascinations. This is the Promenade des Anglais, stretching a mile along the shore, and forming from morning to night the place of concourse for throngs of idlers. The spacious promenade for pedestrians is

divided by a row of sub-tropical plants, including specimens of the pepper-tree and date-palm, from a broad drive, where ladies in the fantastic dresses of the period, with a taste for fast living and public exhibition, indulge in driving backwards and forwards with a fury not usual with their sex in our more sober-minded country. To do them justice, they leave the lashing



Promenade des Anglais, looking westward ; Jardin Public on right.

of the ponies to the driver, who sits behind them with a long whip, with which he seems to have much pleasure in inflicting pain on the poor animals. This species of cruelty meets with no reprobation from the onlookers ; and from the immunity shewn to the practice, I should infer that in France there is no law repressive of cruelty to animals. I regretted to observe that these fast young ladies were generally English. With its promenades, drives, balls, cercle, Jardin Public, musical band, theatres, shops of various kinds where every luxury may be obtained, and abundance of street carriages, Nice offers a choice of attractions, independently of its fine air and sunshine. Besides the cathedral and numerous other Roman Catholic

churches, the town now possesses an English and a Scotch church, both handsome new buildings. At kiosks on the Quai Masséna, several Paris daily newspapers may be purchased. Letters and papers from England are delivered twice a day, Sunday included. For persons studiously inclined, there is a large public Bibliothèque supported by the commune, where books (of course in French literature) may be freely consulted or read by strangers as well as natives. There are likewise two good circulating libraries with English books—that of Visconti a really excellent collection, associated with a capital reading-room. To accommodate the numerous fashionable visitors, as also the more steady order of winter sojourners, there are now divers hotels of huge dimensions, and every succeeding year seems to increase the number. They are for the greater part situated on the quays overlooking the Paillon, also in the Jardin Public, and in the terrace-like line of street along the Promenade des Anglais. The house which after sundry trials I found preferable was the Hôtel d'Angleterre, in the Jardin Public, kept by M. Steinbrück, who speaks English and is married to an Englishwoman; both are most vigilant in attending to the comfort of their guests. All the hotels have omnibuses which wait the arrival and attend the departure of the trains.

Although Nice is now a French town, the humbler classes remain essentially Italian of the old Savoy type. The dresses of the women are picturesque, and their favourite mode of carrying things is to poise them on the top of the head. The peculiar costumes of the district are well represented in the wooden mosaics which form a remarkable local manufacture. I have never returned home from Nice without purchasing specimens of these beautiful *mosaïques en bois*, at the shop of the brothers Mignon, in the Rue Paradis. On the last occasion,

I received an interesting account of how they were prepared. The pictorial effects are, it is said, wholly a result of the varying tints of different kinds of wood grown in the neighbourhood; all being ingeniously shaped and put together without any aid from artificial colouring. As the intrinsic value of the small pieces of wood employed must be insignificant—a pennyworth probably being wrought up in a mosaic which will sell for a couple of napoleons—we have here a striking instance of how national wealth may be increased by exerting artistic ability on materials which are, of themselves, worthless.

Considering its extent, its numerous attractions, its choice of society, and its abundance of hotels, *pensions*, and villas and floors to be let for hire, Nice, as a place of agreeable resort, has a prodigious advantage over Mentone, which is in a comparatively primitive condition, with much to be done to bring it up to the Nicean finish. To all its recommendable qualities, Nice has further added a supply of pure water led on in pipes from the hilly ground behind; and this is a thing of first importance. If the public authorities would be but a little more liberal in their supply of scavengers to scrape and sweep the streets and by-ways, and to prevent the accumulation of nauseous rubbish on the shore side of the Promenade, they would merit a tribute of thanks from every one who makes a sojourn in the town. Granting all that can be said in admiration of the Queen of the Mediterranean, the question remains as to its availableness in a matter where health is so intimately concerned. In its very imposing size and stylish way of living there is, I fear, something objectionable. Health-seekers ought not as a rule to care for balls, theatrical representations, or the lavish exhibition of finery. What they generally want is the re-invigoration of an enfeebled constitution, through simple and natural agencies. Wherefore, the sea-side, the rural hamlet, or any other place

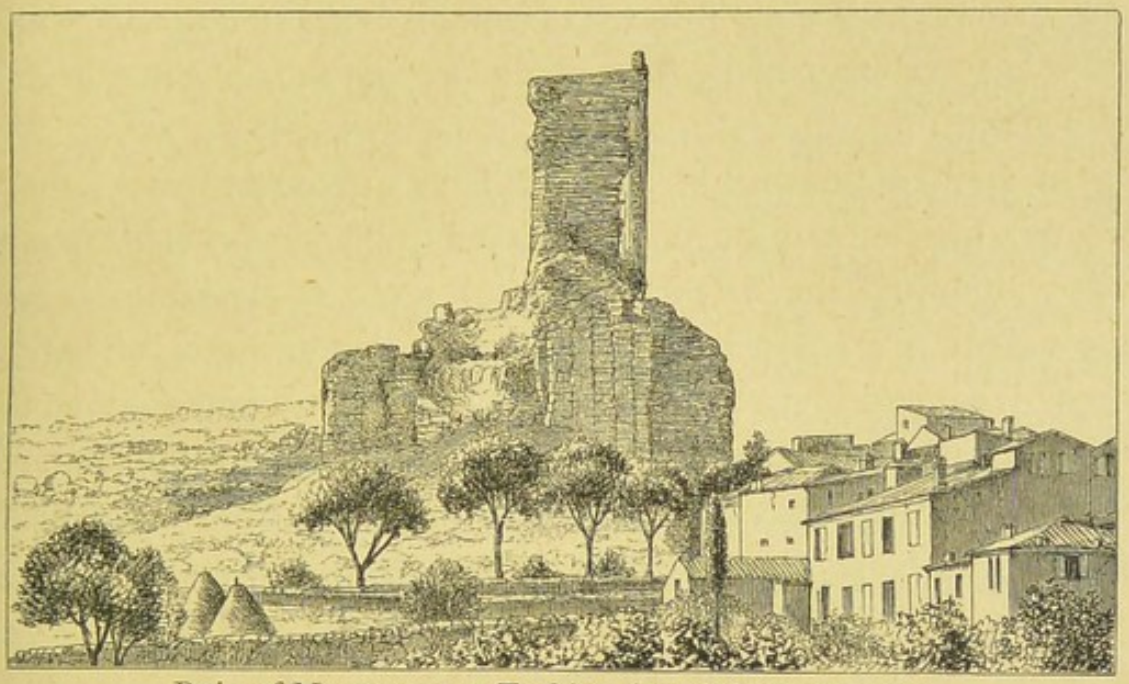
where, by abandoning artificialities, Nature has fair-play to strengthen the animal system, is what is sought after. On this account, as well as on its higher claims in point of shelter and climate, there is no room to hesitate. Pleasure-seekers, or those to whom a town-life is indispensable, will stop at Nice; the less sophisticated will go twenty miles farther, and, with all its deficiencies, bask in the very garden of the Riviera.

The time of transit from Nice to Mentone by railway is an hour and six minutes, including stoppages at Villafranca, Monaco, and other places. It is a cheap, easy journey; but the line is carried through a number of dark tunnels, and to those who have sufficient time at command, and do not mind the cost of a carriage and pair of horses, the road forming the first stage in the Corniche will be preferred. On last, as well as previous occasion, selecting this famous highway across the mountains—the Alpes Maritimes, from which is derived the name of the department—I hired a carriage for the journey. The route is the commencement of the famous Corniche, which most tourists endeavour to see at least once in their lives. Until 1806, when it was partially completed, by order of Bonaparte, there was no other road along this part of the coast of Italy than the very insufficient pathway, fit only for mules, which had originally been made by the Romans on subduing the Ligurians. Snatches of this old Roman road are still in use by the country-people. It was only the pressing emergencies of the Revolutionary army under the conqueror of Italy, at the beginning of the present century, that led to the engineering of the Corniche—a name significant of a pathway winding its way along a natural precipitous cornice. On quitting Nice, the road rises along a mountain-side which commands a magnificent prospect over the valley of the Paillon, dotted with villas and orange-gardens. By and by, on attaining a great height, it gets behind

the hills, and we lose sight of the sea. In this respect, the road was devised under the temporary but awkward necessity of avoiding a cannonade from British ships of war. Now that there are no longer any fears on this score, a new Corniche as far as Monaco is partly constructed, and will be a great improvement on the old one; though it will fail to afford such magnificent views as we now have of mountain scenery, and will prevent travellers passing through and seeing the ancient village of Turbia.

On both occasions on which I have passed this way, the weather happened to be of exceptional brilliance. The season was winter, and the height attained was two thousand feet, yet the air was mild and balmy, and in the open carriage, the only shelter required was an umbrella, to avert the dazzling rays of the sun. On the left were the rugged Alpine peaks stretching far away in the distance, while on the right we looked down the precipitous banks, laid out in terraces for vines and orange-gardens, to the picturesquely peninsulated shores of the Mediterranean. Midway, on our right, we come in sight of the ancient town of Eza, perched most picturesquely on the summit of a conical mount, and which figures in the early history of this singularly irregular line of coast. A more difficult piece of country for military manœuvres can scarcely be imagined, for there hardly appears a level spot in the whole territory; hence we have a pretty good idea of why the Ligurians so long defied their enemies, and also why the district, in its quality of Principality of Monaco, should have for such a length of time maintained an isolated existence. Of the final success of the Roman invaders we have an interesting memorial at the decayed village of Turbia, through which the road passes. It consists of the shattered remains of a colossal monument, erected in honour of Augustus Cæsar. Occupying a prominent rocky knoll, it is

visible from a great distance at sea. Reaching it by an irregular path through the old village, we find the ruin surrounded by a wall, to prevent further dilapidation. What was the original form of the monument is nowhere mentioned. It was certainly a tall ornamental structure, bearing a gigantic statue of Augustus in white marble, of which fragments have been discovered. In



Ruin of Monument at Turbia, viewed from the south.

the middle ages, the building was altered and enlarged to form a species of fortress, and thus it remained until it was destroyed by Marshal Villars, during the wars of Louis XIV. (1705). The present name of the village is said to be a corruption of Trophæa (*Trophæa Augusti*), but this is mere conjecture. A few minutes bestowed in a visit to this noted historical ruin, and in enjoying the outlook seaward, will not be misspent.

At Turbia, we come full in sight of the town of Monaco, perched on a rocky peninsula jutting into the sea, and still walled all around as it was in the days when it required to hold out against foreign enemies. Divided from it on the east by a small port, rises Monte Carlo, a plateau now noted

for its gaming establishment, the only authorised resort of the kind in the south of Europe. The only other place on the route calling for a word of observation is Roccabruna, a cluster of antique buildings, the capital of a commune, jumbled up in a strange manner with huge brown rocks, that look as if they had been suddenly arrested on tumbling down the lofty hill behind them. From this we have a continued descent to Mentone. As we advance, the scene opens, and turning a corner of the road, we see the place of our destination stretching along the curve of a beautiful bay, backed by low hills, covered with evergreens, while behind these rises a semicircular range of arid mountains, towering several thousand feet high, and forming the screen from the north, that, constituting Mentone an Undercliff, gives it that peculiar mildness and dryness of climate for which it has attained celebrity. A drive for a mile along an avenue of plane-trees, environed with olive-grounds and villas, brings us to the spot where we are to spend the winter.

CHAPTER II.

THE approach downhill from Roccabruna to Mentone offers one of the most pleasing sights in the Riviera. Before us is the town, skirting the seashore, backed by hills clothed in evergreens of varying tints. On our right is the wide expanse of the Mediterranean; and in the distance to the east are seen the headlands of Ventimiglia and Bordighera. It is a peaceful, secluded scene, and, lying full in the blaze of sunshine, comes up to our ideas of what is befitting as a resort for those in quest of health, or who wish to reside for a time away from the turmoil of the outer world. It is customary to say of Mentone, that here civilisation ends. We have arrived at the last town in France. Going farther in this direction, we enter Italy, where, generally speaking, matters are in a less advanced condition.

The whole of Mentone is comprehended in the curve of a bay, which, from Cap Martin on the west to Cap Murtola on the east, may measure five to six miles, by following the line of coast; but the curve is divided near the centre by a projecting ledge of rocks, on which stands a conspicuous square bastion or martello tower, forming an outwork of the older part of the town. The sweep of the shore is therefore broken into two bays, the western and eastern, a circumstance which imparts a divided character to the place. As regards the residences of strangers, there may indeed be said to be two towns, distinctly

cut off from each other; the only channel of communication between them being a confined thoroughfare amidst old buildings.

So closely do the mountains infringe on the shore of the eastern bay, that in this quarter there is space on the level ground for only a single range of hotels, with a roadway in front of them. On the western bay, the level ground is much broader; it allows space for a public promenade along the beach, also a succession of hotels and villas, not very symmetrically arranged, and a long street, in which the chief business of the town is conducted. Besides this degree of accommodation, the western bay offers some scope for building in certain lateral valleys, reaching to the base of the mountains. The valley first crossed is the Gorbio, and then the Borigo and Carei, the two last mentioned being the principal. They take their names from the torrents from the north which empty themselves into the sea—that is to say, when they have any running water in them, which is not very often the case. The valley of the Carei is the most spacious, and has already been built on to a considerable extent on both sides. The thoroughfare on the right bank, overshadowed with plane-trees, is known as the Route de Turin, and conducts to the railway station.

The grand thing in the scenery of Mentone is the picturesque hilly ground behind it. Standing on the bridge which crosses the Borigo at the entrance to the town, we are presented with an amphitheatre of almost matchless beauty. In the foreground is a series of round-topped hills, detached from each other, and mostly laid out as groves of olive, orange, and lemon trees, interspersed with vine terraces, and dotted here and there with the cottages of the peasant proprietors. The height of these hills, or *collines* as the French call them, is from four hundred to six hundred feet above the sea-level, an altitude that admits of

our seeing over and immediately beyond them that wonderfully striking range of peaked limestone mountains towering in fantastic masses, and prominently relieved against the clear blue sky. The scene is one which we are never tired looking at, and leaves impressions which no length of time can obliterate. I have often thought with pleasure on that singularly picturesque landscape.

As now seen, Mentone is of comparatively recent date. Its reputation as a resort for health-seekers is only of ten or twelve years' standing, and the larger part of its extensions has taken place within that period. At the end of last century, the town consisted of little more than a dense cluster of antiquated buildings, covering a conical hill, which rises from the sea-shore; the whole hemmed in by defensible walls, with the remains of a castle crowning the summit (since transformed into a cemetery), and a kind of sea-port claiming protection from the bastion on the projecting reef. While in this antiquated condition, there was no road through it fit for wheeled carriages. The only thoroughfare was the old Roman road, about twelve feet in width, sufficient alone for foot-passengers or mules, which wound its way as it best could along the coast—sometimes creeping up hills, at other times diving into ravines, and when arriving at towns, getting through them by narrow passages, well guarded at each end by gates. Such was the sole means of communication along the shore of the Western Riviera till within the memory of persons still living.

Good reasons for this backward state of things might be found in political distractions, and more specially in the fact, that the whole of this part of the coast was for ages so much beset by predatory bands of Moors or Saracens, that it was advantageous to make every place as inaccessible as possible. Villages were placed far up the mountains, with a good outlook to the sea,

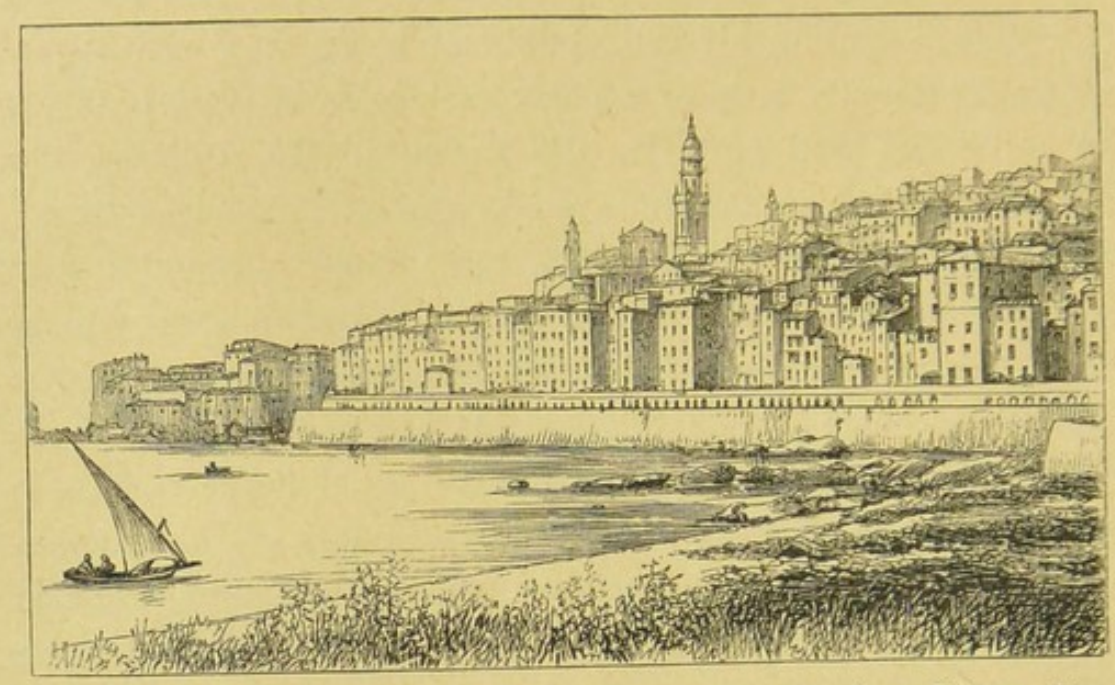
and were approachable only by scarcely distinguishable tracks. While the towns were walled, the palazzos of the gentry adjoining the ancient route resembled the larger kind of fortified Border keeps, and could be entered only by drawbridges and strongly barred doors, protected by shot-holes. Several specimens of these bastel-houses still survive, though in a decayed condition, and are well worth investigation. The Saracens, however, established themselves on various parts of the coast; one of their strongholds being Eza, a small fortified town, already referred to as being seen on the road from Nice to Mentone. According to tradition, the person chiefly concerned in expelling these intruders was a noble Genoese, named Grimaldi, who, for his bravery and public services, received a gift of the territory of Monaco, in which his descendants afterwards bore rule. As this event is said to have taken place in the year 980, the House of Grimaldi must be reckoned one of the very oldest in Europe.

Except as being involved in the wars of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, little is heard of the Grimaldis for two or three hundred years. They were known as seigneurs or counts, holding some local sway, but always under the protection of superior neighbours, to whom they stood in the relation of vassals. Any one curiously disposed regarding their intermarriages and ongoings, will get full particulars in the recent work of Mr Pemberton (*History of Monaco, Past and Present*), also in the French work of M. Abel Rendu (*Menton et Monaco*); but it is not easy to burden the memory with the annals of this noble and not always well-behaved family. But for their instinctively clinging to France, they would long since have disappeared. By Louis XIII., the family were raised to the rank of Princes of Monaco, and they were likewise invested with the Dukedom of Valentenois in the peerage of France. From this time, they fought in the French wars, and were

occasionally employed in diplomatic missions. At the middle of the seventeenth century, the principality had the honour of supporting the extravagances of Lewis I., a prince who, in his ardent desire to shew off with becoming splendour as an ambassador, accepted a mission to Rome from the court of France. We are told that his prodigal outlays led to a system of taxation of hitherto unexampled severity. The most idiotic of his acts consisted in causing his carriage-horses to be shod with silver, each shoe fastened only by a single nail, in order that it might be easily lost, and ostentatiously replaced. In Anthony, the son of this madcap, the male line of the Grimaldis terminated. With only daughters to succeed, there arose a grand family consultation how Louise Hyppolyte, the eldest of these female heirs, should marry some distinguished personage, sufficiently rich to discharge certain heavy debts and obligations. If we could extract any drollery from the history of the Grimaldis, it would be in the straits to which they were put at this memorable juncture. In a sense, the girl was put up to auction. It was made generally known that the highest bidder, with the longest purse and pedigree, might have her; one thing, however, being stipulated, that he should sink his own identity, and assume the name and arms of Grimaldi. After a good deal of looking about and chaffering, Louise Hyppolyte was assigned to Count de Matignon, whose wealth was pronounced adequate, and his ancestral rank in no respect impeachable. The marriage took place in 1715, and from it sprung the present family.

It does not appear that the new branch of the clan Grimaldi was a marked improvement on the old one. When the revolution of 1789 broke out in France, it spread to the principality; and so much was Honore III. disliked for his arbitrary measures, that he had to flee for his life, leaving his patrimony to its fate, which consisted in being absorbed into the French republic.

Unfortunately, the change of masters produced only some new varieties of oppression. There was, to be sure, a very distinct proclamation of liberty and equality; but it was associated with relentless taxation and conscription, along with an assiduous search for victims for the guillotine. Recesses in the mountains above Mentone are pointed out where *suspects* took refuge in



The old town of Mentone with Quai Bonaparte, as seen from Eastern Bay.

these terrible times, and to whom food was under great difficulty taken by their families. With the fall of the Convention in 1793, and the rise of Bonaparte, the Mentonians experienced a gratifying relief, although the conscription continued as severe as ever. In the course of Napoleon's marvellous military feats in Italy, he visited Mentone; and observing the imperfect character of the old road along the coast, gave orders to construct that entirely new carriage-way, the existing Corniche, an engineering exploit which was the making of Mentone. Previously, the old road in proceeding eastwards ascended to a vaulted gateway, and was thence continued in the Rue Longue,

a curious narrow passage environed by tall antique buildings on each side, the exit being by a gateway at the farther extremity, whence the road descended to the eastern bay. For this inconvenient thoroughfare, the French engineer substituted an artificial terrace-road, raised within the sea-margin, and skirting the backs of the gaunt old houses of the Rue Longue. All who have travelled along the Corniche, will remember this ingeniously constructed part of the route, styled the Quai Bonaparte, and how, after getting clear of the town, it ascends to the Pont St Louis, on the front of the rugged cliffs which overhang the Mediterranean.

After having been connected with France for more than twenty years, the principality of Monaco was assigned, by the treaty of Vienna, to its hereditary claimants, who were to be under the protection of Piedmont. Delivered up to Honore V., as the reigning Grimaldi was designated, the unhappy people, to their dismay, soon felt themselves in the grasp of a rapacious tyrant. Honest, industrious, and confiding, they were willing to render loyal obedience to the old family; but so far from being sympathised with, they were viewed as mere objects of the most uncompromising extortion. What now occurred in the communes of Monaco, Roccabruna, and Mentone—such being the entire territory—would, if minutely told, form a history unexampled for despicable selfishness on the part of the ruling authority. The account given by Pemberton, and also by local French writers, regarding the fiscal abuses of Honore and his successor, raises the deepest emotions of compassion. It is painful even to allude to matters of this kind, and I do so only because a knowledge of what took place enables us to understand why Mentone has been absorbed into the French empire. The story—fit to form the subject of a romance—is also not without interest, as revealing to what lengths a despotic ruler

may go when unchecked by considerations either of mercy or public policy.

Living at a safe distance in Paris, and governing by deputies, Honore V. maintained a fair face to the world while issuing ordinance after ordinance calculated to reduce his patrimonial territory to utter poverty and ruin. Plausible and refined in manners, his hypocrisy was equalled only by his intense avarice. What he wanted was money, and that he was resolved to wring by every available means from his helpless subjects. He began operations by taking possession of all property belonging to communes, hospitals, and ecclesiastical establishments, all of which were in future to depend on his bounty. Next, he imposed duties on every article entering or going out of the country, or which was consumed as food. The principal produce consisting of olives, oranges, lemons, citrons, figs, and grapes, these were all placed under rigorous surveillance, and subjected to heavy imposts. There had long been manufactures of oils, essences, perfumes, and confections from one or other of these fruits, for purposes of export, and the taxes now levied upon them rendered the trade not worth carrying on. Then were issued ordinances assigning to the prince an entire monopoly in the manufacture and sale of linen, gunpowder, pipes, and tobacco. No one dared to purchase linens for clothing or domestic use, or to be used as sails for boats and shipping, unless they came from the prince's factories at such prices as he was pleased to impose. Following on these arbitrary measures came the monopoly of selling vermicelli. This was a hard blow on the poor, but nothing in comparison to the next financial device, which was a monopoly in the importation of corn, meal, and flour. As it happened that the territory produced scarcely any cereals, the people depended on imports, and under this new policy they were placed at the mercy of a

prince who cared not though his subjects should perish of hunger.

To advantageously carry out this last ordinance, Honore procured the assistance of a Frenchman named Chappon, with whom he divided profits. Established as the grand purveyor of corn, Chappon became a terror to the unfortunate community. At the very outset, there was experienced a want of mills to grind the imported corn, nor could mills be erected unless where there was water-power. The valley of the Carei at Mentone offered this convenience, but its water-privileges were all secured by olive-mills, and these necessarily had to be bought up. This was speedily accomplished. The oil-mills were forcibly purchased at certain prices; but as these prices were never paid, the transaction was nothing else than a robbery. Possessed of the mills, the next thing was to make a road to them fit for wheeled carriages. Instead of making the road at his own cost, Honore obliged the proprietors of land on the right bank of the Carei to construct a thoroughfare at their own expense, at the same time mulcting them in sums to keep it up. The road so formed, lined with plane-trees, is that now known as the Route de Turin. The construction of such a road was certainly a great improvement; and the only matter for regret is the injustice of the whole affair. Having set the mills to work, Chappon imported parcels of damaged or inferior corn, which, being ground to flour, was sold at such high prices as he was pleased to impose. This extortion was not enough. It was discovered that a good profit could be made by a monopoly in baking. The prince now became baker in general for the principality, and the baking and selling of bread, except under his authority, were declared to be penal. A cry of despair—the wail of the poor—sounded through the land. Earnest, piteous remonstrances were made to Honore. All were unheeded.

There was no earthly tribunal to appeal to. The press of Europe did not hear of, or at least said nothing of these atrocities. The people, patient and forbearing, continued to suffer. One can hardly realise the fact, that within the last quarter of a century a person enjoying the rank of a Christian sovereign should have been guilty of iniquities like those here briefly referred to. The bread monopoly proved the worst of all; for, besides the dearth and bad qualities of the article, excessive penalties were incurred for attempting to bring even so much as a morsel into the territory. If a labourer went across the frontier for a day's work, and brought back at night a portion of the bread he had had for his dinner to succour his wife and children, it was taken from him, and he might think himself well off if he escaped punishment. If a ship, on arriving at any of the small ports, had bread or biscuits on board, the whole had to be thrown into the sea, and a fresh supply procured from the prince's baker. Driven to extremity, the people ate as little as possible of what they emphatically called the *pain de douleur;* but this was met by a new expedient. A register was ordered to be kept of all the bread which each family purchased, and if the quantity fell short of a certain standard, they were exposed to a prosecution for consuming too little.

Things were not yet by any means at their worst. The only fuel used was old decayed olive and fruit trees, and here was a fresh means of exaction. An ordinance was issued forbidding any tree to be cut down, or any branch removed, unless by a special license, which had to be paid for, amounting to a tax on the fuel used for warmth or the preparation of victuals. The next form of extortion was to impose a fine on any one leaving his house after ten o'clock without a lantern. A fine of three francs was also imposed on every license for a person going out of the country. Hungered in the article of bread, taxed on

their oranges, taxed on their fuel, and taxed in their clothing, the people as yet were allowed to eat their own poultry, eggs, and butcher-meat. That was a great overlook, now to be remedied. A universal census was taken of oxen, sheep, goats, pigs, and other animals raised for sale or private consumption, and the amount of stock had to be rigorously accounted for. A register was kept of all births and deaths of these various animals, the sex of each being noted. The object aimed at was a tax payable for every animal slaughtered. If a person wished to kill one of his pigs, he had to intimate the fact to an officer, who attended to lay on the tax, and make the appropriate deduction from the recorded stock on hand. Woe be to any one who ate his own mutton or lamb, without being taxed, even although the animal should have died or been killed by accident. We may conclude the list of extortions, by mentioning that, to support the several monopolies, it was necessary to employ a large staff of custom-house and other officials. The *douane* at the frontiers was remorseless in severity. If a merchant declared the weight of his goods to be a single pound less than they actually weighed, the whole were confiscated. By all these and sundry other contrivances—one being a right to all the scrapings of the streets, for there was nothing too mean to be appropriated —Honore V. wrung an annual revenue of 320,000 francs from a small population, a large proportion of whom were people in a humble rank of life. There was folly as well as cruelty in the exaction, for more than a third of the whole amount levied went to defray the expenses of collection. Some of his schemes were disappointing. He attempted to increase his civil list by coining and putting in circulation five-franc pieces, containing thirty per cent. of alloy, but as nobody would take his bad money, this proved an unfortunate financial experiment. He was also rather luckless in his projects for taxing education. In

Mentone, he set up a school to which children should be sent on paying certain fees, and at the same time it was declared to be penal to teach children at home. The result was that the school was deserted, to which melancholy fact is ascribable the general ignorance of letters among the bulk of the humbler classes past middle life.

Honore V. died in 1841, carrying with him to the grave the execrations of all he had misused and misgoverned. Strange to say, the people, from a hereditary sentiment of loyalty, did not embrace the opportunity of repudiating the Grimaldis. The heir of the principality was Florestan I., of whom good hopes were entertained; but he continued the former extortions and monopolies, adding the obligation, that the crushing of all the olives in his territory should take place at his own mills, under excessive penalties. This was little else than a sentence of annihilation to the olive-growers, and general ruin was in prospect. But the time had now come when the odious tyranny could be safely thrown off. The ferment of the revolution in France in 1848 spread to the principality of Monaco, and by a popular outburst of outraged feeling, the authority of the prince was denounced and rejected. Florestan appealed for help to Sardinia, but in vain. He made some overtures at conciliation. They were treated with derision, and he was ordered to quit the territory. It says not a little for the character of the people, that in carrying through their revolution, not a single personal injury was inflicted. Having rid themselves of the Grimaldis, the communes of Monaco, Roccabruna, and Mentone declared their political independence, in which condition, and unmolested, they remained for twelve years. During this period they did much to restore general concord and prosperity, and it was at this time that some improvements were effected in the various towns. Florestan died in 1856, an

event which provoked no public manifestation in favour of the family. Circumstances had already made it obvious that the communes would need to unite themselves permanently either with Sardinia or France. On this point there were protracted negotiations, judiciously conducted by a patriotic citizen of Mentone, Carlo Trenca, who had been a moving spirit in promoting the revolution and preventing public excesses. Trenca died in the course of these public duties. Matters were at length matured, and in April 1860 the people were left to vote whether they would belong to Sardinia or France. The choice of the majority was wisely for France; for by this means the country was incorporated with a nation which, while advancing its material prosperity, could secure its internal peace, and protect it against aggression. Charles III., the son and heir of Florestan, protested against the union. At last, on the 2d of February 1861, he agreed to a treaty, by which he ceded all his rights and privileges over Roccabruna and Mentone for the sum of four million francs, reserving only his sovereignty over Monaco under French protection.

Since 1861, accordingly, Mentone has in all respects been part and parcel of France, and participated in its national progress. Monaco alone, consisting of a patch of territory extending three and a half miles along the coast, by a width at broadest of one mile, remains a petty dependent sovereignty under Charles III., who lives part of the year at Paris, and at other times in his palace in the town of Monaco. His son and heir-apparent, Charles-Honore, born in 1848, was recently married to a daughter of the late Duke of Hamilton.

Since it was attached to France, Mentone, with some ground in its neighbourhood, has been a commune of the Alpes Maritimes, with a mayor and council for its local administration. So smoothly are its civic affairs conducted, that one hears little

or nothing of them. There is a Hôtel de Ville, but it is by no means of an obtrusive character. It is comprehended in the upper floor of a building in a lane which ascends from the main street towards the cemetery. Adjoining is the office of the police, an establishment of a very limited nature. The annual municipal revenue is 120,000 francs, derived principally from an octroi, or petty duties on articles of consumption brought into the town; and the expenditure, including outlay on schools and hospitals, is the same amount. The settled population of Mentone is 6000. Besides the few sergents de ville who act as street police, there is a small body of Gendarmerie Impériale, members of which may be seen lounging about in military costume, but ready to mount and be off on any mission appropriate to their functions. Though situated on the frontier, Mentone has no garrison worth mentioning. The only soldiers observable are a single company of one of the regiments of the line, exhilarated in their marching by three drummers and a trumpeter. To the credit of the French army, the soldiers when off duty conduct themselves with great propriety. They may be seen reading on the seats in the public promenades, or taking a walk in groups amidst the rural scenery, circumstances which may be thought to speak well for their character.

CHAPTER III.

THE railway from Nice to Mentone, forming part of the line from Paris and Marseilles, terminates at the frontier, where it is to be united to the line from Genoa. The Italian portion, however, is in a very backward condition, and to all appearance years may elapse before it is completed; on which account many travellers for Genoa do not trouble themselves with the railway so far as it is made, but hire carriages and horses at Nice for the whole journey. Vehicles with two, four, or sometimes five horses are seen daily passing southwards through Mentone. The railway does credit to its constructers. Piercing Cap Martin by a tunnel, it crosses the several valleys by bridges, holding close by the hills behind the town. The station, situated on the right bank of the Carei, and reached by the Route de Turin, is about a quarter of a mile northwards from the main street. Omnibuses in connection with several hotels, likewise an omnibus for the general service of the town, and the diligence for Genoa, attend the arrival of the trains. Visitors designing to remain for the season can have no difficulty in getting apartments in any of the hotels having omnibuses, until they look about them and make a choice of a dwelling.

To help them in their selection, a few general observations may be offered. Mentone, as has been shewn, is a town in two divisions, locally known as the East and West Bays. The

first thing, accordingly, for a stranger to do is to make up his mind in which he prefers to reside. The two bays are very different in character from each other. The East—that which is farthest away on arriving from Nice—is reputedly the warmest, and best adapted for invalids with pulmonary or bronchial affections. Sheltered on the west by the projecting hill on which the old town is built, and on the east by Cap Murtola, and closely overhung on the north by the mountains, it is, I believe, the most sunny warm nook in the whole Riviera. So completely is it enclosed that there is only space in front for the roadway from the Quai Bonaparte. The hilly ground in the rear, clothed in olive, orange, and lemon trees, is intersected by the small and not very accessible valley of Garavan, which imparts its name to the quarter. Far up, on the bare acclivities, are seen gray, sun-dried cottages, though who live in them, or how they are reached, no one can understand. Near at hand, on the lofty cliffs to the east, is the Corniche road, pursuing its way by the Pont St Louis.

Latterly, to meet the demand for accommodation in this choice quarter, a number of houses of various kinds have been erected towards the ravine of St Louis, and it seems likely that every available site will ere long be occupied with dwellings of a class suitable for visitors. Singularly favoured in various respects, the East Bay is not without some drawbacks. If the weather be warm, the locality may be found too close, and the mosquitoes somewhat troublesome. To go into and return from town, pedestrians have to pass through a cold windy gorge at the end of the main street, and the walk by the Quai is not pleasant. The greatest defect is the want of a good public promenade near the sea-margin. No doubt visitors can hire a carriage, or they can take the omnibus which plies to and from the western extremity of the town, and so reach promenades to

their liking; but all that causes trouble, and one prefers to saunter out at odd times for air and recreation when a pleasant promenade is readily at hand. This deficiency is said to be in course of remedy by the formation of a level stretch along the beach, but when it will be completed is uncertain. With all its drawbacks and limitations, there is much to fascinate in the East Bay, so quiet, so sunny is it; and the mind carries away recollections of the pretty shrubberies in front of one or two of the hotels, where, in mid-winter, you see parties seated under the elegantly drooping foliage of the pepper-tree, as if enjoying a cool shade in the heats of summer. To live at this spot is truly to winter with the swallows, for there, when the season is propitious, they resort, as if aware that in going farther they would find few such haunts, till they reach the neighbourhood of the Pyramids.

The West Bay, if less sheltered, is more spacious and airy. Living in it, you are more in the world—near the shops, cab-stand, railway-station, reading-room and library, new English church, post-office, Promenade du Midi, and all the walks and rides in the lateral valleys. I should say that this quarter is most suitable for mere health-loungers—those who seek for recreation in open air and exercise. With a south-eastern or south-western exposure, it is sunny enough for all ordinary requirements, and is chosen by many invalids for its amenities, as is observable from the number of persons who are drawn along the Promenade in Bath-chairs, courting health from the sea-breezes, tempered by the brilliant sunshine. In the West Bay, beginning at Carnolles, and extending to the centre of the town, there are numerous hotels, some pleasantly situated, so as to overlook the Promenade, and others at the base of the rising grounds. Here, also, are a variety of villas for hire, and a number of houses specially called *pensions*, the distinction

between which and hotels is not very clear, so far as concerns the residence of strangers for the season. In all the hotels, possibly with one or two exceptions, there is a practice of receiving guests *en pension*—that is to say, they give board and lodging at so much per day. Whether designated hotels or pensions, these establishments are for the most part on a scale of considerable magnitude.

At these establishments no introduction is necessary. All are received on an equality, no matter what be the nationality or rank in life. Some houses are resorted to more by German or French visitors than others, while some are preferred by English and Americans. The charge per day for each person is usually from ten to twelve francs. For this sum you have a small bedroom, fit for only one person, breakfast, luncheon, and dinner, with generally the use of a public drawing-room. Candles, firewood, and service are paid for separately. The object seems to be to let as many bedrooms, and as few salons or private sitting-rooms, as possible; at all events, the charge is made so high for a salon, that comparatively few indulge in that luxury. The French way of living is adopted. The meals are served to the guests in the *salle à manger;* but in the case of breakfast, guests may ordinarily choose their own hour. In fact, the breakfast, *petit déjeûner*, is a trifle, something to carry you on till noon, and consists only of tea or coffee with bread and butter. Luncheon at twelve is the *déjeûner* proper, and is styled the *déjeûner à la fourchette.* It is in reality a dinner with different hot meats and omelettes, but without soup or dessert. Half a bottle of *vin ordinaire* is allowed to each person. Dinner, the great meal of the day, takes place at six o'clock. This is the well-known *table-d'hôte*, set out in good style. There is the same allowance of vin ordinaire as at noon, but other wines are supplied to order.

Under the pension system no tea is given in the evening. After dinner, some go to their bedrooms, others to the drawing-room, for the sake of music or conversation, or to look over a few old newspapers, for want of anything better to do. The drawing-room is usually styled a *salon de lecture*, because it is presumedly a reading-room. A tattered *Galignani*, a week old, lying on the table, will constitute the room a salon de lecture. This mode of living in public may be amusing to those who do not object to racket and noisy talk in several languages. My own experiences have not been very successful, particularly as regards the drawing-rooms or sham salons de lecture, where usually some young lady, with long hair hanging down her back, has, by her frantic performances on the piano, banished everything like quietude and comfort. What with one charge or another, the cost of living *en pension* at Mentone is rarely under a hundred francs, or four pounds, for each person per week. In very many cases it will amount to five pounds. Preferring to occupy a private salon, I submitted to a higher charge. Last season, I procured a salon and two bedrooms on the first floor at a hotel overlooking the Promenade at a charge of 105 francs, and for meals served privately 119 francs, for two persons per week. A charge of 10½ francs was made for service. Wine, fuel, and lights were paid for in addition. The sum-total was usually about 267 francs, or £10, 14s. per week. These charges were lower than I had paid the previous year at another hotel, but I do not scruple to say they were exorbitant, for the *logement* and *nourriture* were not worth the money. Like all, however, who capriciously depart from the plan of eating and drinking in a crowd according to the routine of the establishment, I ought not perhaps to complain. The table-d'hôte system is unquestionably the cheapest, and also the best as regards variety of

dishes, wherefore comparatively few attempt the method of taking meals in their own apartment.

In appearance, the hotels and pensions of Mentone are well built and substantial, with usually a coating of cement or paint of a light colour. All the stairs are stone—in one or two instances marble. The floors are laid with tiles, covered with carpets; the furniture good. The rooms are arranged in rows along each side of the passages, and communicate with each other. In one point of view, this is a convenient arrangement, for it allows any one to occupy two or more apartments *en suite;* but against it there is the objection that you are separated possibly from noisy neighbours only by a thin and imperfectly constructed door (of two leaves); and it is impossible by any precaution to avert this contingency, for there is a frequent shifting of visitors. A little annoyed by the vivacity of some neighbours who spoke in German at about the pitch of their voice, we tried to deaden the sound by hanging up a railway wrapper over the doorway. For such imperfect arrangements the hotels of Mentone are not singular. The same thing prevails at Nice, where, on one occasion, we had to vacate our rooms in consequence of a lady and gentleman taking lessons in singing in the next apartment—the pair going through the gamut for hours, one in a shrill treble, the other in a deep bass voice, and both of course regardless of the noise they created, or the inconvenience to which they were putting their neighbours. There is another structural imperfection which may be experienced in some of the Mentone hotels. It consists in the fire-places being placed in the outer wall so near the connecting doors, as not to admit of a party sitting around them in the English fashion. Besides being awkwardly placed, the fire-places are not furnished with grates for burning coal. On the occurrence of a stretch of cold weather, the want of coal-grates

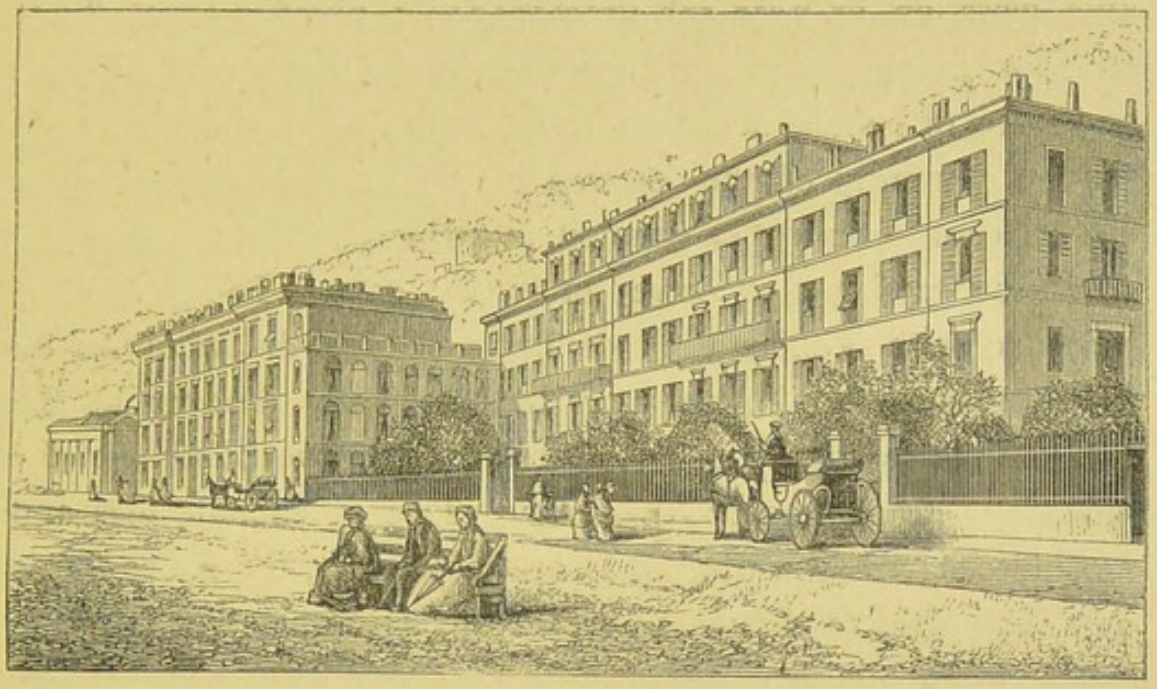
is felt to be a serious defect, for the heat derived from burning wood is very insufficient. The fuel ordinarily supplied consists of billets of old olive and fig trees, two and a half francs being charged for a basket which will last a day. I have known persons who used two baskets in a day, or upwards of four shillings' worth of wood. As a kind of favour, during the coldest part of the season, we were, for a fair consideration, indulged with some pieces of coal to mix with the wood on the hearth, and in this way contrived to strengthen the blaze a little.

A few words may be offered respecting the situation of the principal hotels, beginning at the western entrance to the town. The Hôtel du Pavillon, on right, at Carnolles; well managed, with a small salon de lecture; back overlooks the sea; rather distant from the town, and the roads dirty in bad weather, but situation otherwise pleasant. Hôtel Splendide, on left after crossing the Borigo; an elegant new house facing the south; has an outlook to the sea, but this may be interrupted if buildings be placed on an open piece of ground which is at present offered for sale. Hôtel de Londres, a smaller house on same side of the road a little farther on, good, but partially overshadowed by buildings on south side of the road. Hôtel de Turin on right, with windows to the south overlooking the Promenade; consists of two houses, one being styled the Annèxe, but there is a connection between the two by a covered passage; no salon de lecture, although one of the French guide-books says there is; only a salle à manger, salons, and bedrooms; clean; good service; convenient by means of a back entrance from Promenade; but the noise of the sea troublesome. Hôtel du Parc, a short way up the Route de Turin; new; overlooks the Carei, but seems much darkened by rows of tall plane trees. Hôtels du Louvre and Beau Séjour, at base of hills, facing the south,

with orange gardens in front, reached by the road on left bank of the Carei, also by cross-road from main street, and situated near the town; good, and away from noise of the sea; well adapted for invalids; resorted to by Germans and French; the railway, after crossing the Carei, is carried near the back of these houses. Hôtel de la Méditerranée, on left or north side of main street, good, and used by strangers passing through the town; opposite is a short lane conducting to the Promenade; as the situation is central, it would be found convenient to reside in this hotel until permanent quarters were secured. Hôtel d'Orient, new, situated back from north side of main street near the Cercle; a southern exposure, but shut out from view of sea. Grand Hôtel de Victoria, a very large splendid house, frequented by aristocracy, on right or south side of the street; back windows overlook the sea; and a back entrance communicates with the Promenade; this house has a lift for benefit of residents on the higher floors. Hôtel de Paris, same side of the street; best known for its café, billiard-rooms, and restaurant. Hôtel du Midi fronts the Promenade, which alone separates it from the beach; noise of sea troublesome. Hôtel d'Angleterre, formerly called Hôtel de Turin, fronts Place Napoléon, where travelling carriages arrive and are for hire; back windows with a broad balcony overlook the sea. In this hotel, which is at the heart of the town, a lady friend resided during the winter of 1862–63, and greatly enjoyed a seat on the balcony, the fine season completely remedying a throat complaint. Since that period, the environs of the house on the side next the sea appear to have deteriorated, being not only dirty, but noisy, from crowds of boys who frequent the place for outdoor sports.

The foregoing are the principal hotels in the West Bay, and besides them I may instance the pensions Hemmelmann,

Camous, Miramar, and Bournabat, overlooking the Promenade, and Imberti, prettily situated in a garden on left bank of the Borigo. In the East Bay, the hotels standing in a row near each other, and generally spacious and elegant, are as follow: Hôtel de la Grande Brétagne; Grand Hôtel de la Paix; Hôtel des Anglais, frequented by English and Americans (here reside



Hotels in the East Bay.

during the season, Dr J. H. Bennet, and Dr J. Martin, a skilled English dentist); Hôtel des Iles Britannique; Grand Hôtel. All these, and there may be one or two others, also some pensions, are on the level ground, entering from the roadway, and having a southern exposure to the sea. There is a detached hotel, Hôtel d'Italie, with a good outlook, situated on the hill above, reached by a flight of steps and sloping drive; the landlady is English; the only objection to this house is the difficulty of getting up and down.

As regards detached villas ready furnished for hire, there is a good choice in the early part of the season, at rents ranging from fifteen hundred to five thousand francs. Those

occupying them will either have to bring servants with them or hire them on the spot. Some superior residences of this kind are situated at Carnolles. One of them in this quarter, quite palatial in character, is the mansion which belonged to the Prince of Monaco previous to his expulsion from the commune. There are several villas of a respectable class on or near the Promenade; a number equal, if not superior, in appearance are situated in the valley of the Carei; and some of tasteful architecture have just been erected at the farther extremity of the Eastern Bay. In general, the villas are handsome buildings situated in gardens, with gateways for admitting carriages to drive up to the door. The whole are provided with Venetian blinds hung outside the windows, by which means the houses may be effectually shut up at the close of the season. I observed that the windows of some of the villas have frames covered with fine gauze to exclude flies and mosquitoes; when a window is opened for air, the gauze frame takes the place of the glass; a most luxurious piece of furniture this. Some of the villas are provided with stables and coach-house. The common practice, however, is to hire carriages and horses from persons who make a business of lending them. A good carriage, either to open landau-fashion or to shut up, with driver and pair of horses, the whole turn-out in good style, may be hired at about 625 francs per month, for which sum everything is included. In a few instances, a villa comprehends two distinct dwellings, one in the lower and another in the upper floor, and having separate entrances. For the most part prettily furnished in the French style, the villas are not always well provided with water, nor is their system of drainage very perfect. The whole, I believe, like most of the hotels and pensions, depend on pump-wells, and with few exceptions the drainage is into cess-pools. Here we touch on two weak points

in the character of Mentone. I cannot say that I experienced any inconvenience from either; but things are certainly not what we should expect in a community which depends, to a great extent, on its colony of strangers.

Another class of dwellings for hire are floors ready furnished, reached by common stairs from the public thoroughfares. Houses so laid out in floors for separate families, are styled *Maisons*—as, for example, Maison Gastaldy, Maison Ribaud; being so called from the names of their respective proprietors. Some floors are divided into two dwellings; each dwelling is designated an *Appartement*, though consisting of several rooms with kitchen. Many of these floor dwellings are on a respectable scale; the rent for the season being from 800 to 2000 francs. Service is not given, and will require to be procured separately, as in the case of detached residences. An English family of my acquaintance hires a dwelling of this kind by the year, going and returning annually. Every year, at the proper season, the family arrives, bringing an English female domestic, to whom a native servant is added to complete the establishment. At the end of the season, the dwelling being locked up, is left to the care of the proprietor till it is again wanted. No plan of housekeeping can match this for independence and comfort. It is well suited for families who, for some special reason, require habitually to winter abroad.

There is still one other class of houses offered for hire, furnished. These are *Châlets*, or cottages of moderate dimensions, situated amidst orange and olive groves on the sides of the hills, but to which access is obtained only by winding pathways fit for pedestrians, or for donkeys with panniers to bring all necessary provisions. Persons who have a fancy for ruralising amidst very charming scenery, could find nothing more suitable than a residence in these secluded

spots. Water, I fear, will prove a difficulty, but that must be looked to.

When several members of a family have to be accommodated, I would recommend a hired dwelling of some sort, be it a villa, a floor, or a châlet, not only for the sake of economy, but for that degree of peace and comfort which is not obtainable even in the best-managed hotel or pension. In the furniture of houses let for hire, napery and plated articles for the table are included, and it may lessen anxiety to know that dinners ready cooked are sent out to order from certain hotels. A confectioner and *pâtissier* may be applied to for a like purpose. There is a keen competition in the profession of the *blanchisseuse*. For those residing in hired dwellings, the town is well provided with shops where all things necessary can be procured, which was not the case only a few years ago; and there is also a market daily for eggs, poultry, vegetables, and other articles.

The building and furnishing of houses for hire is evidently a great trade in Mentone. It is a method of employing capital which, being thought safe, appears to commend itself to French notions. Men of considerable wealth, who make little show, embark in it. *Propriétaires* owning villas of an elegant and costly kind, which from their fortune they would be entitled to reside in, may be heard of as living in an obscure and economic way in the town. Houses for hire of all kinds are for the most part let by commission-agents, who have lists for inspection. Strangers who propose to rent such dwellings, will find it to their advantage to seek the advice and assistance of Mr T. Willoughby, a well-known English grocer and wine-merchant settled in the town, who carries on a business as a house and estate agent, and looks personally after the condition of every dwelling with which he is concerned. To facilitate this species of business, he prints a list of houses and apartments

for hire, with a plan of the town shewing where each is situated. He gives a copy of this useful pamphlet, which is printed in English, along with all requisite information, gratis. All English-speaking visitors know Willoughby, who may be considered to be a kind of commercial adviser-general, and ready on all occasions to help his countrymen.

The season is said to begin on the 25th October, and terminate on the 25th April, when the heat becomes inconvenient. I observed, however, that strangers have not fully arrived until the middle of December, and many depart at the beginning of March. Those who come first have of course the best choice of accommodation. According to a list published on the 1st of January 1870, there were 215 English, 41 Americans, 116 Germans, 13 Belgians, 12 Danes and Swedes, 98 French, 21 Dutch, 46 Russians and Poles, and 20 of other nations—total, 582. But as a very large number of the entries in the list were of husband and wife, or of families and suite, we cannot estimate the whole at fewer than twelve hundred adults, and it would be a moderate calculation to set down their aggregate expenditure during the season at less than £200,000.

There were few with whom I conversed who did not complain of the charges of the hotel-keepers: one lady was quite excited on the subject, speaking of the exactions for fuel, lights, and service as something shameful. High charges are certainly more the rule than the exception, and may in the fluctuations of fashion help to drive visitors elsewhere. Nice, however, and other resorts in this quarter, are as dear as Mentone. The hotel-keepers are not without a plausible excuse. They pay high rents; they have to maintain an expensive establishment; their harvest of visitors lasts only six months; two or three bad seasons in succession might finish them. There is truth in this apology, but I would counsel them not to rely too greatly upon

it. They may with advantage take into consideration the possibility of lowering the sum-total of their weekly bills. Rivals have entered the field. The people of San Remo, as if awakening from a trance, are making a push for a share of the visitor traffic; and if they render their town attractive by establishing a good promenade along the sea-margin, and by carrying out sundry other improvements to meet the fancy of visitors, they may seriously affect the hotel-keepers as well as the *propriétaires* of every French winter-resort. It may be years, as I have said, before the railway is opened beyond Mentone (for Italy is in a sad state of impecuniosity, or, more correctly, is suffering from a bad administrative system, along with a want of credit), but there can be no doubt that the railway will be completed as far as San Remo some time or other; and when this event occurs, Cannes, Nice, and Mentone may look for a degree of competition in their staple dependence which at present they do not experience. They had better begin revising their tariff.

It will be understood from the foregoing explanations, that furnished lodgings, in the English sense of the term, do not exist at Mentone. There are no houses in which you can hire one or two apartments by the week, and be waited on by the servants of the keeper. That plan of living is not according to French usage. The tickets hung out of *Appartement Meublé*, signify a furnished suite of rooms without service, and where the dwellers are left to their own resources. Those who wish to be free of the trouble of independent housekeeping, go into a pension, which suits the gregariousness of the French character. Many English will feel this deficiency to be an inconvenience. It often passed through my mind, that lodging-houses on the English system would answer, and more particularly if that peculiar species of lodging-house which prevails at Brighton were introduced. There, the lodging-houses called 'Mansions'

—as, for example, the Belvidere Mansion—are ready to let apartments and supply food and service at so much a day, each lodger being served in his own apartment, if he pleases; or they will allow lodgers to purchase what they require for themselves. Nowhere, in all my ramblings, have I found any lodging-house system so thoroughly convenient and agreeable as this, and it would be a great recommendation to Mentone if it had something of the kind which we could point to.

I may offer another remark. *Propriétaires* at Mentone confine their building speculations too exclusively to detached and costly villas, and to tall houses in the main street. Visitors who wish to hire dwellings do not all incline to pay a high rent for a villa, or to live over shops and have windows looking into a dusty street, noisy with traffic. Many would prefer, if it could be got, a house in a connected row, in a sheltered and retired situation, with a southern exposure—such as may be obtained in one of the crescents at Bath, or the famed *Lung' Arno* at Pisa. Instead of setting down villas in all sorts of odd spots, some facing this way and some that, and often one over-shadowing and interrupting the view of another, how much better would it be for *propriétaires* to unite, if at all possible, in erecting a score of houses not too high, on the plan of a crescent, in some choice situation, and which houses, while commodious as dwellings, would be hailed as a tranquil and sunny refuge for invalids.

CHAPTER IV.

SOMETHING may now be specially said of the climate of Mentone, which as yet is its sole attraction. The charm of the place is its fine air, sunshine, and shelter during the winter months, and for these advantages some petty annoyances may be endured. What will not any one rationally disposed give for health, or a protraction of existence? A journey of several days, much expense, an absence of months from home and from valued friends, possibly professional inconvenience—what is all that when weighed in the balance against a means of extending one's length of days, and making life a pleasure instead of a constant pain and anxiety! Change of air and scene is in itself a good thing, as is universally acknowledged; but doubly beneficial to the jaded and the enfeebled by functional derangement is the substitution of a mild and exhilarating for an inclement, humid, and depressing winter.

Evidently, large numbers do not need to be stimulated to winter in the more sunny regions of the south of France. At several places, the accommodation offered is barely sufficient for the demand. The crowd of emigrants is of a very varied character. Fashion, ennui, and love of gaiety seem to send quite as many abroad as absolutely bad health. The greater proportion of persons, old and young, whom you see frequenting the promenades, and driving about in open pony phaetons, have nothing apparently the matter with them. Many of them,

doubtless, have come abroad for a bit of fun, for personal exhibition in a new field, or on some other frivolous ground, satisfactory to their own conscience. It is at all events certain that if weakened by bodily infirmity, they act as if it were otherwise, disregarding alike the laws of health and the counsels which are offered regarding the peculiar winter climate of the Riviera.

To a stranger from a northern region, the striking thing about the climate is, that during the day, while the sun brilliantly shines, there is a feeling of, and a resemblance to, a fine autumn—say the heat of an English September; but no sooner does the sun disappear below the Mediterranean, than we are back in a minute to our old accustomed wintry sensations. Why the atmosphere does not retain the heat imparted by the sun's rays is perfectly obvious. The air is so dry and thin that there is little medium for retaining the warmth, and the heat generated escapes in the clear sky overhead. What we have to expect, therefore, by a winter sojourn in Mentone, is a species of summer while in the direct rays of the sun, during daylight; and it is our own blame if we suffer by neglecting the precautions suggested by the chills which settle down immediately after sunset. It is, however, to be borne in mind, that the cold of evening and night is only comparative. In an atmosphere so rarefied, a temperature of 40° to 60° Fahr. feels more chilly than the same degree of cold in Great Britain. The feelings and discreet apprehensions are a better warning than a recollection of temperature according to the scale of the thermometer. In the shade during the day there is a sensation of bleakness, approaching to that felt at night. Accordingly, to secure the full benefit of the climate, it is indispensable to have rooms with less or more of a southern exposure. No temptation of cheapness must induce the health-seeker to occupy apartments

facing the north, or under the shadow of buildings which exclude the glow of sunshine. The sun rises earlier and sets later at Mentone during winter than it does in England, a circumstance favourable to invalids and outdoor promenaders.

If the weather be good, the sunshine from half-past ten to half-past three o'clock is delicious, and with the clear sky all nature is joyous. Sometimes the rays of the sun are so inconvenient, that many persons walk about under the shelter of white cotton parasols lined with blue or green, and with hats shrouded in white gauze. It is during such warmth that the visitors pour forth to ramble along the Promenade, and make short excursions on foot or on donkeys, or drive about in open carriages. Those who prefer to remain within doors, throw the windows open from floor to ceiling, and so far enjoy the pleasures of fresh air. The fire, if lit in the morning, is at these times allowed to die out, and the inmates have the satisfaction of depending exclusively on the wholesome warmth of the sun. To derive as much benefit as possible from the open air without bodily exertion, loungers seat themselves on benches (with backs) commodiously placed for public use on the Promenade, near the margin of the sea, the surging of which on the shingle diffuses saline particles in the atmosphere advantageous to some classes of invalids.

Dr Siordet, an English medical practitioner who has been resident on the spot for several years, mentions in his small work, *Mentone in its Medical Aspect* (1863), that the 'small daily range of temperature is one of the most important features of Mentone.' He instances the greatest for two years as being 15°·5 Fahr., and that in another year it was 23°; also stating that the range was least in the colder months. In the tables which he quotes, the mean temperature of the winter months for ten years was as follows: November, 54°; December, 49°;

January, 48°·75; February, 49°; March, 52°·9. During my stay on both occasions I hung up a thermometer outside one of the windows, with a southern exposure, but shaded from the sun, and recorded its indications twice daily, at eight o'clock morning, and three o'clock afternoon, and these pretty much corresponded with Dr Siordet's tables. Frequently, the temperature ranged from about 40° in the morning to 60° or 65° at from noon to three o'clock. In November and December the temperature in the morning was often 58°, and beyond this it did not rise if the day became overclouded. In our bedrooms without a fire, the temperature in the mornings, on rising, between seven and eight o'clock, ranged throughout the winter at from 50° to 60°—commonly at about 54°. With these generally favourable features in the climate, it has to be emphatically stated that there are great differences of weather in different winters. The season of 1868–69 was immensely superior to that of 1869–70, but so was it everywhere throughout Europe, also on the northern coast of Africa, and at Malta. Though well sheltered from the northern blasts, Mentone lies invitingly open to winds from the south, south-east, and south-west, and these can be cold enough when the Atlantic is encumbered with icebergs, or when other causes of atmospheric disturbance greatly lower the temperature of the European continent and African coast.

While the vegetation of the district is a proof that the summers are hot, and the winters on the whole mild, it is indisputable that the mildness is sometimes broken in upon by days and weeks of cold weather, in which few visitors, with any regard to health, venture out. At the close of 1868 and beginning of 1869, the weather was beautiful; the *jour de l'an* as fine as could be desired, and the thoroughfares crowded with holiday-makers. Let us contrast this state of things with the

weather twelve months afterwards. I quote from my note-book.

'*Dec.* 21. Dull, overcast, bitterly cold wind; temp. 54°–55°.—*Dec.* 22. There has been a stormy night; sea tempestuous, has destroyed tramway on the beach; morning dull; the Promenade flooded with sea-water; temp. 53°–56°; snow on tops of the mountains.—*Dec.* 23. Fine; temp. 53°–65°; many people out looking at the havoc on the beach.—*Dec.* 24. Fine; temp. 52°–62°.—*Dec.* 25. Dull, cold; temp. 50°–56°; a dismal Christmas Day; few people out; attempted a walk to the Quai Bonaparte, but driven back by a cold stream of air down the street.—*Dec.* 26. Dull, overcast, very cold; temp. 43°–41°; could not venture out on account of the cold wind.—*Dec.* 27. Dull, overcast, very cold; temp. same as yesterday; did not go out.—*Dec.* 28. Clear but cold, with wind from south-east; mountain-tops white with snow; walked out, and saw ice half an inch thick on pools in the Borigo and Carei; temp. 40°–43°; am told that the temperature during the night has been down to 26°.—*Dec.* 29. Clear and fine, but a cold wind; temp. 40°–63°; children breaking the ice on the pools, and carrying pieces away.—*Dec.* 30. Cold but fine; ice still on pools; temp. 42°–43°.—*Dec.* 31. Clear and fine; sun melting the ice; temp. 45°–55°.—*Jan.* 1, 1870. Dull, cold, overcast, showers; temp. 39°–47°; minimum temp. by a registering thermometer, north side of house, said to have been 34°·5; a miserable *jour de l'an* for the poor people; few out holiday-making; stalls of books and toys, and a show of a fat boy at east end of Promenade, shut up for want of customers; knife-grinder in disgust has left his wheel in the rain, and retired for consolation to a neighbouring Débit de Vin.' The extracts need not be continued.

For about a fortnight after New-year's Day the weather was

tolerable; then it became cold and frequently wet, until we left Mentone, at the middle of February, to conclude the season at Nice. If we could have had proper fires, the cold would have been of no account, for I walked about almost daily, and sometimes made excursions; the torment consisted in keeping up a sufficient degree of warmth while confined to the house. The season was indisputably an impeachment of the reputed climate of Mentone. The natives, who consider the district a sort of earthly paradise, were much discomfited—the shopkeepers in despair. The carriages which used to be open were sometimes seen shut up as closely as if they had been driving up Regent Street. The keeper of our hotel (an aged Italian with ear-rings) vehemently declared that he had never known such bad weather in all his experience—'*Jamais, jamais, jamais!*'

Our only resource in the cold weather were the wood fires, feebly supplemented by bits of coal. By all our expedients we could not raise the temperature of our salon above 63°; the *sensation* of cold being several degrees below that point. My fingers were at times too cold to write, and we were fain to sit with hands and feet close to the imperfect fire, which it required some dexterity to manage; for any awkwardness with the tongs, which are mechanically on the sugar-tongs principle, might have laid the whole in ruin. Yet from these brushes of cold we suffered no ill effects. There was inconvenience, but not injury. Cold days now and then, even to the extent of benumbing the fingers, do no great harm. What kills in England is protracted cold, accompanied with damp and a thick atmosphere. We experienced no fogs; the air was comparatively light and dry—so dry as to have a visible effect on the skin, and to suggest that there was a more than usual exhalation from the system. The snow and mists never descended below the tops of the distant mountains. The hills

and gardens remained green. The only damage to vegetation was the blight of exposed exterior branches of some of the lemon, orange, and other trees. At Nice, as I afterwards observed, there were similar marks of injury. The frost had not been general. The low temperature of 32°, or under, occurred principally in the openings of the valleys, where the pools were operated on by currents of cold air. Had the frost been severe and extended over the district, the lemon and citron trees, which are peculiarly delicate, must have perished. Mingled with the troublesomely cold and wet weather there were fine June-like days, when all was joyous, as befitted the ordinary character of a southern winter. What we endured from the intermittent cold of the season of 1869–70 was not for a moment to be compared to what was experienced at home. And this is the way to estimate a wintering at Mentone. We have to think not so much of what we have enjoyed, as what we have escaped.

Visitors are apt to make mistakes regarding the climate of Mentone. Expecting too much from it, they neglect the precautions which are necessary. Dr J. H. Bennet, the principal authority on the climate, says: 'It should never be forgotten that in winter the heat is sun-heat, and that the air, barring its influence, is usually cold. Warm clothes and woollen outer garments should be used.' Dr Siordet says on the same subject: 'Too much stress has, perhaps, been laid on the excellence of the climate of Mentone, and the expectations of visitors have thereby been unduly raised. No greater mistake could be made than to expect here perpetual sunshine and a perfectly equable temperature; a certain number of rainy days do occur, as my weather-table shews; a moderate amount of cold must be anticipated and provided for.'

Dr Edwin Lee in his *Notice of Mentone* (1862) is less explicit

on this point. Speaking of the infrequency of frost, he says: 'According to the account of an influential resident (M. de Montleon), it appears that during twenty-seven years the thermometer descended only three times below the freezing-point (in three successive winters).' No one can doubt that so low a temperature as 32° is rarely reached. I have never seen it below 39°. But what visitors have to contend with is not a particularly low degree of cold according to the thermometer, but an occasional chilliness and wintry feeling, for which warm clothing is necessary in the open air, and a good fire becomes desirable within doors.

The cold which is endured at times in a sitting-room may not be injurious to health, but it is exceedingly unpleasant, and greatly poisons the enjoyment of a wintering in the south. It may look like a heresy to speak with disrespect of wood fires. They answer well enough for a short time in the morning and evening; but are a poor expedient in days successively cold, wet, and boisterous. Movable grates with coal fires should therefore be supplied when wanted on occasions of this kind. It is perhaps too much to expect that hotel and pension keepers will voluntarily remedy the deficiency. They have a superstitious veneration for wood fires, and regard with traditional complacency the practice of supplying *paniers de bois* at 2·50—the more the merrier, so far as their feelings are concerned. Cold weather is to them the opening of a brisk trade in timber. French visitors who do not know much about coal, and perhaps have a hatred of it, submit without murmuring to these venerable usages. The English, as it may be supposed, have their growl, and look on the whole thing as a downright imposition. It will not surprise me, therefore, to hear that the 2·50 usage gets into disrepute. On calling to see some acquaintances at the Hôtel du Pavillon on what happened to be a cold day, I found

a coal fire of proper proportions in the salon de lecture, which I accepted as a step in the right direction. As regards those who wish to hire ready-furnished residences, they have the remedy in their own hands. I would recommend them to procure a few movable small fire-grates. If they cannot be procured on the spot (regarding which Willoughby may be consulted), they may be had from Paris. There is a store for the supply of such things under the arcade in front of the Palais-Royal. Coal is imported into Mentone, and can be had in any quantity. It is not Wallsend, but it will do.

CHAPTER V.

IN a few things the French are a little behind. They have established no uniform national time. The railways keep Paris time, which may be learned from a clock exhibited at every station; but provincial towns have all their own time, and that is somewhat distracting. At Nice, the hotel and post-office clocks shew both Paris and local time. At Mentone, time is in a chaotic condition. Some few years ago, according to a floating tradition, an English clergyman in the town who was punctilious about time, possessed a watch which was reckoned so great an authority that people thankfully set their pendules by it. Since this public-spirited individual quitted the place, time has become disorganised, and as no one can tell the hour precisely, you may happen to be too soon or too late at church or at any appointed place of meeting. No doubt a horologer who deals in jewellery and mosaics has a clock swinging in his window inviting the confidence of passengers, and over the entrance of the *Eglise Evangélique* there is a clock of respectable appearance, but I never put much faith in their indications.

The want of a good well-accredited town clock is only one of many wants in Mentone, of which something severe could be said. Let us, however, be gentle and considerate. It is easy saying 'they' should do this, and 'they' should do that, but

where are 'they' to get the money to do all these fine things? Any one who has been at the helm of civic affairs knows that scarcely a day passes without the receipt of letters patriotically pointing out great public works which should be undertaken for the good of mankind, but never giving the slightest hint where the money is to come from to execute them. It is an unfortunate thing that everywhere money is in such urgent requisition, yet so it is. Mentone is in the position of needing a good deal, in which respect it resembles a man of small capital newly set up in business with great possibilities of prosperity. We have seen something of its history. It is an old, very old town, and should by this time have attained a decent maturity. But think of what it has come through—held down, starved, taxed, cudgelled, and brutalised by that 'noble Genoese' family which so long maintained sway over it; think of the difficulty it had to get rid of these rulers; how sore were its trials until it was taken in hand by the great and gallant nation with which its fate is now associated; and how short a time has elapsed since it found itself famous as a winter resort, with obligations imposed on it which it had no means adequately to discharge. A consequence of this unforeseen celebrity was that land suddenly rose to ten or twenty times its former value. Capitalists, local and cosmopolitan, made a rush to build villas, hotels, pensions, and houses with shops, without any concerted plan. With the old town clustering on a height like a bee-hive, nothing could be done. The new edifices spread themselves westwards, eastwards, anywhere—the only thing that kept them from falling into utter disorder being the obligation not to encroach on the great Corniche road, or on the cross-way called the Route de Turin.

In the scramble for sites, all kinds of mean selfishness came vivaciously into play. Enormous prices were sought for the merest scraps of ground. The rules of inheritance also stood in

the way. In and about Mentone it is not uncommon for several members of a family to own a house, a garden, or even a single olive-tree. An inheritance may consist of but one or two branches. Petty and complicated heritages of this kind are not easily dealt with. At any offer to purchase, the proverbial *pretium affectionis* undergoes a marvellous development. Attempts to effect improvements on a sweeping scale are everywhere difficult without the potent statutory spell of 'compulsory powers;' here, from the divisional heritage system, they are scarcely practicable unless central despotic rule interposes. From one cause or another, the opportunity to lay out the newer part of Mentone on a symmetrical plan was lost. The most genial as well as most beautiful spot in the Riviera was architecturally spoiled. There was no attempt to construct buildings in harmony with the surrounding scenery—a too common fault everywhere, but especially to be lamented where Nature has been so prodigal of beauty. The most conspicuous instance of bad taste has been the setting down of a square box-like villa, painted a glowing buff colour, on the top of the pyramidal hill which lies between the valley of the Borigo and Carei. Go where you will, this eyesore stares you in the face —an offensive blotch in the midst of a glorious amphitheatre of gray picturesque mountains. Will the proprietor not take pity on strangers, and at least tone down the colour of his box? For a tint, he has only to look behind at the old château which crowns the heights of Ste Agnes.

It will take a week to see Nice. You may walk all over Mentone in a forenoon, and two or three days will make you fully acquainted with it. The long main street, named at one end the Rue Victor Emmanuel, and at the other the Rue St Michel, offers nothing to attract. In winter, the plane-trees, which line the roadway for a certain distance, are bare. On

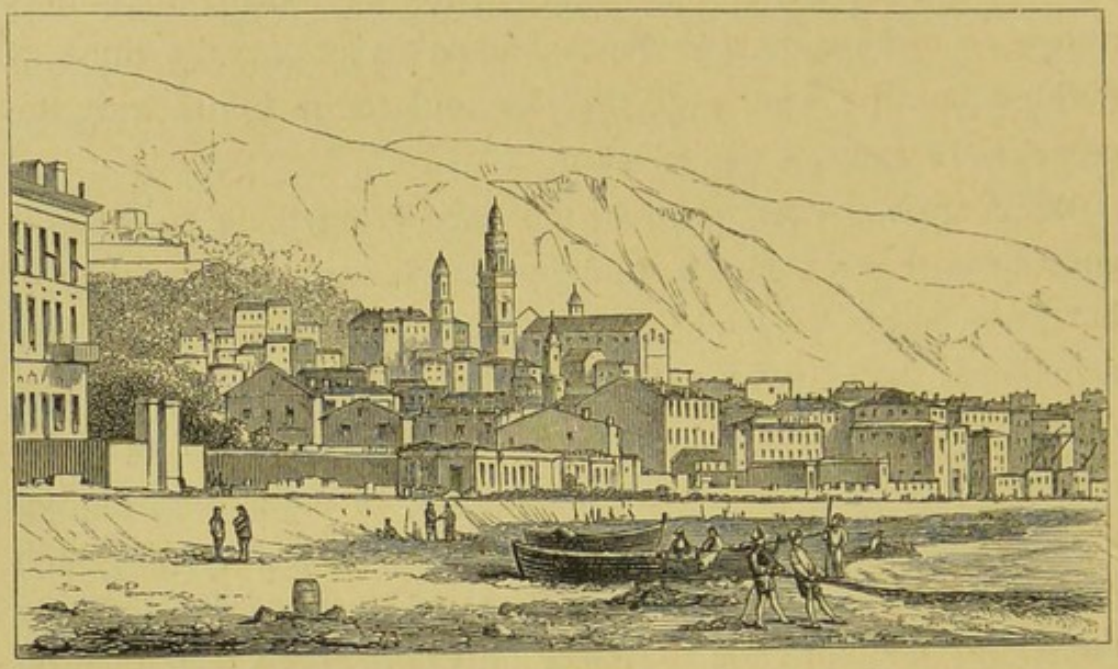
our arrival at the beginning of November, the leaves were falling, and encumbered the thoroughfare, until they were cleared away to be used for litter to horses and cattle. Some of the houses in the street are of a huge size; those on the south side throwing those of the north partially into the shade. The newer parts of the street are provided with side pavements; in the older parts towards the east, the buildings stand close to the roadway. Foot-passengers have accordingly to take their chance of being interrupted by carriages, but no other inconvenience is experienced, because here the street is laid from side to side with flat paving-stones, as at Genoa, Naples, and some other Italian cities. In the eastern or older division, the chief shops and other places of business, also public offices, are situated. Few of the shops make much display, and there is little regularity in their appearance; some with large, others with small windows. It would be unreasonable to expect in so small a town the variety of Nice. Yet there are evidences of progress. Those who visited Mentone seven years ago, could have purchased few of the delicacies which are in constant request by the English. Now, all that is changed. Wines, biscuits, pickles, sauces, preserved meats, and other odds and ends, are now supplied as profusely as at home. There are *tailleurs* and *tailleuses* ready for any equipment. You might be furnished with a Highland kilt if you wanted it. The town has a carnival in a small way. Previous to the beginning of Lent, when balls are in the ascendant, there is a glow of ladies' dresses spangled with gold, fancy costumes, masks, feathers, frippery, and artificial flowers in the shop-window of the Amarantes, whose well-known establishment comprehends a store of knick-knacks, where there is no difficulty in getting rid of money. Speaking of money, there are two banking-offices in the street, ready at a moment's notice to cash

your Bank of England or circular notes, at the Paris rate of exchange.

I should infer there is no police regulation to restrain shopkeepers from placing goods outside their doors. The side-paths, though often of scant width, are in sundry places occupied by stalls for the exhibition of miscellaneous articles—calicoes, fish, poultry, meal, flour, fruit, and vegetables, with glass cases of combs and cutlery. To all appearance, any one may set down a stall anywhere, commence to sell articles by auction, or draw a crowd about him as a tooth-extractor, or curer of corns. All goes on in public. The pedicurist, a well-dressed gentlemanly looking personage, takes his stand behind a table and chair. He lays out his instruments. Harangues the masses as to what he has done, and what he can do for them. He has cured the most inveterate corns in all the courts of Europe. He shews a string of eight gold medals given to him in gratitude by emperors, kings, queens, and princesses. He has been sent for to Moscow. He has cured corns in the Kremlin. He points exultingly to a large picture hung on a pole behind him, representing the members of a royal family, each with a bare foot on a richly embroidered cushion preparatory to be operated on, and all of whom he cured one after the other, not a vestige of corn remaining. And he is prepared this instant to cure the worst possible corn of any monsieur or mademoiselle present, *sans souffrance*—insists greatly on that—*oui, messieurs, sans souffrance; certainement sans souffrance*, for the insignificant charge of *cinquante centimes!* One can scarcely fail to be diverted with the volubility, the audacity, and the antics of these wandering charlatans, who remind us of characters inimitably touched off in the brilliant comedies of Molière.

A sea-side health resort without a promenade for loungers along

the beach can expect to do little good. What would Brighton have been without its Parades? The Promenade des Anglais has in a sense been the making of Nice. At Mentone, the working out the idea of a promenade was not thought of till it was too late to do the thing rightly on the Nicean principle. The villas and houses lining the south side of the main street were set down



Promenade du Midi, looking north-eastwards.

in such a way as not to leave a sufficiently commodious space next the sea, the view from which consists to a great extent of irregular outs and ins, and backs of dwellings of various heights. The blunder is irrecoverable. All that has been latterly effected is a Promenade about forty feet wide, retained by a sloping sea-wall, extending from the older part of the town on the east to the Borigo on the west, and forming an unbroken line except at the Carei, which foot-passengers cross by a wooden bridge. Styled the Promenade du Midi, because it faces the south, it is on the whole a creditable effort. It has been strongly represented that 'they' should extend the Promenade to Cap Martin, which is quite practicable, and certainly desirable, but

whether 'they'—or, to speak more plainly, the municipality —have means or spirit to undertake so large a public work is somewhat doubtful. Such as it is, the Promenade is a boon to visitors who dwell in the West Bay. If the weather be fine, they are out, as has been said, to enjoy the air and sunshine, also to walk about and exchange courtesies with acquaintances, to see the fisher-people in their picturesque costumes drawing their nets ashore, or to lounge on the seats, and as far as possible think of nothing but the beauty of the sky, and to be lulled with the ceaseless murmur of the waves.

Walking or driving, visitors prefer the Promenade, so far as it goes, for a thoroughfare east and west. It is not very well kept, but it is better than the main street, which one soon gets acquainted with, as it is the only continuous passage for traffic. At a central part of the street, where there is a cross entrance to the Promenade du Midi, will often be seen a mixed throng of loungers of the ouvrier and vetturini type, through which passengers have to thread their way. This place is evidently the favourite lounge for town gossip, where there is frequently something to excite critical remark in connection with the octroi. At this spot is the receipt of custom for duties on animals coming into the town for slaughter, and which must go through the preliminary ceremony of being weighed. One after the other is urged to walk on to the flat top of a steelyard, level with the ground, and scarcely distinguishable from the street. What the poor animals cannot rightly comprehend is the reason for making them stand on a particular spot and no other. Oxen—great horned beasts of a light dun colour, which have been driven from distant pasturages—are tolerably docile, and require little management. They stand stupidly with their heads bowed down, till the man in the adjoining office records their weight. Pigs—a dark-skinned race like the Hampshire brocks, but with

long legs, and nearly as nimble as greyhounds—are more difficult to deal with. Disposed constitutionally to take their own way, they can by no artifice be persuaded to go or stand quietly on the machine. They move, they wriggle, they bolt. Then begins the popular merriment. The onlookers shout with laughter on seeing the abortive manœuvres of the drivers to bring their charge to a proper sense of obedience. One of the obstreperous pigs at length darts off in a state of indignation down the street, with twenty gamins full cry after it—the groups of loungers all the time frenzied with delight, and one of the *sergents de ville*, a merry personage who seems to spend his days in chatting and smoking, evidently relishes the *contre-temps* with all his accustomed humour.

It may not be thoroughly *comme il faut* for a visitor to notice such popular diversions, but then what is he to do? Getting some amusement from the harangue of a loquacious street charlatan, from the capers of a long-legged pig scornfully refusing to be weighed, or from the playing of a monkey on a miniature sham fiddle, seated on the hump of a peripatetic dromedary—is it not better than having no amusement at all? Mentone is a dull—a very dull—place. That is its reputation, and I am not going to deny or qualify the fact. The town has not yet got so far ahead as to have a regularly constituted system of public entertainments, such as one has the opportunity to fall back upon for recreation in Nice, Paris, or London. Nor does private society offer an equivalent which can with safety be embraced by professed invalids or the health-seeking sexagenarian. There are few natives with whom visitors are likely to make an acquaintanceship. Dinner-giving is not the custom of the place, and if it were, it would perhaps be so much the worse. We are to keep in mind that it is not very advisable to go out after sunset, which, in the depth of winter at Mentone, is about

half-past four o'clock. If visitors can make up an agreeable society among themselves in the house in which they reside, they may be congratulated. The chances are against their being able to do so, in consequence of a difference in languages and tastes, as well as from the peculiarities of hotel usages already referred to. Unless visitors be specially fortunate, they will have to rely on themselves. The evenings will probably be dull. You may occupy a neatly-furnished room, provided with a wood fire, and a lamp on the table—a pair of candles being useless for reading—and that is what has to be looked forward to. No callers. The surging of the Mediterranean is heard outside. The moon and a sparkling planet shine on the waters. It is a beauteous scene, but you are alone in a strange land. Is it surprising that the heart should yearn for home, and for the friends whose companionship and sympathy count for so much in reckoning up the sum of earthly happiness?

Isolation, less or more—a monotony in daily routine—what the world calls dulness—will have to be submitted to for the recurring hours of brilliant sunshine, and the possibility of reinvigorating a frame wasted by functional or organic derangement, or by a too assiduous pursuit of professional, or it may be needlessly self-imposed duties. What sacrifices, it has been asked, will not one make for the possibility of improved health? Curiously enough, many will make no sacrifices whatever. This I discovered during my last visit, and it is proper to speak plainly out on the subject. Numbers of people go abroad professedly for the benefit of their health. They have been advised to winter in the south of France or Italy, and no doubt they have been cautioned as to a mode of living suitable for effecting their cure. If quitting home be a sacrifice, that they make, but it would be hard to say what other privation they endure. They have probably never been accustomed to restrain

their inclinations, and have lived in a perpetual holiday humour. Possibly, they are under the strange hallucination that mere climate is to do everything—that no care on their own part is necessary. Such is the most charitable view that can be taken of conduct that could be more frequently explained by a deficiency in self-control, and a heedless recklessness of consequences. They like gaiety, and will have it at all hazards. The pleasures of dressing, dancing, and evening amusements are what they alone greatly care for. Ladies bringing enormous boxfuls of fashionable attire, wish to shew it off somehow. Favoured with good looks, liveliness of manners, and a fair stock of jewellery, it may be possible to become that most envied of women, 'the belle of the ball.' Young gentlemen, however (and some not young), have also their aptitudes for amusements, which involve a necessity for going out in the evening.

Parties of twos and threes of this indiscreet order of invalids come to Mentone. Fun must be had, though the forfeiture of health, and even of existence, should be the penalty. Here arise some strange reflections as to wintering in Mentone. Several English medical practitioners reside in the town during the winter, among whom Dr J. Henry Bennet acts as consulting physician. It is customary for invalids on arrival to ask advice regarding their respective complaints from one or other of these professional gentlemen; but frequently the advice is not strictly followed, and fatal consequences ensue. The sunshine and azure skies tempt to take unjustifiable liberties. The more staid order of visitors of course remain in their hotels in the evening, there finding such slender means of amusement as these houses afford. Others, indifferent to what may ensue, and unable to resist temptations, accept invitations to dancing-parties, although perhaps aware that one of their lungs is already gone, and that the other is in process of decay. They

have come to Mentone to have that one lung healed, and with care the object might be accomplished; but how is it possible to resist going to that delightful party! As well, they say, go into an infirmary at once! These perverse indiscretions cause the death of several visitors every year. Such conduct gives fair-play neither to the climate nor to the physician who is consulted. I was told of a young gentleman of fortune with lungs very much gone, who, two years ago, contrary to advice, attended a dancing-party. The result was very abrupt. He dropped down in the room, was carried out, and died in the passage. In that 'Dance of Death' he had finished the last atom of lung—gaily ended his days in the revelry of a waltz. Last season, a young lady, considered to be the reigning beauty, was pointed out as having only one lung, which it was alleged she was doing all in her power to get rid of. What is the use of invalids of this stamp coming to Mentone, unless it be for the pleasure of finishing their career abroad? Dr Bennet, with whom I had some conversation on the subject of climate and hygiene, spoke despondingly of these errors, and mentioned a number of cases which proved fatal, but might have been effectually cured had his professional advice been followed. But the same thing, I suppose, could be said by all medical men whatsoever. 'I *will* die, and nobody *shall* save me.'

As a contrast to these instances of thoughtlessness, we have opportunities of recognising cases in which the utmost care is taken to derive the fullest possible benefit from the climate. The anxiety shewn by relatives for the recovery of some young person under their charge is matter for daily and interesting remark. It may be the case of a boy affected with phthisis in its early stage—the hope of a family in a decline. With what solicitude is the pallid youth wheeled out to the Promenade;

there, under the shelter of a white parasol, to breathe the fine air wafted from the Mediterranean. How, on any symptom of a cold wind, is his Bath-chair drawn aside to a protecting wall! What means are taken to amuse him by conversation, and observations on natural phenomena! How, at the proper hour, the attendant wheels him home, and remarks made as to the circumstances which amused the passing hours! In one case of this kind, we took especial interest. It was that of a French gentleman who day after day brought out his partially paralysed child to enjoy, and, if possible, benefit by, the animating sunshine. Towards the end of the season there was a visible improvement in the languid countenance; and at our departure we ventured to hope that parental care had not been unblessed or unavailing.

If the irregularities to which I have adverted admit of any excuse, it will be in the deficiency of rational and available amusement. At Nice, there is a military band which plays almost daily in the Jardin Public, much to the gratification of the visitors. There is nothing of this kind at Mentone, neither, as may be gathered from previous remarks, does there exist any means of genial or social intercourse on a scale worth speaking of. The English-speaking population are scattered about among the hotels and villas, and are generally unknown to each other; while the obligation of not venturing over the door after dark, if one has any regard to health, is in itself an insuperable difficulty. In these circumstances, it would greatly contribute to the pleasure of a winter sojourn at Mentone were a few mutual friends, with similarity of tastes, to sojourn at the same establishment. It is pleasant to note that croquet parties are getting into vogue among the younger class of visitors. The turf—if there be turf at all—is not what English players are accustomed to; but if the weather be good, the deficiency is

not of serious import. The introduction of croquet is something, at anyrate, set agoing in the way of wholesome recreation and companionship. More may follow.

It is fortunate for invalids that there is good medical attendance at Mentone, in consequence of English practitioners residing at least for the season in the place. The fees expected are said to be higher than what most persons are in the habit of paying at home. On this point, I am unable to offer any personal experience. I believe napoleon fees are common, but more is given for special consultations. I cannot say whether things are conducted on the rigorous business principle which a lady a few years ago experienced at Nice. A medical practitioner to whom she gave a sovereign for a piece of advice, said he would call again next day, which he did, and before leaving said 'it was proper she should understand that for every visit he expected a fee of a napoleon.' The money was paid. If this was a trifle too *exigeant*, we may perhaps be reminded that the English practitioners have but a limited field of operation, and further, that they must have been put to the inconvenience of procuring a diploma from the University of France. Both at Nice and Mentone there are druggists who dispense medicines according to the authorised British pharmacopœia, at whose establishments English assistants are employed. All sorts of patent medicines with which we are familiar are seen on their counters, but high in price, on account (as is alleged) of custom-house and octroi duties.

Mentone is pretty nearly destitute of means of intellectual recreation. What can be furnished in the way of books is not much. Therein lay my chief privation. There was nothing within doors to fall back upon to relieve the tedium caused by the absence of accustomed resources; and doubtless this species of desolation will press heavily on the more thoughtful class of visitors. At the Hôtel de Ville, there is a *Bibliothèque Publique*,

consisting of a roomful of books in French and Italian literature, including some old encyclopædias and historical works, which may be consulted daily by persons studiously disposed. Strangers have little recourse to this collection of books, for besides that they are not the kind of works ordinarily wanted, they are not given out. Let us, however, give credit to the municipality for maintaining an establishment so meritorious. Not many towns in Great Britain, of only 6000 inhabitants, keep up a free consulting library for public use.

For reading, visitors chiefly depend on a circulating library kept by Papy, a bookseller in a central situation in the main street. The library consists of a collection of English books, mostly of a light kind, not particularly new, and of works in other languages; though limited in point of choice, the library is gladly hailed by visitors as something better than no library at all. Papy also offers the attractions of a reading-room, in which will be found copies of the *Times*, *Standard*, *Illustrated London News*, *Punch*, and *Galignani*, and several French and German papers. The subscription for the reading-room is five francs per month, or eight francs for reading-room and library; and for a longer period, less in proportion. Papy is a civil fellow; he speaks no English, but here, as elsewhere, a very little French is sufficient for visitors to procure all they want. The shop (which is open on Sundays, to accommodate the French and Germans) is a considerable resort for books and stationery. There is another bookseller in the town, Giordan, who circulates the Tauchnitz editions. Near his shop is the photographic establishment of M. Noack, whose productions are of an unusually high order. Few parties quit Mentone without carrying away some of his views of the neighbouring scenery.

Opposite Papy's, in an open space back from the north side of the street, stands a handsome building of recent erection,

known as the *Cercle Philharmonique.* This is a club-house partly on the English plan. It does not aspire to rank with the famed Cercle on the Promenade des Anglais at Nice, yet is much beyond what might be expected in a place of such moderate size as Mentone. The building, erected by an association on shares, is under an administrative committee. It comprehends a large, splendidly decorated apartment for balls, concerts, and other entertainments, French and English billiard-rooms, a reading-room provided with French, English, and German newspapers, a smoking-room, and what is called a *salon de réunion pour les dames.* In the large apartment, styled the *grande salle de spectacle et de bal*, take place balls about Christmas and Carnival time, balls given by the members of the Cercle to a select number of the visitors, and balls given by the visitors to residents who have paid them some attention. Here, also, by means of a small stage at one end of the room, take place amateur theatricals, for which some Parisian and other ladies who are annual visitors have a special fancy. The invitation is by private ticket. Entertainments of this kind are in the afternoon, and are given for charitable purposes, a voluntary collection being made by which a few hundred francs are raised for distribution among the poor. (The heat from artificial lighting, and the crowding, not advantageous for invalids.) During the day, few persons are seen in the reading or other rooms.

If the intention of the originators of the Cercle was to accommodate male visitors in the town, it has signally failed. No means are adopted to make the character of the establishment known; no one having any curiosity on the subject knows whom to apply to for information. So far as the general body of strangers are concerned, the establishment might as well not exist. Only a few days before quitting Mentone, was I able,

by particular inquiries, to learn anything satisfactory regarding it. Subscribers, it seems, are admitted to the privileges offered at the charge of 20 francs for a month, 45 francs for 3 months, and 80 francs for the season of 6 months. As in most cases, the only thing cared for is a reading-room, these charges will appear too high, and tend to exclusion. The stock of newspapers on the table sought after by the English, appeared to me inferior to what can be seen on much more moderate terms at Papy's. The administration is sleepy, and needs rousing.

Many visitors, invalids in particular, will depend on newspapers ordered from England. The time of transit of letters from London is two days, and deliveries are regular. Newspapers, for some incomprehensible reason, cannot be reckoned on with the same certainty. Frequently, no paper arrives, and then perhaps two or three come together. Such irregularities, often complained of, but never redressed, are the reproach of the French postal system, and it is useless to say any more about it. There can be no complaint as regards cost of transit. A penny stamp takes an English newspaper to any part of France.

There is no local newspaper. All that the press produces is a small weekly sheet, with lists of strangers, advertisements, and some miscellaneous literary matters. It purports to be issued every Saturday; things, however, are taken easily. Sometimes it does not appear till Sunday or Monday, and on one occasion it did not appear till the succeeding Thursday. Since the opening of the railway, a hawker with a basket goes daily about calling out the names of Parisian newspapers which he has for sale. Some of the cheap literary drolleries of Paris may be obtained at a kiosk in the Place Napoléon.

At all the winter resorts in the Riviera, there are found English churches, also chapels in connection with the Established or the Free Church of Scotland. In the East Bay, Mentone, a

Church-of-England chapel has existed for a number of years. More recently, for the accommodation of residents in the West Bay, a neat and commodious chapel, known as St John's, has been erected at the entrance to the Route de Turin. It is built in the Gothic style, and with the trees about it reminds us of that usually interesting object, an English parish church. Services are here frequent throughout the week and on Sundays. The chapel has a good organ, and also an effective choir, which is aided by the voices of young ladies who kindly volunteer their assistance. The Free Church of Scotland has a mission chapel in the Rue Pieta, a narrow cross thoroughfare. It consists of the first floor of a house on a common stair, with windows commanding a view of an orange-garden adjoining the Hôtel de Ville. The situation is central, but not otherwise satisfactory. Yet here, during the season, a congregation of about fifty persons, Scotch, English, and American, ordinarily meet on Sundays. The expenses are defrayed by voluntary contribution at the door in going out. I attended on several occasions, and it was not without emotion that I joined in the simple psalmody of 'The Martyrs,' while overlooking gardens blazing with orange-trees and other sub-tropical vegetation.

These chaplaincies are of use, not alone as regards the appointed services of public worship. The ministers may be said to form a pastorate to the whole English-speaking community, irrespective of national distinction. The reputation of Mentone as a health-resort has reached the United States (where Dr Bennet's work is, I believe, fully as well known as in England), and every season numbers of Americans in a jaded state of health make it a place of abode. I heard of a family who had come eight successive winters from Philadelphia, every year crossing and recrossing the Atlantic, as if it were a holiday trip. Last season I had the honour of becoming acquainted

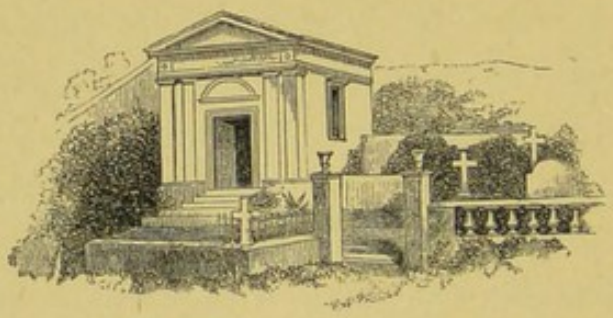
with an American clergyman, of most apostolic character and appearance, Bishop Whipple of Minnesota, whose health had been grievously impaired by arduous professional labours at his distant see, and who here sought for its restoration. Among the visitors generally, denominational differences are in a great degree laid aside. When distant from home and friends, and when life is perhaps felt to be waning, sectarian and other distinctions in a great measure disappear. The consolations of the Gospel are thankfully accepted from any kindly disposed administrator. As far as I could learn, the several ministers are zealous in their sacred calling, and hold themselves ready to help on any occasion, when their services, secular or spiritual, are in request. A little incident, which occurred in the season 1868–69, is worth relating.

It is the custom to hang up in the lobbies of the hotels English-printed notices of the different chapels, with the names of the officiating ministers, and hours of divine service. Late one evening, an American gentleman, with several ladies, drove up to a hotel in Mentone for the night. They had hired a carriage at Nice to go on to Genoa, only stopping at certain places on the way. In coming from Nice, one of the ladies had been taken ill. To proceed in the morning was foreseen to be impossible. What was to be done? Not one of the party could speak French, so as to be able to adjust the matter with the voiturier. In this dilemma, the gentleman, in looking around the lobby, saw the printed notice about the Free Church: 'Rev. James Stuart, parish of Yester, minister.' 'Take me to that person,' he said to the hotel porter, who spoke a little English. He was conducted accordingly to the villa Guibert, where Mr Stuart, roused from bed, listened to the painful story, and heard that there was a written contract, which it would be necessary for him to see before offering advice. Accompanying his visitor

to the hotel, the contract of hire was examined, and it was at once obvious that unless the party went forward to their destination, they must at once pay the whole prescribed fare. In these circumstances, and the voiturier being inexorable, all that could be recommended was, that the sick lady should be left in charge of the landlady of the Hôtel d'Italie, who was an obliging Englishwoman, while the others proceeded on their journey—a few days' repose being all that was necessary, and it would be easy afterwards to go by the diligence. The proposed arrangement being acceded to, Mr Stuart without delay kindly saw the lady carefully bestowed, and next morning the party went on their way to Genoa. It is by such self-sacrificing labours as this, that an English or Scotch minister stationed on the continent may shew his lively perception of the precepts which ought to rule the Christian character. It need hardly be said that, for clergymen so missioned abroad, a knowledge of French is of exceeding importance.

Besides the chapels above mentioned, there is a French Protestant church (*Eglise Evangélique*) in the town, ministered to by a much esteemed pastor—the whole body of Protestant clergy in the place uniting to carry out objects of common concern. For the accommodation of the Protestant community, a portion of ground at the public cemetery, on the top of the hill surmounting the old town, has been specially set apart as a burying-ground. It is provided with a neat mortuary chapel, to which bodies are brought shortly after decease, and where they may remain for any reasonable length of time previous to interment. This fact in itself may tend to soothe the feelings of those whose relatives chance to die at Mentone. All is done becomingly according to the usage of the English, and ordinarily a small party of visitors interested in the deceased attend in honour of the obsequies. If there be such a thing as

cheerfulness in a burying-ground, it is at the slip of terrace appropriated as a necropolis some hundreds of feet above the sea-level. The elevated spot is sunny, secluded, and beautiful. How solemnly is borne on my remembrance the circumstance of attending the funeral of a young Englishman from one of the midland counties, who had sunk under a mortal ailment, and was here interred with the usual service of the church! His grave occupies the edge of the declivity, and on it rest the last rays of the sun as it declines in the blue waters of the Mediterranean.



CHAPTER VI.

WITH little in the way of public amusement or general intercourse, Mentone and its neighbourhood offer some subjects of interesting inquiry. If employment does not come readily to hand, it may possibly be evoked by looking about. The medieval old town; the character and habits of the people; excursions on foot or donkey to the mountainous region, with its decayed castles and sun-baked villages perched thousands of feet above the sea-level; the picturesque sea-coast, with its caverns and traditions of Saracenic invasion; the mouldering tokens of Roman sway—all will yield matter for agreeable exploration. Turbia and Monaco should be deliberately seen, if not already visited; and so likewise should Ventimiglia and Bordighera—the latter for the sake of its palm-trees. I am sorry to say there is no handy local guide-book, affording that minute explicitness of detail expected from works of this nature. The native topographers write prettily, and even poetically, of the surrounding district; a guide-book, however, is not bought for fine writing, but, like an almanac, is looked to for plain trustworthy facts. The best of the books of the kind is entitled a *Guide des Etrangers à Menton*, by M. Pessy; it comprehends a good map, which is at all events indispensable. In the prevailing state of things, the explorer will have to rely greatly on his own powers of investigation, assisted,

if it happily may be, by friends well acquainted with this outlying part of the Alpes Maritimes.

The ever present, and often noisy Mediterranean can scarcely fail to suggest historic recollections. Around it were clustered all the great nations of antiquity. It is the sea of the Bible, that on which Paul encountered misadventures. It is the sea which the Crusaders had to cross in their delirious expeditions to the Holy Land. Now, in comparison to the great oceans of modern discovery, it is only a salt-water lake, yet rich in the legends which undyingly hover about it. Physically considered, it is curious. Barred out by the Strait of Gibraltar, the tidal wave of the Atlantic operates but feebly on the Mediterranean. Residents at Mentone recognise little difference in the height to which the water flows on the beach. The sea may be twice a day a few inches higher or lower; but except in the case of winds affecting it somewhere, and causing it to dash high up on the shore, it has a monotonous uniformity of appearance. The beach consists of rounded stones and gravel, not agreeable for being walked on, and on that species of gray shingle the waves are everlastingly surging. Sometimes in the calmest days and nights, its roar is most outrageous and trying to the nerves. Suddenly, when level as a pond, it will assume an angry aspect, with white breakers in the distance. In short, it is very whimsical and incomprehensible in its varying moods; and those who dislike its more placid or its more uproarious proceedings had better live away from its shores. A distance of a hundred yards, with intervening trees or houses, will be enough.

As the sea neither ebbs nor flows to a perceptible degree, rocks on the beach are not periodically uncovered and exposed to the atmosphere, the consequence being that there is scarcely any marine vegetation—no large sea-weed, and no sea-like smell.

Along the coast from Nice the beach has a rapid descent to depths ranging from three thousand to five thousand feet. So abrupt is the declivity that, unless at particular spots, bathing is somewhat hazardous. We observed preparations for bathing at Nice, in March; the wheeled machines employed being carefully tethered by a rope to the shore, lest they should dart down headlong into the depths. The occasional appearance of sharks adds another danger of which bathers need to be cautious.

The Mediterranean is said to abound in many species of fish; visitors, however, see little of them. The kinds which appear at table, and that very sparingly, are sardines, red mullet, mackerel, tunny, and whitings. Mentone has a fishing population nestling in the older part of the town, who with all their toil and patience make but a poor livelihood. Proceeding to sea in boats at an early hour of the morning, and keeping within a few miles of the shore, parties of them may be seen from nine to ten o'clock laboriously drawing in their nets to the beach. The produce is very insignificant, often not more fish than will fill a small basket, yielding perhaps three or four francs —sometimes the whole not worth a single franc. Since the railway opened, a few of the shops have begun to procure supplies of fish from distant and more productive quarters, and the selling of fresh oysters brought from the Atlantic coast, if not from the Channel, has in the winter season become a considerable trade. Amateur anglers using fishing-rods of cane try to lure a prey; the Quai Bonaparte, against which the sea is incessantly dashing, being a favourite spot. On no occasion did I ever see one of these anglers draw a fish from the water. The sport seemed to consist of a more than ordinary exercise of hope and patience.

Although hitherto styled a sea-port, Mentone has little pretension to that character. The few small craft that belong

to it are, along with the fishing-boats, drawn up high and dry at an open space adjoining the beach. After being in a primitive way delivered of their cargoes—barrels of wine, for instance, being lowered overboard and floated to dry land—the vessels are tugged up the ascent to their resting-place by a windlass, at which men, women, and children lend their assistance. Last winter, the French government commenced to form a harbour with landing quays; the first step taken being to lay down a tramway along the beach for conveyance of blocks of stone from Cap Martin. The tramway was so insufficiently executed that the greater part was washed away by the storm on the night of the 21st of December. It was replaced on a better footing, and the works were begun. Whether they will endure the impetuous battering of the heavy rolling waves may be gravely doubted. The spot selected adjoins the old martello tower, which remains invulnerable on the ledge of rocks in front of that medieval old town of which it was once the protector.

Possessing in some degree a resemblance to the steep and crowded lanes of the older parts of Edinburgh, I made this ancient town a kind of study. Originally walled for defence, it consists, as has been said, of a dense cluster of tall tenements, rising pile above pile from the sea-shore to the summit of one of those low hills which stand out in advance of the higher mountains. From the modern street, forming part of the thoroughfare of the Corniche, we ascend into this strange mass of buildings by steep paved lanes, which turn and wind in different directions, until we reach the top, where, on the site of the ancient castle, is found the cemetery of the town, from which there is an extensive prospect over sea and land.

At the foot of the ascent, wheeled carriages are left behind. The lanes, though dignified with the name of streets, are accessible only to foot-passengers or donkeys. The principal

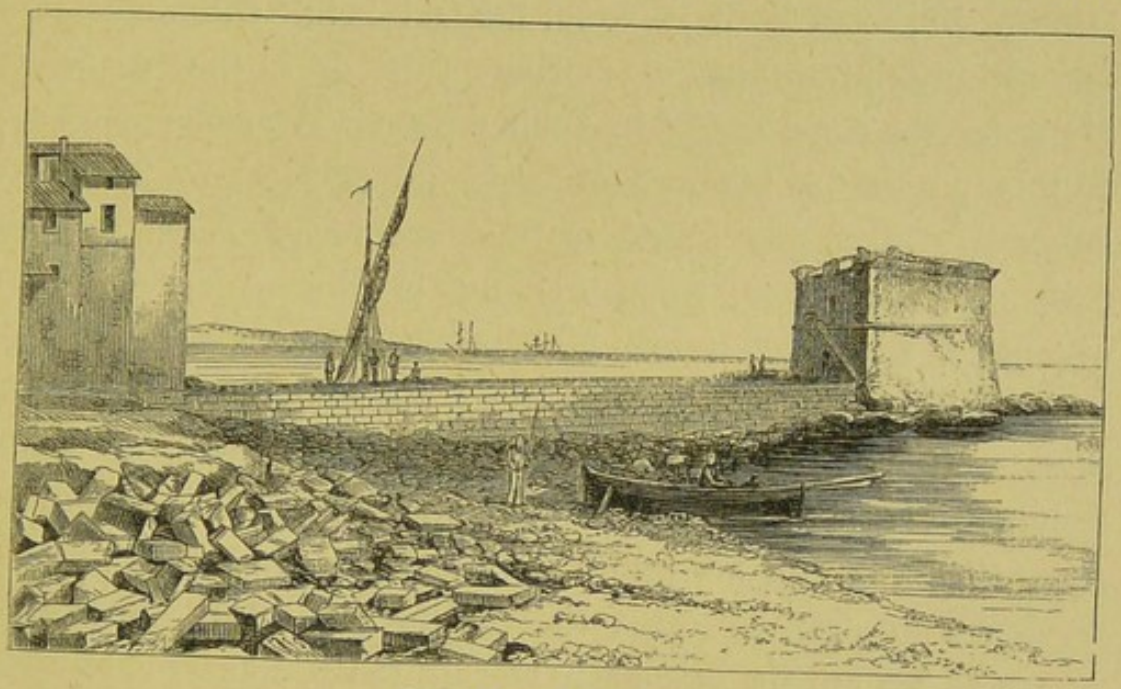
one is the Rue Longue, noticed as having been an ancient thoroughfare, protected at each end by a vaulted gateway and guardhouse. The gates have been long since removed, leaving free access to all who feel any interest in perambulating the narrow passage, now sunk into the character of a back street. Being paved with small rounded stones, with an inclination to a central gutter, and environed with tall antique buildings, you feel pretty much as if walking along the bottom of a drain; but there the resemblance ends, for, to do the inhabitants justice, the road is remarkably clean, which is more than can be said for some of the pretentious thoroughfares. The massive tenements, five or six stories in height, are laid out in separate dwellings, reached by narrow common stairs. In the lower floor were the shops, consisting of dingy vaults with round-topped doorways, some down and others up a step, and a good deal of irregularity throughout. The Quai Bonaparte having drawn away all general traffic, the Rue Longue has, in a business sense, correspondingly declined. You see vaults which had been great shops in their day, sorrowfully shut up, their clumsy old-fashioned doors dreadfully in want of paint, fastened with queer-looking decayed padlocks. As, however, there must still be a demand in the crowded floors above for the essentials of existence, the street is not without some traces of commerce. When grand concerns disappear, hucksters step in to occupy the field, just as when some imposing order of forest trees is swept to destruction, shrubs of various species start beneficently into existence. In the Rue Longue, accordingly, you will not be surprised, but rather on the whole gratified, to see a certain class of dealers—old women selling bread, oranges, and candles, modestly exhibited on a slip of shelf outside the door, with meal and flour in a small way in bags inside the threshold, along with possibly cheap cuts of salt fish

in steep to meet demands on Fridays; establishments purporting to be a *Débit de Vin;* a *Boucherie*, authorised to sell *bœuf, agneau et de veau au 2ᵐᵉ qualité;* or a respectable middle-aged spinster retailing a miscellany of tapes and other small wares. Dull and composed even at mid-day, the long Rue has an air of solitude. There is little stirring. The only sound heard is that of a shoemaker, who, seated outside his door for the sake of light, is industriously hammering his leather; besides which spectacle of activity you will have the satisfaction of observing a wrinkled old crone airing herself on the outside step of a doorway, and spinning with the distaff—a picture for your sketch-book, if artistically inclined.

What traditions of historical events and distinguished personages could be told of the Rue and its surroundings! Some of the houses, the backs of which overlook the East Bay, and in old times reached down to the water's edge, have still a wonderfully aristocratic aspect; and it might be safely affirmed at a venture that they had been the residence of dukes and counts in the stirring bygone times. A mansion of this kind, with tall windows and heavy cornices at the eaves, is pointed out as having been the dwelling of the Princes of Monaco. It is said to have been built by Honore II. in the early part of the seventeenth century. This prince, one of the best of the Grimaldis, rendered himself popular by causing the reconstruction of the church of St Michael, a puissant archangel in whom all classes of the Mentonians have ever in their emergencies placed great confidence; and it is a matter of no little pride to them that the handsome spire of the church under his invocation dominates over every other edifice. It is further said of Honore II. that he erected the martello tower or bastion on the ledge of rocks at the port. This would place the date of that conspicuous structure at about 1620. From appearances, I am

inclined to think it is of greater antiquity, and that the prince only caused it to be repaired in the shape in which it has latterly remained.

Wandering through the sinuosities of this ancient town, we are apt to be destructively inclined. In one sense it would be a pity to tear down what long ages have spared. To the



Old Martello Tower.

archæologist, the whole cluster of buildings is a curiosity which he would consider it a species of sacrilege to destroy. Sanitary reformers, though not devoid of respect for antiquity, are forced to be less scrupulous. Knowing the evils that had ensued in Edinburgh from overcrowding in tall buildings closely packed together, I thought a clearance here and there would be pardonable. Archæologists, however, may calm their apprehensions. Looking to the slow and apathetic way public affairs are conducted in Mentone, as well as to the general indifference which prevails on matters of social concern, there is no reason to fear that the visitor fifty years hence will find any change whatsoever on this clustering old citadel.

Outside the Rue Longue on the south, where things have a more modern aspect, there is a street running east and west, now called the Rue Brea, possessing some good specimens of domestic architecture, dating from the seventeenth century, if not earlier. A tenement at the west corner on the south side, bearing traces of frescoes on the walls, is that in which General Brea was born in 1790, the fact being commemorated by an inscription on a marble slab over the doorway. Mentone has some credit in having put up several inscriptions of this nature in memory of incidents of local or historical interest. Brea was killed in the streets of Paris on the 24th of June 1848, when fighting in the cause of order, wherefore the inhabitants honourably acknowledge him as a native. In the same street, near the middle on the north side, there is a wall enclosing a piece of ground in which stands a house that had been temporarily occupied in 1814 by Pope Pius VII., on his return towards Italy, after a compulsory residence in France. This visit of the pope, and the circumstance of his having graciously blessed the people at this spot, are matters carefully recorded on a marble slab inserted in the wall.

One more incident needs to be recorded concerning the Rue Brea. Here for a night or two resided General Bonaparte, when, in April 1796, he was, as commander-in-chief, proceeding with the French army along this difficult piece of coast to open his famed Italian campaign. The tenement, marked No. 3, on the north side of the street, is a tall building, distinguished by a handsome doorway, leading to a spacious, and what had formerly been a finely ornamented common stair. The stair, consisting of intermediate landings, is at first of blue slate, and afterwards of tiles faced with wood. There are two dwellings on each floor. Eighty years ago, the house on the second floor,

entering by the door on the right hand, was occupied by a M. Pretti, a *négociant* of some local importance, and was selected as the most suitable for accommodating General Bonaparte. At present, there is a decayed look about the stair, the houses in it having been relinquished by its former genteel inhabitants, though, still, they have by no means sunk to a degraded condition. Ringing a bell by a cord which hung at the side of the door, we were admitted by an aged female domestic through a lobby into a singularly elegant *salle de réception*, such as could scarcely have been expected in this back street. It measured upwards of thirty feet in length by about twenty in breadth, with two windows at each end, hung with figured lace-curtains. The floor of smooth tiles was carpeted in front of a sofa, which, like the chairs ranged along the sides of the apartment, was covered with yellow damask. From the centre of the ceiling depended a handsome chandelier. The most remarkable feature of the room were the decorations on the walls, consisting of classic scenes in raised stucco, disposed in panels, serving the place of pictures. While noting these particulars, the abbé entered the room, and there ensued the ceremonial of introduction. Made acquainted with my views, the abbé proceeded in the first place to say something of the house. The room in which we were seated was that in which Bonaparte gave his receptions, and here, during his stay, there was a dance. The small dingy room adjoining, into which we were conducted, was his *salle à manger*, and beyond that was his *chambre à coucher*, now forming the bedroom of the abbé. In one point of view these were small particulars, but anything which concerns the life of a noted individual is worth knowing. I considered it rather curious that Napoleon the Great had dwelt even for a short time in a house on a second floor in a common stair in Mentone.

In the still more modern street immediately below, forming the roadway through the town, is a mansion which, by an inscription, we learn was the residence of the patriotic Carlo Trenca, who, in the course of his onerous public duties, died in 1854. The example set by the town in this species of mural commemoration, might, as some will think, be advantageously followed in places of greater size and importance.

As regards the inhabitants generally, who are crowded into the narrow passages in the old town, we have, I believe, a proper specimen of the aborigines—a people illiterate and uninstructed, but from naturally good dispositions, industrious and well conducted. The older among them are said to be unable to read, which is not unlikely, considering their past history; at anyrate, I never saw either book or newspaper in their hands. Since the expulsion of the Grimaldis, the town has been provided with schools, at which there is a large attendance of children; but beyond some efforts of this kind, nothing is attempted to enlighten the humbler classes. The town possesses no school of arts for the improvement of mechanics, no lectures on miscellaneous subjects of interest, no popular concerts, no native newspapers to concentrate and direct public opinion. The young are suffered to grow to manhood without intelligent direction. The only provision for their leisure hours is made by the keepers of cafés and billiard-rooms. This state of things is not very creditable to the more thoughtful part of the community; and does not come up to what is frequently represented as the activity of continental governments in stimulating advancement in arts and science.

The humbler operations of the day-labourers employed on the tramway were on an awkward, and to us amusingly rude scale; the implements they used were such as an English navvy would have treated with disdain. In rough manual operations,

things are far behind, and we are painfully reminded of the fact, that a country may excel in science and the fine arts, and yet not be acquainted with the use of a shovel and wheelbarrow. The man who repairs the roadway of the Promenade does so by the slow and painful process of bringing small basketfuls of shingle on his shoulder from the beach, thus taking days to perform what, under a more intelligent system, might be effected in a few hours; and, after all, the thing is badly done. There is not that amount of knowledge which prescribes making provision for water to run off to each side; the consequence being that, after rain, the roadway is in pools.

To make up for the absence of local public spirit, the central authorities in Paris beneficently prepare and circulate a news-sheet gratuitously all over France. It is designated the *Moniteur des Communes*, and resembles a page of a newspaper, closely printed in columns. Dispersed from the Ministry of the Interior, it is stuck up as a placard in every commune. Besides scraps of news on such subjects as the opening of the Suez Canal, the paper contained, when I saw it, a variety of information regarding movements in commerce and agriculture, with advices as to the treatment of vines. The thing is really well done and well meant, but so far as Mentone is concerned, it experiences the usual fate of all that is given for nothing. Although this sheet is regularly stuck up at the market-place, no one is ever seen reading it—not that the people despise the information which is offered, but because it is not their practice to read anything.

With such an entire absence of wholesome mental exhilaration, it does not surprise us to see that there is an inordinate number of *Débits de Vin*, dingy vaults, furnished with deal tables and benches, where the imbibing of thin potations drawn in jugs from the cask, forms a popular solace. I am bound,

however, to add, that whether from the weakness of the liquor, or an indisposition to spend, there is little or no external demonstration of drunkenness. As a whole, the people are sober and thrifty in their habits. Here, as in other towns in France, intemperance in tobacco-smoking is greatly more conspicuous than in stupefying liquors. I see it stated among national statistics that the quantity of cigars smoked in France during a year, would, if put end to end, go twice round the globe at the equator. In this monstrous wastefulness, the female population take no part. It is impossible to over-rate the painstaking assiduity of the humbler class of women, both old and young. Their small industrial occupations for a subsistence are most meritorious. One of their pursuits is the sale of roasted chestnuts, an article much in request. In one of these female vendors I took some interest. Verging on eighty years of age, and with a wrinkled countenance that would have been the delight of Rembrandt, this poor woman carried on business in a packing-case, which stood on end without a lid, placed at the termination of the Quai Bonaparte. Here seated in her box with her chauffer and bag of nuts, and cheerfully chattering to her customers, or to the *douaniers* who loiter hereabouts in sky-blue uniforms, she made a living by her petty merchandise, exemplifying what may be done under depressing circumstances to rise above a degrading dependence on charity.

As at Nice, the carrying of articles poised on the top of the head is a common practice of the women of Mentone. They may be seen coming daily into the town loaded with baskets of oranges or lemons, or with huge bundles of sticks for fuel, in some instances their hands being employed in knitting. As suitable for this kind of drudgery, they wear a straw-hat, almost flat like a trencher, with a small round space raised in the middle, on which the load is balanced. These hats, formed by

an ingenious interweaving of straw and cotton, are one of the peculiar manufactures of the district around. Some hats of a superior quality, with fanciful trimmings, are becomingly worn by young ladies. Besides fruits and sticks, bundles of fir-cones are brought into the town for sale. Of all the toils of the women of Mentone, this is the most severe. The cones, called here *pommes des pins*, are gathered among the scattered forests of pines high up on the mountains, and brought down in bags to be sold for lighting fires. Arrived at the market-place, the girls sit down patiently with their loads, which are offered at the price per bag of twelve sous—sixpence for all this excessive labour. I could not help pitying these females, brown, skinny, and bare-footed, with faces like leather, who are engaged in these rude occupations; but painful as is the sight, is not the labour honest? and how much more distressing is the spectacle of flaunting vice and wretchedness in our own country?

The want of water led in pipes to the houses, entails another heavy department of labour on the humbler class of women. In the older part of Mentone, there are some public fountains, supplied from the hills, and from these all water has to be carried for domestic purposes. Subject to this inconvenience, the water so obtained is pure and wholesome, though yielding a slight limy deposit. In this respect, therefore, the inhabitants at the centre of the town are better off than the occupants of hotels and villas, which depend on pump wells. The Hôtel d'Angleterre has the advantage of being close to the fountain in the Place Napoléon, and of readily getting water from it. The husbanding of water does not seem to engage the attention of the authorities. During wet weather, there is such a profuse and wasteful overflow at the fountain situated at the end of the Quai Bonaparte, as to suggest that, by proper storage, supplies could be widely distributed. It is the destiny of every

town, with any regard for health or decency, to have a 'water question' forced some day peremptorily on its attention. Mentone's day is coming.

The custom of washing clothes in rivulets or pools leads to some difficulties in the profession of the *blanchisseuse*. It cannot be easy to wash when there is no water possessing washable qualities. Cheerful in this as in everything else, the women of Mentone are exemplary in making the best of things. They will wash clothes in a dub which a dog would not drink out of. Kneeling in a kind of basket, to keep their knees from the stones, and using square lumps of white soap streaked with green, like old Stilton cheese, they cluster in groups around pools in the Borigo or Carei, and there carry on their operations. The pools which have settled among the rubbish of the Carei, dirty and offensive though they be, are the recognised washing-tubs of the town. Around one favourite gutter, I one day reckoned as many as fifty-two washerwomen, all kneeling as close to each other as possible, and all using the same opaque frothy liquid. The sight of these bands of kneeling figures at the outlet of the Carei, where a pool accumulates, after having served the like purpose farther up the bed of rubbish, is about as extraordinary as can be witnessed. How clothes can be cleansed by washing in such puddles is somewhat incomprehensible. Persons knowing on the subject ascribe all to the force of soap, and the detergent power of fine air and sunshine in drying. The explanation is not very satisfactory.

In this as in other toilsome occupations, the women of Mentone exhibit a spirit of ceaseless and uncomplaining industry. Be the weather cold or hot, there they are at their work. When frost put a film of ice on the pools, they still continued their labours. Poor as the females evidently are, they shew uncommon skill in the patching and mending of clothes. The

needle must be in frequent requisition, for nowhere is there to be seen a ragged garment on man or woman. It does not detract from the ingenuity of the needlewomen to say that, in patching, they do not concern themselves greatly as to harmony of colour. A light patch on a dark ground, or dark on a light ground, red upon blue, or any other incongruity as it may happen, answers every required purpose. A square patch of bright green on the back of a fisherman's gray jacket, shews a fine indifference to public opinion, and is rather amusing than otherwise. The grand thing evidently is to overcome raggedness, no matter about colour, and the design is fully realised. By the mending process, garments of all sorts, masculine or feminine, are spun out to a respectable longevity—that is to say, as long as they will hold decently together. This thriftiness, I think, speaks well for the character of the humbler classes. There is poverty, but no squalor. The only unpleasing feature is street-begging. In all quarters we were beset by mendicants. Public begging is doubtless forbidden, but where there is no comprehensive method of succouring the necessitous, and no proper police, how is it to be prevented? The feeling we had about it was, that the *sergents de ville* benevolently winked at the practice. However this may be, the letting loose of beggars on the *Colonie des Etrangers* is not a very discreet procedure; neither is it very commendable to take so little trouble to enforce cleanliness in some of the highways and by-ways.

These blemishes, along with certain excesses in tobacco-smoking (which must drain the not over-enriched pocket of many a sou), and some carousing in a mild way in *Cafés* and *Débits de Vin*, constitute the leading social defects. An absence of crime of a serious, or it might almost be said of any, kind must be deemed a favourable characteristic. In this respect the surrounding district, whether nominally French or Italian, differs

greatly from those southern parts of Italy which were colonised by Greeks. The ancient Ligurians, a brave but docile Celtic race, have left their impress on the inhabitants of the Riviera. All strangers concur in speaking well of their honesty, sobriety, and industry. The late Rev. Dr Robert Lee, who spent a season at St Dalmas di Tenda, and afterwards gave an account of his experiences, compliments them highly for these and other good qualities. In conversing with the abbé who occupies the house in the Rue Brea in which Bonaparte resided, I learned that the more odious vices common in our large (and some small) communities were next to unknown in Mentone; and this coincided with what I had often casually observed. The people, men and women, said this clergyman emphatically, were *bon pour la morale.* This good moral conduct is, I believe, greatly owing to a prevalent tone of courtesy and refinement among even the humbler classes. Coarseness of manners and low habits are at the root of much that we lament as evil.

Quoting from Dr Bottini on the medical statistics of Mentone, Dr Siordet states that among the native population 'epidemic diseases do not occur to any great extent,' and that some other diseases are very rare. This may be true. I was informed, however, on what seemed good authority, that the death-rate of the settled inhabitants of the commune was as high as 26 per 1000 per annum, which is 6 or 7 above what it ought to be. Assuming that I was correctly informed, the comparatively high rate of mortality might be explained by hard work, poor living, and overcrowding of dwellings, with perhaps other insanitary conditions.

Hard grinding labour in all states of the weather might alone account for much. It would be a great mistake to imagine that the French, with all their light-heartedness, are an idly-disposed people. Taking them all in all, they work too much; for as there is no law in France against working or

transacting business on Sunday, many who are so inclined labour seven days a week. The *blanchisseuse* knows no recurring weekly Sabbath—not because she is irreligious, for she is frequently seen popping into the churches to go through some devotional exercises; but that a regard for a periodical day of rest is not part of her spiritual system. As in the case of the humbler orders generally, her reverence for Sunday is merged in the great solemnities of Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter, at which times alone do we observe that there is a scrupulous laying aside of ordinary occupations. Such a constant round of drudging labour cannot have a beneficial effect. The sight of it gives one the heart-ache. We feel that an error is committed, not only in a religious point of view, but in social economics, and in all that tends to elevate and adorn humanity. A residence abroad convinces me more powerfully than any argument, that a due and reasonable observance of a weekly rest on Sunday is one of the noblest attributes of civilisation. I am glad to observe that a change for the better is in this respect creeping over France. At Mentone, from whatever cause, there is a growing abstinence from work on Sundays. The practice of closing the shops is more common than it was some years ago; comparatively few loaded carts are seen in the streets; building operations are for the most part suspended; and scarcely any donkeys with their burdens are observed trooping in from the country. These may be deemed gratifying symptoms of an improved tone of feeling, the more creditable for being spontaneous, at least without legal obligation.

It might perhaps be argued that the cessation of donkey-traffic on Sundays is as much due to commercial as to religious scruples. I am not aware that any animals are kept ready for hire at the *Stations des Anes*. These establishments are only dépôts for ass-saddles, where orders can be executed. The

donkeys come from the hills in the morning laden with fruits or other articles, in charge of a female; and having done what might be thought a fair day's work, are ready for hire at the *Stations*, to go on excursions with invalids on their backs to and from places in the neighbourhood. As few visitors employ them on Sunday, it may seem advantageous not to bring them to town on that day. If so, the donkeys have reason to be thankful. These docile creatures, contriving 'a double debt to pay,' might be styled the true bread-winners of the peasant proprietary. Travelling by pathways wholly inaccessible to wheeled carriages, they are seen not only bringing down loads of native produce, but carrying up stones, lime, and other building-materials to places two thousand feet above the sea-level. But for these useful animals, the hilly region would be in a great measure valueless. So far as the Riviera is concerned, the ass must be considered to be a beneficent gift of Nature.

CHAPTER VII.

IN making excursions in the neighbourhood it is advisable not to attempt too much in one day. During the season there is plenty time to take things deliberately. A good beginning may be made by a forenoon walk to the Monastery of the Annonciade, or Annunciata. It is situated on the high ridge of the hill between the Carei and Borigo—that hill the front promontory of which is defaced by the buff-coloured, box-like villa dignified with the name of the Château Partouneaux. The pathway to the monastery leads off from the Route de Turin, a short way beyond the railway viaduct, and will be found a curious zigzag lane, fit only for pedestrians or donkeys. To relieve the steepness, the path is formed like a series of steps four to five feet broad, cut in a rude way in the sandstone rock, and now much worn. Winding upward among olive and orange trees, and passing some dwellings, the road has an antiquated broken-down look, significant of the misfortunes of the religious establishment to which it leads.

On the spot occupied by the monastery originally stood a small chapel, where, according to the account of M. Ardoin, wonderful cures were effected by the intercession of the Virgin. We are told that about 1660, a sister of the Prince of Monaco, afflicted with a distressing leprosy, made pilgrimages to the chapel to offer prayers for her cure. The prayers were successful: and, in gratitude, the princess built fifteen niches or small

chapels along the pathway, dedicating them to the 'fifteen mysteries of the rosary.' This recognition gave what may be termed a great lift to the institution, which forthwith swelled from a simple chapel with one or two priests into a regular monastery with twelve monks. In the eighteenth century, all went on flourishingly until the French Revolution, when the whole was abruptly put an end to, and the property taken possession of by the nation. In this state matters remained until in recent times some renovations were effected. Finally, in 1867, a small number of monks of the order of St Francis, who had been unhoused at Genoa by the appropriations of the Italian government, got leave to plant themselves down here; and, favoured by local munificence, the monastery was once more set on foot. So there it is, with its monks in brown woollen gowns and hoods, wearing sandals on their bare feet, and going about as walking curiosities. The piety of the district has not managed to restore the niches placed by the princess at different points of the ascending pathway. They stand in hopeless ruin, and we see, only by fragments of plaster, that they had at one time been pictorially decorated. Yet they continue to be used as praying stations by those who, on pious errands, mount to the Annonciade. The walk to the top is charming—the view of the hill-terraces fine. If a little fatigued, the excursionist can take a seat in the chapel, which is always open, and there note the votive offerings hung about the walls. Among these I observed two pairs of crutches, which had belonged to persons who (it is said) were cured of lameness by intercessions similar to those which had effected such wonders on the skin of the princess. M. Ardoin gives some historical details concerning the spot, which may interest visitors. His small pamphlet, *Du Sanctuaire de N.-D. de l'Annonciade*, may be procured in Mentone. Scattered about in bosky situations

on the top and sides of the hill near the monastery, there are several small cottages, some of them more fanciful than are elsewhere to be seen. One is placed like a nest among the branches of a tree—a very pretty Jack-and-the-beanstalk idea, but not to be complimented on the score of convenience.

Another but more lengthened excursion can be recommended —that to the heights of Ste Agnes (pronounced *Anèse*). Invalids and persons stiff in the limbs will find the journey too fatiguing to be undertaken on foot. They will require to hire a donkey at a *Station des Anes*, and either a boy or woman will go to lead it up the steeps. Walking, however, is preferable, if the fatigue can be encountered; for much of the pleasure consists in sitting down now and then to loiter over and mark the beauties of the scenery. The route is, for about a third of a mile, along the right bank of the Borigo, and then the ascent commences. First, it winds by the usual broad and rudely made steps amidst orange and lemon gardens, laid out in terraces, irrigated at certain seasons by water gathered with the greatest possible care in well-built tanks. The design apparently is to conduct all the rain that falls by channels and gutters into these receptacles. When I made the ascent, the tanks were either wholly dry, or had a residuum of dirty fetid water. What the dwellers in the cottages did for water, was past my comprehension, unless supplies were brought to them in small barrels on the backs of donkeys.

The solitude, the simplicity of these hill-dwellings, furnish interesting matter of contemplation. Of the old Ligurian type, and speaking a blended patois of Italian and French, with some words of Arabic and Spanish, the people occupying the slopes of the hills cling with tenacity to their old usages and habits. From generation to generation, they have occupied their small properties. Simple and frugal in their way of living, consuming

no foreign or taxable luxuries, they follow out their obscure destiny in a manner that entitles them to respect. Conquered by the Romans, harassed by the Grimaldis, they have been so fortunate as to suffer no absolute robbery of houses and lands. Dynasties may come and go. It is pretty much the same who are their nominal superiors. What they have to do is to attend to their patch of olives, oranges, or lemons. All the year round, the sun beats down on their little properties; and provided they can secure a proper supply of water for irrigation, they bask amidst permanent luxuriance. Water is to them most precious. Every proprietor must have a tank for receiving the runs of water from the pathways, in case of rain; and all along the hill-sides are constructed channels for bringing supplies from distant sources. With such appliances, a craggy steep, with but faint traces of soil, becomes fertile and beautiful. In buying pieces of ground, therefore, care is taken to stipulate for some sort of water privilege; such, for instance, as a right to have water turned on one or more days, or hours, per week. When there has been a long drought, as was the case previous to my visit, the suffering is considerable; though personal inconvenience is less thought of than loss of crops. In summer, when the heat becomes excessive, it is not unusual for these hill-dwellers to quit their small cottages, and live entirely in the open air. A whole family will, gipsy-fashion, bivouac under one of the leafy boughs of a fig-tree, and thus far exemplify in a European country the Asiatic usage referred to in Scripture.

Gaining the summit of the *colline*, and passing through a forest of pines, the path at length ascends the face of the mountains, becoming continually more steep until the top of the pass is reached at the small decayed village of Ste Agnes. The circumstance of snow occasionally powdering the summit

in winter, appears to have suggested the dedication of the old church to Our Lady of the Snows. By a steep footpath, an ascent may be made to the ruined château, which is perched on the rocky peak. Tradition associates the ruin with a lady, canonised as Ste Agnes, and a redoubtable Saracen chief, the occupant of the castle, whom she Christianised; there is, however, no end of romantic legends of this kind in the Riviera, and any one so inclined might fill a volume with them. The fête of Ste Agnes takes place on the 21st of January, when a miscellaneous concourse gathers for the occasion, some on foot, others on donkeys, while ladies of infirm health are carried up in an arm-chair—the carrying being managed by poles, on the principle of a sedan. The ceremonies include a procession with a large *pomme d'or*, or golden apple; and besides gifts of money, some devotees place an apple covered with gold-leaf on the altar of the saint by way of offering. At the termination of the ceremony, pieces of the apples are freely distributed. M. Pessy, who mentions the fact, is unable to explain the origin of this strange and ancient usage. The peak of Ste Agnes may be considered as the central eminence in the wide semicircle of limestone mountains which shelter Mentone from the north and north-western blasts. It is not nearly the highest of the mountains, but it is prominent and singularly picturesque. In a fine day, the view from it is magnificent, the heights of Corsica being clearly outlined on the southern horizon.

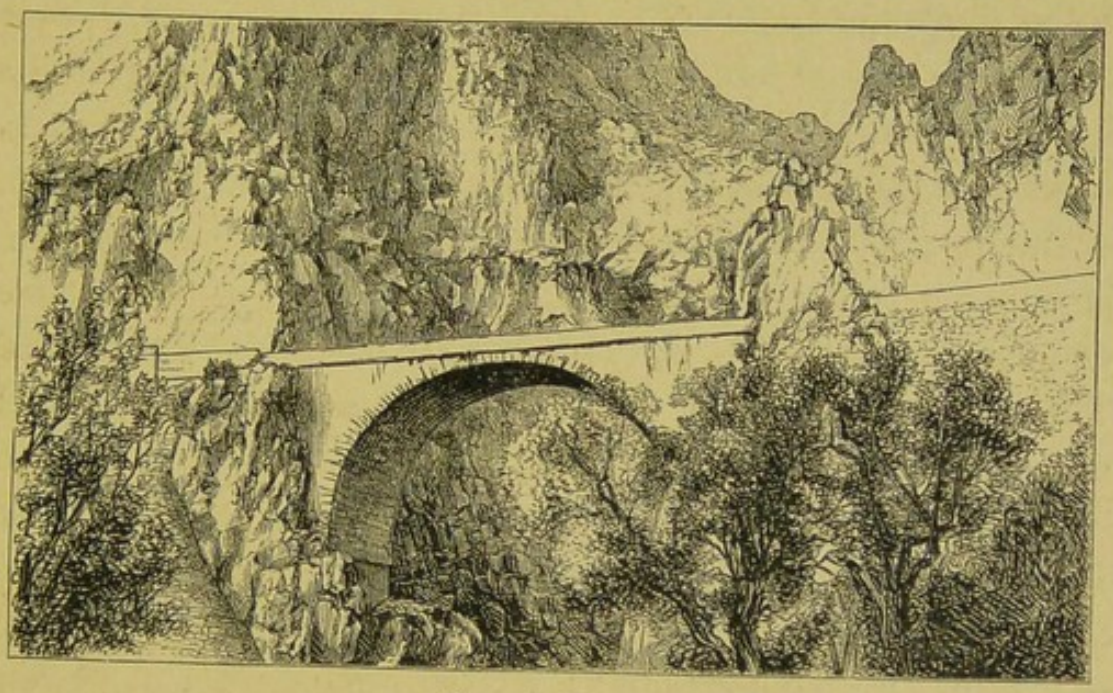
We need say nothing special of excursions to Castellare, Castillon, the lofty Berceau, the sunny knolls of Gorbio, Cabrole, or the quiet nooks in the recesses of the different valleys. It is a common practice for a party of visitors, ladies and gentlemen, to go off in the morning for pic-nics to some choice spot, selected for its beauty. Seated under the olive trees, the baskets borne by the donkey-boys are opened, and their

contents displayed. The grouping (faintly represented in the vignette frontispiece) is sometimes made matter of tasteful arrangement, and the *tableau vivant*, blended as to colour and figure, brings to remembrance the pictures of Watteau.

In none of the excursions do we see the pasturing of sheep, such as we are accustomed to at home. There is a general absence of animal life. The scenery communicates the feeling of perfect repose. In the recesses of the valleys, there is a sort of supernatural stillness. You are environed by trees, rocks, and hill-terraces, with châlets far up on which the sun is shining; but not a leaf is stirring, although at that moment, perhaps, there is a breeze on the sea-shore. I never quite understood what was done for supplies of mutton for market. The only sheep visible consisted of a single flock, under the charge of an old man and boy, dressed in antiquated costume. Standing high on their legs, the sheep had remarkable Roman noses, and long pendent ears like hounds. So thin, so lank were they, that a Scottish store-farmer would have looked on them with contempt. It was my impression they were half-starved. Every afternoon about sunset, they might be seen conducted into town for the night. They came down the dry rubbishy torrent of the Carei among the washerwomen at their dirty frothy pools, eagerly catching at every blade of grass that happened to be growing among the stones, eating, as a windfall, any bit of orange-peeling that happened to lie in their way. Then, getting out of the Carei to the sea-beach, they had a leisurely walk along the shingle, where possibly a stray turnip-top or decayed potato rewarded their explorations. Next morning, after being housed somewhere, they were out again for the day, and might have been observed grubbing in the by-ways, and on odd pieces of waste ground, where a mouthful of green food could be picked up. Such is all I can say about

the feeding of sheep in this pleasant Arcadia. As for cows, they are not seen at all, but are kept within doors, where they are fed on the waste pulp of oranges, lemons, and citrons, the rinds of which fruits are for the most part manufactured as confections. Milk good, nevertheless, which I thought strange.

Few will refrain from hiring a voiture to make a trip across



Pont St Louis.

the frontier by the Pont St Louis, as far at least as that projecting part of the mountains on which stands the old tower of Grimaldi. From the level space in front of the hotels in the East Bay, the Corniche ascends amidst gardens and villas until, at the distance of a mile, arriving at the ravine of St Louis, it is carried by excavation along the face of the precipice. It is really a grand work of art. The ravine, rugged and singularly picturesque, is spanned by a bridge of a single arch, connecting France and Italy. A rivulet trickling down the hollow is conducted by artificial channels to the immediately adjoining gardens, and issues some hundreds of feet below on the sea-beach. To have a proper idea of the value of the road, we

would need to walk along the bottom of the cliffs bordering on the sea, making use of fragments of that ancient Roman way which was the sole thoroughfare previous to the construction of the Corniche. The walk is a scramble, with barely footing for a single individual. It is, however, in various respects worth seeing. We here have an opportunity of visiting several caverns in the overhanging cliffs, in which bones and flint weapons of the pre-historic era have been discovered, and may likewise see the arch of a Roman bridge, which spans like an attenuated thread one of the ravines.

The road from the Pont St Louis, cut by blasting out of the rocks, is the finest part of the whole Corniche. On our left we have the huge overhanging cliffs, and on our right the Mediterranean—view superb. Tourists will remember that at the top of the ascent, the road wheels round to the left, and becomes a little more tame in character. Just at the point of turning, we are opposite the old tower, which had been a residence of the Grimaldis. It resembles a Border keep, stuck high on the side of the hill, with a good outlook seaward. Adjoining it, and reached by an awkward pathway over some broken rocky ground encroached upon by a quarry, is a garden made in the face of the steeps by Dr J. H. Bennet. The thing is a marvel of artificial beauty. Five hundred feet above the Mediterranean, and with incalculable labour and taste, has this garden been established, 'with a view to the cultivation of flowers, and to the tranquil enjoyment of invalid lazaroni life.' Such is Dr Bennet's own explanation of this singular garden among the rocks of Grimaldi. On entering, you walk along an avenue with built pillars on each side, whereon climbing plants are ingeniously trained. At my last visit, the garden had been considerably extended by a fresh purchase of rocks. Where the earth comes from, is at first sight a little puzzling. It is discovered to consist of what through

ages had accumulated amidst small crevices in the gray limestone, and being carefully preserved when making the pathways, is found to be of immense fertility. Dwellers in northern climes can have no adequate idea of the productive power of even a single handful of earth in this favoured spot. A large bush will be seen growing out of a hole in the rock barely sufficient for its stem.

Although the season is winter, when most English gardens wear a doleful aspect, all around is gay with salvias, lavateras, geraniums, myrtles, pelargoniums, and other plants less or more in blossom. Specimens of the aloe and cactaceæ grow luxuriantly on the jutting points of the rocks. The mesembryanthemum is in great profusion on the terraces. Garden plants which with us are only small bushes, grow here to the dimensions of moderate-sized trees. The grounds are tended by a native gardener, who conducts the engineering of the ascending and descending pathways, and has the whole in charge during summer, when the rays of the sun blaze fiercely on the gray limestone cliffs. I ventured to suggest to the doctor the purchase of that time-worn ruined tower of the Grimaldis, which, amidst a group of olive trees, overhangs the entrance to the gardens. Cannot be done. The ruin, practically valueless, is held in heritage by six individuals, whose demands are too enormous to be dealt with. At an opposite corner of the gardens is a slip of flat ground bounded by a wall on the verge of the cliff, and here, at a projecting angle, stands a round pepper-box-looking turret, which in the olden time had been a watch-tower of the Grimaldis, commanding a fine view westwards as far as Cap Martin. From a flag-staff on its summit, the union jack—'the meteor flag of England'—is unfurled on holiday occasions, and may have been seen incomprehensibly waving far overhead by travellers along the Corniche.

The level patch of ground which is so distinguished seems to form a kind of open drawing-room or lounge, for playing croquet, reading, and other recreations. At the inner side of it there is an arched alcove with a slight trickle of water, affording growth to ferns and some other plants; and here in the cool shade, swinging his hammock, Dr Bennet at certain hours indulges in the pleasures of a lazaroni existence. While his old friends the London physicians are driving through drizzling sleets and choking smoky fogs, he, by an intelligent if not compulsory restraint, is lolling in his hammock on the cliffs of Grimaldi, enjoying the pure air and sunshine in the midst of a little garden of Eden—the elegant pursuit of botanical science in a bland climate skilfully protracting a life which had formerly been in jeopardy. All cannot follow his example, nor is it desirable they should do so, but to how many professionals approaching their grand climacteric is the example, at all events, eminently suggestive?

The slopes to the sea-shore, after passing Grimaldi, if less picturesque, possess an interest from archæological circumstances. The land, rich and beautiful, had pertained to a number of families of distinction, each with a palazzo of old Italian architecture, the approach to which had been by lofty gateways, surmounted by heraldic devices, and opening on the old Roman way. As that way is now broken up, and all but impassable, the palazzos are in the awkward position of being left without a road. All that can be done is to make pathways down to them from the modern Corniche, and in a country where donkeys play so important a part in social economy, the absence of regular roads is perhaps not esteemed a serious inconvenience. If anybody wants to buy a palace with fifty to a hundred acres of land on the borders of the Mediterranean, here is his chance. Revolutions and what not have cleared out

the old families. The actual proprietors are living somewhere in penury and obscurity; their palazzos are shut up, with boards in the windows instead of glass; and the only major-domo is a peasant dwelling in an outhouse, to take charge of the grounds. Several properties were pointed out to me (1869) as being for sale.

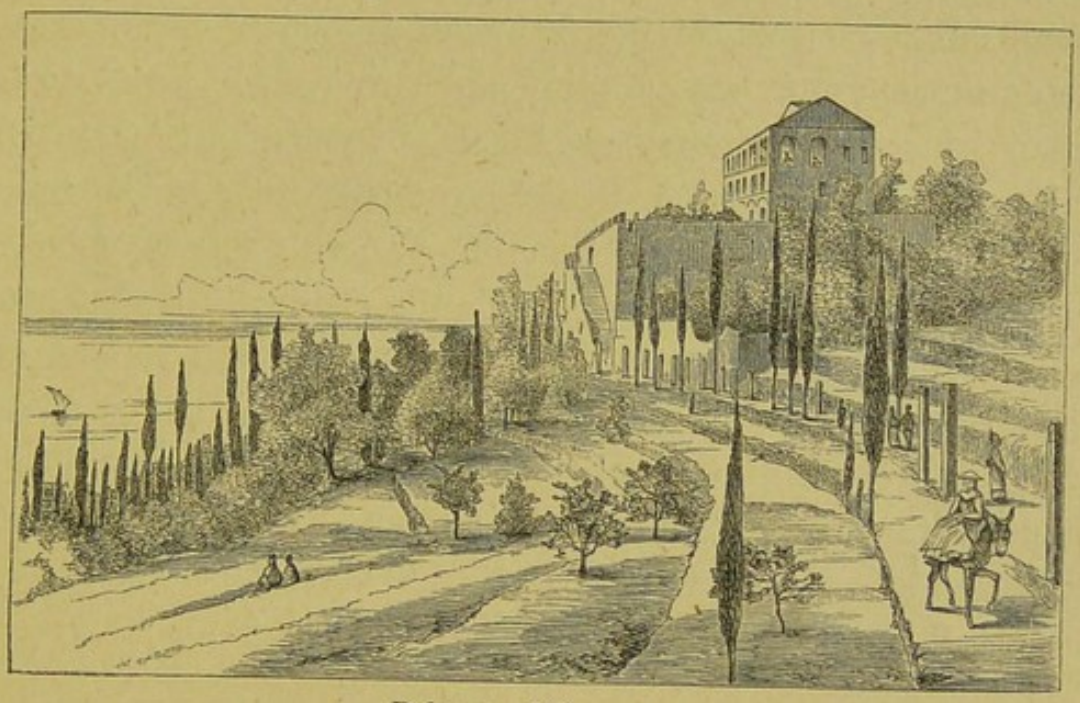
The idea of making an investment in Italy may not be pleasing. One never knows what may turn up. Possibly, this is being too sensitive. Distance is said 'to lend enchantment to the view,' but it sometimes also lends unnecessary apprehensions. On the spot, everything looks as composed and harmless as may be, and whatever political turmoils may occur, this cosy nook in the Riviera offers a retreat not likely to be molested. It is a great thing to acquire a palazzo and the importance of a seigneur for two or three thousand pounds—to make your own oil and wine, eat your own oranges and figs, and have boating and yachting to any imaginable amount. It is something in the catalogue of recommendations, that the authorities at the neighbouring town of Ventimiglia are delighted (and no wonder) to see Englishmen buying properties about them; any one, therefore, settling down in the neighbourhood, may expect to be treated with profound civility and consideration. Then, think of being within an hour's drive of France—Mentone quite at hand, whence friends can come to see you on all occasions during the season, and the douaniers at the frontier giving no sort of trouble. I retain a vivid recollection of the richly-prolific grounds which environ these old and traditionally dignified palazzos. Peeping within the gateway, you see an enclosure exuberant in orange, citron, and fig trees, with vines trained from pillar to pillar over the silent approach. Amidst the foliage towers the old gray battered edifice, shut up, and sorrowful, with nothing to animate the scene but the swallows wheeling in

their busy flight around the deserted mansion. My visit to these palazzos was in the month of January, when peas (probably raised for market) were in full bloom.

An English gentleman has bought one of these properties, the Palazzo of Orengo, near Cap Murtola, and renovated it in first-rate style. The mansion occupies a site so prominent as to command a view of Mentone. With the grounds and some water privileges, it was a cheap purchase. Even with cost of repairs, it was a prodigious bargain. Politely invited to the palazzo, we went in a hired carriage from Mentone, but unexpectedly found that it could not take us further than a point on the high-road overlooking the house, two hundred feet beneath. A walk down, and the use of a donkey up for Madame, made all easy. I was of course interested in the interior of the structure, with its white marble stairs, its inlaid floors, and loggia off the drawing-room, in the upper floor of the mansion. In every old palazzo two things appear to have been essential, a draw-well and a loggia. The draw-well is here situated at one side of the marble-paved entrance-hall; being, however, tastefully enclosed, it does not appear out of place. Without a loggia, it would be scarcely possible to exist in the heats of summer. At Orengo, the loggia is a square apartment, open on two sides, the roof being supported on pillars. Seated in this shady retreat, the family enjoy the pleasures of the open air, with a view of the gardens beneath and the adjacent sea-beach. A flight of steps on the side next the sea leads down to the original entrance to the grounds from the old Roman road, here distinctly traced, about twelve feet wide.

Conducted over the gardens, I had the pleasure of being shewn a variety of trees and shrubs natural to a tropical climate, and rarely seen in the open air in Europe. During the short ramble, I learned some facts regarding the antiquity of the

water channels which one observes everywhere, and of the punctilious way in which custom and legal rights guard the privileges of the proprietors. The water for the grounds is led from a torrent, which at certain times turns a mill for pressing oil from the olives. In consideration of the priceless value of water, something like a grudge was felt that there was somewhere here-



Palazzo of Orengo.

abouts a subterranean river which had its outlet in the sea, where it could be seen boiling up and running to waste. Nobody could tell where it came from. All that could be conjectured was that it found its way through the limestone rocks from some place far distant, it might be a hundred miles off. If that river could be but tapped, and diverted to some useful purpose, what visions of wealth for the neighbourhood! Perhaps, thought I, this may come about. What a prize for the Mentonians if they could manage to tap and impound a subterranean and ever-running river! A gold mine would be nothing to it.

Observing English newspapers on a table in the house, a talk

ensued about the irregularities of the French postal system. On settling here, the *Times* was ordered from London *viâ* Mentone, but so frequently was it late in arriving, that at length the expedient was tried of procuring it by way of Turin and Genoa (some hundreds of miles about), and ever since it had arrived with regularity and despatch. I am glad to have at least one good thing to say of Italian administration, and were the circumstance properly known, it might shame the French into an improved system of forwarding English newspapers to strangers residing in their country. In the pleasant society at Orengo, a few hours sped quickly away. On our departure, after being hospitably entertained, a school of little girls, under charge of their mistress, stood awaiting us on the road. It was an agreeable surprise. At a signal, before entering our carriage, which had been in attendance at the village, they united in singing a hymn expressive of good wishes. Having concluded, they individually presented us with bouquets of sweet-scented violets, and kindly courtesied an adieu.

CHAPTER VIII.

THERE is one other excursion which ought not to be omitted. It is to Cap Martin, and will be comprehended in a forenoon walk. What, I think, may particularly interest strangers, is a sight of the largest and finest olive trees in the whole Riviera, and also some curious Roman remains, of which no one can give any perfectly satisfactory explanation. A few days before my departure from Mentone, I made this excursion. Fortunately, I was not alone in the journey. I was favoured with the escort of Mr M. Moggridge, an English gentleman of nearly my own age, who has resided a number of winters in Mentone with several members of his family. Uniting a singular saliency of disposition with scientific tastes, and happily possessing a wiry frame, which seems to defy fatigue and exposure, he has been able to undertake journeys over a lengthened tract of the Riviera, from the sea-shore to the tops of the highest mountains. In 1862, he occupied himself in exploring the caves in the limestone rocks on the shore near Pont St Louis, already noticed, bringing to light bones, pieces of charcoal, and flint instruments, which are the puzzle of historians. In the midsummer of 1868, he made an expedition to the mountainous region of the Laghi delle Meraviglie, thirty-two miles north of Mentone, and there, at the height of 7825 feet above the level of the sea, copied certain hieroglyphic inscriptions on rocks,

which bear some remote resemblance to those remarkable stone carvings in Scotland which have engaged the inquiry of antiquaries. Ever on the alert, chiefly with a view to investigating the nature of the plants in the Riviera, and so aiding the inquiries of his son, who has written some elegant brochures on the botany of the district,* Mr Moggridge readily consented to be my cicerone to Cap Martin and the vicinity of Monaco.

At ten o'clock I was ready to start, equipped in my strongest shoes, which, however, were not half strong enough; for the weather had been wet, and the roads were in about as bad a condition as possible for a walking expedition. Feeling the inadequacy of my equipments, I could not help admiring and envying my friend's whole set-out. On presenting himself, you might see at a glance that you had to deal with an enthusiastic mountain pedestrian. Attired in a pair of knickerbockers, ribbed woollen stockings, and stout ankle boots, he carried a pole five and a half feet long, with a pike at one end and a hook at the other, calculated either to steady him on the acclivities, or to pull down the branch of a tree which he wished botanically to examine. Besides this formidable pike-staff, he carried a green-painted tin box, slung by a belt round his shoulder, as a receptacle for specimens of plants; while around his waist was another belt, bearing two leather sheaths, one containing a large knife, and the other a saw, both serviceable in his explorations. In his visits to the hills, as I learned, he does not burden himself with provender. Ordinarily, he is satisfied with a few oranges in his pocket, and a brown tobacco-pipe, which he has the knack of smoking while talking to you, holding the pipe adroitly between his teeth.

It was in this guise that he proceeded to lead me to Cap

* *Contributions to the Flora of Mentone.* By J. Traherne Moggridge. With Coloured Engravings. London, 1868.

Martin. Passing Carnolles and the last house in the western suburb, we left the main thoroughfare, and struck to the left, down a narrow road, dreadfully cut up with wheel-tracks, and environed by grounds, on which grew a forest of olive trees of considerable size, and evidently, from their appearance, of great antiquity. I had seen none so large elsewhere. According to tradition, many of these trees were upwards of a thousand years old, and such, in a qualified sense, is likely to be the case. Branches and part of the stem of the olive tree decay, but life remains in the roots and lower division of the trunk, from which new boughs spring time after time through a succession of ages. From these causes, while many of the trunks are rent in antiquated hollows, the mass of branches above are youthful and luxuriant. Such trees may command a degree of veneration from their age, but I cannot coincide in the notion of their beauty. Evidently the whole require frequent manuring around the roots. Old woollen rags, if they can be obtained, are used for the purpose. There is a belief that the Romans brought the olive from Palestine and introduced it into the country. Nowhere, as I have said, has it attained such a gigantic size as on the soil of Cap Martin.

Having floundered along the pathway for about a mile, turning and winding, and at length ascending to the higher ground forming the flattish ridge of the Cap, we paused a little to have a view over the Mediterranean and the environs of Mentone. Mists hung on the summits of the higher mountains, a few peaks being slightly whitened with snow. One sharp point stood out clearly against the sky.

'Do you see that tall jagged peak,' said Mr Moggridge, 'that one clear of clouds, immediately behind Castellare?'

'Of course I do,' I replied: 'it seems so narrow that a person could not find footing on the summit.'

'Quite a mistake,' he replied. 'I have often pic-nicked with parties on the very top, which is only 2745 feet high.'

'Surely, ladies cannot have climbed to such a height?'

'Yes, they have,' replied my friend. 'The last time I was up, there was a lady in the party who was a grandmother, and she is quite ready to make the ascent again at the first opportunity. You have no idea what spirited ladies—English visitors—we have in Mentone; they will walk for miles up the hills, and afterwards dance half the night at a ball at the Cercle. This is the place for exercising the limbs.'

'Perhaps,' said I, 'sometimes rather more dancing than discretion; however, that is not my affair. What is your idea about the climate of Mentone?—you must have had a good experience of it.'

'My idea is very conclusive; I care nothing about popular fancies, but go to Nature. Two things I take as a criterion—contour and vegetation. See that semicircle of mountains, the whole a mighty rampart sheltering the lower grounds from the cold and moist winds of northern and central Europe. Then, see what is the vegetation. Lemons and citrons, two most delicate fruits, growing in profusion in the open air, like apples in Herefordshire. Look around you, also, and see these noble olive trees, as old and as tall as oaks in England. I might speak of the carouba and various other trees, but it is unnecessary.'

'Is not dryness a peculiarity of the air?'

'Yes, the air is generally dry and light, which adapts it for some classes of invalids; but I do not consider it as being too dry; the sea must have a certain modifying influence. The benefit derived by members of my own family wintering here, enables me to speak with confidence of both air and climate.'

Speaking of the adaptability of the Cap for a pleasure-ground,

with drives for the enjoyment of visitors, I learned that the land had been put in the way of being saved from exclusive private use by being purchased by a Parisian gentleman, a winter visitor, M. Sabatier, to whom, as well as to his family, Mentone was under many obligations. Having bought the property, he has given the municipal authorities an opportunity to acquire it at the purchased price for the use of the public. Whether the liberal offer will be embraced seems doubtful; for besides the purchase-money, there must be a considerable outlay in forming a proper road along the beach to join the Promenade du Midi.

After a little chat on this interesting topic, we walked on, immediately striking upon a narrow road through the forest, differing in some respects from the miry path in the lower grounds. It was bounded by low walls, and here and there we came upon a remnant of pavement with large stones; such being portions of the old Roman road through the country. Excepting what produce might presumably be gathered from the huge olive trees, the district was a waste. Along the road, we met only two or three labouring men going to their work somewhere, to all of whom my companion said: *Bonjour, mon ami,* to which greeting there was a gracious response.

'I see,' said I, 'that you make a point of speaking to every one you meet—I suppose that is the common practice.'

The reply was: 'Some do it, and some do not. It has been my custom through life to always have a kindly word for every one when walking through the country. It is a bit of civility that gives pleasure. I have never been the worse, but often the better, for it. Years ago, when helping a canvass in Wales, I secured a great many votes from people I knew nothing at all about; the explanation being, as they candidly told me, that I had spoken to them long before, when I asked

for and expected nothing. Since I came to France, I have followed the practice, and am the best friend in the world with all the poor people in the neighbourhood.'

'The opinion I have formed,' I said, 'from a comparatively limited observation, is, that the humbler classes in Mentone and its vicinity are an industrious, quiet, well-disposed people—does that consist with your experience?'

'Most assuredly it does: they are old-fashioned in their ways, possess no enterprise, but in all my experience I never saw such a decent, well-behaved people. Crime is almost unknown amongst them.—But here we are at the ruin.'

At the distance of about sixty feet north from the side of the road, on a raised bank surrounded by olive trees, stands this fragment of masonry. Approaching it, to have a close inspection, we find it to be a building of stones squared, and laid in regular courses. Fronting us is a façade, measuring twenty-seven feet across, and twelve feet high; but as the top is broken and ragged, the original height must have been greater. The thickness of the façade is five feet six inches—so thick as to admit of three alcoves or recesses in a row, each recess arched, and about two feet in depth backwards. The wall above the arches shews a handsome string-course, with a lozenge-shaped figure over the two side arches. Over the central arch, there is a square recess in the wall, which had evidently at one time been occupied by a slab, probably bearing an inscription. Behind the mass forming this frontage, there had been an open quadrangle, enclosed by a wall two feet thick. Of this wall the west side only remains, but we trace where the other sides had been. The depth of the quadrangle over the wall had been twenty-eight feet six inches, by twenty-seven feet —very nearly a square. These walls, as is observed by significant traces, had not been above seven or eight feet high.

Having examined the structure at all points, we can have little difficulty in assigning its origin to the Romans; but at what period it was erected, or what were its uses, are questions less easily solved. There it stands, without date or mark to tell its mysterious tale; and from no ancient writer do we learn aught concerning it. To strengthen the opinion that the ruin is of Roman origin, it is known with all but absolute certainty that on the flat ground hereabouts was the military station of Lumon or Lumone, indicated by Antoninus as being on the Roman way from Ventimiglia to Turbia. Of this station there is now no visible trace, such as the mounds of an encampment, but this may be accounted for by the universal trenching caused by the culture of the olive trees.

'Well,' inquired my companion, 'now that you have had a good look of the ruin, and taken its measurements, what is your opinion about it? I have made up my mind, but I will be quite fair, and let you speak first.'

This was putting me on my mettle. I took a little time to think. 'My first notion,' I said, 'on seeing the building was, that it was the relic of some habitable structure; then the idea of baths crossed my mind; but on looking closely at the façade, I am fully of opinion that the building has been of a commemorative character; and I will shew you why. That empty square space over the middle arch had, no doubt, been originally filled with a slab bearing an inscription; and it is quite as likely that in each alcove there had stood a figure in marble; in the central one, possibly, a bust, and an appropriate heathen deity on each side.'

'Not badly guessed, so far,' said Mr Moggridge: 'now, I will tell you what I think. This had been the mausoleum of some distinguished Roman family, connected with the station of Lumone. The burial-place had been the enclosure behind;

and in front had been the inscription. Such, in fact, is the opinion of several French antiquaries who have written about the place. I believe, however, no one has thought of the figures in front; but that conjecture, I allow, is very feasible.'

We argued the point as to whether the mausoleum was that of a family or an individual; but having no basis of facts whereon to found our respective theories, the discussion settled nothing. I suggested that the space behind the façade should be trenched, to discover if there were any sepulchral remains; and that at anyrate the whole ruin should be enclosed, and protected from further injury. There is no photograph or drawing of the ruin, and I likewise hinted that something of that kind was very desirable. I have attempted a small sketch of it from memory, and put it at the conclusion of the present volume.

Leaving this relic of antiquity, we continued our walk westward till, getting clear of the woods, and still on the old Roman road, we came in sight of Monaco and the very picturesque shores of the Mediterranean in its neighbourhood. The ground was an open uncultured steep. Far below on our left was the sea-shore, while on the face of the hill above was the town of Roccabruna, which can be reached by a steep pathway. Around us on the sloping bank, trees and small flowering plants were growing in a state of nature. This wild condition of affairs was highly relished by my companion. He was on the outlook for a particular plant, which he described as being never found except in the south. I drew his attention to a modest-looking shrub about the size of a whin-bush, bearing very small purple blossoms along the outer stems.

'Why,' said he, 'that is a common plant here; it is rosemary —the well-known rosemary of Shakspeare; and if we look about we shall also find rue, another plant of poetic renown—

there it is. You remember what Ophelia says about rue: "There 's rue for you; and here 's some for me."'

'Ophelia says something more than that: in tendering the rue to Laertes, she says, "we may call it herb-grace o' Sundays," and what is meant by that has been subject of subtle inquiry among critics; I suppose, however, that rue was called herb-grace simply as figuring by its sorrowful name the grace of repentance.'

The remark introduced a conversation on the practice of laying a bunch of rue before persons on trial at Newgate—an impertinent practical pun on their unfortunate position at the bar. While discussing the subject, Mr Moggridge made a sudden rush to a plant with small slender leaves, being the one he was in quest of, and seemed to feel more happy in securing a specimen of it than if he had fallen upon a mine of the precious metals. 'I daresay it is a valuable plant that you have got hold of,' said I; 'unfortunately, I am not able to see anything remarkable about it; that, of course, is my ignorance. I go in for admiring the rosemary, which is flowering hereabouts in great profusion; so, "for remembrance," I will take the liberty of carrying off a sprig in my button-hole.'

Glancing down the steep, I observed a donkey climbing a pathway under a load of sticks, with a lad behind driving it. 'What a wonderfully useful animal the ass is in this mountainous region,' I observed. 'I don't see how the people could get on without it. And so patient, so docile is the creature, I am sometimes sorry for it. Talking of that, I have heard the donkey-women address a few words to the animal, as if to cheer it on, which I did not understand. The words sounded like *alla eesa*. Can you tell me what they mean?'

'Yes,' was the reply. 'The meaning is a pious exclamation of kindly import from the Arabic, and is traced to the Saracens, who at one time held possession of parts of the country along

the coast. The hill-dwellers certainly take the work out of their donkeys, but on the whole treat them kindly; they are, in fact, their companions, their friends, their dependence.'

Conversation now turned on the remarkable absence of wild animals, particularly birds, along the whole Riviera. There was, doubtless, no deficiency of butterflies, but this only confirmed the notion, that insects injurious to plants had gained in numbers by the vicious practice of shooting almost every kind of small bird.

Mr Moggridge confirmed me in this opinion. 'Some of the tracts on the higher hills,' said he, 'have been wholly stripped of their pine forests by a destructive caterpillar, the *Bombyx processiania;* so called because these caterpillars follow each other in long and very strange processions. One goes in front as a leader, two follow close behind, then three, and so on, all hard upon each other. As they are marked brown and black, a procession of them looks like a triangular piece of old carpet on the march with one of the corners foremost—a very queer sort of thing, I assure you. Two or three years ago, when on an expedition among the mountains, I came to the forest of Braus, which was already half destroyed by these voracious caterpillars. Many trees were merely withered stumps, others were dying, and to all appearance the remainder would ere long perish. A good way to get rid of these destructive caterpillars would be to gather and set fire to their nests, which resemble bunches of fine wool placed among the branches of the trees. I suggested to the government that women and children should be employed to pick off the nests, otherwise the country would be denuded; but I was referred to the communal authorities, and they would do nothing. I suppose the woods are all gone by this time. All this comes, of course, from shooting the small birds which are appointed by Nature to keep down the number

of insects. There has been, I believe, some formal edict of the French government against killing these birds, but little or no attention is paid to it. The insects which prey on plants have full swing. The time may come when, alarmed for the consequences, the French, like the people of Philadelphia in the United States, may have to import batches of live sparrows from England.'

Taking the road back to Mentone, and leaving Mr Moggridge to pursue some inquiries in the neighbourhood of Roccabruna, I had not an opportunity of following up his remarks on the folly of killing small birds. It is more than a folly. It is a gross public outrage. At Mentone, persons are seen sallying out with guns slung by a belt over their shoulders, on the watch for every stray sparrow, lark, or robin. Shooting these small birds goes on with perfect impunity in the streets and by-ways. The practice is not carried on in a mere spirit of idleness or mischief. The little creatures are killed for the sake of picking up a few miserable sous. The birds are disposed of to shopkeepers, who hang them up in bunches for sale outside their doors; and in due time they make their appearance cooked at the tables-d'hôte: a *menu* with an *Entrée des alouettes et des rouges-gorges*—in plain English, a dish of roasted larks and robin-redbreasts! Greatly to the credit of the visitors residing last season at the Hôtel Splendide, they protested against the barbarity, and the remonstrance, as under, obtained publicity in the small local journal.*

* (*Translation.*) The undersigned, members of the colony of strangers at Mentone, penetrated, as every one ought to be, with the great wrong done to agriculture by the destruction of insectivorous birds, and anxious to contribute on their part towards the disappearance of a practice as hurtful as it is barbarous, make it known as their wish that the keepers of hotels and pensions will never again serve up this species of game at their tables-d'hôte. —*Journal de Menton*, Nov. 27, 1869.

Besides being injurious to agriculture, the systematic slaughter of insectivorous birds must tend to increase the number of mosquitoes. I cannot say we were annoyed with these insects, for the season was winter, and from any stray one that happened to be in the apartments at night we were protected by fine gauze curtains hanging in copious drapery around the beds. They become, however, a serious trouble in spring and summer, more particularly in the neighbourhood of trees. If it were for nothing more than lessening the numbers of mosquitoes, the settled inhabitants should interpose by some general movement to preserve the small birds from indiscriminate destruction. If they do interpose, they may as well, while in a lecturing mood, offer some hints to the municipal authorities regarding their neglect in sundry other little matters; some of them so obvious to the senses, that they do not need to be particularised. When a town professes to lay itself out as an attractive health-resort, it should not have been left to strangers to make these remonstrances. The self-interest of the people, as well as good taste, ought before this to have applied a corrective.

Before quitting the country, I visited Monaco, partly with a view to see what I had heard sufficient talk about, the Casino of Monte Carlo. The principality, shrunk to moderate dimensions, is now visited almost exclusively on account of the Casino. Few trouble themselves about the old walled town on the rocky peninsula, though it is interesting from historical circumstances. Occupying a pleasant situation on an elevated plateau east from the town, Monte Carlo consists of the Casino, a hotel, and a few villas, shops, and restaurants. The whole are intermingled with gardens, promenades, and terraces. On the principal terrace grow some fine date palms. The place has an air of splendour. Everything has been done to render it attractive. Much money must have been spent by M. Leblanc, the lessee

of the Casino, which bears a considerable resemblance to the similar establishment at Homburg. The edifice comprehends several large and very highly-decorated apartments for the gaming-tables, balls, and concerts. There is likewise a reading-room, provided with a profusion of English, French, German, American, and other newspapers, open freely to visitors from morning to night. A band of musicians plays in the open grounds twice a day. *Les jeux* are of the usual character—*rouge et noir* with cards, and *roulette*. As the railway station is at the foot of the slope immediately behind, the Casino can be reached many times a day in a quarter of an hour from Mentone, and in less than an hour from Nice. The resort is considerable, more particularly from Nice; every train carrying a flock of persons of both sexes with an appetite for gaming. Natives of the district are, I believe, forbidden to enter the establishment, but this is a rule which could not be easily enforced. I heard of cooks and waiters from the hotels in Mentone occasionally winning or losing a five-franc piece.

It would be easy to enlarge on the gambling which, day by day, Sunday included, goes on in this authorised temple of Pluto; but with every disposition to say something condemnatory on the subject, one is awkwardly reminded of the old injunction about first taking the mote out of your own eye before trying your hand on the eyes of others. On this matter of Monte Carlo, I feel as if my mouth were shut by a knowledge of prevalent gaming practices at home—I mean the wide-spread system of betting on horse-races, which is nothing else than inveterate and disreputable gambling under the cover of sport and fashionable usage.

Wandering about the sunny knolls near the Casino, I had pointed out to me a pretty spot on the sea-shore, as the original site of the shrine of Ste Dévote, the patron saint of the small

sovereignty. I had been lately reading the legend of this highly appreciated female martyr, which I may condense into a few lines, for the amusement of those who care for this class of stories.

Dévote was a young maiden of Corsica, who, for her faithful adherence to Christianity, was cruelly put to death during the frightful persecutions of Diocletian and Maximilian. Warned by a vision, two priests, who had hid themselves in a cave, carried away her body, and putting it on board a boat, set sail for the coast of Africa. A storm, however, arose, and there appeared to be a danger of being wrecked. In this emergency, when all was given up for lost, the priests were again favoured by a vision; the spirit of the girl announced that the storm would soon cease, and that a dove would issue from her mouth, which they should follow with the boat till they arrived at a certain spot on the Italian coast near Monaco. They accordingly saw a dove come forth from the mouth of the corpse, and they gladly followed it to the spot indicated. There the body was interred on the 27th January, which day remains the festival of Ste Dévote. The relics of the saint have been transferred from her original shrine to the church in Monaco, and are carried in great ceremony at the annual festival. It has long been a custom, on this occasion, for the inhabitants of Monaco to prefer a request to the prince, which, if they all agree upon, and is reasonable and practicable, is graciously granted.

The implicit belief in the legend of Ste Dévote may be taken as a fair specimen of the credulity still prevalent in the Riviera. At Monaco and several other places, the passion of our Lord is dramatised in a public procession every year on Good-Friday, when an immense concourse of people attend.

Efforts, as I understand, have been made by some of the higher order of clergy to put an end to these practices, which

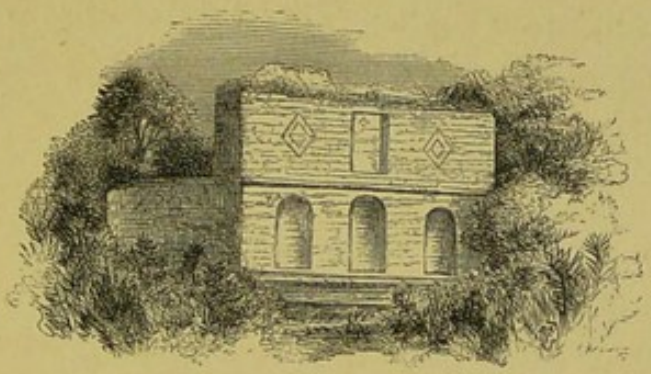
have degenerated into little better than sacrilegious burlesque, but such well-meant attempts have hitherto failed. The occasion is hailed as a sort of 'Holy Fair,' of which the lower uninstructed classes are immensely fond. To accommodate the fluctuating crowds, Roccabruna holds its Good-Friday entertainment on the 5th August. The maintenance of the revelries is said to be partly due to the keepers of *Débits de Vin*, who find it to their account to encourage them; and there are persons who cling to them for histrionic reasons. One man is good at playing Pontius Pilate, another (the villain of the piece) is clever at representing Judas Iscariot, a woman is proud of being able to simulate the tenderly weeping Mary Magdalene, and so on with other personages. There is sometimes a difficulty in finding a person with sufficient self-command to endure the contumelies heaped on the meek and suffering Saviour by the Roman soldiers. A few years ago, at Roccabruna, one who undertook to represent the sacred character was, as he thought, so maltreated as to lose his temper, and using his fists in defence, broke out in imprecations which greatly shocked the onlookers. From what I heard, these pretended solemnities are losing hold on popular feeling. At Mentone they are of a subdued character. Education and intercourse with strangers are year by year lessening the general respect for them. Let alone, I doubt not that, like the mummings of the olden time in England, they will gradually disappear.

The concluding part of the season, as has been said, was spent by us in Nice, where, as well as in Paris subsequently, I found something to interest in the method of forming foot-pavements and roadways of a species of artificial stone, which was introduced a few years ago with perfect success into France. The material employed is a bituminous limestone rock ground to powder; the powder is heated, but not melted, in a caldron,

after which it is laid evenly, as a sort of hot mortar, on a bed of concrete; lastly, it is pressed smooth with rollers, and is allowed a short time to cool and harden previous to being used. In the case of foot-pavements, after pressure, it is stamped with indentations to resemble sandstone. When finished, it is smooth, beautiful in appearance, hard, and more durable than any stone ordinarily employed. In Paris, it has latterly come extensively into use for the roadways, and is only now becoming known in London. The rock which furnishes this remarkable material is a hard limestone dug from mines in the Val-de-Travers, canton of Neufchâtel, Switzerland. The proportion of bitumen in the rock is eleven to twelve per cent., just sufficient to fuse the material when ground, and to take a firm consolidated form by pressure; on which account, it is a very different thing from the pitchy asphalt mixed with sand with which we are accustomed. Any one who is acquainted with the newer streets in Paris will recollect their smoothness, and the ease with which carriages are run upon them. The wonder is, how the invention should have been so long in making its way to England.

My little tale is told. I have endeavoured to offer a fair outline of what may be experienced, and what seen, by a WINTERING AT MENTONE—extenuating nothing, overpraising nothing. More might have been said regarding the climate without trenching on the province of the physician; yet enough has been stated to shew invalids and health-seekers in advanced years that, with care, very considerable benefit may be experienced. It will have been seen that certain discomforts, possibly extortions, may have to be submitted to. The dreariness of exile in a place so unfortunately devoid of means for rational

amusement as Mentone, will in itself be hateful. The inadequacy of various public arrangements may cause personal inconvenience and dissatisfaction. But seriously considered, what is all that and much more, when balanced against the probability of returning home with a reinvigorated constitution? My latest sojourn, not free from annoyances which are vanishing from memory, effected every desired end. On losing the last glimpse of the Mediterranean, I felt something like a pang of regret, though its noisy movements had at times been troublesome. Its pleasant sunny shores had restored the health that had been impaired on the banks of the Firth of Forth.



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