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Contributors

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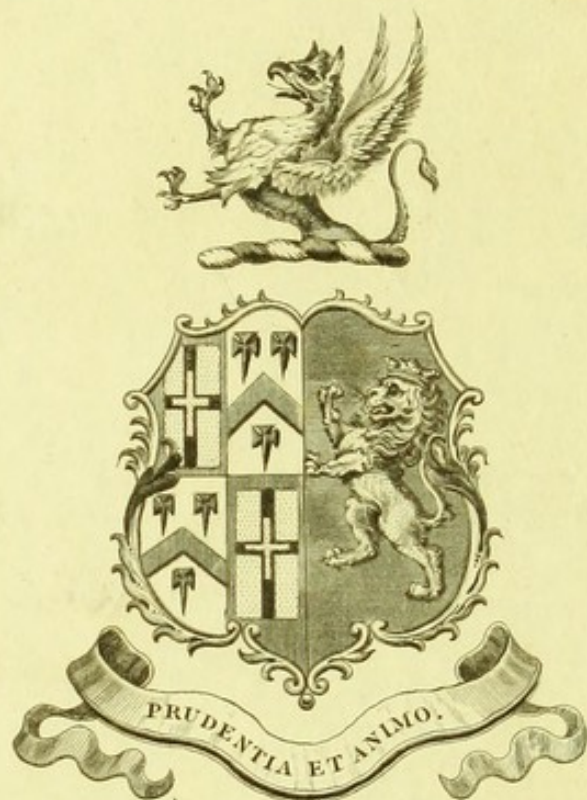
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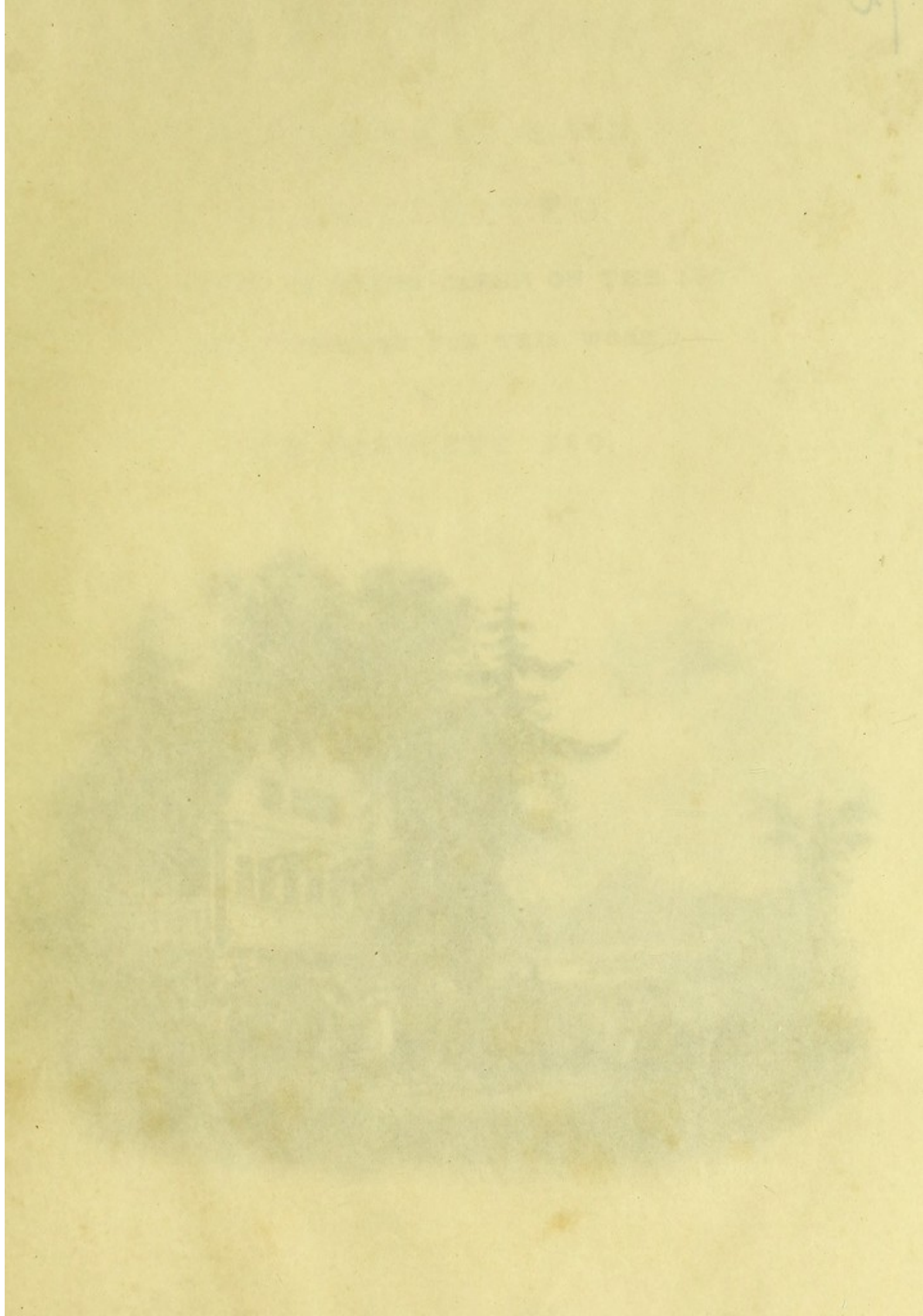
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SWITZERLAND

BY

WILLIAM BEATTIE, M.D.

ILLUSTRATED.

IN A SERIES OF VIEWS TAKEN ON THE SPOT

AND EXPRESSLY FOR THIS WORK.

by

W. H. BARTLETT, ESQ.



COTTAGE NEAR THUN.



SWITZERLAND.

"Ce paysage unique, le plus beau dont l'œil humain fut jamais frappé!—séjour charmant auquel je n'avais rien trouvé d'égal dans le tour du monde!—l'aspect d'un peuple heureux et libre!"—ROUSSEAU.

"THE SWITZER'S LAND!—Where grandeur is encamped
Impregnably in mountain-tents of snow;
Realms that by human foot-print ne'er were stamped,
Where the eagle wheels, and glacial ramparts glow!
Seek, Nature's worshipper, those landscapes!—Go,
Where all her fiercest, fairest charms are joined
Go to the land where TELL drew freedom's bow;
And in the patriot's country thou shalt find
A semblance 'twixt the scene and his immortal mind."—CAMPBELL.

WHOEVER has travelled much, and compared the various attractions presented to him in the course of his peregrinations, will generally be found to admit that if there be any country which merits more attention than the rest, *that* country is SWITZERLAND. He may have traversed the fertile plains of Italy, and become familiar with the vestiges of her ancient grandeur; he may have coasted the "shipless shores" of Greece, and felt his mind kindling with enthusiasm, while he dwelt upon those scenes and associations which have thrown such hallowing lustre over her soil and history; but in both, the contemplation is more or less tinted with melancholy, and the proud memorials of the past exhibited in humiliating contrast with the present. In both the human mind, half divested of its original attributes, groans under the pressure of despotism, or expends its once elastic spirit in trivial pursuits and occupations. Every where he deploras the degradation of intellect, the traces of ungovernable passions, and the baneful influences of a grovelling superstition. This, indeed, may admit of many isolated exceptions both in district and individuals—the

rule, nevertheless, is general. But quitting these, let the traveller enter Switzerland by what point he may, how different is the picture which engages his contemplation! Here the energies of the human mind are presented to him in full operation. Every where he observes the regenerating influence of freedom; the equal protection of rights and extension of privileges; an equable distribution of the public burdens; a strong practical morality; an unwearied industry, and love of independence; united with a patriotism which, from its very intensity, has become proverbial. Here the peasant, fearing no avaricious lord, no spiritual inquisitor, enjoys the fruits of his labour in peace, sweetened and improved by the free and full toleration of his religion.

Although subdivided into so many cantons, and inhabited by a people who present so many distinct features in their customs, dress, religion, language, and municipal laws, Switzerland, nevertheless, furnishes ample proof that she is actuated by one sole pervading spirit; where every canton contributes with friendly emulation to improve her domestic policy, and to strengthen her political relations. Here, commerce is fast extending her ramifications—a process which is greatly facilitated by the medium of her lakes and rivers. Her towns appear like so many national hives, where science, arts, and mechanism are industriously prosecuted, and generally secure independence. In the lower valleys agriculture is carried to great perfection, while the higher are devoted to pastoral purposes, and present to the eye of a stranger a life of cheerful and patriarchal simplicity.

Here also, the business of public education is conducted with remarkable industry and success. Institutions for the advancement of this most important branch of political economy have become universal in the Protestant cantons, where they are liberally conducted, and, under the vigilant guardianship of men whose labours in the good cause do honour to human nature, they may be viewed as the best guarantees of that prosperity which exalteth a nation. Here virtue is not merely “its own reward,” but being honoured by public approbation, it is imitated, and becomes an object of generous competition; while vice, kept in constant check by the powerful influence of good example, is but rarely productive of capital offences. Timely reprobation and correction are salutary measures; and the legislative authorities acting upon these principles, and animated by a humane and lively solicitude for the moral welfare of the people, have directed their efforts to the *prevention*, and consequently have greatly diminished the necessity for the *punishment*, of crime. It is thus that, in a moral estimate, Switzerland may be said to take as decided precedence over other nations as she does in her geographical position—the most elevated country in Europe.

Such, briefly, are the moral features of Switzerland; but, that they are universal, is not to be inferred. Religion alone, by its various and irreconcilable tenets, has a powerful effect in their development; and from the Lake of Constance to the Lago Maggiore, the traveller observes many striking contrasts and modifications, and such as, from the distinctions above stated, the reader will readily suppose. But after unprejudiced observation and much familiarity with the country, we will cheerfully admit that there is infinitely more to command our admiration than to provoke our censure.

But as these reflections may appear rather foreign to a work more ostensibly devoted to the "sublime and picturesque" scenery of Switzerland; and as the literary portion must necessarily be brief and limited, we proceed to our task, *con amore*, and shall now conduct the reader through those scenes which may be truly said to embrace whatever is most striking in Helvetian landscape; most characteristic of its peculiar grandeur and magnificence; and on which the struggles and triumphs of a high-minded and heroic people have conferred an especial immortality.

PASSAGE OF THE JURA.

"Salut! pompeux Jura, terrible Mont Envers!"—DELILLE.

ON quitting the plains of France, and passing through St. Laurent on the road to Morey, we behold the gradual development of the Jura mountains, which form the grand and imposing barrier between France and Helvetia on one hand, and Germany and Helvetia on the other. As we advance, our attention becomes more and more rivetted by the scenery before us, and the silence of contemplation is often interrupted by enthusiastic bursts of admiration. By degrees every individual feature assumes a more imposing aspect; points less distinct appear to advance; those in advance, to increase in magnitude, till the dwarf seems to shoot up into the stature of the giant, and every step gives additional life and prominence to the landscape.

The Jura, unlike the other and loftier mountains of Switzerland, is clothed from base to summit with luxuriant pine forests. Here, you observe them

advancing in isolated promontories and outposts; there, grouped into a congeries of hills, or shooting up in serrated and precipitous ridges; but towards the base, variegated by intricate and romantic valleys, and labyrinths of rich meadow land, which give striking ornament and relief to the sombre forests in which the whole chain is enveloped. This passage of the Jura abounds in every variety of scenery;—the simple and picturesque, the savage and the sublime, follow one another in such rapid succession, and are assembled in such remarkable juxtaposition, as to defy all description or classification. The ascent is full of interest, and the impression not a little strengthened by the sense of personal risk which the traveller must at times encounter before he can accomplish his task. Winter is the season when it is to be seen in all its wildest magnificence, for then the snow-sledges supersede almost every other vehicle of locomotion, and, preceded and followed by horses and mules in long procession, with a constant tinkling of bells, present at first sight a most novel and picturesque effect.

After pursuing for some leagues a steep, rugged, and circuitous route, winding, at one time, along a deep ravine, or the deserted bed of some ancient torrent; at another, under the threatening verge of precipitous rocks, we reach the immediate frontiers of Helvetia.

From La Vattay, a town shut up in the deep obscurity of pine forests, and enjoying most perfect seclusion, a shelving, terraced road conducted us up the Dole,* whose isolated summit presents one of the boldest features in the Jura. Here, at an immense elevation above the valley, a new world opened upon us, and we unexpectedly found ourselves on the almost perpendicular side of the mountain. The pine-covered precipices upon which we stood gave us a full command of the wild undulating forest scenery around, which plunged, as it were, into an extensive plain, where gleaming spires, villages, and chateaux, swam beneath us like a floating cloud. Stretching away in far perspective to the shores of the Lemman—from which a pale, transparent vapour crept slowly upward, dilating as it ascended—the vast forms of confused and blending mountains towered range above range in shadowy grandeur: while, loftier still, and lifted into the serene purple of an evening sky, the eternal ALPS burst suddenly upon our view, and, by an irresistible fascination, held us for a time in fixed and silent admiration.

The sublimity of this scene has been acknowledged by general acclamation, and the glowing colours with which it has been invested by the author of *Eloïse*

* Or *Dolaz*:—4,000 feet above the Lake of Geneva, and commanding the Alpine Chain to the extent of 100 leagues.

are far from exaggerated. It was from a similar point that Rousseau, after his pilgrimage and sojourn in Italy, hailed these stupendous landmarks as the unchangeable features of his country, and gave vent to those powerful emotions which he has recorded with so much pathos and simplicity.—“ Plus j'approchais de la Suisse, plus je me sentais ému. L'instant où, des hauteurs du JURA, je decouvris le lac de Genève, fut un instant d'extase et de ravissement. La vue de mon pays, de ce pays si cher, où des torrens de plaisir avaient inondés mon cœur; l'air des Alpes, si salubre et si pure; le doux air de la patrie, plus suave que les parfums de l'orient; cette terre riche et fertile; ce paysage unique! le plus beau dont l'œil humain fut jamais frappé! séjour charmant auquel je n'avais rien trouvé d'égal dans le tour du monde! l'aspect d'un peuple heureux et libre; la douceur de la saison, la sérénité du climat; mille souvenirs délicieux qui reveillaient tous les sentimens que j'avais goûtés: tout cela me jettait dans des transports que je ne puis décrire, et semblait me rendre à la fois la jouissance de ma vie entière.”

“ Who first beholds those everlasting clouds,
Seed-time and harvest, morning, noon and night,
Still where they were, steadfast, immovable;
Those mighty hills so shadowy, so sublime
As rather to belong to heaven than earth—
But instantly receives into his soul
A sense, a feeling that he loses not,
A something that informs him 'tis an hour
Whence he may date henceforward and for ever?”*

Whether we dwell upon the picture of beauty expanding before us, or lift our eyes to the glorious frame-work in which it is set, our hearts are strangely touched, and overflow with sentiments hitherto unfelt. Amazement, admiration, and delight, melt and captivate the mind by a new and unwonted impulse, and call forth that homage which perhaps no other scene in existence could so effectually command. It exhibits in one glorious view the divine attributes of omnipotence and beneficence. The first we behold exemplified in those everlasting barriers which every where bound the horizon, and enclose the landscape like a curtain; of the latter we have abundant evidence in the Eden-like valley before us, where every field is fertile, every tree fruitful; where the ornamental and the useful go hand in hand, and where every thing seems to foster life and administer to the luxuries of man.

* Rogers's Italy.

The unique character of the landscape before us is greatly enhanced by the classic Lemman which occupies the centre, and whose shores, rising as they recede, present an assemblage of features singularly striking and animated. Every where the labours of man have encroached upon the asperities of nature, and left upon all the stamp of his enterprise; while his empire is only limited by that frozen line of demarcation which separates his social existence from the awful solitudes of the Alps.

As we descend the Jura, the scenery which characterises these shores differs materially, and presents itself in striking and mutual contrast. On the Savoy side of the Lake, it is bold, variegated, and abrupt: beetling cliffs overhang, and green promontories jut out into the Lake. Terraced vineyards occupy the acclivities, and corn-fields the vallies and gentler slopes; while towns, hamlets, isolated châteaux, and villas rise in white clusters along the shore, or sprinkle the heights in picturesque and solitary beauty. Beyond these, vineyards and corn-fields merge into green pastures; the cheerful cottage is superseded by the *chalet*; valleys are contracted into deep ravines; orchards are succeeded by ridges of dark pines, and every thing demonstrates a new and less kindly region. Higher still, cataract and avalanche claim undisputed possession: man retires from the vain and ineffectual struggle, and the process of vegetation is suspended. The chaos of the Alps commences, and numerous *aiguilles*, stationed like advanced outposts, lead in lofty succession to the sovereign Blanc, whose unchangeable aspect presents one of the boldest emblems of eternity which the material world can supply. The opposite, or Lausanne side, exhibits nothing of this sublimity; but it offers every combination of the beautiful and picturesque, while at the same time, it is the granary, as well as the garden, of Switzerland. From the Jura to the Lake, though comprising a distance of only three leagues, it embraces every feature that the human eye delights to contemplate—a naturally favoured, fertile, and highly cultivated soil; an appearance of universal cheerfulness and comfort; an industrious and healthful population, fully alive to the blessings of independence, and indefatigable in every means best calculated to render such blessings permanent.

While we slowly continued our descent, the twilight met us from the east, and gave to the already enchanting picture that gorgeous finish, which has called forth the remarks of so many tourists, and excited the admiration of all. Travellers in these and other parts of Switzerland are not unfrequently charged with enthusiasm, and with embellishing their scenes by drawing on the imagination; but where is the imagination that could conjure up a scene fit to compete with that which now opened upon us? Here also, what so often implies

incredulity or exaggeration, was literally true—every thing appeared *à couleur de rose*.

Over the heights above Lausanne, the clouds assumed what meteorologists term a cirro-cumulated form; the extreme edges of which were richly tinted with bright gold, and faded in the circumference into deep crimson. From the bay of Morges, at the same instant, to the rocks of Meillerie, the bosom of the Lake glowed like a topaz; while every white sail crossing the magic circle assumed the same bright livery, till it glided away to the eastward, where the water retained its deep sapphire tint. Looking back on the extreme ridge of the Jura, it appeared to rest on a sky of fire; while the light which now penetrated its recesses, was a new and amusing phenomenon, and played and flashed through its pines in a thousand fantastic coruscations.

In sympathy with these, and as the rich saffron faded gradually from the Lake, the mountains, one after another, and according to their elevation, took on the same glowing tint, which continuing to ascend as the sun went down, gradually invested the side of Mont Blanc, and at last, like a golden diadem, settled upon his head. Of the beauty of the scene which followed, we feel it impossible to convey any adequate idea; and must apologize for having attempted to describe scenes which only lose by description, and impress every writer with a deep and humiliating consideration of his own inefficiency. To all who have been actual spectators of these phenomena, description will necessarily appear irksome and unsatisfactory; but, for the sake of our untravelled readers, we have ventured to record *first impressions*, on crossing the JURA, and if these have been sketched but faintly, they have, so far as they go, been sketched with fidelity. The success of the artist, however, will amply compensate for other deficiencies, and in the accuracy of the accompanying illustration the reader may repose implicit confidence.

“ The night descends: but still yon glacier glows
In gorgeous lustre; and its burnished snows
Break forth in blushes, where the sunbeams sleep
With lingering fondness on its rosy steep.

Far up yon Alpine ridge, from deep ravine,
Like forest-phantoms, flickering lights are seen:
There, Freedom's social home—the *Chdlet's* hearth
Is warmed with mountain-pine and native mirth;
Whose genial blaze and homely shelter throw
A barrier 'twixt the blossom and the snow.”—COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE.

GENEVA.

"Où on est parvenu à joindre la politesse d'ATHÈNES à la simplicité de LACÉDÉMONE."

VOLT. *L'Hist. Gen.*

THE history of Geneva remounts to a period of remote antiquity, and quotes the authority of Cæsar in testimony of her strength and importance as a town of the Allobroges.* Her strong position, however, was no security against those warlike nations who endeavoured to check the progress of Roman conquest. The town was repeatedly burnt, but as often rebuilt and extended, and appeared to acquire fresh stability and beauty from the very means employed for its destruction.

In the beginning of the fifth century Geneva was distinguished as the capital of Burgundy, but passed, successively, into the hands of the Franks, the German emperors, the counts of Geneva, and then became the residence of prince-bishops, under whose auspices she maintained a long struggle with the neighbouring despots, who were incessant in their efforts to crush her independence. The personal sacrifices and privations to which her citizens were subjected in these contests were numerous and severe; but, actuated by that zeal which looks upon nothing as a sacrifice which is employed in the purchase of liberty, their self-devotion and fortitude increased in proportion to the difficulties they had to encounter. That independence, however, for which she fought, was but a despotism till the beginning of the sixteenth century, when she threw off her episcopal allegiance, along with that of Rome, and became a republic. From this period Geneva maintained a proud eminence amidst surrounding states, and was amongst the first to embrace—what she was afterwards so eminently zealous in consolidating—the doctrines of the reformed church. Thus regenerated, and stimulated to exertion by the possession of civil and religious liberty, she became the nucleus of science, the sanctuary of learned men, a safe retreat from the violence of persecution, and a principal strong-hold of that great moral revolution which the Council of Constance, by its edicts and martyrdoms, had so vainly attempted to crush.

* "Extremum oppidum Allobrogum, proximumque Helvetiorum finibus, est Geneva."

Favoured by these moral and political changes, allied with Bern and Freyburg, and protected by France, her freedom consolidated, and her trade flourishing, Geneva continued to enjoy peace and prosperity till the unprecedented events of 1798 once more overthrew her government. Her incorporation with the French republic, however, was not a measure to which she tamely submitted. In the minds of her enlightened citizens, the atrocities of that period were exhibited in their true colours; but, reluctantly yielding to the force of a system which she had no power to withstand, and, making the inviolable protection of her form of worship, and her religious institutions, with all their endowments and regulations, the subject of solemn treaty, she resigned her independence and became identified with France.

Profiting once more by those events which, by the treaty of Paris in 1814, restored the balance of continental power, Geneva was reinstated in her former government and independence. The first use which she made of her newly recovered freedom was to modify and improve her ancient aristocratic Constitution. This revision was accomplished with equal despatch and judicious discrimination; so that in the month of August in the same year, all civil distinctions were finally abolished under the fresh legal enactment,—That the Constitution should thenceforward acknowledge no patricians, nor privileged classes; and that all the Genevese, without distinction, should be considered equal in the eye of the law.

The territory of Geneva, although materially extended by the treaty of Paris, comprises a population of only 18,000, which, added to that of the city, amounting to 24,000, raises the entire population list to 42,000, and in the present year perhaps a little more. This city and territory, nevertheless, possess a power and attraction totally independent of their numerical strength, and to which an annual congress of strangers from every country in Europe bears the most flattering testimony.

Placed on the confines of three great states, on the border of the Lemman Lake, and occupying the centre of a panorama of unrivalled beauty and sublimity, Geneva takes an easy precedence over other cities and states, and derives from her remarkable natural position, that importance which neither architectural embellishments nor extent of territory could supply. The Rhone, after depositing the turbid matter suspended during its course through the VALLAIS, and as if refreshed by its temporary expansion in the Lake, once more contracts its channel, and, dividing into two branches, rushes through the city with the impetuosity of a torrent. These two streams again uniting, enclose an island which, connected by wooden bridges with the right and left banks, constitutes the city. Here the water is of a bright opal or aqua-marine tint, and

presents a striking contrast to the turbid mass in which it first enters the Lake at Villeneuve.

The various combinations of picturesque buildings harmonizing with the exquisitely beautiful scenery of the Lake, render this the most interesting portion of the city; but with which the march of improvement now threatens to interfere. Great alterations are in progress: a new bridge and a commodious quay, both of elegant design, are in a state of great forwardness; and these, with other artificial embellishments—whatever they may evince as to the prosperity of the canton—will soon, it is feared, obliterate many features in the picturesque and ancient character of the city. To the *utilitarian* this will be a gratifying report; but by the poet, the painter, and tourist, it will be viewed as an irretrievable loss. The grand and imposing features which enclose the Lake, however, are unchangeable by any process of art, and on these all future travellers may reckon with confidence. The houses of Geneva are generally lofty, but to the fastidious eye of taste and experience, they shew, with a few exceptions, but little elegance in design or execution. The Rue Basse, which is the seat of commercial activity, extends the whole length of the city, and offers a grotesque picture in its long rows of wooden shops and sheds which connect the houses with the street. Opposite the Place Metard, where the buildings are lofty and imposing, immense wooden coverings, of singular construction, project from the walls. From this point many diverging streets lead to the upper town, on which the cathedral, the Hôtel-de-Ville, and other public buildings, confer especial distinction. The cathedral is a noble gothic structure, very commanding, and the great ornament of the city. Its modern portico is much admired, and its towers, particularly that called la Clemence, enjoy unrivalled prospects of the Alps, of Faucigny, and Chablais; the Pays de Vaud and Gex; the Lake, and the hill of Coligny which borders it with a rich garniture of orchards and vineyards, sprinkled with white villas, and rising in progressive stages like the grades of an amphitheatre. In the immediate vicinity of this is the promenade de la Treille, which runs along the ancient fortifications—once bristling with cannon, but now richly planted with trees, shrubs, and flowers—and opens in charming vistas upon the valley of the Rhone, the undulating ridge of the Jura, the Saleves, and the mounts of Sion and Vorrache. Here are the Botanic garden, the new Museum, and an elegant line of buildings, called Corraterie, which give quite a patrician air to this portion of the city.

Among the names in theology, philosophy, and science, which have thrown such lustre upon Geneva, we need only cite those of Calvin, Beza, Calderini, Pictet, Saussure, and Rousseau. That predilection for science which conferred

such early distinction upon the Genevese, is still encouraged; and every avenue leading to knowledge and refinement is beset by a crowd of zealous competitors. The college has twelve professorships, with an annual concourse of students amounting to 600 or upwards. The library contains 50,000 printed volumes, and 200 MSS. It was founded by Bonnivardt, "The Prisoner of Chillon." Among the MSS. are Homilies of the sixth century by St. Augustine; the wax tablets of Philip-the-Fair; besides many volumes of Calvin's Sermons and Letters.

Of the manners of the Genevese, so much has been written by our predecessors in this route, that we cannot flatter ourselves with the hope of presenting the untravelled reader with many original features. From the amalgamation of interests which took place at the Revolution, and which was greatly facilitated by a community of language, slight modifications in social habits were the natural result; and from this epoch the censors of the day deduce that love of amusement, and that diminution of native morality which a long line of pious divines and virtuous citizens had established by precept and example. During the French occupation, the handsome theatre, built in 1784, and so strenuously opposed by Rousseau, was opened by a regular *corps dramatique*; and being supported and frequented by those in power, the contagion soon spread; former scruples were overcome, and, to the no small horror of their pastors and elders, the Genevese became a play-going people. At the Restoration, however, aided by revised laws and interdicts, this unseasonable gaiety was checked; the gates of Thespis were shut, and those of Solon re-opened. By little and little, the temporary effervescence for pleasure subsided; things began to resume their former channels; and the lighter amusements of France were superseded by grave philosophy and the tranquil enjoyments of the domestic circle. It is not a little remarkable, that in so short an interval the Genevese should have fallen into the very practice of what had rendered Voltaire so obnoxious at Les Delices. *Soirées* are now the evening's resource; but a predilection for the drama is still felt and expressed; many revert with unfeigned regret to the pleasant days of *bagatelle*, and point to the strange anomaly of a city with so many churches and no theatre! "I cannot but regret our want of *spectacle*," said a lady, "most of your *compatriotes* quit us annually at the approach of winter; but, had we an open theatre, we might keep them all!" The drama has been lately restored.

The domestic, like the public system of education, is here conducted with eminent success; and, under parental prudence and discrimination, leads to the most pleasing results. The humbler class enjoy the benefit of a substantial education, and such as may be suitable to the duties they are expected to perform. The ladies in general are highly accomplished, and second to none in

the exercise of all those amiable qualities which give society so many attractions, and throw such hallowing lustre over the recesses of domestic life. In their intercourse with strangers, the men are occasionally charged with unnecessary austerity, with too much rigour in their estimate of manly character, and too much indifference for those minor qualifications and attentions which conciliate good will and promote social harmony. Of these there is certainly some evidence; but the absence of such small currency is fully compensated by those classical and scientific acquirements which give the *soirées* of Geneva their charming intellectual character. But if those who from their infancy have been accustomed to contemplate the sublime forms with which nature is here invested, do acquire an air of habitual severity, or even a disrelish for the innocent frivolities of life, the deficiency has less of fault than merit, and seems neither unbecoming nor inexcusable. Mentally, men are all more or less subject to the influence of external nature; and the mind of him who lives under the shadow of Mont Blanc, may be reasonably supposed to differ in various particulars from his, whose first impressions were caught in the precincts of Mont Martre.

It struck us as a remarkable but very pleasing singularity, that since we had descended the Jura, not one appeal had been made to our charity,—a circumstance which speaks highly in favour of Switzerland, and which it would seem an act of injustice not to record. In Geneva, the charitable funds are most judiciously administered, and industry is so universal, that mendicancy seems entirely suspended. We agree with Dr. James Johnson,* that this industry is much connected with, or dependent on, religious and political institutions. The appearance and produce of a country will always be in proportion to the degree of diligence with which it is cultivated; but the poor man who has three *jours-de-fête* out of the seven, has little time for practical industry, compared with his neighbour who has but one. Hence, probably, the very different aspect presented by the opposite sides of the Jura.

The number of strangers who annually resort to these shores, and often fix their residence in or near Geneva for a period of years, seems rather on the increase than otherwise. There is no situation in Europe, probably, where mental cultivation, well-informed society, and domestic economy, are to be had and practised on such eligible terms. This continued influx of foreigners, however, has brought along with it a degree of polish and refinement, which has softened down many of those sharp and original lines which gave such relief, or even asperity, to the Swiss character. To see the native features of the Switzer,

* See his talented work,—*The Philosophy of Travelling*.

such as the mind has been accustomed to paint them, the reader must accompany us into the more inaccessible and retired cantons, where the people retain all that primitive simplicity which society so soon obliterates, and for which it gives so little in compensation.

While at Geneva,* we would recommend our readers to pay a visit to the Great and Little Saleve; they will feel amply remunerated for their trouble in beholding one of the most extraordinary phenomena in existence. To the student of natural philosophy it will present a fertile field for geological discussion. These two mountains present their steep escarpments of limestone to the valley of the Rhone, but on the south side slope down to the valley of the Arve. On this side may be seen, not the remains of an ancient city or temple, but the magnificent ruins of mighty mountains, and the monuments of an overwhelming catastrophe which transported the ruins into their present situation. The snow-clad mountains from which they were torn rise majestically to view, though fifty miles distant! On the Little Saleve, at the height of 1400 feet above the valley, are scattered numerous blocks of granite, of vast size, not at all water-worn, and almost as fresh as if but recently torn from their parent mountain. They are of that kind of granite called *protogine*, and identical with the granite of Mont Blanc, while the surrounding mountains, and the Saleve on which they lie, are *calcareous*. On the Great Saleve adjoining, there is one block of this granite, seven feet in length, at the height of 2500 feet above the valley. Saussure has remarked that these blocks are not broken or shattered, as they would have been, had they been hurled with violence from the Alps; neither do the limestone strata beneath present any appearance of having been fractured or indented by their fall; on the contrary the blocks lie upon the surface. Our limits will not permit us to dwell on this most interesting subject, or to compare the theories of Saussure and Mr. Bakewell; the latter, however, is by far the more probable and conclusive of the two, namely, that these blocks were transported by the floating glaciers of the Alps, and not by a sudden rush of waters, as the former imagined.†

A portion of the Jura, which extends above twelve leagues into the Canton de Vaud, comprises many very interesting and romantic valleys. The chain being of inferior elevation, compared with the Alps, and little exceeding, in its highest

* To the contemplative, a walk to the Cemetery of Plain-palais will not be without interest, and will awaken the recollection of many illustrious names. The grave of SIR HUMPHREY DAVY is on the second line of No. 29;—the fourth grave from the end of the west side of the Cemetery.

† For much original and highly interesting information on these and other Alpine phenomena, the reader may consult Mr. Bakewell's popular work, 4th edition, 1833.

point, 4000 feet, as already stated in noticing the Dole, snow does not lie upon the summits throughout the year; so that being deprived of this fertilizing source, the pastures are less abundant, and the produce of the dairy inferior in quality to that of the Alps.

The Jura range is entirely composed of calcareous stone, wherein various petrified marine substances are found imbedded. The Alps, on the contrary, are composed of granite, with only a covering of calcareous substance. Detached blocks, like those on the Arve, are also found in the Jura; but they are entirely isolated, and must have been projected from the Alps in some remote explosion of nature; and as several of these blocks are found here as well as at Saleve, upwards of 2,000 feet above the Lemman, some idea may be formed of the dreadful revolutions by which this portion of the globe has been convulsed.

Among the Vaudois Alps, numerous small lakes and sheets of water present themselves to the pedestrian who quits the beaten track; but all these, however striking and picturesque in their isolated positions, sink into insignificance when viewed in conjunction with the Lemman, which in magnificence and expanse has no competitor.

“ Que le chantre flatteur du tyran des Romains
Ne vante plus ces lacs et leurs bords magnifiques
Ces lacs que la Nature a creusés de ses mains
Dans les campagnes Italiques;
Mon lac est le premier : c'est sur ses bords heureux
Qu'habite des humains la déesse éternelle
La Liberté.”

VOLTAIRE.

It occupies a vast basin, formed by the Alps and the Jura, about fourteen leagues in length from Villeneuve to Geneva, with a breadth of three leagues between Thonon and Rolle; the whole comprising a surface of twenty-six square leagues, and occupying a site of 1,125 feet elevation above the Mediterranean. It is exceedingly pure and transparent, except where it issues from the Vallais; and possesses a saponaceous quality which is very efficacious in bleaching. It is also considered by the inhabitants, in the form of a bath, as a remedy in rheumatic affections. Very different from the lakes of other countries, which diminish with the increase of summer heat, the Lemman gains at this period a height of five or six feet above its winter level,—an anomaly produced by the melting of the snow in the Alps. Like the lake of Constance, it never freezes during the longest and most severe winters, and in a storm presents all the phenomena of a tempestuous ocean. It is further remarkable for its regular currents, water-spouts, and an occasional ebb and flow, which lasts several

hours, rising in flow to the height of three or four feet above the ordinary level,—an effect which has been attributed to electricity, but which is more properly the result of atmospheric pressure. The greatest depth is near Meillerie, where the soundings have indicated 949 feet.

As a medium of local intercourse and traffic, these waters are every day acquiring fresh importance; and, by the recent launch of steam vessels upon them, a cheap and expeditious method of transport has been established among the long chain of towns and villages by which they are enclosed.

Agreeably to our plan, we now proceed to Savoy, reserving the Pays de Vaud for a future portion of the Tour.

GENEVA TO CHAMOUNI.

“Alpes! je reviens vous chercher!
Sapins de Mont Envers, puissiez-vous me cacher
Dans cet antre azuré que la glace environne
Qu’entends-je! l’Arveron bondit, tombe et bouillonne! . . . ”

DE FONTANES.

“Des siècles autour d’eux ont passé comme une heure . . .
Et vous, vous y venez d’un œil observateur
Admirer dans ses plans l’éternel CREATEUR!”

DELILLE.

ON quitting the gate of Geneva, we speedily left her circumscribed territory, and pursued our route along the romantic valley of the Arve. This broad, shallow river takes its source in the glaciers, and, receiving many tributary streams in its capricious and riotous descent, falls into the Rhone a little below Geneva. The country continued open till we reached the precincts of Bonneville, a small but ancient town, with antique towers, when its character was entirely changed. On the left, the Môle rises to the height of 5800 feet, and closes in the valley; while on the right is the bold, irregular mass of the Brezon. Crossing the Arve by a stone bridge, 500 feet long, we proceeded along the left bank to Cluse; and near Siongy, through the rich and redundant foliage, waving along the acclivities and precipices, romantic vistas opened upon the valley; where the river, far below, swept along a broad and boisterous channel, and communicated life and fertility in its course. The lower district is enlivened with scattered villages, while

midway among the recesses, or cliffs, of the encircling mountains, a solitary church or convent started forth like a landmark, and contrasted well with the subjacent scenery. On the left, his fractured precipices capped with snow, and rising to an elevation of 9700 feet, Mont Buet seemed no mean representative of Mont Blanc. Passing the ancient town of Cluse, and entering the valley of Maglans, we were arrested by the Nant d'Arpennas, whose rushing waters were music to the ear, and seemed the only voice that disputed the stern and impressive solitude of the place.

It was on a May morning we entered this beautiful defile, of which Florian has expressed his admiration. A profound, but far from melancholy stillness invested its hoary precipices and dark ascending forests,—the whole exquisitely relieved by the vivid tints and flushing verdure of an Alpine spring. The Arve swept by in a swift but smooth current—here losing itself in shadowy foliage, and there stealing suddenly from its retreat, as if it sprang fresh from the earth, and “rejoiced to run its course.”

We reached Sallenche at sunset, and, passing through its streets intersected by ramifying torrents, halted on the green heights above the church. Here, fatigued with the previous walk, we sat down under the delicious shade of a cottage orchard, and, soothed and refreshed by the cool evening air, and fragrant verdure, were speedily absorbed in the contemplation of the scenery around us. Beneath were the towers of Sallenche, with the broad, variegated, and winding valley of the Arve. Above these, in shadowy magnificence, the enclosing mountains seemed to melt away in the sky; while their shattered pinnacles glowed with rich crimson radiance, and all below reposed in the soft purple of twilight. Following the ascending vale, till lost amidst pine-clad ridges, the majesty of the “Alpine Monarch” threw every thing else into shade or insignificance; and with his stupendous retinue of glaciers, icy precipices, and trackless wastes of snow, claimed undivided homage, and in awful pre-eminence overlooked the scene. The same phenomenon which we noticed in our descent from the Jura again presented itself, but, if possible, with a still more dazzling effect. The tint with which the summit was invested approached nearer to that of the ruby, and gradually diminished as we gazed, till at length it entirely disappeared and left the cold cloudless summit starting up in an isolated, snowy mass, into the liquid purple of heaven. Slowly, and as if in obedience to the signal, the evening vapours stole forth, hovering along the river, then dilating and floating upwards, till they threw a transparent veil over the inferior mountains, and delivered them over to the dominion of night. The shades of night, however, detracted little from the dazzling whiteness of Mont Blanc: the blue vapour hardly reached his

girdle, above which, as if fresh moulded and towering in snowy serenity, he stood like a sheeted ghost betwixt earth and heaven.

It was now beautiful to watch the stars as they gradually kindled along the blue vault above us. From the cottage gardens, all the mingled odours of an Alpine spring ascended like incense. The night winds began to stir, with increasing breath, the rustling foliage along the cliffs; while the faint but incessant murmur of distant waterfalls, with a broken watchword, or salutation from the town beneath, were all that now interrupted the solemn and increasing stillness. Continuing our saunter and contemplation for a little longer, the scene again underwent a sudden and striking change. The snowy shoulder of Mont Blanc deepened into shadow: but, slowly climbing his eastern pinnacle, the moon threw "her mantle of light" upon the scene; and the mountains, till this instant in comparative darkness, sprang suddenly forth into new existence, and, bathed in silver, and exhibited in beautiful detail, left an impression never to be forgotten.

Sallenche, the capital of Upper Faucigni, is beautifully situated, with considerable claims to antiquity, and an air of prosperous and increasing traffic. The immediate environs furnish irresistible inducements for the indulgence of picturesque rambles, and an ample field for enriching the traveller's portfolio. But the inhabitants are painfully contrasted with their Swiss neighbours, and present but few examples of that manly independence and domestic comfort which so eminently distinguish the latter. Penury and wretchedness enter largely into the picture; idiots and *cretins* abound; the Catholic religion maintains its spiritual despotism; and the humiliating conviction is forced upon us, that with the increasing sublimities of nature, man retrogrades and sinks in the scale.

From Sallenche to Chamouni, the road is only practicable to *char-à-bancs*, horsemen, and pedestrians. On the right, about a mile from the road, and situated at the entrance of a deep gorge, are the thermal waters of St. Gervais, discovered about twenty-eight years ago. The stream is very copious, and rises near the junction of mica-slate and limestone, at a temperature of 94° to 98°. Baths, in a singular and quaint taste, have been erected, and are now much frequented; but the locality is wild and melancholy, and has nothing to recommend it beyond the merit of its waters. A short way behind the baths is a remarkably fine cascade, formed by the torrent which descends the ravine. Quitting St. Gervais, and crossing the Arve, we arrived at the hamlet, and thence by a steep and toilsome ascent at the lake, of Chede. The scenery by which it is inclosed is highly picturesque, while the triple-crested Mont Blanc was reflected from its unruffled bosom. From this stage of our journey, the valley of the Arve undergoes an entire change, passing

from richness and fertility into savage grandeur and desolation. This hitherto broad, shallow stream is transformed into a rapid torrent, and fills the ear with its roar; while precipitous rocks hem it in on both sides, at once protecting and opposing its course. The path traversing the wild and elevated bank on the left crosses numerous brawling torrents, swollen with melted snow, each hurrying to pour its contribution into the general channel. These are what Professor Playfair has expressively termed, "Nature's saws, incessantly at work cutting down the mountains." On the left of this road, at some distance, with an elevation of 6000 feet, arise the stupendous precipices of Mont Varens, from which, in winter and spring, the avalanche descends with awful impetuosity, waking a thousand echoes and wasting every thing in its progress. On a nearer approach, Mont Blanc unfolds more distinctly his gigantic proportions, and throws his frozen barrier around the wild and dreary waste through which we pass.

Next succeeds the fertile valley of Servoz—an oasis in the desert—where one cannot contemplate without a shudder the ruins of an Alp, which, in 1751, had nearly converted this luxuriant recess into a scene of utter desolation. All the inhabitants fled at the first indication of the danger that menaced them; but their flight was too late to rescue some of their children, who were buried in the ruins. The clouds of dust occasioned by rocks precipitated into violent contact, and the terrific crash which preceded it, led to the conclusion that the disaster was a *volcanic* explosion,—a supposition which was soon rectified by observation, and the effect attributed to its true cause, *éboulement*—a common occurrence in the Alps, as we shall have occasion to notice hereafter. The fall, in the present instance, lasted many days, and the air was darkened with immense volumes of black dust, which extended for twenty miles. A continued succession of reports, like those of cannon, announced the falling of rocks day and night. The fall did not, like that of Mont Grenier, near Chambery, happen at once; for the mountain here is composed of a succession of limestone, resting on sandstone and extremely fragile schist, which are even now yielding to the constant action of rain. A deep excavation under a precipice of limestone, near the summit, observed by Mr. Bakewell* a few years since, appeared to threaten a renewal of the catastrophe of 1751.

Leaving Servoz, the road winds pleasantly through groves of fir to the Pont de Petissier. Here another long ascent commences, which carries us

* For much interesting information on this subject, see his GEOLOGY, already referred to, page 13.

to an immense height above the Arve, the latter boiling around the base of an almost perpendicular mountain, whose rugged flank is clothed with pines, many of these blanched with age, or scathed by lightning, and, torn from their rocky hold, are hurled into the foaming waters beneath. The view from this point is peculiarly wild and impressive. Emerging from the dark pines, the path scrambles along the right bank of the Arve, and, skirting the glaciers of Tacconnay and Bossons, shortly opened on Chamouni.

Furnished with excellent and well-informed guides, we left our inn next day, at half-past six, to visit the Mer-de-glace, Montanvert, and the source of the Arveron. To ascend the former, we employed upwards of three hours; and, in our route, passed through pine forests, where the *débris* of avalanches, blocks of granite, and bleached trunks of trees, were assembled in striking confusion. At the fountain of Le Caillet, the torrent of the Arve seemed diminished to a thread, "the bourg like card-houses, and the fields and meadows like the squares of a chess-board, or beds in a flower-garden, embellished with a thousand different shades of green." Struggling onward, through an extremely difficult, though happily not a dangerous, path, we reached the Hôpital de Blair, where the frozen sea suddenly flashed upon us in all its wild and indescribable magnificence!

"Wave upon wave!—as if a foaming ocean,
By boisterous winds to fierce rebellion driven,
Heard—in its wildest moment of commotion—
And stood congealed at the command of Heaven!
Its frantic billows chained at their explosion,
And fixed in sculpture! here, to caverns riven—
There, petrified to crystal—at His nod
Who raised the Alps an altar to their God!"

To contemplate this unrivalled phenomenon in detail, we followed a path bordered with rhododendron, and in a quarter of an hour stood upon the ice. Traversing its surface, several crevices, widening into chasms, of a beautiful aquamarine tint, commanded express attention, and, in addition to their rich prismatic hues, associated fearful ideas of danger, which it requires great caution to avoid. This slippery position cannot fail to remind the stranger of that expressive and popular line,—*Facilis descensus Averni*, and no where else could it be more emphatically applied. These congealed waves, which, from the heights of Montanvert, appeared like furrows in a ploughed field, were now found to rise in abrupt ridges from twenty to forty feet.

Retracing our steps up the Montanvert, we halted at the "Hôtel de Blair," where our basket of provisions formed a very agreeable interlude in our

day's drama. This "Pierre-des-Anglais," it will be remembered, served our adventurous countrymen, Windham and Pocock, for a dining-table, after having been the first to explore these Alpine wonders, and to open a new region for all succeeding tourists. If we may calculate on the imperishable block of granite which bears their names, they will descend to a remote posterity, and awaken pleasing associations in thousands of their countrymen.

Hence, descending to the source of the Arveron, we followed the Chemin des Chèvres, a rugged path, where the thunder of avalanches and pyramids of ice hurled from the surrounding precipices, give new and appalling features to the scene, and strike the unpractised stranger with dismay. The glacier of Montanvert forms the conducting slope along which these sudden cataracts of ice and snow descend with such unparalleled fury. At such instances, the whole air is agitated by the concussion, and every surrounding object participates in the shock;—the torrent leaps in its bed—the forests shake—the whole producing an effect closely resembling that of volcanic action, and recurring with a frequency increased or modified according to the season.

The first object of attraction here is the Voûte-de-Glace, a much more superb structure than the imperial ice-palace of Prince Gallitzin!—such as M. de Brune and our own Cowper have described it.

" No quarry sent its stores
T' enrich his walls ; but he did hew the floods,
And made his marble of the glassy wave."

This grotto cannot be viewed without astonishment, even by those who have been most conversant with the stupendous and seemingly miraculous operations of nature. Its partition walls, as if cased with the finest pier-glass, multiply and reflect each other in such endless succession, as to produce the most striking illusions, and conduct the imagination through a long labyrinth of gorgeous apartments, such as might embellish the wildest Arabian tale. From every part of this dazzling vault, a continued dropping rain, like the well at Knaresborough, descends with the sparkling purity of distilled spirit, and, uniting amidst huge fragments of granite and blocks of ice, gives birth to the limpid Arveron, which, at the distance of half a league, loses itself in the Arve.

" In ascending the glacier des Bossons," says M. de Bourrit, " we stopped at one of the peasants' habitations, to observe a young *chamois* returning from pasture with the goats:—they had taken it very young at the foot of the Aiguilles, and brought it up with the herd ; its horns were just beginning

to sprout, its head was fine, its eyes full of fire, and every movement evincing agility and strength." Providence has formed this interesting animal with such instinctive love of liberty, that it is hardly possible to confine it long: when once convinced of its own strength, it constantly endeavours to escape into the rocks; and almost all the young ones they have taken, with a view of bringing them up tame, have made their escape. The manner of taking them is singular: when the hunter has killed a female chamois, he sets it upon its legs again, as if it were still living, and, concealing himself under it, waits with patience till the kid returns to its dam; he then captures the little struggler and conveys it home to his cabin.

LINES ON LIBERATING A CHAMOIS.

"Freeborn and beautiful! the mountain
 Has naught like thee!
 Fleet as the rush of Alpine fountain—
 Fearless and free!
 Thy dazzling eye outshines in brightness
 The beam of Hope;
 Thine airy bound outstrips the lightness
 Of antelope.
 On cliffs, where scarce the eagle's pinion
 Can find repose,
 Thou keep'st thy desolate dominion
 Of trackless snows!
 Thy pride to roam where man's ambition
 Could never climb,
 And make thy world a dazzling vision
 Of Alps sublime!

 How glorious are the dawns that wake thee
 To thy repast!
 And, where their fading lights forsake thee,
 They shine the last.
 Thy clime is pure—thy heaven is clearer—
 Brighter than ours;
 To thee, the desert snows are dearer
 Than summer flowers.
 Nor kindness, fear, nor love can tame thee—
 The desert born!
 Then go, where thy free comrades claim thee,
 And meet the morn!
 There, all thy kindred rights inherit,
 And ne'er again
 May hunter's guile on thy free spirit
 Impose a chain!"

THE GLACIERS.

" Prismes éblouissants dont les pans azurés
Défiant le soleil dont ils sont colorés,
Peignent de pourpre et d'or leur éclatante masse ;
Tandisque, triomphant sur son trône de glace,
L'Hiver s'énorgueillit de voir l'astre du jour
Embellir son palais et décorer sa cour !
Non, jamais au milieu de ces grands phénomènes,
De ces tableaux touchants, de ces terribles scènes,
L'imagination ne laisse, dans ces lieux,
Ou languir la pensée, ou reposer les yeux !" DELILLE.

ALONG the chain of the Alps, from Mont Blanc to the Tyrolese frontier, there are about four hundred glaciers, many of which are six or seven leagues in length, half a league to three-quarters wide, and varying in thickness from one hundred to six hundred feet. Although it is impossible to arrive at perfect accuracy in the measurement of these glaciers, it may be estimated that the space above stated comprises a sea of ice of more than one hundred and thirty leagues in superficies ! It is exclusively in the highest valleys of the mountains that all the glaciers have been formed, and where, during three-fourths of the year, the surrounding mountains receive fresh accumulations of snow, which at intervals descends in tremendous avalanches to the bottom of the valleys, where they are collected as in a basin, and form condensed layers, several hundred feet deep. Upon these enormous masses the summer makes but a slight and partial impression, so that with every returning winter their volume is increased, the layers more compacted, and the internal mass expanded by the infiltration of water from the surface. The shape and surface of the glaciers are modified by the nature of the soil on which they accumulate. Where the declivities are inconsiderable, they are smooth and present but few crevices ; but where they occupy a steep descent—and every valley of the Alps is a slope—they are scarred with clefts, yawning chasms, and rise in distorted ridges, as already observed in the Mer-de-Glace. If the slope exceed thirty or forty degrees, these appearances are still more remarkable ; the beds of ice are disrupted, changed in their shape and posture, and often present the most grotesque and whimsical features. The clefts, which have proved fatal to so many adventurers, are extremely variable in width, but

of enormous depth, and changing as they descend from a beautiful light green to an intense blue. They are occasioned by the rocky or unequal surface over which the glacier progressively descends, the sudden changes of atmospheric temperature, and the brittle material of which they are composed. Nothing can be more awfully impressive than the perfect stillness which, during nine months of the year, pervades these frozen solitudes. But as soon as the incumbent atmosphere has acquired some increase of temperature, and as the summer advances, astounding explosions are heard at intervals, attended with a vibration that seems to shake the whole mountain. These announce the sudden disruption of the glaciers, every new instance of which is proclaimed by hollow thunderings, like the sound of distant artillery, startling the echoes, and overpowering the traveller with the most sublime impressions. From the period and frequency of these phenomena, certain conclusions are drawn by every mountaineer, which are of the utmost importance to his personal security, and serve as a barometer of unerring precision. These atmospheric changes, so frequent in elevated regions, often discharge from the clefts of the glaciers currents of wind, insufferably cold, and loaded with what has the appearance of pounded ice, and presenting the singularity of a snow-shower issuing from the earth. These *gletschergebläsen*, as they are called, are readily explained on the principle of sudden rarefaction in the external atmosphere. The wells, which we observe scattered over these fields of ice, are produced by detached masses of granite, which, heated by exposure to the sun, melt and penetrate into the glacier, leaving the vertical aperture through which they descended filled with water. Within the substance of the glacier, as well as on its surface, numerous fragments of rock are deposited, which the storms and avalanches have detached from the higher mountains, and transported to their present situation. On the borders, and at the base of the glaciers, these stones are accumulated in such masses as to form cairns of a hundred feet high. The inferior extremity of the glacier always drives before it that kind of dike which is here called *Nioraine*, and in the Oberland, *Gandeken*: occasionally also, isolated heaps of stones are observed in the middle of glaciers, and in the elevated points of the highest valleys, shaped like sepulchral cairns; those on the glacier of Rosboden are the most remarkable; sometimes, on the surface of a glacier—on those of the Aar, for example—you will observe a lofty pyramid of ice, of a regular form, surmounted by a huge stone.

From these circumstantial facts, and in reference to the glaciers as a floating power, Mr. Bakewell has offered an apt solution of the enigma respecting

the granite blocks on the Salève. It is remarkable, that these groups occur opposite the embouchures of all the Alpine valleys that open into the great valley of Geneva. Every where, under these extensive masses, the undulating sound of streams, less or more distinct, are heard gurgling beneath our feet, and forcing a meandering channel through the glaciers. When, by some mysterious cause, these channels are interrupted, and their waters denied a vent, their accumulating and increasing pressure become irresistible: their icy boundaries are torn asunder, and the imprisoned torrent, bursting its way through the yawning fissure, carries desolation in its course. An appalling instance of this nature we shall have to record, in our subsequent account of the Vallais.

Such, in a few words, are the glaciers of the Alps—the most striking and characteristic features of those elevated regions—the sources of the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Po, and which dispense such beauty and fertility to the plains of France and Italy.

“Unfailing fountains! fertilizing source,
 Whence myriad channels bear their tide of gladness
 Through Earth's green bosom: with benignant course
 Still scattering bounty where they meet with sadness!
 By springs thus spiritualized, Earth drinks new force—
 Basks in eternal youth—and, from the madness
 Of roaring cataracts, sees her wide domain
 Blushing with fruits, and crowned with golden grain.”

MONT BLANC.

“Là, le temps a tracé les annales du monde.
 Vous distinguez ces monts, lents ouvrages de l'onde;
 Ceux qui des feux soudains ont lancés dans les airs,
 Et les monts primitifs nés avec l'univers;
 Vous fouillez dans leur sein, vous percez leur structure,
 Vous y voyez empreints, DIEU, l'Homme, et la Nature!”

DELILLE.

NOTHING short of actual observation can convey any adequate idea of the solitary grandeur and gigantic proportions of Mont Blanc. Neither the strength of imagination, nor the power of language, can depict the vast and overwhelming

subject; there is nothing in Europe between which and this Cerberus of the Alps a comparison may be drawn and description facilitated. The only method by which the untravelled reader may approach to something like an estimate of its transcendent dimensions, is to reflect, that the snowy mantle which envelopes its triple head and circumference, exceeds an altitude of 4000 feet perpendicular and 9000 feet horizontally, from the Dôme of Gouté to the summit; and that the height of the snow and ice, estimated from the source of the Arveron to the summit, cannot be less than 12,000 feet perpendicular—nearly three times the height of Snowdon, in North Wales! The entire height of the mountain above the sea is stated, by De Luc, at 15,304 feet, or 15,662, according to Sir George Shuckburgh; but, according to the “*Ortographie de l'Europe*,” in the “*Recueil de Voyages et de Mémoires*,” lately published by the Geographical Society of Paris, Mont Blanc is stated at 15,732 feet, English.

Of the various attempts to reach the summit of Mont Blanc, the first was made in July 1776, by M. Coutteran, and three guides, from Chamouni; but which, like many others that followed, entirely failed. In July 1786, Jacques Balmat, one of six guides of Chamouni, being separated from his companions, who failed in another attempt, passed the night on a spot above the Dôme of Gouté, at an elevation of 12,000 feet above the sea. On his return to Chamouni, he was seized with a severe indisposition, the effect of extreme fatigue and intense cold; but speedily recovering, under the treatment of Dr. Paccard, a physician of the place, he offered, as an expression of gratitude for his attendance, to conduct him to the summit of Mont Blanc. His offer being accepted, they set out together on the 7th of August, and, having completely succeeded in their enterprise, remained on the summit about half an hour. The cold was so intense, that their provisions were frozen in their pockets, the ink congealed in their inkhorns, and the mercury in Fahrenheit's thermometer sunk to $18\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$. The ascent was performed in fifteen hours, but their return was attended with incredible difficulty, owing to the great debility of sight caused by the reflection of the snow. On their return to Chamouni, at eight in the morning, their faces were excoriated, their lips much swollen, their eyes inflamed and bloodshot, and Dr. Paccard almost blind.

To convey some idea of this tremendous journey, it may be proper to observe, that although the distance, in a straight line, from Chamouni to the summit, was not more than eight or nine miles, yet the real extent of this arduous walk is between forty and fifty; and, owing to the frightful glaciers and endless

circuits which the traveller must encounter in his ascent, cannot be accomplished in less than eighteen hours.

Stimulated by the success of this enterprise, SAUSSURE, attended by a servant and eighteen guides, left the priory of Chamouni on the first of August, in the following year, and began his celebrated ascent. He passed the first night at the top of La Côte, 5000 feet above the Priory. The second day they had to cross the glacier of this name, a very difficult and dangerous passage, owing to the frightful chasms with which it was intersected. One of the guides, sent to reconnoitre, narrowly escaped destruction, being precipitated into one of these traps, but was saved by the wise precaution adopted in fastening themselves together with ropes. As they ascended, the snow was traversed at intervals by prodigious apertures, shewing distinctly its horizontal strata—each corresponding with a year; but the depth was incalculable. At four o'clock in the afternoon, they reached the second platform, and encamped at a height of 1455 toises above the Priory—90 toises higher than the Peak of Teneriffe! Here the guides began the excavation which was to be covered by the tent, and to serve for their night's lodging; but they had scarcely thrown up five or six spadeful of snow, before they were utterly unable to proceed, without resting every few seconds. One of them was in great pain all the evening; and Saussure himself, to whom the mountain air had hitherto proved a salutary medicine, was exhausted with his meteorological instruments. Their thirst, which was insufferable, they endeavoured to allay by melting the snow with a small chafing-dish, but which afforded a very slow and scanty supply to a party of twenty persons. At this elevation no living creature is to be seen—not a sprig of vegetation: it is the exclusive region of eternal cold and silence.

During the night, Saussure, overcome with the close and heated air of the tent, was compelled to seek relief in the open air. He found the moon shining with indescribable brightness in a sky black as ebony; while the planet Jupiter issued, all radiance, from behind the loftiest neck to the east of Mont Blanc. The light reverberated from this vast basin of snows was so intense, that only stars of the first and second magnitudes were visible. Re-entering the tent, he went to sleep, but was soon awakened by the startling thunder of an avalanche, which swept over part of their next day's route. At day-light they found the thermometer 3° below freezing. Having to dissolve snow for breakfast, and to be taken with them, they set off late; the ascent was every where along the edge of precipices, and the snow so hard, that the leaders of the party were obliged to hew out their steps with

a hatchet. Having arrived at the last rock, the atmosphere was so much rarefied that their strength was soon exhausted. Saussure could not take above fifteen or sixteen steps without drawing breath, and from time to time became so faint as to be compelled to sit down; but, as the respiration returned, he regained his strength, and, at eleven o'clock, reached the summit in perfect safety, and achieved an object which had been the sleepless ambition of many years.

His first impulse was to turn his eyes on Chamouni, where his wife and two sisters were watching his steps with a telescope; and where, at the same instant, he had the satisfaction to see the banner hoisted as the signal, previously agreed upon, that their fears were suspended by discovering his safe arrival on the highest pinnacle of the old world. Here, one view cleared up what years of labour had not been able to solve to his satisfaction. The tent was erected, and the table and philosophical apparatus set before him; but, in preparing his experiments, he was compelled every few seconds to pause for breath. So long as he continued perfectly at rest, he felt little or no inconvenience, except a sensation of nausea at the stomach; but the instant he exerted himself, especially in stooping, his respiratory functions became almost suspended, and compelled him to gasp for several minutes like a person struggling with asthma. . . . Saussure and his party continued on the summit till half-past three in the afternoon, having had four hours and a half for making several most interesting experiments. The descent to the first platform was very difficult, steep, and appalling, owing to the brilliancy with which the precipices were lighted up. They again reposed on the snow, about 200 toises lower than the preceding night, and were now satisfied that it was the rarefaction of the atmosphere, and not fatigue, which had so painfully incommoded them on the summit. Here they supped with appetite, and Saussure made his observations without inconvenience. He assigns 1900 toises as the height at which his respiration becomes painfully obstructed. The following day they recrossed the glacier of La Côte, observing fresh chasms opened during their expedition; and about mid-day reached the Priory, amid the tumultuous greeting of a numerous crowd of anxious friends and spectators. The extreme fatigue and exhaustion which Saussure experienced in this ascent is supposed, and with great probability, to have abridged his days. It may amuse the reader to be told that, during his excursions in the Alps, Saussure wore a full-dress scarlet coat and gold-laced hat. He relates that, while he was seated on Mont Breven, the lace of his hat attracted the electric fluid from a passing cloud, and occasioned a hissing sound.

In the same month, the following year, M. Bourrit and his son, accompanied by Mr. Woodley, and Herr Camper, set out on the same expedition; but, being dispersed by a storm, only M. Bourrit, his son, and three guides, reached the summit. Mr. Woodley, and the other guides, returned to Chamouni with their hands and feet frozen. Their leader, M. Bourrit, also had nearly lost the use of his limbs, and was only restored by washing for thirteen days in ice-water. The next year another English gentleman, named Beaufoy, made the attempt, and succeeded, but at the expense of severe suffering. Three years later, the perilous expedition was revived by four other Englishmen, but failed. One of the guides was killed, another broke his leg, and the gentlemen themselves were all severely wounded. On the 10th of August, 1802, M. Forneret, of Lausanne, and a M. d'Ortern, accompanied by seven guides, reached the summit, and returned in safety to Chamouni, after encountering a severe storm, but declared that nothing should ever tempt them to repeat the frolic! In August 1808, the intrepid Jacques Balmat once more scaled these tremendous boundaries, and carried with him fifteen inhabitants of Chamouni, among whom was a female adventurer, who still enjoys the distinction of Maria de Mont Blanc. In 1820, the attempt of Dr. Hamel, of Geneva, was another failure, attended with the melancholy loss of three guides, who perished in an avalanche near the summit.

Among the more recent instances, is the ascent of Dr. E. Clark and Captain Sherwin, in August 1825, which the latter has narrated, with much interesting precision, in the *New Monthly Magazine*. During the descent, a pleasing incident occurred, which is thus told: Towards one o'clock, at a still elevated point, we suddenly espied, under the shade of a large fir-tree, a small party with a cloth before them, as if enjoying a repast. On a nearer approach, our guides told us it was Maria de Mont Blanc come to welcome us. She had arranged upon the ground, on a clean napkin, a can of milk, a large jug of cream, and delicious brown bread, and, advancing to receive us, invited us to partake of her cheer. Seating ourselves accordingly on the green turf around this welcome and unexpected feast, Maria, at our request, furnished us with the following particulars of her history:—When she was twenty years of age, her youthful ardour and love of mountain scenes led her to join a party of guides, who were going on an exploring excursion to Mont Blanc. Maria set out in good heart with her companions, and bore her share of the fatigue with a prowess seldom equalled by a female. They continued their march till they had passed the plain of the Grand Plateau, when, in her ascent towards the Rocher Rouge, her strength failed her, and

for some time she could advance no farther. Her spirits, however, were still good, and her companions had too much kind feeling to think of enjoying the selfish pleasure of accomplishing their task without making her a participator in the glory. They admired the fortitude which she had hitherto evinced, and unanimously resolved that Maria should be the first female who had ever stood on the summit of Mont Blanc. They kept their word; and, by incessant exertion, succeeded in placing her upon the pinnacle of Europe. From this extraordinary epoch in a woman's life, she has borne the exalted title of Maria de Mont Blanc.*

By an order of Napoleon, crosses were erected on Mont Blanc, as well as on Monte Rosa. In accomplishing the former of these, old Coutet had the superintendence; and, although fixed with great care, and in a workmanlike manner, in four hours the cross had declined greatly from the perpendicular, and in a few days was entirely carried away by the hurricanes.†

Our remarks on the geology of Mont Blanc must necessarily be very brief. The inference drawn by this intelligent philosopher, Saussure, respecting the vertical position of the beds of granite that compose a principal part of these mountains, is, that they were originally horizontal, and have been subsequently elevated by some tremendous convulsion of nature. The summit of Mont

* "And thus th' ambition of her sex,
To prove the wish and power were ample
To make their path on monarchs' necks,
Selected Marie for a sample."

† The summit of Mont Blanc is a ridge, running east and west, and so narrow that two persons could not walk abreast on it. No rock is visible within a distance of 60 or 70 toises from the top. The surface is a scaly varnish of ice, and of firm consistence. The highest rocks are all granite. Two animals only were seen—one, a small grey moth, the other, a *Myrtillus* butterfly, at 100 toises below the summit. The last plant with visible flowers was the *Silene acaulis*, 1780 toises above the sea—lichens were observed on the very highest rocks: among others, the *Sulphureus* and *Rupestis* of Hoffman. The thermometer, in the shade, stood at 5° 3' below freezing; and at Geneva, at the same hour, 52° 6' above it. At 3 P. M. the hygrometer in the sun was at 44, that in the shade at 51; at Geneva it was, at noon, at 76.7, from which it appears that the air on Mont Blanc was six times less moist than at Geneva. This accounts for the extreme thirst suffered during the expedition. By the electrometer, the balls diverged three lines: the electricity was positive. Saussure was surprised at this, and attributed its weakness to the great dryness of the air. Water required half an hour to boil, whilst, at Geneva, it boiled in half that time; the ebullition was effected at 187°, and performed in a kettle heated by an Argand lamp. The colour of the sky was an intense blue. The wind blew from the north, and was piercingly cold; but, on the south side, the air was mild and temperate. By some interesting experiments on lime-water and caustic alkali, it was ascertained that, even at this elevation, the air was still impregnated with carbonic acid. Shadows were colourless. Smell and taste, perfect—wine and provisions retaining the same flavour as at the foot of the mountain. A pistol fired on the summit was no louder than a cracker let off in a room. Balmat's pulse beat 98, Saussure's servant 112, and Saussure's 100, in a minute. At Chamouni, in the same order, they beat 49, 60, 72. The loftiest points discovered were the Schreckhorn and Monte Rosa.

Blanc, according to the same high authority, must at one time have been more than two leagues under the surface. To the same convulsion he also attributes the position of the escarpments, or steep sides, of the rocks which face Mont Blanc for a considerable extent, and then turn from it in an opposite direction. This would have been the case, had the surface of the globe been broken and elevated in the manner he supposed; and there is a circumstance stated by Saussure which tends strongly to confirm, if not absolutely to prove, the truth of this hypothesis. Some of the vertical beds of rock, adjacent to the granite, contain round pebbles, boulders, and water-worn pieces of the lower rocks. "It is impossible," says Mr. Bakewell, "to conceive that these rounded fragments could have been placed in a vertical position; for, if they be really pebbles and boulders, the beds on which they occur must originally have been nearly horizontal. Now, as these beds are at present placed between others which are also vertical, and in the same range, it follows that the whole have been overturned and thrown up at a period subsequent to their formation." Saussure expressly states, that the boulders in the rocks near Mont Blanc are precisely similar to the boulders on the shores of the Lake of Geneva.

The thermal waters here have acquired considerable celebrity. Baths have been erected, and every accommodation is offered to invalids, whom the virtues of the spring have attracted in considerable numbers. The source is near the junction of mica-slate with the lowest beds of secondary limestone, and was discovered within these very few years.

To examine the valley of Chamouni in detail, would far exceed our present limits; and even to visit its immediate and adjacent wonders would afford seven or eight days' excursions to the pedestrian. Owing to its great elevation, and being enclosed by mountains covered with eternal snow, it possesses a salubrious, but keen and piercing atmosphere. The soil is chiefly devoted to pastoral purposes, but where it is cultivated produces tolerable crops of rye and barley, with excellent oats and potatoes. Flax is raised in considerable quantity, and is much prized for its strength and quality. The melons and honey of Chamouni, the latter sold in small casks, are much prized. The honey possesses a peculiarly rich flavour, arising from the innumerable plants and flowers which thrive at this elevation, and from which it is extracted. This, like other Alpine valleys, owes all its freshness and fertility to innumerable rivulets which descend from the glaciers, and pour in their supplies from all sides, so as to irrigate and preserve the luxurious green pastures in all their beauty. Fruit trees very seldom arrive at maturity in this valley; the summer is short, and the winter so long

and severe, as frequently to destroy even the hardier species of orchard trees.

The brief duration of summer at this altitude has suggested an expedient, in common use, for diminishing the great quantity of snow which retards the kindly approach of spring. This consists in scattering a layer of earth over the snow which covers the soil intended for crop, by which means a greater quantity of the sun's rays is absorbed—the snow melts rapidly—and by continuing the operation considerable space is gained, and seed-time anticipated by a period of a fortnight or three weeks. In certain parts of Switzerland the same object is attained by spreading black cloths upon the surface of the snow.* The wealth of the inhabitants consist in their cattle, and the independence of each is estimated by the number of cows he can keep through the winter. During the summer these cattle graze over pasture lands common to all the inhabitants, and, in the long winter that succeeds, are housed, and fed on the hay which is made during the few weeks of autumn, and reserved for their winter provender. There is also a fine breed of mules, for the purposes of local transport, traffic, and the accommodation of strangers, and which their proprietors turn to good account during the season for traversing the neighbouring *cols* and passes.

The natives of Chamouni are a hardy, industrious, and enterprising race, the boldest hunters and the best guides to be found among the Alps. In the latter capacity they are cheerful companions, perfectly versed in all that concerns their immediate calling,—generally well informed on the subject of natural history and Alpine phenomena,—cautious in avoiding danger, but cool and intrepid where it is unavoidable. Collectively they form a society of about forty, and pay strict observance to its rules; every offence against which is punished, according to degree, by fine or expulsion. This society is extremely well regulated, its funds being appropriated to the support of superannuated members, as well as to that of the widows or orphans of such as have perished by unforeseen accidents while exploring these frightful regions. The catalogue of deaths from this cause is numerous and appalling, and no season passes without adding some fresh catastrophe to the list.

The wild animals observed are rabbits, white hares, martens, and ermines, which inhabit the wood; while the chamois and marmot are found in the high

* In order to exemplify the effect that different colours have in absorbing heat, Dr. Franklin covered snow with pieces of cloth of different colours, at a time when the sun was shining full upon the snow. Having done so, he observed that the snow under the *black* cloth was melted first, then that under the blue, then under the brown, while that under the white cloth was very inconsiderable. Hence the effect of black as above described.

rocks: the former are gregarious, and generally frequent valleys where no hunter can approach them. While at pasture a few are always detached from the main body as scouts, while others perform the duty of sentinels. The fearless agility of this animal is proverbial; and in scaling almost perpendicular heights, and bounding from rock to rock, its evolutions seem the effect of wings rather than feet.

In taking leave of Chamouni, and in order to atone for our own imperfect sketch of its transcendent features, we subjoin the HYMN by COLERIDGE, written in this valley before sun-rise, and expressed in language of as unrivalled magnificence as the glorious subject it has so vividly depicted.

“Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
 Adown ravines enormous slope amain;
 Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
 And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
 Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
 Who made you glorious, as the gates of heaven,
 Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
 Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
 Of loveliest blue,* spread garlands at your feet?
 GOD! Let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
 Answer, and let the ice-plains echo, GOD!
 GOD! sing, ye meadow streams, with gladsome voice!
 Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
 And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
 And in the perilous fall shall thunder, GOD!
 Ye living flowers, that skirt the eternal frost!
 Ye wild goats, sporting round the eagle's nest!
 Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm!
 Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
 Ye signs and wonders of the element!
 Utter forth, GOD! and fill the hills with praise!”

* Within a few paces of the Glaciers, the *Gentiana major* grows in immense numbers, with its “flowers of loveliest blue.”

PASSAGE OF THE TÊTE NOIRE.

" Niente di piu maestoso, niente di piu imponente, niente di piu sentimentale che il passaggio detto del Tête Noire ! "

" Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow !
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits ! " BYRON.

At four o'clock we were summoned by our guides, and commenced our progress towards this interesting and remarkable pass. The morning air was cool, refreshing, and charged with fragrance ; the valley still wrapt in shadow ; but, eastward, the horizon was streaked with a ruddy purple glow, while the extreme verge of the mountain snows, kindling at the sun's approach, offered a picture much too gorgeous for description, while the rush of the Arve, and the various matin notes of birds, fluttering among the sombre but odorous pines, were the only sounds that met us on our way. But at this altitude, every sound was impressive, every object of sight overpowering !

After an ascent of some length, we reached the hamlet of Argentière—so named from a silver mine near it—planted at the foot of its glacier, the latter running up between large woods of fir-trees which contrast admirably with the whiteness, clearness, and varied colours of the ice. This isolated spot is much more sheltered and pastoral than Chamouni. The sky now brightened, and the peaks of Mont Blanc were suffused with a flood of ruby light, which seemed to be the signal for the peasants to quit their cabins, and return to the labours of the day. As we met, or passed them, a hearty salutation was exchanged, while our guides and they appeared to be on the most friendly footing. Mutual good-will is the best passport, and the uniform civility of the inhabitants gives zest to the landscape and the traveller.

As we approached the division of the two routes to Martigny, we found the ordinary path by Valorsine blocked up with snow, and were obliged to pick our way to La Tour, as the Col-de-Balme was impassable. It was a striking, but rather painful, novelty, to observe the poor peasants, "forcing a churlish soil for scanty bread," busy clearing away the snow from a patch of ground and melting it with earth, preparing to till and sow in the midst of a dreary waste, while the roofs of their miserable cabins seemed ready to fall in under the weight of snow. Still continuing along a steep track, we reached the higher ground, itself enclosed within fresh acclivities which form the natural barrier between Chamouni and the Vallais. Later in the summer, these heights present a rich greensward, covered with cattle; but at present they were still deep in snow, of which a huge mass, loosened by the sun, was precipitated with thundering impetuosity into the valley, sweeping over its surface, and shaking the soil and atmosphere where we stood. This was a little startling, as we had still to pass several points immediately exposed to avalanches; but the guides, contrary to our personal conviction, assured us there was no danger, and, with their authority in our favour, we continued the route. These swift-winged ministers of fate hung, nevertheless, in awful suspension over our heads, and seemed as if a breath would have hurled them from their stations. The path was steep, difficult, and knee-deep in snow; and in our progress we had to cross the *débris* of several very recent falls, each enough to have confounded the army of Xerxes. Our guide informed us that, while, with others, he accompanied a party of gentlemen across the Col-de-Bonhomme, last autumn, they were overtaken, in the midst of recent snow, by a tremendous tempest, where one of them, rather infirm and overcome with cold and terror, sunk down insensible upon the snow. They shouted for help to a small hamlet not far below them; but before the dying man could be conveyed on a sledge to the shelter of a hut, one of his companions, younger and more athletic, was struck with a palsy of terror, and both were lifeless corpses when the party reached the hamlet. The guides have but too ample and similar details wherewith to furnish the traveller; but their anecdotes are greatly relieved by numerous instances of hair-breadth scapes which all of them have experienced. A melancholy fact, related by Mr. Carne, may serve as a useful lesson to the rash adventurer on this route. The Aiguille-de-Caton, from the base to the extreme point, forms one vast perpendicular precipice of 8,000 feet, and to appearance is inaccessible; yet there are always some travellers mad enough for any exploits, and it had been a favourite one to climb to the top of this mountain or rather needle.

Five or six individuals, of different nations, were known to have succeeded. A bottle is fastened to the very peak, in which these desperadoes have enclosed their names, and the date of their exploits, thus seizing a claim to immortality. A Saxon gentleman, on his way from Martigny to Chamouni, took it into his head to make this ascent. The guide, a young man, after dissuading him from the attempt, refused to accompany him to the Aiguille: he therefore went alone, attained with great difficulty the sharp summit, and placed his name written on a slip of paper in the bottle, where it was afterwards found. But in retracing his steps, the appalling descent burst at once upon his view in all its horrors; he was seized, as is conjectured, with sudden giddiness, sank helplessly over the verge of the precipices, and rolled down its terrific depths. On the third day he was found, and subsequently buried by some of his relatives at Martigny. The legend annexed relates to a similar catastrophe, and to some of our readers may recall a painful event in humble life.

“ Chamouni's daughter, fair wast thou,
 Health, love, and beauty lit thy cheek!
 Hope sat enthroned upon thy brow—
 Thy sparkling glances seemed to speak
 Where innocence had found a nest
 Within thy pure and spotless breast!

“ All praised thy beauty: thou alone
 Wast all unconscious of the spell;
 And, like a floweret blooming on—
 The idol of thy native dell;
 A shrine amid the Alps wast thou,
 Where lonely pilgrim loved to bow!

“ The summer shone—the avalanche
 Rushed with its deluge of despair!
 And tears that time could never staunch
 And shrieks that rent the troubled air
 Soon told that, where the deluge rushed,
 Thy home, thy hopes, thy heart were crushed!

“ Too frail to save—too faint to strive
 In Nature's fierce and awful strife
 That mountain hearth,—so late the hive
 Of fond hopes ripening into life—
 Is cold!—the frozen *lawen* piled
 Where valour wooed and beauty smiled!

“ A withered form is weeping there
 Whose tears will never—never dry!
 Whose cheek is wasted with despair—
 Whose morning, noon, and midnight cry

Is—' Take me to thy couch of snow !
My Ellen Rho—my Ellen Rho ! '

" The thunder groans along the Alps ;
The rushing peal on peal succeeds ;
The lightning scathes their hoary scalps ;
The quivering pines are bent like reeds !
Yet louder than the torrent's flow
Ye hear the name of ' Ellen Rho ! '

" The storm is spent ; the evening sky
Has decked with gold the glacier's crest ;
Mercy hath closed the mourner's eye—
That voice is hushed—the weary rest ;
And there, a simple cross doth show
The resting-place of Ellen Rho !

Having crossed the col or apex of this Alpine pass, and gained the shelter of a straggling pine forest, we felt secure from the danger of the *lavanges*; and after recruiting our exhausted strength with a *goutte* of *kirschwasser*, descended rapidly in the Valorsine, but not without an occasional plunge beyond our depth in the snow, and a painful concussion with disjointed fragments of rock under its surface. In our present state of mental and bodily exhaustion, the little cabaret of the village was a most attractive object, and redoubling our steps we speedily reached its hospitable threshold. Our guide taking the lead groped along a dark, narrow passage, into a still darker apartment, where, in lieu of windows, a huge timber tunnel, rising from the middle of the floor, and tapering to a point, served at once to discharge the smoke and admit the light. At the signal of guests, our hostess started from an obscure corner, and, bidding us an Alpine welcome, conducted us into the " best parlour." This was literally a *sanctum*; for saints, martyrs, and holy water were its only ornaments, unless we add that of a Sardinian edict posted on the wall. The room, however, was very clean, and our landlady civil and attentive; so that our repast of eggs, bread, cheese, and wine, after so much fatigue, had the flavour of a banquet,—a banquet such as pedestrians only can enjoy! The *lavanges* are the periodical scourge of this romantic valley, and often descend close to the church; for the protection of which, a strong embankment has been raised on the exposed flank where, literally, " the Church is in danger." This, with the exception of the valley of Sass, is the only Alpine district which affords evidence of volcanic action, in the appearance of certain rocks described by Mr. Bakewell.

When we again emerged from this Cimmerian den, the sun was still high and cloudless, and threw a cheerful and animating influence over our sterile track.

The scene continued to soften as we approached the Trient, which foamed along with "torrent rapture," till lost in the shades of the Tête Noire. Our path was now among shattered groves of pine, with the sun glancing through their branches, and shadows playing fitfully across the greensward. A little farther on our left, and sparkling through dark foliage, the cascade of Barbelle threw up its silvery foam into the air; and, following the course of the torrent, we soon reached the frontier of the Vallais, where a small fort terminates the path. Even this remote and sequestered spot became the scene of strife and bloodshed during the French revolution. The situation is singular and picturesque.

Entering the savage defiles of the Tête Noire, and crossing the torrent on a crazy bridge, we began to climb the magnificent rocky steep, which, feathered with pine, towered in precipitous grandeur over our heads. Enormous masses of rock, the scattered fragments of some remote convulsion, lay piled in wild confusion; while others hung, like the sword of Damocles, suspended over our heads—

" As if the wakening breeze might sweep
Their slumbering thunder from the steep."

But the "Rock" of rocks, which is the especial glory of this pass, and which no man with the slightest pretensions to gallantry can pass without ejaculating—*Hommage aux dames!* is that which bears the aristocratic distinction of *Lady G—'s rock*—the Balmarussa.

" Said Nature to a favoured nymph,
Of azure eyes and raven tresses,
And cheek transparent as the lymph
That sparkled in her wild recesses:—

" ' What boon wilt thou?—the mountain's breast,
The torrent's bed, obey my daughter—
Wilt pearls and rubies for thy vest?
Or diamonds of the purest water?

" ' What wilt thou?—Here be secret mines,
T' enchant thee with their magic treasure!
Rich gems, that in their glowing shrines,
With rival lustre wait thy pleasure.'

" ' Give, goddess,' said the nymph, ' but give
To empty pride thy gems resplendent,
Baubles for which my sisters live—
Pale votaries of a glittering pendent!

“ ‘ Give me *substantial gifts* !—Bestow
Some boon coeval with our planet !’
‘ Nay—such thou hast ! Wilt more ?’ ‘ No—no !
Give me *ten thousand tons of granite* !’ ”

As we proceeded, the scenery, if possible, increased in wild and savage features ; the defile became more dismal, the rocks more imminent, and enclosing a space which the sun had never visited. In an instant, however, the scene was thoroughly transformed, and the transition brought us to a bright sunny glade, carpeted, like Calypso's isle, with *beau gazon* and interwoven with flowers ; but farther on in the season, covered, we were told, with wild strawberries of a peculiarly rich flavour. Through the intervening trees the foam of the torrent at intervals caught the eye, as we wound along the verge which communicated with it by a precipice of 600 feet.

Every object in the passage of the Tête Noire is calculated to produce a most original, strong, and lasting impression ; and although varying a little, according to the season, it is always wild in its features, and formidable in the strange and indescribable ideas and sensations which it conjures up.

Certes, it was a fearful path ! Enthroned,
There Horror sat, and scowled with furrowed brow !
Rocks crashed, streams roared, pines to the tempest groaned,
Struggled, and smote each other—till each bough
Was blanched and shattered : then from hills beyond
Burst the dread avalanche ! and where were now
The pilgrim or the path ? The snowy surge
Has swathed him, and the tempest howls his dirge !

THE VALLAIS, OR, VALLEY OF THE RHONE.

“ Niuna contrada dell' Europa merita tanto l'attenzione del colto viaggiatore quanto il VALESE : il naturalista, il filosofo, l'uomo di stato percorrono questo strano paese col medesimo interesse. Qui tutto è diverso da quello che si vede altrove ; natura diversa, diversi costumi, vi s'incontrano usanze politiche che sono abolite in tutti i luoghi circonvicini ; e questa regione sì poco conosciuta è situata tra la Francia e l'Italia, nel centro di tutto ciò che la coltura civile ha di più perfetto.”

PROSPETTO DEL VALESE.

THE situation of this canton, the character of the people, and the productions of its soil, distinguish it from every other branch of the confederation, and demand a few general observations as we pass through its interesting territory. Placed in the centre of the Alps, it is surrounded on every side by those enormous barriers, and traversed through its whole extent by the Rhone. It is the longest and most considerable of all the valleys of Switzerland, being thirty-six leagues in length, but of a breadth seldom exceeding one league. It has however numerous lateral valleys, which run into the interior of the Alps, and of thirteen that are inhabited, four are ten leagues in extent. These are in the south chain, while in the north chain, which divides it from Switzerland proper, there are four other inhabited valleys, with numerous others devoted to pasture. It was formed into a canton by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. St. Maurice is the only gate by which it can be entered on level ground, and this key of the canton is turned every night like that of a gaol upon its prisoners. The inhabitants comprise two distinct races : those of German extraction, who occupy the higher Vallais, and speak the language of the fourteenth century ; and those descended from the Celts, Romans, Gauls, and Burgundians, who are spread over the lower Vallais, and speak a barbarous French, composed of Celtic, Gallic, Latin, Greek, and Italian words. Over these last the former have greatly the advantage, and unite all the characteristics of a free and energetic people. In the lower Vallais no branch of industry has hitherto been introduced. In the management of their flocks and in the cultivation of their vineyards, they are still, as compared with their neighbours the Vaudois and Bernese, in a state of barbarism. Prior to the revolution they were subject to the Bishop of Sion and

the German, or upper districts of the Vallais; but their emancipation has operated less powerfully upon their habits than might have been expected; its ameliorating influences are still prospective, and a great moral revolution must take place before they can in any degree compete with their neighbours. It is remarkable that, with the most powerful stimulus of good example constantly before them, their indolence remains unexcited, their prejudices unshaken, and the shackles of superstition as strongly rivetted upon them as ever. They are the slaves of their priests, victims of their own unconquerable indolence, and creatures of little more than a vegetative existence. The Catholic religion is exclusively professed, and education neglected; and thus ignorance and fanaticism, left without the controlling influence of the one or the enlightening power of the other, are every where apparent, and excite in the observer mingled feelings of disgust and commiseration. The habits of the people are in many instances glaringly repugnant to every feeling of common sense, delicacy, and decorum, and might take precedence of those numerous other causes to which those revolting spectacles so peculiar to the Vallais have been attributed. But of these we shall have occasion to speak in due course.* With all its moral disadvantages, the Valley of the Rhone, nevertheless, is a charmingly diversified country, presenting physically the most beautiful and sublime features, and producing, from an exuberant soil, every variety of fruit, abundant harvests, and a successful vintage. In some districts the corn is cut down in May, in others it does not ripen till October. In one place the fruit never ripens—in another, the almond, fig, and pomegranate arrive at perfection. Such is the climate; so various as to furnish the hardy productions of the north with the delicate luxuries of the tropics. In one day we may collect the common productions of Spitzbergen, and the high-flavoured growth of the Carribees. In a few hours we pass from the shivering skies of Iceland to the glowing sun of Africa, and by the simple process of ascending the mountains or retiring into the valley, we enjoy nature in her most delicious prospects, or contemplate her features in their most appalling form. The Vallais abounds in rare plants; her Flora comprises 2000 varieties, besides about 1000 cryptogamic species.

This country is still imperfectly known, the lateral valleys especially. They have been explored by few if any strangers, and by none who have communicated information of value. It is one of the few fields still open for the researches of scientific men; and were a summer devoted to that purpose it might

* Dr. James Johnson, in the excellent work already referred to, has depicted with great force and brevity, the actual moral, and physical condition of the lower Vallaisans.

be productive of many important and pleasing results. Mr. Brockedon, in his "Excursions," has thrown much interesting light upon the mysterious recesses of the Alps, and made a valuable addition to our previous knowledge of their topography and population. But to the student of natural and political history—to the philosopher, whose proper study is *man*—and to the geologist and botanist, the Vallais is almost unbroken ground, and in its numerous ramifications almost as little known as Boothia Felix or the banks of the Niger. It is gratifying, however, to observe that, since our first sojourn, after a residence in Italy six years ago, many beneficial changes have been introduced, some improvements effected, and a faint spirit of emulation excited, which, by perseverance, may yet work greater miracles in behalf of the people, than were ever recorded of the Bishops of Sion.

"Le RHONE altier m'appelle, et je porte mes pas
Jusqu'à ces monts blanchis par d'éternels frimas,
Où semble s'élever les barrières du Monde!"—LA HARPE.

"I entered where a key unlocks a kingdom."—ROGERS.

The great entrances to the Vallais are those from the right and left banks of the Rhone; the former, the great thoroughfare from the Canton de Vaud, is by far the most striking, as it commands the Alps, and exhibits the features of the Savoy side in magnificent detail. As we approach by this route the mountains of the Vallais assume a more grand and imposing aspect. The Tour d'Ay, and the Diablerets, where the salt mines of Bex are excavated, command the passage on the left, while more in advance the Dent de Morcles and Dent du Midi, with their eternal mantle of snow, seem as if torn asunder to afford an escape for the impetuous waters of the Rhone—

"Who cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In haste, whose mining depths so intervene
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted."

The Castle of St. Maurice, crowning a rugged eminence, closes in the passage, to which its bridge of one bold arch keeps the key. This hardy structure is a monument of great antiquity, and by general consent a specimen of Roman architecture. St. Maurice occupies the site of the ancient Agaunum, and was the place of general sepulture while the Romans held possession of the country. In proof of which the floor of the church was formerly paved with

sepulchral marbles, many of which still remain, giving a sufficiently classic air to the sacred enclosure, and perplexing the antiquary by their very short-hand initial inscriptions. St. Mauritius, a distinguished hero in the martyrology, left his name to this place, where a fine abbey was constructed over his bones, in compensation for the martyrdom inflicted upon himself and Theban legion by that imperial manslayer, Maximinian. It is one of the few haunted churches in this country; but whether haunted by Maximinian or the martyr (for it is the scene of both their exploits), we could not learn. Had this happened in Scotland, we should have had all the supernatural in minute detail, and been informed—

“ Why his canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Had burst their cerements.”

The whole story, however, is a mere monkish tradition and supported by no respectable authority; but it has drawn many pilgrims and much pence to the shrine; and, viewing the lucre, the legend must be respected.

The Pizevache, which breaks the torrent of the Sallenche, and throws itself over a succession of precipices, several hundred feet high, gives striking relief to the scenery between St. Maurice and Martigny; and, contemplated in a bright summer morning, presents one of the most imposing accompaniments which Alpine landscape can offer. At the height of seven hundred feet the torrent first catches the eye by its white line of foam, boiling through a bed of black rock, whence it vaults over a succession of rapids to the brink of the great fall, and is thence precipitated, at a single bound of three hundred feet, into the basin below, tossing its clouds of spray around, foaming and agitated, as if its cauldron boiled over subterranean fires. And thus has it gushed these thousand years, with a rapidity that has never paused, and been received into a basin that has never presented but one aspect of foam and tempest. A small bridge, spanning the torrent, and several Alpine cabins, add much to the picturesque effect, but detract from the natural sublimity of the picture. A beautiful iris throws her arch across the fall; and numerous streamlets, rushing through the rocks in minute, snowy, and fantastic channels, catch the morning rays, and sparkle in such prismatic hues, as to invest the whole picture with enchanting brilliancy. To see these to perfection requires a bright morning sun; for without this important accessory, the tourist will be disappointed, as we ourselves happened to be, who saw it first under a cloudy and tempestuous sky. Under all varieties of season or circumstance, however, it is a fascinating object, and at every visit presents some new and imposing feature. The roar of its waters is peculiarly

deep and full, varying according to atmospheric influence, and meeting and accompanying the visitor to a great distance. It is extremely well situated for the convenience of strangers, as the great road forms the base of the picture, and receives a continued sprinkling from the clouds, suspended like snowy exhalations over the fall.

On quitting this magnificent cascade, the Castle of La Bathia, or Bâtie, perched upon a rock, and commanding the village and the pass, is a very picturesque ruin. It is one of the ancient fastnesses which served as an occasional retreat to the Prince-bishops of Sion, and, independently of its beautiful position on the Dranse, as it falls into the Rhone, must have been a place of great strength and security. It was originally constructed by order of Pierre of Savoy, whose hatred and oppression of the Vallaisans were deeply felt and resented. From Pierre it descended to the prelates above named, by whom it was employed for purposes very derogatory to episcopal dignity, and became a secret tribunal of a spiritual as well as temporal despotism. The dungeon in the central tower is connected with many traditions of fearful import. To such abodes of darkness and despair the sittings of the *Vehm Gericht* consigned their victims, and it is impossible to contemplate this sepulchre of the wronged and oppressed, without an instinctive shudder—

“ Le puissant foule aux pieds le faible qui menace,
Et rit, en l'écrasant, de sa debile menace !
..... Je ne veux désormais
Dans les prêtres des Dieux que des hommes de paix ! ”

MARTIGNY.

As we enter Martigny, the ancient Octodurum, we are reminded at every step of that frightful deluge which in 1818 had nearly swept the whole city from its foundation, and converted its territory into a leafless waste. Memorials of the catastrophe are deeply inscribed upon its walls, and many years of repose and prosperity will be required before the inhabitants can forget the shock, or the soil recover its native fertility. It was one of those tremendous ebullitions,

originating in obvious and natural causes, which in remote ages have dislodged mountains, exploded rocks, and converted the primitive valleys of Switzerland into profound lakes. Although there are no traces of subterraneous fires in these valleys except, as already noticed, equivocal evidence in the rocks of Saas and Valorsine, the causes which led to the inundation referred to, continue in silent but active operation, and in their effects are no less destructive than the earthquake and the volcano. The sterility caused by an Alpine torrent, is more incurable than that produced by a stream of lava; the latter may only suspend for a time the process of vegetation, the former cancels it for ever.

For a considerable time the waters of the Dranse—the “Niagara” of the Alps—had gradually diminished, and at length almost disappeared. So unusual a phenomenon, it might have been supposed, would have led to some inquiry into the cause, and to a salutary apprehension of consequences. This however was not the case; the Martignians, like the Catanians, reposed too implicitly upon their guardian saint to fear either man or the elements, and, suspecting nothing, continued, like the Pompeians, to eat, drink, and make merry. At length, in the month of April, some inhabitants, more curious than the rest, ascended the course of the river to ascertain by what cause the water had been interrupted. On farther inspection they found that vast masses of the glaciers of Getroz, and avalanches had slipt from their perch, and falling into a narrow defile between Mont Pleurer and Mont Mauvoisin, had formed an intercepting mound of ice and snow 600 feet wide, and 400 feet high, which was supported on a base of 3000 feet. Behind this enormous and still increasing barrier, the impeded waters of the Dranse had formed a lake twelve furlongs in length. They now took alarm, and adopted immediate steps to prevent a catastrophe which unless speedily remedied was unavoidable. In this emergency M. Venetz, the public engineer, a man of great skill and energy, was appealed to, who immediately undertook to excavate a tunnel through this enormous mass of ice and avalanche, and thus effect an escape for the waters, like the *emissary* from the ancient crater of Albano. On the 10th of May the enterprise commenced on both sides—the plan adopted in excavating the galleries on the route of the Simplon, and at the height of twenty yards above the level of the water, which, it was calculated, would not exceed this height during the interval employed in the perforation. Every judicious arrangement was made that could accelerate and secure the success of the enterprise; and the work, kept up without intermission by alternating gangs of fifty miners at a time, promised a speedy termination to the gallery, and the vivid apprehensions which the still accumulating danger had awakened. The conduct of the engineer, and the intrepidity of

those acting under him in this perilous duty, were above all praise. Night and day they continued at their post, neither intimidated by present danger, nor deterred by the symptoms of inevitable destruction. They acted like men devoted to the salvation of their homes, and threw themselves into the gap with the resolution to rescue their fellow-citizens, or sacrifice their own lives in the cause. But it was not the machinations of a common enemy they had to oppose, but the dreadful operation of nature, which they could counteract—not by brute force, but by prudence and caution,—a cool, persevering, and intrepid spirit. These virtues were every hour put to the severest test: avalanches continued to fall;—the astounding crash and descent of fresh masses from the glacier, followed by a sudden swell in the waters of the lake, might have inspired terror in the stoutest heart; but each of these brave fellows exhibited a firmness, which would have done honour to a Codrus or a Marcus Curtius, and laboured on with the impression that his life was on his lips, and that each succeeding instant might consign him to destruction. On an average, the lake acquired a daily increase of two feet during thirty-four days; but in one instance it rose five feet, and threatened, by its vast and increasing pressure, to burst the dyke. This sudden rise involved another dilemma; for if it should exceed the level of the gallery, and the height they had calculated at commencement, their labours were forfeited. Dreadful noises, similar to those which precede an earthquake, were heard at intervals, occasioned by the disrapture of solid masses from the bottom of the lake, which, emerging to the surface, floated in detached icebergs, of sixty or seventy feet perpendicular. Superior to all these obstacles, dangers, and the continued exposure to a freezing temperature, the men persevered with unexampled courage; and by the 4th of June, had carried the gallery six hundred feet through the intervening mass. Unfortunately, the extremities of the tunnel did not meet in the centre as they had calculated—that opening from the lake being twenty feet lower than the external aperture. They accordingly proceeded to sink the upper floor, and establish a thorough communication between the two compartments; but while thus occupied, the lake received fresh contributions from the impending glaciers, and began to discharge its waters the instant the perforation was completed. On the 13th of June the rush commenced; but the diameter of the tunnel was much too small to carry off the volume, and it accumulated to a height of two feet above the aperture. This, however, was speedily remedied; the vibration of the torrent, and its increased temperature from exposure to a summer atmosphere, by dislodging and melting the masses of ice, widened the artificial breach, and gave free scope to the impetuous stream. In fifty-six hours, the water of the lake had lost thirty feet in depth; and as the floor

of the gallery was every instant lowered by the violent action of the vast body of water impelled through it, there was every hope that a very few days would have reduced the stream to its ordinary level; when a sudden and unforeseen circumstance defeated all their vigilance, and produced fresh alarm and consternation. The cataract, in its descent from the external aperture—a fall of great height—had undermined the projecting base of the dike; and this important buttress gradually destroyed, the resisting force was overcome, the flood-gates burst open, and in half an hour the lake was drained to the bottom.

“ Alors avec fracas il (le Rhône) traîne des ruines,
 Il emporte les bois minés dans leurs racines;
 Et, soulevant ses flots où d'énormes glaçons
 Tombent en bondissant de la cime des monts,
 Il retombe, il déchire, il creuse son rivage,
 Au loin le bruit de son passage
 “ Fait trembler les rochers, fait mugir les vallons;
 De son vaste courroux il couvre les campagnes,
 Et va précipiter dans le sein de Téthys
 Ces débris orageux en courant engloutis,
 Et les dépouilles des montagnes.”

LA HARPE.

In this half hour, five hundred and thirty millions of cubic feet of water passed through the breach—five times the volume of the Rhine, at Basle, where it is thirteen hundred feet broad! Its velocity at first was that of a headlong torrent, estimated at one hundred feet deep, impelled by the vast momentum from behind; and at this rate it continued for thirteen miles, sweeping every thing before it. Charged with enormous blocks of rocks and ice, and uprooted pines, cattle, houses, and, painful to add, human beings, it reached Martigny, a distance of eight leagues, in ninety minutes. Every bridge in its course was totally demolished: that of Mauvoisin, ninety feet above the ordinary level of the Dranse, was no exception; four hundred cottages were swept away, involving a loss of many lives. This sacrifice of human life, so comparatively small, was the result of various precautionary measures, which had been enforced during the excavation. Signal stations were erected; sentinels planted along the heights; watch-fires, and pieces of ordnance ready charged, during the night,—all were prepared to announce any sudden disruption of the dyke. Such, however, was the security into which the inhabitants had been lulled, or such the terror occasioned by the sudden and appalling tidings at last, that thirty-four of them, bewildered, or overtaken in their flight, fell victims to the terrific scourge. The

noise of the torrent was deafening, and as if all the cataracts of the Alps had been collected into one channel, and let loose upon the plain.

Many escaped as if by miracle; and among these, as we were informed, were an English gentleman and his guide, with the loss of their carriage and horses. But for the devoted heroism of the engineer and his band, each of whom merits a statue, the destruction must have been sweeping and conclusive, and the town of Martigny as if it had never been. But as it is, the damage seems almost irreparable; and the actual loss of property during the two hours of inundation, is stated at upwards of a million of Swiss livres—an enormous sum in this country.*

Among the tragic incidents connected with the disastrous night on the Dranse, is the fate of a young betrothed pair, natives of Lavey, and much esteemed by their comrades. On the fatal morning, the lover left his mistress, to make some arrangements at Martigny, previously to their marriage, which was to be solemnized on his return; but this return was for ever cut off by the inundation in which he perished. The shock was fatal to the reason of the unhappy survivor, who still continues her watch, in the fond anticipation of his return. Mr. Roscoe, in his *Annual* for 1830, has introduced this episode in detail, and with striking effect and pathos. The catastrophe has imparted to the little hamlet of Lavey a sympathetic interest among travellers of every class, which no degree of prosperity could have conferred.

“And who is she—that meek-eyed maniac?—Who
That spectre watching by the blue wave’s border,
And calling him who answers not? But through
The night cloud on the cliff, in wild disorder,
Loud cataracts dash, and to that maiden’s view,
Dreams—bright delusions—have again restored her
The form she doted on! The bridegroom’s voice
Calls his beloved one, and the guests rejoice!

“Ha, no—’tis but a phantom! Those fond arms
Embrace a shadow! Him at dawn who parted,
With heart and step so light—chanting the charms
Of his betrothed—a fearful death has thwarted!—
The deep engulfed!—congealed the tide that warms
No lover now! How blessed the broken-hearted
Whose life survives not love! to her whose doom—
The death of mind—leaves nothing for the tomb!”

It is evident, nevertheless, on examining the archives of the hostellerie, that travellers may be sensibly touched by other, and more pressing incidents than

* Vide Brockedon, p. 173.—*Bibl. Univers. de Genève, Sc. et Arts.* tom. viii. p. 291.

even the story of Lavey; and that a "good table and civil landlord" may become the subject of very ungrateful remarks.*

S I O N.

"Le RHÔNE, dien de ces climats

Guide dans ces détours má course vagabonde." EP. à SCHOWALOW.

THE approach to SION—the ancient Sedunum†—is highly picturesque; hamlets, churches, and chapels, scattered along the acclivities, give to the landscape new and animating features, and indicate a more liberal share of luxury and refinement, than is to be met in any other part of the Vallais. The whiteness of these buildings, the rich meadow verdure, and the terraced vineyards from which they project, mutually relieve and enhance each other. The city is built on the declivities of two isolated rocky eminences, which command every approach, and in "its Castled Crags," presents a pleasing and rather formidable aspect. These three heights are occupied by the remains of a castle and two palaces—the Majoria and Tourbillon—which were the fortified residences of the Bishops. Those Prince-prelates were more feared than respected; few were distinguished

* "Why, yes—the *table's* good, I grant ye;
But I, alas! no magic-monger!
Find vintage sour, and viands scanty—
Mahogany's no cure for hunger!

"I grant ye, too, my landlord's *civil*—
None better loves a guest—or guinea!
But then his *table d'hôte's* the —
And so good night to thee, Martigny!"

† The *first* view, illustrative of this subject, is taken from the *west*, looking *up* the Vallais, and shews the "Castled Crags," and the town beneath, with the Rhone under the mountains to the right. The *second* view is taken from the broken ground on the hill of Valerie, at the foot of the Cathedral, embracing the ruins of the Episcopal Palace on the right, and the course of the Rhone towards Martigny. The *Cathedral* is taken from the same site, but farther back, and looking in the same direction. The *Chapel and Castle of the Bishops*, taken from nearly the same point, but looking in the opposite direction. The hill, *Tourbillon*, is on the left, with the ruins of the old Palace of the Bishops. The *Street* view shews the great Inn on the right.

for the odour of sanctity, but nearly all for their knowledge and use of the sword! They maintained the dignity of the mitre by wearing the casque; and while they professed a meek, virtuous, and humble spirit, practised every vice, and countenanced every oppression. Among these mitred champions was the renowned Matthieu Skimmir, a great favourite with the *Minnesingers*, and whose merits are still preserved in snatches of mutilated Runic song.

“ Well could Matthieu tell his beads—
 Well could shrive the *frauenzimmer*!
 But, better far, heroic deeds
 Became the holy Matthieu Skimmir!
 And thus the loud reveillé ran:—
 Haste where spear and falchion glimmer!
 In thunder-peals from rear and van—
 Shout, “for God and Matthieu Skimmir!” &c.

These courts, with the exception of the present Bishop's quarters, are now deserted, grass-grown, and partially occupied by a few monks: but they have witnessed many brilliant fêtes, closing in bloody frays; and public tournament and private treason following one another in rapid succession!

“ But, lo, the brier has wreathed the court—
 The nightshade climbs the wall;
 And the wild fox doth nightly sport
 Where princes strode in hall!”

From this point the view is superb: the Alps, in all their boldest outline of rocks, forests, and snowy summits, environ the scene; while the Rhone, winding round a bold promontory, intersects the vale in front, and sweeps along the foot of stupendous mountains, from which torrent and cascade are every instant contributing inexhaustible supplies.

The cathedral in the centre of the town, the hospital, and the Capuchin convent, are the chief objects in architectural embellishments, and well worth visiting. The first is a splendid temple; the second a handsome modern edifice, and the convent remarkable for its structural design, strength, and antiquity, and the reputed scene of many political as well as spiritual events. The predominant feeling, however, on visiting Sion, is in the impression of its departed greatness, and the unresisted dilapidation which every where meets the eye. There is probably no city in Europe, where melancholy musings are more apt to be excited by a ramble in the streets or suburbs, and very few where instruction and rational pleasure are of more difficult purchase. Here physical decrepitude,

moral deformity, and mendicity, in all their revolting forms, arrest the stranger at every step. But we do not resume the subject here, after an already brief notice of the hereditary calamity to which the people are subject; but may revert to it, with other topics, in an Appendix.

Opposite the town, on the further side of the Rhone, is a convent, entirely hewn out of the solid rock, and comprising all the appendages necessary to such an establishment,—kitchen, refectory, small dormitories or cells, &c.; but, owing to the dripping from the rock, it has been long deserted.

The situation of Sierre, for society and climate, is seemingly the most eligible in the Vallais; and the preference given to it by those who can afford to retire from busy life, fully justifies this opinion. It is the retreat of many of the wealthy families, and is, on a small scale, to Sion, what Richmond, Versailles, and Frascati are to their respective capitals—combining the *procul negotiis* with the *rus in urbe*. This locality is famous as the scene of popular revolt against Raron, when his chateau here, and the Bishop's fortress at Leuk, were reduced to ashes.*

From this point to Brieg, includes the various and sanguinary scenes of rencontre, between the French and Vallaisans, in 1798; in which the latter, although overpowered by number, and foiled by the superior tactics of their invaders, evinced a fortitude and perseverance that did honour to their cause, as a brave and uncompromising people.

The town of Leuk occupies an acclivity, and is defended by a castle, one of the ancient residences of the Bishops. Its principal attraction is in its baths, which are extensively patronized, and enjoy great reputation in cutaneous complaints. There are twelve springs, varying in temperature, from 117° to 126°. Those of Naters, opposite Brieg, do not exceed 90°; but it is difficult to

* According to an old custom of the Vallais, persons were sent about with a large club, on which a doleful visage was carved, encircled with rods and thorns. This figure, intended to represent oppressed justice, and called by the Vallaisans, the *Matze*, having been brought into an open square, the people soon gathered round it, and one of the boldest, as chief of the *Matze*, advanced towards it, and placing it upright, some of the crowd addressed the figure:—"Matze, why art thou so sorrowful? what brings thee here, Matze?" As no answer was returned, others then said,—"Matze, we will lend thee assistance: shew us against whom. Art thou afraid of Sillenen? Is it Asperling or Henngarten, who offends thee?" The *Matze*, however, was silent and motionless as before; but when Raron was named, it bowed profoundly in token of assent. They then took the *Matze*, and paraded it from village to village, through the ten districts of the Vallais, saying,—"The *Matze* was going to visit Raron, Captain-general of the Vallais, and afterwards the Bishop of Sion, his nephew, and all his other adherents. As soon as Raron observed the commotion, and the bitter feelings which animated the people, he fled to Savoy, to entreat protection and aid from the Duke. The Vallaisans, in the mean time, reduced to ashes his fine castle, which stood on an eminence, overlooking Siders (Sierre), as also his tower and the Bishop's fortress, which commanded the town of Leuk. All his possessions were destroyed.—*Vide ZSCHOKKE.*

ascertain the exact temperature, owing to their intermixture with surface-water. The spring rises under a rock of mica-slate, on the right bank of the Rhone. During the great earthquake at Lisbon, in 1755, the ground at Leuk, Naters, and Brieg was agitated by earthquakes every day, from the 1st of November till the 27th of February. Some of the shocks were so violent, that the steeples of the churches were thrown down, the walls split, and many houses rendered uninhabitable: many of the springs were dried up, and the waters of the Rhone observed to boil. At three different times the inhabitants abandoned their houses and fled into the fields; the mountain, above the spring at Naters, opened and threw out hot water. The last earthquake of consequence, in this district of the Vallais, happened in January, 1803; but it has been subject to similar phenomena in every age.

Near Turtmann, we visited a beautiful cascade, little inferior to the Pize Vache, and falling from the lofty grades of a natural amphitheatre, which adds greatly to the effect.

The route continues up the Vallais, but without exciting much interest, till arriving at the bridge of Viege, where the peaks of the Schallhorn, and not Monte Rosa, as is generally believed, are suddenly descried.* The town is situated at the entrance of the Valleys of Saass and St. Nicholas. The latter is little frequented, but highly romantic. Quitting the narrow streets of Viege, we followed the course of the river by a narrow but delightful path, winding through rich foliage; and, creeping round the bold edge of the precipices above its rushing waters, reached a small hamlet in a picturesque situation, and crossed the torrent on a high narrow bridge of one arch, with a small oratory upon it.† The path still follows the river, and discloses scenes of increasing interest, till we reach the village of Stalden, in a very romantic position, and consisting of a variety of ancient Swiss cottages, scattered irregularly. To the inhabitants of this secluded hamlet, the arrival of a stranger is an event of rare occurrence. From this a steep rocky path still ascends the valley, opening upon the most sublime scenery, and just wide enough for one loaded mule, winds through the tangled thickets and hanging pasturages, sometimes sweeping into ravines, down which torrents dashed impetuously to swell the river far beneath. At length, the magnificent pinnacles of Mont Cervin, or the Matterhorn, came into sight, dazzling the eye with their brightness, and giving a splendid termination to the sublime features of the valley. We made a halt at the base of overhanging

* The View is taken from this point, shewing the town on the left, the torrent of St. Nicholas in the centre, and Monte Rosa in the distance.

† The View is taken from this point, with the village of Stalden in the distance.

precipices,* down whose steep slopes and rocky declivities, forests of most luxuriant birch and pine waved in soft and undulating masses, striped and checkered with foaming torrents, with a romantic village on the right, perched among rocks, to all appearance, inaccessible. This is altogether a scene of solitary and impressive grandeur, and deserves to be better known: much is gained by occasional deviations from the beaten track.†

The town of Brieg, as already mentioned, suffered severely during the great earthquake, in 1755. It is seen to much greater advantage in the descent from the Simplon than from the Vallais. Its churches, convents, and glittering cupolas, emerging from rich meadows and groves of trees, produce an original and almost oriental effect; and, at the foot of a vast mountain chain, horrid with rocks and crowned with snow, gain additional beauty by contrast, and form, under all circumstances, an agreeable variety in the journey. The inhabitants of this town and district suffered great hardships during the war with the French Directory; and, after evincing the most courageous conduct, were compelled at last to yield to the force of numbers, and retire to the mountains. The pleasant village of Naters,‡ on the opposite bank of the Rhone, is much frequented during the fine season, on account of its baths.§

The opinions of geologists have been much divided respecting the cause, or causes, which have elevated mountains, and given a vertical position to beds that once formed the bottom of the ocean. Those who maintain that *subterranean heat* has expanded and broken up the solid crust of the globe, and has raised from vast depths the ancient bed of the ocean, appeal to a cause that is known to exist, and

* The View is taken from this point.

† For a very interesting account of Mont Cervin, and its passage, the highest in Europe, we refer the reader to M. Brockedon's work—the result of personal enterprise, completed at no small risk, and of unrivalled interest, in all that regards Alpine phenomena.

‡

“ Here, Nature when she scooped the bed
That holds her healing waters,
To all her hapless children said—
‘ Hygeia dwells in Naters!’
And thither, Beauty's blighted flower—
Youth, doom'd to droop and sicken—
Man, smit in his meridian hour—
And Age with languor stricken—
Flee, flee, to the enchanted SPRING,
Sons, fathers, mothers, daughters!
There taste the sweets of health, and sing,
The glorious fount of NATERS.”

§ The View is taken from the other side of the bridge leading to Naters, across the Rhone, part of which, with the river, is shewn. Brieg is seen in the middle, the bridge of the Ganther on the right, and the ascent of Simplon in the distance.

which seems sufficient to explain most of the various appearances which Alpine regions present. In opposition to this theory it is asserted, that there are no remaining vestiges of the action of subterranean fire in the Alps: but this, Mr. Bakewell is convinced, is erroneous. From near the source of the Rhone to the foot of the Little St. Bernard, there does not occur any known rock of a volcanic character, with the doubtful exception (already adverted to) of some rocks in the Valley of Saass, and in the Valorsine. I have examined (says the same authority) various parts of this range in the northern side of the highest mountains in the Alps, along a line of one hundred and twenty miles; and though I could discover no indications of the action of subterranean fire in the rocks themselves, I was greatly surprised to observe the numerous *thermal springs* that are abundantly gushing out at the feet of the primary mountains, near the junction of the mica-slate, or the dark schist passing into the mica-slate, with the lowest calcareous beds of that vast series of limestone strata, which forms the outer ranges of the Alps. Numerous as these hot springs are on the northern side of the Alps, and not unfrequently on the southern side also, it appeared remarkable that they had hitherto been regarded as isolated phenomena, and that their geological position had not been noticed. It is true, some of the warm springs in the Vallais, and in Savoy, had been long known and frequented; but the greatest number has been discovered, since Saussure published his *Voyages dans les Alpes*; and it appears probable, that they would every where be found near the junction of the primary and secondary rocks, were it not for *éboulements* that have covered them with a heap of ruins, or that torrents from the glaciers have mixed with them, and reduced their temperature.—APPEND. p. 555.

THE SIMPLON.

“ Qui non palazzi, non teatro, o loggia
 Ma'n loro vece un' abete, un faggio, un pino,
 Tra l'erba verde, e'l bel Monte Vicino
 Levan di terra al ciel nostr' intelletto.”—PETRARC.

IT may be safely affirmed, that nothing short of ocular demonstration can furnish any thing like an adequate idea of the wonders presented by a survey of this unrivalled pass. In the hardihood of its plan, and the skill and perseverance displayed in its construction, human daring and human ingenuity seem to have

been carried to their *ne plus ultra*, and to have perfected and realized what in a remoter age would have been considered as an idle speculation. It is one of the few achievements of human hands, which imagination can scarcely invest with additional grandeur, and where the reality of the picture justifies the most extravagant anticipations. It was an enterprise, which nothing but the most gigantic ambition could have contemplated, and nothing but the most consummate science, skill, and intrepidity could have accomplished. It seems to address every traveller in the words of Gaillard :—

“Voilà ce que peuvent l'industrie, l'audace, et la persévérance !”

Unlike the wonders of antiquity,—the pyramids, or the great wall of China, the results of mere physical labour, and where nature in a passive state offered small resistance to the operations of art,—the route of the Simplon is to be viewed as the proudest monument of man's genius, where, in continued conflict with the awful operations of nature, his perseverance was attended by incessant peril, and where the fall of rocks, or the rush of avalanches, were constantly threatening his life or impeding his progress. From Brieg to Crevola, a distance of seven leagues and upwards, the wonders of this route succeed one another in rapid detail ; but their scale and character are such as no mind, however capacious, can take in at once. They must be seen again and again, in order to be properly understood and appreciated ; and the more they are contemplated, either collectively or in abstract, the greater is our astonishment at the means employed and the obstacles overcome. Travellers, in general, pass so rapidly, and with so much facility, from the Swiss to the Italian side, and *vice versâ*, that the impression left on their minds is both faint and partial, and retains little of that enthusiastic admiration,—the spontaneous homage of every mind, which, in so stupendous a proof of human capabilities and resources, discovers a refined subject for honest pride and exultation. In every portion of this route, the awful and sublime features in which Nature manifests herself, are conspicuous and appalling, and such as no written description can embody. More than forty bridges,* of

* The principal bridges are the Saltine and the Crevola :—“Les deux plus considérables,” says M. Céard, “pour la hauteur, qui existent en France, et même parmi tout ceux qui ont été exécutés entre Sesto et Glitz, au nombre de 611, tant grands que petits, soit en granit, soit en bois. Les dessins de ces deux constructions remarquables se voient au relief du Simplon que j'ai fait et que j'ai livré au Ministère de l'intérieur pour être mis sous les yeux de Napoléon. Mais,” continues M. Céard, “ce pauvre Simplon avait du malheur ! Un drôle, espèce de *gypier* qui travaillait à ce relief dans mon bureau à Genève, m'en escamota les principales dimensions, et en fabriqua pour lui un second qui fut envoyé à l'Empereur Alexandre qui le vit ainsi avant Napoléon ! J'eus tellement d'inquiétude sur cet envoi clandestin, que j'en écrivis au ministre pour en informer Bonaparte, qui répondit :—*Si l'Empereur Alexandre a le relief, moi j'ai le Simplon !*”

various forms and altitudes, are thrown from one wild chasm to another, thereby connecting localities, between which no previous communication had ever existed. Numerous galleries, cut through the solid granite—various aqueducts—the grand canal—walls that support and flank the whole of the route—refuges for travelling, and a thousand other objects of surprising labour or ingenuity, complete the vast enterprise, and fill the mind with images of the most novel and overpowering interest.

The glory of having planned, and carried into effect, this more than Herculean task, belongs to the Chevalier CÉARD.* It was commenced by order of Buonaparte, after the battle of Marengo, and completed in 1805. During three years of incessant labour, upwards of *thirty thousand* men were employed upon it. The road is of a width sufficient to admit three carriages abreast; it shortens the distance between Paris and Milan, by nearly fifty leagues; and, although still exposed at certain periods of the year to avalanches and land-slips, the greatest precautions are observed, so as to diminish the risk of any catastrophe from those causes. But, under such circumstances, and in such a situation, human precaution may be supposed to be far from infallible; and it is not long since an English family, consisting of five persons, were swept away by an avalanche, and buried in one of the abysses which skirted the road. In the month of May, 1811, eight persons were precipitated, by a like accident, into the Gulf of the Tavernettes. Similar disasters are related to have happened at various other points; but for the last few years, we were told, such lamentable occurrences have been happily unknown.

We shall now present our readers with an extract from Dr. Johnson's very graphic and accurate account of this remarkable route:—"Crossing from Glitz to Brieg, the Simplon comes full in view, through a gorge or narrow opening, between two steep and piny mountains—the Glitz-horn and Klennen mountains. It is clothed with wood two-thirds up, then presents crags with straggling trees, and last of all, the snow-capt summit. The road first leads up the left-hand mountain, through a dense wood of pines, winding rather laboriously for nearly two hours, but still tending towards the gorge or narrow valley that separates it from the opposite mountain, and through which valley the Saltine, a rapid torrent, is distinctly heard in its foaming and precipitous course towards the Rhone. At every turn of this long zig-zag ascent, the Valley of the Rhone

* The reader, who might be desirous to know more on this subject, may consult M. Céard's very interesting work, entitled,—*Mémoire et Observations historiques et critiques sur la Route du Simplon, adressés à M. Dupin, Membre de l'Institut.* Paris. Goeury. According to this authority, the labours of the Simplon lasted *six* years, the road being merely *passable* in 1805.—P. 34. The first operations, in the Vallais, commenced Feb. 9th, 1801.

lengthens out, and the river is seen more clearly meandering through its plain. Brieg, Naters, Viege, Tourtemagne, and many other towns and villages, come successively into view, and appear as distinct as if they were only a very few miles from the observer; while the immense chain of Alps on the north side of the Vallais, with the Gemmi in their centre, are ranged along like fleecy clouds, but with all their angles and forms surprisingly well defined. The innumerable chalets, cottages, and hamlets, perched in all directions on the steeps, rising from the north side of the Vallais, can be traced with the naked eye, while the telescope shows the men and cattle moving about. At length, the road opens on the verge of the precipice, formed by the Klena over the Saltine, and directly opposite the Glitz-horn, which appears within musket-shot. Here the scene is sublime, and even fearful. It really requires some courage to look from the space between the first and the second Refuge, down into the yawning abyss through which the torrent is dashing from crag to crag. The opposite steep seems so abrupt, that the pine trees appear to grow along a surface as upright as themselves. Here, though not the last, yet the most extensive view of the Vallais, with all its snow-clad Alps, is taken; and the traveller, however excited by the anticipations of what is to come, lingers for a moment in reflections, which the wretched pictures of human nature presented to him in the Vallais had called forth—then surveys, for the last time, the hoary-headed mountains of Switzerland, and pursues his course towards the classic ground of Italy!

“The road from the second Refuge to the bridge, crossing the Kanter, assumes a perfectly horizontal line, under the stupendous brow of the Klennenhorn, and along the face of a craggy and precipitous steep, out of which the road is cut with infinite labour and art. This gallery, as it may be termed, extends two miles; and here was the difficulty of constructing the road originally, as well as that of preserving it afterwards. If ever the Simplon becomes impassable, this will be one of the first places to give way. The whole side of the mountain is a series of loose, or easily loosened, masses of rock, of all sizes, interspersed thinly with pines. Every avalanche, almost every fall of rain, undermines or detaches some of these masses, which go down with thundering precipitation into the valley, tearing away, where they do not happen to leap over, the preservative terraces, or even the road itself! A rock, fifty tons in weight, had just rolled down the steeps before we crossed, and lodged on the road, rendering it extremely difficult for carriages to pass, there not being twelve inches to spare between the off-wheel and the precipice. After passing the bridge, where a wild and romantic view of the valley above, as well as of that below, is seen, we ascend in zig-zags up the opposite mountain, through forests of pine, larch, and

other trees—along the edges of frightful precipices, and under magnificent grottos, hewn out of the solid rock, till we come to the open and barren part of the Simplon, in the immediate vicinity of the eternal snow. Here a picture of desolation surrounds the traveller; the pine has no longer the scanty pittance of soil which it requires for nourishment; the hardy, but beautiful Alpine flower, ceases to embellish the sterile solitude, and the eye wanders over snow and glacier, fractured rock and roaring cataract, relieved only by that stupendous monument of human labour—the ROAD itself, winding along the edges of precipices, penetrating the primeval granite, striding over the furious torrent, and burrowing through dark, dreary, dismal, and dripping grottos, beneath accumulated masses of ice and snow. At length, the summit of the Simplon is gained—a solitary human habitation is approached—and the ‘shivering tenant of this frigid zone’ presents himself, in the shape of a Piedmontese soldier, who demands your passport, and levies a contribution upon your purse at the same moment. The contribution, however, is cheerfully paid, since it is expended on a spacious HOSPICE,* similar to that on the great St. Bernard, and destined for the hospitable reception and protection of the way-worn and benighted traveller.

“The descent from the barrier to the Valley of the Simplon, winds between wild, barren, and snow-clad heights, and the traveller is not sorry to ascend the cold stony steps of the Hôtel-de-la-Poste. Invalids should not stop here; but those who are in tolerable health, should give two days to the Simplon, and sleep in this eagle’s nest, in order to feel the contrast between the mountain air of the Alps, and the mephitic atmosphere of the Vallais.

“The Valley of the Simplon, contrary to the usual mode, contracts as it descends, and terminates in a frightful chasm between perpendicular precipices, fifteen hundred or two thousand feet high, formed by the rending asunder of granite mountains, during some earthquake or volcano, long before the appearance of man. Through this abyss, or series of abysses, runs and roars the torrent of the Doveria, formed by the junction of the Krumbach and Quirna. At the point where these two glacier streams, or rather cataracts unite, the road, which had first accompanied the one and then the other, dives into the solid rock and disappears. On emerging from the gloomy grotto, the route follows the

* The view is taken from this point, at an elevation of 6560 feet. In the lowest depth of the picture is the town of Naters; above are the Bernese Alps, the *Breithorn*, the *Jungfrau*, and the *Mönch*, crested with their glaciers. For the last ten years no progress has been made in the New HOSPICE, commenced by Napoleon, and which was to have enclosed a space of 200 feet in length by 70 feet in breadth. The establishment was to have consisted of fifteen persons, monks and domestics, and to have been conducted on the model of the great St. Bernard.

channel of the foaming Doveria, sometimes excavated out of the wall of granite on one side, sometimes striding across the boiling flood, and pursuing the same course on the other. In this way the astonished traveller proceeds for nine or ten miles, through a succession of the most stupendous and desolate scenes which imagination can conceive. The rocks rise on each side to a frightful altitude, and, in many places, appear ready to precipitate themselves headlong on the traveller, while cascades in all directions come down in sheets of foam along their rugged and perpendicular sides."—It is remarkable, that in its whole extent, even in the galleries perforated through the granite, this route preserves its uniform breadth of twenty-five feet, and a slope of not more than one inch and a half in every six feet,—a fact, which, considering the obstacles they had to combat, would appear almost incredible. Under these advantages, carriages proceed in every part of the route with uniform dispatch, and without the slightest occasion to employ the drag-chain. Of all the Alpine passes, this is the only route practicable for artillery and heavily-laden waggons. As it was at first apprehended, that unless fifty, or eighty thousand francs were devoted for annual repairs, the avalanches, torrents, and fragments of rock, in conjunction with the tremendous storms of which these mountains are so oft the theatre, would soon block up or render the route impracticable, the King of Sardinia ordered several parts to be destroyed. This edict, however, was speedily recalled; workmen were stationed along the entire line, and a thorough intercourse re-established. In the mean time, however, frequent devastations, the result of natural causes, have interrupted the communication. Only two years after its completion, the bridge of the Oësbach was entirely swept away by an avalanche.—The gallery of Gondo, or the Great Gallery, as it is called, *par excellence*, is, in point of extent, situation, and execution, a phenomenon in the history of human art and enterprise, and takes undisputed precedence over every other feature in this wonderful route. Eighteen months of incessant labour, night and day, supported by alternate gangs of six men at either opening, were required to complete the excavation of nearly 600 feet through the solid granite. The work was executed, agreeably to the plan furnished by the veteran engineers, MM. Céard and Cournon, in a sinuous course, in order to facilitate the military defence of the passage, by the side of which not an inch of space exists but what is occupied by the Doveria, which here precipitates itself into a gulf of incredible depth, mined by the cataract of Frassinone, and the rocks which it incessantly detaches from the rugged escarpments of this terrible valley, which, in fact, is but a vast fissure, produced by some remote volcanic shock, and sawed deeper and deeper by the incessant action of impetuous torrents. At each extremity of this gallery there is a bridge,

which in any emergency would render the defence more sure and practical. On issuing from the gallery, we stand upon an arch thrown across the Frassinone, a cataract, which is seen falling from a great height above, and then, at a hundred feet below, precipitated into the Doveria. It is impossible to contemplate the scene which is here presented, without a strong feeling of awe and admiration. "It offers," says Mr. Brockedon, "perhaps the finest assemblage of objects, to excite an emotion of the sublime, that is any where to be found in the Alps!" "My recollection," he adds, "is vivid of the unexpected and awful impression received from the scene, by my bursting suddenly upon it from the gallery."

It was recommended by Céard, that for the better defence of the passage, the bridge on the French extremity should be of stone, and that on the Italian side of wood, but the result was exactly the reverse. The two lateral openings, which admit light to the gallery, were made with a threefold intention, namely—to apply to the work six gangs, of twenty miners each, instead of two which, under other circumstances, could only proceed in the work; to discharge through these openings the blocks and *débris* of the excavation into the gulf below; and, finally, to light the gallery *after* its completion. Looking out from these, the abyss they overhang seems truly awful; and the roar of the waters beneath appalling. On the rock opposite one of these openings is the rudely-chiselled memorial of its completion—ÆRE ITALO. MDCCCV.

We may partly imagine what must have been the feelings of the stranger or straggler from the neighbouring villages, when overtaken by night in this dismal region, during the progress of the work; how, as he groped his way along the gloomy defile, he was suddenly startled by the sound of hammers, chisels, and pickaxes, mingling with the deafening roar of the Doveria! while groups of beings, more than human in their appearance, clung to the rocks, and carried on their Herculean task by the light of torches—forcing their way through the solid granite: then the thunder of the "miners' blast" shivering the rocks, and calling forth a thousand echoes from the mountains! "It was a scene," says M. Mallet, "through which we would advise the author of the next grand epic, to introduce his hero to the infernal regions!"

The efforts of every kind made by the Italian engineers, attached to this, beyond question, the most difficult portion of the undertaking, yet crowned with triumphant success, are deserving of all praise, and invest the names of Gianella and Bossi with well-merited immortality. It is a pleasing duty to ascribe honour to whom honour is so justly due, and to be able, in some measure, to appreciate such unexampled labours. "Yet," says Eustace, speaking of this gallery, "how insignificant does it appear when compared to the grotto of Posilipo, or to the

gate of Salzburg!" To those acquainted with these objects, and their geological structure—the peculiar circumstances which mutually encouraged or opposed their execution—which rendered the one the triumph of art over nature, and the other the result of mere physical labour—this statement must appear too absurd to require refutation. They present, respectively, such difficulties as may be imagined, by comparing the perforation of an oak to that of an apple. Farther, says Mr. Eustace, the Simplon is "covered with perpetual snow, and is remarkable for the passage of Buonaparte, previous to the battle of Marengo!" This is a mistake; as the invasion in question was effected by way of the Great St. Bernard.

In expressing our admiration of these galleries there is no need, as an anonymous writer has well observed, to draw upon the imagination. The distance from human dwellings—the difficulty of access—the dangers of the avalanche, the precipice, the storm, and the torrent—all are circumstances which enhance the magnitude of the undertaking, and should not be forgotten in contemplating the results. If a temple were built upon the summit of Mont Blanc, what should we think of the traveller who sneered at its architecture, because it did not equal in magnificence that of St. Peter's?

A little below Gondo a small chapel marks the extreme boundary of the Vallais. The government of this canton is democratic, and the Bishop of Sion the chief magistrate. Although in no respect an actual sovereign, he receives, nevertheless, all the honours peculiar to that dignity; he has the sole privilege of holding, and of inhabiting at pleasure, the fortresses of the country: he alone convokes the national assemblies—which are held twice a-year—and such diets extraordinary as occasion may demand. The election of Bishop rests with the people, who make choice on the presentation of four candidates from each of the seven cantons of the Upper Vallais, proposed by the Canons of Sion. The second magistrate is the Captain-General; after him come the Banneret, the Treasurer, and the Chancellor. All these are accountable for their administration to the deputies of the seven cantons, or subdivisions, who constitute a Supreme Council. This council possesses the legislative authority, and pronounces decisively in all questions of public and private interest.

"After traversing the solitude of Gondo,* and the somewhat less savage defiles

* In the Vignette accompanying the present work, the reader will observe a striking sketch of this dismal village and hostelry. Prior to the formation of the grand route, merchandise was transported on mules; and in case of stormy weather, hundreds of beasts of burden, forming a caravan, were here obliged to halt for shelter, and often for several days together. Two brother-barons were the original fabricators and feudal proprietors of this gloomy sanctuary.

of Isella, the scene gradually changes—the towering precipices begin to lose a little of their perpendicularity, and recede backwards at their summits; the abyss becomes less gloomy; solitary and stunted pines shew themselves on the ledges of rock; then clusters of pines; and, at last, the gorge opening wider and wider, a fairy scene—the romantic Valley of Fontana bursts on the view! This, indeed, is *Italy!* The chilling humid vapours of the tremendous abyss, from which the traveller has emerged, vanish at once; the balmy air is loaded with odoriferous perfumes; the sloping glades on the left are covered with vineyards, orchards, gardens, villages white as snow, and every kind of cultivation, contrasting with the still precipitous and gigantic cliffs on the right. After proceeding a few miles farther along the foaming Doveria,* another and much more spacious valley opens out to view, at the village of Crevola—‘one of the most delightful,’ as Eustace justly observes, ‘which Alpine solitudes inclose, or the foot of the wanderer ever traversed.’ This is the Val D'Ossola.”

The almost magical effect produced upon the traveller by the sudden exhibition of this magnificent picture, Dr. Johnson has described with equal force and originality. “Whether,” says he, “it was owing to the physical qualities of the air—the sudden transition from scenes of savage sublimity to romantic beauty—from sterility to fertility—from the awful work of earthquakes and cataracts, to the peaceful labours of man—from solitude to society—or from all these causes combined, I know not; but the exhilaration produced upon myself and a large party by this first entrance into the glades of Italy, was indescribable. Imagination, early association of ideas, and reminiscences of classic tale and history, must have had considerable effect. I have entered upon and sojourned in many different climates on the face of this globe, but never did I feel such elasticity of soul and body, as in the drive from the Crevola to Duomo D'Ossola. A thousand times did I inspire, to the very utmost extent of my lungs, the balmy atmosphere of Italy, and still with increasing delight. After this confession, it will not be said that I descended to the velvet plains of Latium, with a mind prejudiced against its climate.”

“O TERRE de Saturne! ô doux pays! beau ciel!
Lieux où chanta VIRGILE, où peignet RAPHAËL!
Terre dans tous les temps consacrée à la gloire,
Grande par les beaux-arts, reine par la victoire!

* It was at the opening of the Val-Dovedro, that in 1487 the Vallaisans gave battle to the Milanese, and where the women of Duomo took such signal vengeance upon the former, for the outrages they had committed.

Sans respect, sans amour, qui peut toucher tes bords ?—
 Partout les descendants de la reine du monde
 Ressuscitent sa gloire, et la terre féconde
 Rend l'Italie antique à leurs nobles efforts.'

SAINT-VICTOR. *Le Voyage du Poëte.*

Inaccessible as these Alpine regions which we have just left have hitherto been, and inhospitable as they must ever seem to visitors from a more favoured country, still their awful solitudes embosom numerous scattered villages, whose isolated population derive a scanty subsistence from the grazing of flocks, employment on the route, casual attendance on travellers, and the cultivation of a late and precarious harvest of rye and potatoes. But even these are confined to certain altitudes; and at the elevation of the village of the Simplon, neither fruit nor vegetable can be produced for the use of man. Still the inhabitants, though subject to so many privations, are neither more unhappy, unhealthy, nor more discontented than their luxurious neighbours. They can expatiate with patriotic warmth upon the beauty of their native rocks, the keen but invigorating temperature of their clime; and over their precarious meal experience that sentiment of gladness and gratitude, which continued profusion, or even regular supplies, can but seldom inspire. In situations, where even the pine is unable to take root, the wood of the rhododendron, the hardiest and most beautiful of all Alpine plants, supplies them with fuel; and with such humble means to soften the rigours of an eight months' winter, they enjoy a degree of health and cheerfulness, which form a rich equivalent for the absence of other essentials. "Avez-vous jamais respiré," say they, in the words of Barthélemy, "dans vos riches appartements la fraîcheur de cet air qui se joue sous cette voûte de verdure! Et vos repas, quelquefois si somptueux, valent-ils ces jattes de lait qu'on vient de traire?—Quel goût ne prêtent pas à nos aliments, des travaux qu'il est si doux d'entreprendre même dans les glaces de l'hiver? dont il est si doux de se délasser, tantôt dans l'épaisseur des bois, tantôt auprès d'une flamme étincellante, nourrie par des troncs d'arbres, au milieu de nos femmes et de nos enfans—objets toujours nouveaux de l'amour le plus tendre!—au mépris de ces vents impétueux qui grondent autour de nos retraites sans troubler la tranquillité!"

Besides most of the quadrupeds and birds that range at liberty over the plains of France and Germany, there are several others indigenous to the Alps; namely, the lynx,* the white hare, the black squirrel, the dormouse, the chamois,

* A fine specimen of this animal was taken a few years ago in the neighbourhood of Saxe-Meiningen, and may be seen in the Museum there, where it is preserved in commemoration of the remarkable fact. *Vide* the author's "Journal of a Residence in Germany, during an attendance upon His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence."

the black and fawn-coloured bear, especially on the southern flanks of the Higher Alps; the white tit, the Alpenfluevogel, and the large eagle, known by the name of l  mmergeier, which is four feet four inches long, measures nine feet four inches between the extremities of both wings, and weighs from eight to fifteen pounds. This formidable bird will attack chamois, lambs, kids, calves, &c., and has been seen in the Grisons to assail an ox, and struggle vainly for several hours to precipitate him from the rocks.

Entomologists, botanists, and others, desirous of collecting specimens, should begin their excursions to the calcareous mountains early in June, and visit the granitic Alps in August.

For such Alpine tourists as purpose to combine the study of Botany with their excursions, a small press to dry the plants will be found very convenient. For all very delicate plants it is indispensable; but, where the traveller is unprovided with the apparatus, a book may be substituted, and the flower or plant carefully deposited between the leaves. For others, again, who calculate on passing some time among the mountains, and are so circumstanced as to return home every night, a tin box will answer the purpose nearly as well; but they must be careful to have it trimmed with fresh moss, over which, in order to preserve the plants moist and natural, a little water must be sprinkled at intervals.

For the convenience of the mineralogist, the apparatus used by Professor Pictet, of Geneva, is the best that can be selected. It consists of a leathern girdle, on the left side of which is a sheath of the same material, to hold the hammer; on the right is a pocket to contain a phial of acid, enclosed in a wooden box, and the necessary implements to strike a light. This girdle forms the upper part of a thin leather apron, that may come down to the knee, or be tied up by means of buttons on the sides, so as to make a kind of wide horizontal pocket, open at the top, and supported in the middle by a leathern thong, the shape of a Y reversed, the two branches of which are fixed to the girdle. The thong, which we have already said supports the pocket, is buckled or locked to the belt, in which M. Pictet carried a barometer. Thus the minerals collected being placed near the centre of gravity of the body, and partly supported by the shoulders, give the least possible inconvenience to the pedestrian. He has his specimens constantly under his eye, and within reach when he wishes to substitute some one more eligible than those at first picked up. In this way, moreover, the stones suffer less damage by friction than when carried in the pocket. Moveable steel hooks serve to suspend, on one of the sides of the girdle, a sextant of three inches diameter—a very useful instrument to observe

the angles, of which it will serve the purpose of ascertaining, not only the degrees, but the minutes; and, on the other side, an artificial horizon, and a water-level to measure the heights. M. Pictet contrived to make the box for this instrument serve as a table, standing on a kind of stick, the legs of which open in a triangular form, to support the barometer, and which, being closed, will answer the purpose of a good walking-stick.

For the artist, or amateur, who wishes to transfer the face of nature to his portfolio, a large octavo paper book,—blue and grey are the best,—a pewter *stilet*,—which is preferable to the black-lead pencil, inasmuch as it requires no preparation to *fix* the outlines,—with chalk and crayons of the usual landscape colours, comprise nearly the whole *materiel* for the object in view. To the experienced artist we presume not to address ourselves; but we would advise the amateur to tint his views from nature on the spot, and never to rely upon mere memory to conjure up the resemblance. Every evening, on returning to his inn, it will be advisable to strengthen the outlines by substituting Indian ink for the marks of the crayon. In this manner he may secure the resemblance, and proceed satisfactorily; while, in after life, the most meager outlines from his portfolio will often awaken impressions and recollections of the Alps which the most animated and vivid description could not convey. The morning and evening illuminations are the seasons at which these sketches may be made with best effect. The rough, black, and convex mirrors sold by Breitiger, at Zurich, and to be had in most of the principal towns, are much employed by native artists. By means of these, light and shade, partial or entire landscapes, being brought together, and concentrated into a small space, the various features of the picture come more immediately within the axis of vision, and, while they maintain their relative proportions, are readily taken down by the pencil. To those who are not already familiar with this apparatus it will be found to be a great acquisition, and will much facilitate the process, while it ensures the accuracy, of the drawing.

Having left Switzerland by the great pass of the Simplon, and purposing, after a short *détour* of the Italian lakes, to re-enter it by the celebrated pass of the Splughen, we trust it will neither be irrelevant to our subject, nor uninteresting to the reader, if we descant for a little on the means best calculated to ensure his personal security, and to enhance the pleasure and satisfaction consequent upon excursions in the higher Alps—such as he may have it in contemplation to perform. We are the more disposed to select this duty at present, from the consideration that, on repassing the Alps and dividing our attention between the startling events of history, and the sublime character of

the scenery which that route will unfold, our pages must be reserved for the employment of more imposing and essential materials.

It should be a fixed practical maxim with every traveller in the Alps to take counsel of the inhabitants, and to be swayed by their observations, in whatever regards sudden atmospheric changes, the practicability of mountain *traverses*, the danger or security from avalanches in their different forms, and the times and seasons at which the wonderful objects in view are most safe and accessible. The invalid is required to be especially on his guard, to avoid exposure on the elevated points in his route, to make curiosity subservient to prudence, and he may then rest assured that, with these limitations, there is nothing from which he may shrink in a passage over the Alps.

With this view we recommend the following observations—originally impressed upon us by the perusal of M. Ebel and others, but reduced to practice during subsequent excursions in the Alps—to the attention of our adventurous countrymen, convinced that, in a region where only the pedestrian can approach many of the scenes to advantage, they may serve as useful memoranda.

If the traveller is not in the habit of walking, let him begin with short excursions of two or three leagues, to which he may add one league every succeeding day. In this way he will avoid the danger of over exertion, and, in the course of a week, look with mingled surprise and pleasure at the progress he has made in the right use of his limbs. In ascending steep mountains, let him abide strictly by the following directions:—to proceed at first with a regular, moderate step; by this means respiration will not be impeded, nor the circulation too much accelerated; and he will be able to continue the ascent for several hours without fatigue. Those who have not been accustomed to travel in the Alps, generally climb with too much ardour at commencement, or take too long steps, so that, after continuing the exertion for a single hour, exhaustion is induced, and thus the chief object of their setting out greatly, if not entirely, defeated. To all, therefore, who would reach the summit with sufficient spirit left to enjoy the prospect, let the motto be—*Festina lente!*

Whenever the rule is practicable, the traveller should always ascend the mountain from the west side in the morning, and from the point opposite in the evening. By this precaution he will escape the exhausting repercussion of the sun's rays, and prosecute his journey, during the greater part of the day, in comparative comfort. When any particular *col*, or snowy ridge, is to be crossed, it is advisable to start very early—at four o'clock, or even sooner, in summer—so that a firmer footing may be secured; and any dislodgment of the snow, caused by the sun's heat, avoided.

Of the danger from avalanches, the pine-trees, which are every where scattered over the Alps, afford a very correct indication : for so long as they have not dropped the snow with which their branches are loaded—and which may remain from two to four days—danger is to be apprehended. The frequency of avalanches is in proportion to the severity and duration of the snow-storm ; but the danger from that cause is chiefly imminent at the setting in of a thaw. We would, therefore, caution the rash, or unexperienced tourist, and whom pressing necessity does not impel forward, never to attempt the passage of the higher Alps, until the fall of the vernal avalanches has been announced, and free intercourse re-established. Let it also be noted that, after a succession of rainy days, a different kind of avalanche is to be guarded against—one of the three varieties already described—namely, the descent of large fragments of rock from the precipices which skirt, or enclose, the valleys, and often block up, or even obliterate, the road. Under these circumstances, a short halt becomes indispensable ; and the tourist who consults his safety, must suffer himself to be swayed, as to the time of his proceeding, by the experience and prudent calculations of the native guides.

Travelling in *large* parties is attended with many inconveniences, or even privations. The difference in age, ardour, taste, strength, and temperament, make it next to impossible to keep company ; each, according to his fancy, will be constantly on the outlook for congenial subjects ; so that you will observe exhaustion and restlessness, apathy and enthusiasm, excitement and depression, exhibited by the same party—often ludicrously contrasted—yet called forth by the contemplation of the same scene or incident. We recollect two most intimate friends and worthy citizens, who, in a pleasure excursion through Switzerland, presented a contrast of this description, but in such extreme that, while the one shed tears as he stood mute and devout in the chapel of Tell, his friend pursued exactly the opposite course, and filled the sacred precincts with raillery and declamation of the most absurd character. Yet both were sincere, inseparable friends ; with no apparent sympathies, but walking over the land like the two laughing and “ piping ” philosophers of antiquity. There is another and greater inconvenience, however, to which large parties travelling in the remote cantons are exposed ; namely, the scanty and insufficient accommodation supplied by the inns—*gasthofen* and *auberges*—which, during the rambling season, are overstocked with customers ; and to late arrivals, present a most indifferent welcome after a fatiguing day’s journey. On some occasions, also, the nights must be passed where there are no inns, and where the party must be thrown upon the hospitality of the minister, or curé, for the means of rest and

refreshment. But as these inconveniences apply chiefly to large parties, those whose number does not exceed three may be perfectly easy on the subject, and commence their journey without the slightest dread of any thing like serious privation.

In addition to the always more or less probable danger attending an Alpine route—namely, the danger from *above*—there is another, and sometimes a very formidable one from below, where the narrow path winds along a precipice of extreme depth, and the traveller's eye is suddenly arrested, and paralysed by the sight of an appalling chasm at his feet. Instances of this sort are numerous; and on nervous individuals produce a sort of moral paralysis, or rather fascination, which has at times proved fatal. The melancholy fate of the Saxon gentleman, already recorded in these pages, with others which we could mention, were, no doubt, the result of the same inexplicable fascination; and the pedestrian should bear forcibly impressed upon his mind this fact, that what is exceedingly practicable in the *ascent*, may prove a dangerous enterprise in the opposite direction. In the one case he has to face and approach, in the other to recede from, the danger; and even the strongest mind will at times be shaken by the fearful suggestions conveyed to it through the eye. The only remedy in the case—for such passages are unavoidable among the Alps—is, if possible, to familiarize the eye with the subject, and to wait till the effect produced upon the imagination has subsided, and the mind has recovered its self-command. But where this indifference is not to be acquired, and where the eye is constantly attracted to the object in question, it will be impossible for the feet to advance with safety, and the traveller must either consign himself to the imperturbable self-possession of his guides, or retire—a measure which, as we have just observed, is not always a favourable alternative. The alacrity and *sang-froid* with which the native guides—particularly those of Thun and Chamonix—scramble or vault along these precipices and chasms, are subjects of astonishment to the uninitiated tourist; such are the mere natural results of much and early familiarity with objects of terror. A Swiss on the verge of a precipice, and a seaman on the topmast of a seventy-four, feel nothing of the trepidation with which the spectator is affected, but fearing nothing, have nothing to fear. The agility of the Swiss peasants, in such instances, is depicted with much truth and picturesque effect by Sir Walter Scott, in his *Anne of Geierstein*. We have occasionally observed, and have heard too many anecdotes in proof of, a reckless hardihood in some of our young countrymen, and a propensity, on such occasions, to court unnecessary peril and exposure. It is, however, but a sorry exhibition of native courage, to bring into unnecessary

jeopardy that life which is the strength and property of the state, and cannot be honourably sacrificed but in her service, or in the great cause of humanity. Let them reflect that, while their self-possession and resources in cases of real danger are proverbial, they have nothing to gain by uncalled for displays of those excellent properties; and that it is much more noble to reserve their courage for combating such dangers as spring up of themselves, than to tempt those they might avoid. We step aside to make these observations, under the impression of painful reminiscences, and trust that our young friends will, on all occasions, unite these two attributes of the goddess by whom they have been so liberally endowed—valour and prudence!*

Strangers in the Alps are very apt to be misled in their calculations of distance, and to consider an object within immediate reach, which, in reality, may prove to be several leagues off. This deception originates in the peculiarly rarefied and transparent condition of the atmosphere, and is only to be corrected by much experience, study, and observation. The most striking deception of the kind we ever remember, was experienced in crossing the Apennines from Florence to Bologna, when, having reached an isolated point between the latter and Cavilajo, the vast plain of Lombardy lay like a map at our feet, with all its numberless cities, towns, villages, rivers, and streams, bright as silver, and so distinctly marked and defined, that we could hardly reconcile the apparent proximity with the actual distance. Travellers, however, like other men, become cautious by experience; and reflect, that most objects of desire, like those in the Alps, although beautifully defined, and seemingly within their grasp, may, nevertheless, prove either very remote, or altogether inaccessible.

In our brief sketch of Chamouni, we adverted to the danger attending an incautious survey of the glaciers, and shall only recommend the traveller who wishes to examine these wonderful bodies, to hire the most experienced guides in the neighbourhood, provided with ropes, poles, or ladders, as a prompt and available resource in all cases of danger. He should never attempt to take the lead of his guides, nor part from them, but to follow in the exact tract prescribed, and pay the most scrupulous attention to every warning and suggestion which their experience so well enables them to furnish. After a fall

* In these cautionary remarks, the adventurous spirit of our fair countrywomen is not to be overlooked; for so long as the latter are to be met with in every perilous situation in the Alps, it is but an act of common gallantry on the part of the gentlemen to follow at least, if they do not lead. "If mothers and daughters" attempt and accomplish such feats—*quid non facient magistri?* Within the last few years, Mrs. C., a lady of high accomplishments and enterprising spirit, has made the ascent of Mont Blanc. This throws M. de Saussure quite into the shade.

of snow, which in these elevated regions often takes place in the midst of summer, the clefts and crevices in the ice, being partially concealed, render a visit to the glaciers attended with imminent risk. The same danger presents itself during the heat of the day, when the snow becoming too soft to support the feet, the adventurer sinks at every step, and incurs the hazard of dropping through, and becoming crystallized in one of the numerous chasms with which the glacier is so deeply scarred! Of this several melancholy instances are recorded.

The painful effect produced upon the eyes by a long walk over ice or snow, will be agreeably obviated by wearing a piece of black or green crape over the face, a precaution adopted by all who have ascended Mont Blanc, and in common use among the workmen who are employed on the Simplon. In the valleys of Switzerland the summer heat is at times very oppressive and, to some, insupportable. The only certain remedy for this inconvenience is to halt during these extremes, and continue the route only during the early hours of the morning, and again in the cool of the evening. In order to appease the excessive thirst which so often torments the pedestrian in his passage through these sultry valleys, we would recommend the common effervescing powders, which he can mix at any of the delicious springs which gush forth on every side, and will appreciate as a truly royal beverage. The portable leathern cup, drawn from his pocket for the occasion, will present all the elegance and accommodation of a silver goblet. It may not, however, be altogether unnecessary to remind him, that he must never drink this beverage when *much heated and fatigued*; nor take immediate rest after drinking, but have the fate of Father Floridus before his eyes, who, being warm with walking, greatly to the detriment of the convent of Enghelberg, drank of this cooling potation and died! Uncharitable surmises respecting the ingredients, it is true, have been circulated; but this, it is said, was the doing of some unconverted *Huguenot*, and therefore entitled to no credit in a question of such importance. Some say the worthy friar omitted to mingle a little *Kirschwasser* in his draught; others again, that he mingled too much, and that the *Kirschwasser* was the fatal ingredient; but however that may have been, one thing only is certain, namely, that it was the "friar's last draught."

In addition to the comforts already suggested, we would advise the pedestrian to provide himself with a straw hat to protect him from the sun, and a light umbrella—or, in place of the latter, with an oil-silk cloak, which is not only a complete security in rainy weather, but also exceedingly comfortable when the wearer is exposed to the keen and searching winds of the Alps. Cloaks of this material are very light, and may be bought for nine or ten florins. Those who

venture among the Alps for the first time, and who are not of very robust health, should by no means omit the precaution of taking a warm suit with them, to be used as occasion may require. The usual weight carried by the guides, is from thirty-five to forty pounds, or upwards; so that the tourist may carry every convenient change of raiment along with him, and thus provide against those sudden variations of weather and temperature which are the natural characteristics of those lofty regions. Besides the items already mentioned, there are a few others necessary for the complete equipment of the tourist; but as our hints are fast swelling into pages, we must conclude for the present by referring him to the *viva voce* communications of some experienced adviser, and proceed with him on our projected route.

Having thus far, as we trust, advanced sufficient arguments to put the traveller on his guard as to the dangers which may occasionally threaten him, if unmindful of good counsel; we now hasten to open a new leaf, and introduce him to those retired cantons where, as we remarked in an early portion of this work, the Switzer retains the stamp of his native character unimpaired; and where the valour and patriotism with which history and tradition have invested him are still the active principles of his existence. We shall there converse with him at his own hearth, listen to the inspiring history of his ancestral achievements, survey his battle fields, participate in his patriotic enthusiasm, visit the shrine of Tell, and, gazing upon the sublime scenery around us, cease to wonder that so many thousands have imbibed inspiration from the same sight, and been impelled to the performance of deeds which have secured her liberties, and give a sacred character to the soil of Switzerland.

CANTON OF TESSIN, OR TICINO.

“ Here beauty and primeval nature dwell :
Ever-green forests—fountains ever clear—
Haunts of the fabled muse—how shall I tell
The transport ye inspire in stranger’s ear !”

FROM the Ponte Crevola, which closes the pass of the Simplon, we proceed successively through Domo d’Ossola, Villa, Vogogna; and, at Baveno, embark upon the lucid waters of the Lago Maggiore. We shall not detain the reader by

any studied description of this beautiful lake, or of the palaces which, as if conjured up by the wand of enchantment, emerge from its surface, and, with their thousand accompaniments of natural and artificial embellishments, recal to the spectator's mind the classic fables of Armida and the Hesperides. The scenery of this lake, as we ascend from the islands to re-enter the Confederation at Brissago, is perfectly Italian in character, exquisitely beautiful, and presents the strongest contrast that can be well imagined, with the scenes of grandeur and desolation through which we have just passed. Profusely scattered along its steep romantic shores, towns, villages, villas, convents, churches, and castellated rocks, follow in quick succession, and fill up a picture such as no other portion of Italy can exhibit. Forests of luxuriant chestnuts overshadow the flanks of the enclosing mountains, and, embrowned by the fervid summers of Italy, contrast well with the verdant pasturages of Switzerland.

Passing the remains of some castellated edifices which stretch into the lake, we regain the Swiss frontier, at Brissago; and, gliding along that portion of the waters which pass under the distinctive appellation of the Lake of Locarno, land at the small town of Magadino,—near the entrance of the Ticino into the lake, where the steam-boat, now plying, has its daily receipt and discharge of company. Opposite this station, the white buildings of Locarno skirting the lake, and the convent of Madonna del Sasso crowning the eminence beyond, add much interest, and some artificial touches of great effect, to the natural picture. The deep cærulean tint of the water, the brightness of the sky, the balmy freshness which is every instant wafted from a soil where the fig, the orange, the olive, and pomegranate reach maturity, stamp a luxuriance and serenity upon the scene, which surprise and fascinate every stranger. Several buildings of taste and elegance still bear evidence of the prosperity which shone upon Locarno in its better day; but the population is very thin compared with its ancient census, and, at most, counts but thirteen hundred inhabitants. Situated on the western shore of the Lake Maggiore, and defended from the keen blasts of the north, by a natural rampart of mountains, it enjoys a delicious, fertile, and exceedingly mild climate. The spring commences with March; the fields produce two crops, and, planted with elms at intervals of eight or nine feet, to which the vines are trained, the effect is strikingly picturesque. Were the industry of the inhabitants freed from the stagnating influences around, and directed into some remunerating channel, Locarno might still present a picture of happiness and prosperity; but the obstacles which oppose the due exercise and employment of those ample resources which Providence has placed at their disposal, are at present a dead weight upon

industry. Their principal traffic consists in wheat and wine, aided by the manufacture of clocks, hats, and strong cloths. Of the public buildings, the cathedral and three convents are the chief; of the latter, that of the Franciscans is the most remarkable. Belonging to the same order, is the Madonna del Sasso,* which commands in its natural position one of the finest views in Italy. The vineyards around this eminence are particularly luxuriant. In consequence of the steam-boat lately launched upon the lake, and the great increase of traffic and tourists to which that epoch has given rise, Magadino seems fast rising into importance. The same agreeable testimony is presented wherever this great medium of intercourse has been established.—It was in the bailiwick of Locarno that, during the middle of the sixteenth century, the reformist party mustered so strong; and where Lelius and Faustus Socinus promulgated a creed far more liberal than those of Zuinglius and Calvin. They were both, however, expelled the country, and their adherents sentenced to banishment or death. Beccaria next presented himself as a distinguished teacher of the evangelical doctrines in Locarno; but the governor, who was of the catholic persuasion, caused him also to be imprisoned till a band of reformists, having assailed his castle, forced him to consent to Beccaria's liberation. Hereupon the governor, empowered by the seven catholic confederate cantons, issued an order for all conformists to attend mass; while those who refused to comply were sentenced to outlawry. Various scenes of mutual persecution and retaliation followed, till at last it was resolved to banish the whole body of reformists from Locarno. A decree was accordingly pronounced to this effect, in March, 1555, and one hundred and fifty of the reformists were summoned to the Town-hall, to hear, in silent submission, the passing of the sentence. No sooner had it been pronounced, than the Pope's nuncio, says the historian, precipitately entered the hall, and indignantly exclaimed:—"This is too mild a sentence. The exiles must be stripped of their property, nay, even of their children!" The catholic deputies, however, whose hearts were more susceptible of humanity than that of the minister of God, shrunk from the thought of such cruel severity, saying:—"We never reverse a sentence once pronounced!" Accordingly this unhappy band of exiles were driven from their homes, and compelled, at this inclement season, with their wives and young children, to cross the dreary and dangerous defiles of the Alps, and crave an asylum from the charity of strangers. More than a hundred of this proscribed colony, among

* The View is taken from the edge of a ravine looking towards Bellinzona—the termination of the Lake is seen, and the Ticino gleaming as it winds along the level plain to enter the Lake.

whom were many affluent and learned men—such as Orelli, Muralt, and others—were welcomed with true christian benevolence at Zurich, where their families are distinguished to the present day. It is worthy of remark that this simple act of expatriation, the art of weaving silk was first introduced into Zurich; mills and dyeing houses established; and so much contributed thereby to the industry and prosperity of the town, that its celebrity was soon extended far beyond the limits of Switzerland.

From Magadino to Lugano, the road crosses Monte Cenere, and descends the course of the torrent of Agno, as far as the village of Taverne, where it branches off to the left. The scenery, as we approach Lugano, becomes exquisitely luxuriant, and in character purely Italian. From the road immediately overlooking the town,* we made an involuntary halt, as the splendid view which that point afforded suddenly opened upon us—enriched with luxuriant vineyards, through which the white buildings of the town rose in fine relief—the lake expanded like a mirror, and reflected on its glassy surface the numberless beauties, natural and artificial, with which the shore is embellished; while Mont Salvatore rose on the right, and threw a chastening shadow over the whole scene. The surrounding mountains—of the third order—are richly wooded with chestnuts; while the plain offers an assemblage of every feature essential to the constitution of beautiful and picturesque landscape—vineyards, meadows, orchards, gardens—scenes of beauty and fertility present themselves on either hand; while spacious villas, embowered in almond, olive, fig, and mulberry trees occupy every height, and give to the already animated picture the luxuries of art and the elegance of refined life. There was an air of bustle and commercial activity in the squares and streets of Lugano, which was peculiarly agreeable after the scenes of mental stagnation through which we had just passed. This town is an *entrepôt* for all merchandize received or sent across the St. Gothard, and in this manner a spirit of industry and emulation is kept constantly on the alert. The domestic manufactures consist of silk and tobacco, which are the most considerable. After these may be mentioned those of hats, tanneries, and various printing establishments—one of which issues every Monday the *Gazette—Il Corriere del Ceresio*. In the neighbourhood are several forges of copper and brass, also some establishments, where silk is manufactured by machinery of a highly ingenious

* Our View is taken from this point, where the buildings seem to repose in the bosom of the Lake. Mont Salvatore is conspicuous on the right, with a chapel on the summit; while on the left the Lake recedes towards Porlozza

construction. The great annual fair is held about the middle of October. The inhabitants are computed at three thousand seven hundred, or upwards. The environs abound in delightful promenades, all commanding objects and situations of great beauty or interest. Boating on the lake is a favourite pastime, and frequent parties are made to visit the caves hollowed in the rocks of Monte Caprino, where the cool air from the mountain preserves its extraordinary freshness during the greatest heats of summer. The ascent to Salvadore is steep, but rich in prospect, and much frequented by pilgrims. The collegiate church, situated upon a small eminence, is remarkable for the ornaments on its principal entrance.

The Val-Levantine, another extensive district of this canton, consists of three divisions; the first, comprising the Valleys of Bédretto, Trémola, and Canaria: the second, the intermediate portion between the defile of Platifer and that of Chironico; the third, which enjoys the full advantage of an Italian climate in soil and produce, extends from Giornico to the Lago Maggiore. These three divisions comprehend all that can be imagined as characteristic of the severity of winter, the verdure of spring, with the beauty and abundance of summer and autumn. The whole valley is rich in subjects of natural history, and rife in political recollections. In remote times, the Upper Levantine formed the bed of a lake, which, by the bursting asunder of the rocky barrier within which it occupied a natural crater, was suddenly drained, and thereby submitted a new territory for the ambition of man.

The mountain which, in 1512, fell across the Val-Blegno and blocked up the course of the river, gave origin to a lake which, after accumulating for two hundred years, at length burst its confinement, and sweeping every thing before it into the Lago Maggiore, added one more to the events of 1814—a momentous epoch for these valleys.

The ground between Giornico, Chiggiogna, and Faido, is famous as the scene of the first victory which, by an ingenious device, carried the terror of the Swiss arms into Italy. The circumstances are briefly these:—Some Milanese subjects having one day ventured to fell timber in the Val-Levantine, a party of young men from Uri crossed the St. Gothard, and commenced a course of retaliation by pillaging the nearest villages. This outrage, instead of being prevented, was encouraged by the canton of Uri, and followed by a declaration of war against the Duke of Milan, an enterprise in which they called upon their confederates for support. The latter, failing in their endeavours to effect a reconciliation, yet unwilling to abandon their allies in a moment of no ordinary danger, despatched a body of troops to their assistance. In the meantime Borelli, the

Milanese general, marched with a strong force up the Ticino, to give a timely and effectual check to this invasion. The Swiss advanced guard, consisting of only six hundred men, lay at Giornico, where the main body of the confederates, about ten thousand strong, was shortly expected. Borelli, however, saw the advantage thus offered, and resolving to push on the attack before the expected reinforcement should arrive, made a rapid advance at the head of his best troops. This was late in December, while the frost was intense; and the Swiss having caused the waters of the Ticino to overflow the meadows, the latter were speedily covered with ice, upon which, having supplied themselves with cramp-irons, the men of Uri took their stand, and calmly awaited the attack. Along this slippery surface the Milanese continued to advance with cautious and faltering steps; while the firm-footed Swiss rushed suddenly down upon them, and with their trifling force easily overthrew their tottering battalions, of whom fifteen thousand fled before a force of six hundred. Milan was constrained to purchase peace by making ample indemnification, and recognising the right of Uri to the Val-Levantine, as a perpetual fief, on condition that a wax-taper, weighing three pounds, should be presented annually to the cathedral of Milan. Frischhans Theilig, commander of the Lucerne troop on this day, in acknowledgment of the effect with which he wielded his two-handed sword, acquired from the Milanese the name of the exterminating angel.

The canton of Tessin,—the most southern of the Helvetic Confederation, and wedged in between the Austrian and Sardinian states,—possesses a territory of fifty-three square miles, with a population of ninety thousand. It is composed almost exclusively of valleys, extending their ramifications along the southern flank of the Alps, and, with the exception of the plain and lake of Lugano, all opening into the principal valley watered by the Ticino. Bellinzona, Lugano, and Locarno, are, each in its turn and for a period of six years, the three capitals of the canton, which is divided into eight districts, and these, again, into thirty-eight circles. In this canton are comprised the Val-Levantine, which, prior to the revolution, was subject to URI, and seven Italian bailiwicks, four of which, Lugano and Locarno, Mendrisio and Val-Maggior, belonged to the twelve first cantons; while the three others, Bellinzona, Val-Riviera, and Val-Blegno, were subject to the cantons of Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwald.

During the late revolution, owing to some want of accustomed vigilance on the part of the Swiss, the small town of Campione, although entirely inclosed by the district of Lugano, was incorporated with the Milanese territory. The greater portion of the Lake of Lugano, and the higher part of that of Maggiore—or the Lake of Locarno, as it is called—belong to this canton.

The inhabitants are all of Italian extraction, the small German commune of Bosco excepted; and, in their moral and physical character, exhibit all those peculiarities which give such marked distinction to the Cisalpine race. Could advantage of situation, variety of resources, fertility of soil, benignity of climate, or beauty of scenery, constitute a happy people, those of Tessin might rank with the happiest in existence. But all these are insufficient to effect this "one great end and aim;" and he who, as a true philanthropist, traverses this terrestrial paradise, as it has been described, must look patiently and prospectively to that great moral revolution, which is slowly, but not less surely, advancing, and which will ultimately develop the true interests and vindicate the proper dignity of man.

Agriculture, the breeding of cattle, and the transport of merchandise across the Alps, are the chief employment of the industrious classes; while hunting, fishing, the manufacture of silk, straw, &c., as well as the numerous forges in districts where mining is carried on, give extensive facilities to others. But the same propensity to indolence, which we have noticed elsewhere, lays a painful embargo on the progress and interests of agriculture. Instead of profiting by the natural advantages of soil and climate to raise an abundance of corn and wine, the majority of the natives prefer passing their winters and summers, or even whole years, abroad, following the precarious chances of their calling from town to town,* while the labours of the field entirely devolve upon superannuated men, or are consigned, as they often entirely are, to the hands of women and children. In this manner the natural fertility of the soil is, in a great measure, lost, while those who return home from time to time, impart too often a taste for those foreign habits, which, as the fruits of a wandering life, are alike inimical to the morals and domestic industry of their fellow-citizens.

The Catholic is the exclusive form of worship throughout the canton, which, in its ecclesiastic relations, forms part of the dioceses of Milan and Como. The business of public instruction is entirely conducted by monastic authority. Religious communities are numerous and flourishing, and, like the specimen presented in the *Madonna del Sasso*, often singularly commanding and picturesque.

In its civil affairs the canton acknowledges no exclusive privileges. Seventy-six deputies, representing the entire body of the people, and headed by a landamman, or chief magistrate, exercise supreme authority, and, as the great council of the canton, take cognizance of all that concerns its domestic policy. From this body are chosen the eleven members who form the council of state,

* These adventurers are to be found everywhere on the continent, under the name of plasterers, builders, tailors, chimney-sweepers, *voituriers*, shepherds, basket-makers, chocolate-makers, pedlars, couriers, &c.

invested with the executive and administrative authority, and the supreme tribunal composed of thirteen judges. The contingents in troops and money required from the canton in case of war, are 3,700 men and 74,000 francs—a proportion, according to the articles of the confederation, of two men in every hundred souls.

The beautiful and classic river from which this canton has its name, issues from one of the small lakes on the St. Gothard, and is greatly augmented by the rival branch, which takes its source near the *hospice* of Acquat, and joins the former at Airolo. Traversing the canton through nearly its whole extent, it falls into the Lago Maggiore, at Magadino; emerges again at Sexto; and finally, after watering another territory, loses itself in the Po at Pavia.

Nothing can surpass the beauty and variety of scenery which fascinate the traveller's attention as he slowly descends Monte Cenere, and enters the Val Levantine, where the rarest productions of Italy are strewn profusely around him.

Here fruit and flower the self-same bough bestows,
And, cultureless, the grape's free nectar flows :
Here twice the peasant hoards his ripened sheaves,
And crowns his winter with unfading leaves.

In all that respects climate, architecture, soil, produce, population, social habits, and costume, the approach to Bellinzona is purely Italian. The grand and imposing feature in the distance is the great castle, formerly the Castel d'Uri, backed by two other commanding fortresses,—the castles of Mezzo, and Sasso Corbario,—from all of which the views are exceedingly picturesque.* During the sovereignty of the three cantons, these fortresses were respectively occupied as official residences by the bailiffs of Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwalden. Towering gradually one behind the other, these castellated eminences give an air of strength and importance to the whole scene; while recent embellishments, enhancing every natural advantage, and appearing under numerous striking combinations, fill up the picture, and leave upon the mind an impression at once pleasing and permanent. The houses, in style and accommodation, unite the two recommendations of elegance and solidity, and exhibit a liberal portion of architectural ornament, painting, and sculpture. The cathedral, which is esteemed the finest in the canton, is much admired for the impressive grandeur of its façade, its rich marble altar-pieces, and several fine paintings which escaped the epoch of revolutionary plunder. The town contains various monastic and other ecclesiastic establishments. Public instruction is confided to a select number of

* The View illustrative of this subject is taken from the south, and shows the castles in their relative positions.

Benedictine monks, under the immediate sanction of the convent of Einsiedeln, and comprises Latin, Italian, German, geography, natural history, and rhetoric. The charge of female education is committed to the nuns of St. Ursula, who, as well as several other sisterhoods, possess nunneries in the town and neighbourhood. In the immediate suburb is the votive chapel of St. Paul, or, as it was called by the confederates, the red church, built to commemorate the sanguinary conflict fought in this vicinity on the 30th of June, 1422, and which may be thus briefly recapitulated.

The Duke of Milan, still smarting from his recent losses in troops and territory, being suddenly apprised that the Swiss confederates had made over the whole Levantine to the barons of Saxe, hereditary lords of Bellinzona, for a very inconsiderable sum, and failing to effect a counter-treaty with them on the terms he had offered, made a precipitate march into the disputed district, took Bellinzona by a *coup-de-main*, laid the whole territory under contribution, and compelled the inhabitants to take an oath of allegiance to him as their rightful sovereign. In the mean time, the Confederates, who were disunited among themselves, could offer no prompt or efficient aid, and, for a time, the Milanese were suffered to retain undisputed possession of the whole valley. At length, however, having mustered their troops—though greatly inferior to their opponents in every essential, save personal courage—they once more crossed the St. Gothard, and encountered the Milanese force on the plains of Arbedo, where they maintained a desperate struggle from morning till night, and succeeded in restoring the captured province to its owner. This done, and leaving a small garrison in the Val-Levantine, they repassed the Alps; but as the tidings of this dear-bought victory preceded them across the St. Gothard, it became a subject, not of patriotic triumph, but of public regret and lamentation. Among the fatal list of those who on this day had shed fresh *éclat* on the Swiss name, were the landamman and standard-bearer of Uri, and the amman and standard-bearer of Zug. The latter having fallen at the head of his troop, with the standard firmly grasped in his hand, one of his sons drew it from under his father's body, waved the bloody ensign exultingly over the heads of his battalion, renewed the charge with impetuosity, and falling, covered with wounds, resigned the sacred trust to one of his intrepid comrades, by whom it was borne in triumph through the enemy's ranks.

The mortifying results of this victory were shortly after soothed and compensated by an act of singular heroism on the part of Petermann Rysig, who, at the head of five hundred Swiss, scaled the St. Gothard, attacked and expelled the Milanese from the Val-d'Ossola, garrisoned the place with his own intrepid band, and maintained his ground in face of the whole concentrated force of Milan.

THE GRISONS, OR GRAUBÜNDTEN.

Dura viris, et dura fide, durissima sede.—NOLKER LE BOGUE.

“ La Nature marâtre, en ces affreux climats
Ne produit, au lieu d’or, que du fer et des soldats.
Tout son front hérissé n’offre aux desirs de l’homme
Rien que puisse tenter l’avarice de Rome.”—ZURLAUBEN.

RESUMING our route towards the Bernardino, we continue up the Val-Levantine till we arrive at the bridge of the Moësa; then, turning to the right, and passing through Lumino and Monticello, cross the Grison frontier at San Vittore, and, entering the delicious valley of Misocco, ascend the course of the river, which divides it through its whole extent. A little beyond Roveredo are seen the castles of Calanca and Grono—the former above Santa-Maria. Richness of scenery and fertility of soil are strikingly associated in this valley, where, at small pains, vintage and harvest yield their liberal treasures; and yet where the peasant, surrounded by luxury and abundance, seems poverty-stricken, and doomed to witness a prosperity in which he has small share. The pollente, or flour of Indian corn, and chestnuts, are the chief articles of food among the lower classes. The chestnut cake, such as we have tasted it, is both palatable and wholesome; while the chestnuts, simply roasted, serve as a good substitute for potatoes, which, in other cantons, enter so largely into the common diet. The corn and wine, though excellent in quality, are still insufficient for home consumption; but the natural resources are far from being employed to their full extent, and, under better management, might be made to double, in many instances, their present supplies. Some of the peasants evince a degree of industry and perseverance which would acquire wealth and respectability for them in almost any other situation; but the general character is, it must be confessed, a natural “aptitude for indolence,” and a rooted indifference to what, on the opposite side of the St. Gothard, are objects of unwearied industry and ambition. Both here, and among the Tessinese, the duties of religion are constantly interrupting and curtailing the duties of labour; and having early imbibed the doctrine, that the business of the chapel is the chief business of life, industry is virtually discouraged, superstition promoted, and the indolent taught to expect from a punctilious attendance at mass what they might earn in the field, or in the practice of any

creditable art. But that which we attribute to them as a misfortune, they quote and extol as their greatest merit, and inquire whether a life devoted to the punctual performance of religious observances, or a life spent in the pursuit and accumulation of wealth, is the most likely to ensure happiness?—a question which, inasmuch as it anticipates the answer, sets all reasoning aside, and leaves the querist in the full enjoyment of his native cheerfulness—the true panacea of all his privations.

The pleasure with which we wind along the Misocco is not a little enhanced by the circumstance that we can rarely take in more than a small portion of the valley at once, and that every turn opens some new vista, and throws some new feature into the picture. Surprise seems to increase with our progress, and the scene, “ever changing, ever new,” still presents some fresh and harmonious combinations to stimulate the fancy and soften the heart. The characteristic and predominating features of the landscape are—romantic villages, gradually losing their Italian cast and colour—slopes, sprinkled with *capanne*, or pastoral cabins—towers—oratories—or mouldering chateaux, half concealed amid the deep luxuriance of chestnuts, and clustered with figs and mulberries. Above these, solitary spots of green pasture—like so many “swat kernels” just bursting their shells—seen in glimpses through the dark forests of pines which usurp the higher or third region;—cascades so numerous as to form a perfect chorus of torrents—at one moment dancing from rock to rock, at another descending in sheets of snow from some tall isolated rock—glancing through the dense foliage, or by one bold and frantic leap plunging at once into the bed of the torrent which ploughs its way through opposing rocks, and the ever-accumulating *débris* from the mountains. On either hand, and seeming to embower the whole course of the Moësa, meadows, gardens, vineyards and orchards, blend their endless variety of tints, and, waving their rich and undulating masses of verdure over the road, delight and refresh the traveller with the two-fold luxury of shade and perfume. Crowning the whole, and shooting their white and glittering peaks into the horizon, the eternal glaciers appear in the distance, and throw the contrasted horrors of winter, and the flush and fruitfulness of summer, into the same picture. All these particular features combined, present a landscape of such mingled beauty and sublimity that the eye is bewildered by the very profusion in which it revels, and the mind excited and restless from the constant succession of objects upon which it has been so intensely exercised.

The finest cascades in this “valley of streams” are those of Cabiola, Soazza, and San-Giacomo. The village of Soazza is peculiarly inviting, and sufficient of itself to elicit from most tourists the hearty ejaculation of *Hoc erat in votis!*

The castle of Misocco,* which next arrests our attention, is finely perched on a bold rocky promontory overlooking the village of that name, and surrounded by rugged cliffs and precipices, where numerous cascades, flashing and foaming through the dark foliage, chafe and swell the torrent of the Moësa, which roars at its base. This is justly esteemed one of the most striking views in the whole territory of the Grisons. The claims which this alpine fortress prefers to antiquity are strong, but indefinite; inasmuch as its original lord, and the period of its erection, are subjects of merely plausible conjecture: but the warlike purpose to which, in remote times, it has been applied, is abundantly evident in its commanding position, and must have made it a formidable barrier against every hostile inroad upon the Rhætian territory. From the middle of the tenth to the close of the fifteenth century, Misocco and its territory were held successively in fief of the see of Como, the barons or counts of Saxe, and the dukes of Milan; the latter of whom, the celebrated Trivulzio, resigned his feudal supremacy for a sum stated at twenty-five thousand florins, paid by the inhabitants, who, from that period, became incorporated with the Grison league.

In our progress through the upper district of the valley, which commences at this point, climate, scenery, produce, and population, undergo a sudden and powerful transition. The vine disappears; the mulberry and luxuriant chestnut are superseded by the pine; every object presents a wilder or more romantic aspect; the flanking rocks become more bleak and precipitous—the rushing of winds, and the roaring of cataracts, more audible and multiplied; the frequency and freshness of the verdure interrupted and deformed with barren rocks, in whose crevices the dwarf-pine and rhododendron alone take root: the fine Madonna faces, too, which at times met us in the lower valley, have here undergone a wintry transformation, and proved that female beauty, like tropic flowers, requires a liberal share of soil and climate for its proper development.

In point of volume, and in the height and savage characters of the rocky *Linn*, over which it rushes, the fall of the Moësa, near San-Giacomo, is an object well worth contemplation.

“Through the hollowed channel toiling—
Caverns wildly rent asunder!
Down it gushes—bursting—boiling—
White with foam, and loud as thunder
While o’er the frantic gulf below
An iris flings her glittering bow.”

Beyond this the scene assumes a still more sombre and inhospitable aspect, and every step assures us of our proximity to the thrilling regions of winter. The

* Our View is taken from the road, looking back upon Soazza.

village of Bernardino, the last of the valley, and placed on the confines of snowy solitudes, has nothing to recommend it beyond the reputation of its mineral spring, which attracts many visitors during the summer, and lays claim to virtues scarcely second, apparently, to those of St. Moritz, and which we shall notice more critically in their proper place. From this village commences the ascent in all its reality; following the brink of the torrent, spanned by a handsome and lofty bridge, which, with a long gallery to protect the road from the danger and ravage of avalanches, has a very impressive effect, as at once intimating the risk, and affording the shelter.* This forms one of the many striking instances which labour and ingenuity have devised for the safe conduct of the solitary traveller across this perilous defile, and which it is impossible to contemplate without a feeling of deep thankfulness for the lives it has already spared, and the dangers it has so happily obviated.

The height of this pass above the sea is estimated at six thousand and thirty feet; and it would be difficult to imagine a scene more thoroughly desolate than here opens upon us, where the genial influence of season is unfelt, and the powers of vegetation consigned to an eternal blight. The small lake which here forms the source of the Moësa, seems only to enhance the dreary aspect of the place, and, like the fabled Avernus, holds nothing living within its waters. Not a leaf, or flower, or shrub, exists on its border, and yet by that beautiful arrangement of Providence, so conspicuous in every department of the natural world, the never-failing stream discharged from its bosom communicates beauty and fertility throughout its whole course. There appears a striking analogy, though, perhaps, not generally noticed, between the circulation of blood in the animal system, and the circulation of the no less vivifying current through the intricate labyrinths of the natural world. Thus, the streams which are here filtered through icy caverns flow into the Mediterranean,† and there evaporated, and in the form of clouds carried back and condensed in these elevated regions, descend once more in rain or snow—again to leap down in fertilizing streams to the plain, and perform the same revolutionary function of evaporation, condensation, and liquefaction. The nicely balanced proportions, and the exquisitely adjusted regularity with which this vital process is conducted, are beautiful illustrations of the beneficent designs of Providence in adapting those otherwise destructive

* The View is taken at this point, looking back towards Bernardino—the avalanche is seen in the act of falling, which explains the nature of the gallery.

† By evaporation the ocean loses many millions of gallons hourly: the Mediterranean, by the same process, is supposed to lose more than it receives from the Nile, the Tiber, the Rhone, the Po, and all the other rivers that fall into it.

phenomena to the wants and happiness of man. The truth of this is still more forcibly impressed upon us, when we reflect that even a momentary suspension of this law might prove fatal to the globe we inhabit, and derange the whole system of nature.

The sight of a human habitation erected near the margin of this dismal lake, and designed as a house of refuge, is the only feature which breaks and relieves the dreary monotony of the scene.* Here, during those sudden hurricanes to which every Alpine pass is less or more exposed, travellers obtain shelter and refreshment; but as the journey across the *col* may be performed in a few hours, even by pedestrians, it seldom becomes a place of more than very temporary halt. By those who travel post, the journey between the two capitals of the Grisons and Tessin may be performed in one day.

While we stood shivering in this gelid receptacle, waiting the result of a rude effort to repair a fracture of the pole and splinter-bar of our *drosque*, attention was directed to a group of three Tessinesi, in earnest conversation, and who had just arrived from the opposite side of the mountain. Two of the party were apparently about the ages of twenty-five and thirty—the younger in a hunter's dress, the other in that of the upper class of *contadini*, or small proprietors. The third had the air and manner of one who enjoyed some station of authority in his own valley; he spoke in a purer accent, and, by the reverent attention paid him by his two companions, it was evident he possessed their respect and confidence. The question agitated appeared to be one of no common import, and upon which the judgment of the elder was anxiously appealed to. "Pietro," said he, addressing the younger of his companions, and in an impressive tone and manner, "I entirely disapprove of your rash project—the path has been long impracticable—the *lavanges* are in motion—the hurricane is not far from us—and these, and other insurmountable obstacles, render it impossible for you to reach Calanca in the time and manner you propose." "Then, *padre mio*," said the hardy and athletic hunter, "I am indeed miserable—if there be no path left in the way and time I propose, the path to happiness is for ever closed to Pietro Muratini." "*Caro figlio!*" rejoined the elder, in a sympathizing tone, "the *curé* will have assured her but this morning that there was nothing to apprehend—that the report was unfounded—and that business alone detained you at Coire." "Yes—but will she believe him? will she be soothed—tranquil?" inquired the hunter, impatiently. The elder made no reply: but the third, who had not yet spoken, admitted that such efforts were but too likely to fail to comfort her, and that one small hope alone would serve to keep her suspended

* Our View is taken at this point, looking down towards the *Rheinwald*.

over the brink of despair. "And what is that hope?" eagerly inquired the other. "The hope that the courier, who has now passed, and who will reach the village by midnight, will soften, or disprove, the fearful catastrophe."

"And will this hope be realized? Will the tidings now on the wing yield consolation or despair? Has not the courier left the *col* with the full assurance that the rumour was confirmed?—that escape was impossible?"—The other was silent. "And shall I hesitate then," he continued, "to run all hazard, when I reflect that even *now* she has taken her stand on the bridge—there to watch till midnight—and then to sink under the first piercing salutation that shall reach her ear?"

"*Compiango e prendo parte alla tua afflizione!*" replied the other, in a low and soothing tone.—"How much then of agony," resumed the former, "would not a few hours—even a few minutes—spare her, could I by this much earlier reach my own door in the direction proposed—the only alternative left me!"

"My son, my son!" resumed the elder, "the danger is imminent, and the adoption of such a course could not fail to ensure a calamity from which there could be no escape—the sacrifice of a life which the special interposition of Providence alone has so lately preserved!" A profound silence followed this appeal—but only for a few seconds—during which the young hunter, covering his face with his hands, and resting his head upon his knees, seemed as if he struggled hard to overcome the emotion which now shook and agitated his whole frame.

Then starting up with an air of passionate inspiration—"The dangers," said he, "are nothing—life itself is nothing—and its loss only to be lamented when incurred in a bad cause. But to lose that, which she will inevitably lose for me, unless I can yet outstrip the evil tidings now hastening towards her, is nothing, and, by the help of San Nicholas, I can and will follow the suggestions of heaven and my own heart!"

Thus saying, they both once more implored him to reflect. "Nay, my friend, forbid me not, I entreat you. What I have so often dared as her lover, shall I now shrink from as her husband? No! And you, my father! why dissuade that husband from performing—as the last and most important duty of his life—what you yourself have so often performed for your pleasure as a hunter?"

"Alas!" said the elder, "that track is no longer what it was then—or, rather, the track is obliterated—the chasms are deep and treacherous—the precipices insurmountable—the torrents which thwart the course wild and impassable—and the boldest hunter in the Grisons is now a stranger to the ancient track. Reflect then, for an instant; a prudent and timely pause may spare more than one life."

Distressed by the apparent inference, the young mountaineer lifted his eyes in mute, but expressive, appeal to the speaker; then in an impassioned tone of soliloquy, added: "In an hour of apparent security, and when all Santa-Maria were making merry to receive them, she lost her father and brother: but in the midst of apparent dangers—when all seems dark and discouraging—heaven, in compensation, shall yet restore her husband, and spare a pang which this ill-timed delay threatens to inflict. Thus, then, I devote myself to her cause; ill should I requite her affection if I longer hesitated to defeat the messenger whose tidings to her are words of despair."

"Stay, my son," said the veteran, as the former sprang to his feet; "take my blessing upon thy head! Though I have dissuaded thee with the partial and selfish feelings of a parent, I now withdraw my objections: go as thou wilt—dangers thou must encounter, and mayest overcome—but even these, appalling as they seem, are yet less formidable than the excruciating suspense of the present hour, on which depends all the happiness of thy future days... Go, then, in peace: by the succour of heaven, and thy own prudence and intrepidity, we shall yet meet happily in the vale of Calanca."

As these words were pronounced, a sudden gleam of joy gave new life and expression to his fine countenance; and the young athlete, pronouncing a hearty *addio*, rushed forward on his perilous journey.

"Poor boy!" ejaculated the elder, as his eyes could follow him no longer; "may the blessing of the Madonna del Sasso surround his steps, and conduct him in safety to his already despairing partner!" In this aspiration his companion devoutly participated, adding, "Ahi! short time indeed since her poor father and brother perished by an avalanche—the very day their presence was to have sanctioned her marriage with your son."

"Alas!" rejoined the elder, "and should the courier, with whom my unfortunate boy was expected, anticipate him—as it is but too probable he will—what must be the consequence!—how shall a heart like her's bear up under the dreadful assurance that the same calamity which made her so lately an orphan, has also left her a bereaved widow!"

But here we were summoned to resume our seats, and put our recent repairs to the test—a movement which, though it interrupted, did not diminish the deep interest awakened by the last ten minutes in the *refuge* of Bernardino; and we resolved, should we again visit the Italian side of the mountain, to make special inquiry after the hero of our digression, and learn the result of a conjugal devotion so truly noble.

To describe the descent towards the *Hinter-Rhein*, would only be to

recapitulate, in a great measure, what we have already attempted in our general sketch of the savage grandeur which marked our ascent. The road preserves the same uniform and gentle inclination; and, by a long series of tourniquets, pursues its twisted and sinuous course from steep to steep, lessening—as much as human labour, skill, and ingenuity can lessen—the numerous dangers, in the various forms of avalanche, rock, and precipice, which severally overhang, block up or undermine the route, and threaten to assail us from below, as well as from above.

After some progress downwards, the valley of Hinter Rhein is suddenly descried—profoundly scooped out of the wild landscape beneath us; and although not reposing “like beauty in the lap of horror,” it forms a pleasing line of demarcation between the regions of absolute chaos, and those destined for the support of life and vegetation. With the vale of Misocco still fresh in our mind’s eye, the contrast forced upon our view by the aspect of this—the first valley of Switzerland, gradually developed—seemed as strongly marked as the respective boundaries of Tartarus and Elysium in the page of classic mythology.

“Stabat acuta silex, præcisus undique saxis.
Hinc atque hinc, vastæ rupes,” &c.

The wild glaciers of the Rhine, like the diadem of an eternal winter, frown on our left—now obscured, and now flickering through the subtil vapours, suspended like azure drapery over their rugged and trackless precipices. Through the desolate and savage defile, and bounding over a succession of rapids which churn its water to foam, the *hinter* branch of the Rhine gushes riotously through the gorge, while the never-slumbering echoes spread and perpetuate the thunders of its course.

“Nunc ruit opposito nivibus de monte solutis,
Et turpi crassas gurgite solvit aquas.”

The village of Hinter-Rhein appears like a mere speck in the vastness of the encircling mountains, which, by their frowning aspect, seem to express the reluctance they feel to tolerate the presence of man—addressing him at every step with a *ne plus ultra* to his ambition! Man, nevertheless, unintimidated by the awful voice, continues his encroachments—entrenching himself in the very preserves allotted to the mountain spirits—struggling in the very grasp of annihilating power, he still grapples for supremacy, and some fresh extent of his jurisdiction.

Such a territory as this, and held by such a tenure, was a fitting cradle for the spirit of liberty and the healthful expansion of that glorious inheritance which, in the bleakest vale of Switzerland, are more inspiring than all the treasures of

the south. In a region like this, he who from infancy has imbibed health of mind and vigour of body by fearless exposure to the climate and daily conflict with the elements, has bought independence at its highest price, and ensured its possession by the strongest of all bonds—"the resolve to be free!"

"Hos animat patriæ pietas, et dulcis amœnæ
Libertatis amor."

In the early stage of our descent we were gratified by the unexpected appearance of a *lämmberghey*. Sailing through the air in solitary contemplation, he no doubt views with peculiar complacency those scenes where he is the only despot suffered to levy his tribute at the expense of life—without, at least, incurring some personal risk in the exercise of his tyranny. We have already, in an early portion of this work, alluded cursorily to the surprising strength and rapacity of this "scourge of the desert," and the fact of its attacking even oxen in some parts of this canton. The war of extermination which the *lämmberghey* carries on against the chamois, is well described by Ramond. Like other despots, he requires an exclusive territory to subsist in, and it is rare that two of them are seen together in the same region: they would starve each other in a country capable of supporting a multitude of their subjects. It is against the chamois—who has the same agility on the ice and rocks that the *lämmberghey* has in air—that he exerts his whole force and address. The former sports upon the toppling verge of precipices—flies over distances, to the extremes of which it would seem that wings only should transport him. He scales summits so steep and sharp that their apex would not afford room for the feet of any other animal to rest upon: he precipitates himself from the pinnacles of rocks without fear of breaking his long springs of steel, and bounds over chasms which would prove an effectual barrier to any other animal. With such proofs of agility, great strength must necessarily be conjoined; and these together render the chamois a prey by no means unworthy to exercise the exploits of this most formidable of birds.

Rousing his victim in those retired and inaccessible valleys where the chamois pasture together, the *lämmberghey* attacks, frightens, and forces him to seek safety in flight. The rocks being the only resource of this timid animal, to these he appeals in his distress; but the vulture, still pursuing, compels him to continue his flight higher and higher. He vaults across the frozen snows, darts from summit to summit, until stopped short upon a shelving projection over some abyss, he has no alternative but to face his ruthless adversary. Seeing his victim thus isolated, the *lämmberghey* employs a *ruse de guerre*—turns him round

and round, and makes a feigned swoop at him ; while the chamois, to parry these sham attacks, points his horns at the aggressor, and endeavours to shew game. But at the instant he thus puts himself on guard, the very posture of defence makes his equilibrium extremely critical ; the l  mmergheyer now boldly advancing, hurls him by a stroke of his powerful wing to the base of the precipice, and dropping down after him, with all the self-importance of a victor, finishes the business by a stroke of his beak, and enjoys the feast in his own way.

During the spring, avalanches are not unfrequent in this stage of the descent, where, a few years ago, the landamman of Roveredo, and another, passengers by the Coire diligence, were lost in one.*

Pursuing our course along the deep gorge and capricious windings of the Rheinwald, the stern features of German Switzerland become more and more developed ; the mountain-slopes are covered with the brightest turf ; the pine forests extend their shadowy ramifications along the steeps ; and, crossing the torrent, the simple white-washed church, and the twenty neat Swiss cottages, or upwards, which compose the hamlet of Hinter-Rhein, attest our actual presence in the land of TELL.

From this village—enjoying a cool elevation of near five thousand feet, with a six weeks' or two months' summer—the valley slopes gently through Naufanen, towards the hamlet, or rather town, of Spl  gen ; and, in that space, makes a descent of nearly four hundred feet. The interval is filled up with scenes of great pastoral beauty, in which the sterile and even terrific features of our previous route are softened down into the verdant and picturesque. The town of Spl  gen consists of from forty-five to fifty houses—several of these very handsome—with rather better than three hundred inhabitants, and being the point of junction between the two great roads from Italy, presents an agreeable air of commercial prosperity. The quarries in the neighbourhood afford various specimens of excellent marble, of which the white is in high repute among sculptors, and considered as little, if at all, inferior to that of Carrara. The inhabitants, like those of Hinter-Rhein, are all of German extraction, and profess the doctrine of the reformation. The covered bridge which here spans the Rhine—the View of which is taken from the opposite side, looking towards the church and the inn—is a fine specimen of pontific architecture, as it prevails in Switzerland.

Here the magnificent route which conducted us across the Bernardino becomes identified with that over the Spl  gen—the union of which, along the Rhine,

* The passengers were walking when the alarm was given, and two were swept off in its course.—BROCKEDON.

forms the great line of social and commercial intercourse with Coire, Wallenstadt, the lake of Constance, Germany on the right, the whole course of the Rhenish provinces to the ports of Holland, and, in a word, between the shores of the Levant and the German Ocean.

The important question of opening this new pass, which had previously been only practicable for beasts of burden, was decided and acted upon in the course of 1816. Down to the period which, ten years prior to this, witnessed the completion of the great routes over Mont Cenis and the Simplon, the passes over the Brenner and Tende were the only media of transport upon which wheel-carriages could be employed. But now that peace was re-established, national prejudices subsiding, and a spirit of commercial enterprise revived, the Grisons, pursuing a line of policy which reflects the highest credit upon them, entered into engagements for carrying their plans into effect. As a contribution towards the expense of the enterprise, the canton of Tessin, whose interests were so completely involved in the success of the measure, agreed to advance two hundred thousand francs, and to charge themselves with the extra expense of completing and improving that portion of the route which connects the Grison frontier with Bellinzona. This liberal offer, however, was met by numerous interruptions and objections on the part of Austria, and every means employed to defeat a measure which, if once carried, could not fail most materially to diminish the amount of revenue collected on the Splügen. Thus influenced, the Tessinese rescinded their previous engagements in due form, and now, obstinately blind to their own domestic prosperity, opposed with vigour what at first they had so warmly espoused. Similar experiments were tried upon the Grisons, but they—neither conciliated by flattery, nor intimidated by threats—were plain spoken on the subject, and stated, in terms not to be misunderstood, that should they be subjected to farther interruption in the prosecution of a plan so obviously framed, not on selfish principles, but for the general encouragement of industry and commerce, they would retaliate by closing the route over the Splügen—so far, at least, as it came within their jurisdiction. This argument of course ended the diplomacy: the works proceeded with alacrity under the direction of Pocobelli: a native company, formed after the English fashion, subscribed liberally in shares: while the Sardinian government continued to advance numerous subsidies during the progress of the works, besides permitting the free importation of grain into the Grisons.*

* The people of the canton, who lived on the line of the projected road, advanced 60,000 Swiss francs; and the king of Sardinia, in whom the project found a ready advocate, by a Convention made in 1813 with the government of the Grisons, contributed 280,000 francs, a sum which was afterwards extended to

After six years' labour, kept up with great skill and activity, and often under circumstances of much personal risk, as well as physical difficulties, this magnificent route was finally opened in 1824, and is now one of the best and safest thoroughfares of the Alps.*

Resuming our route from the Splügen, we gradually descend towards the gorge of the Rofla, pass the village of Suvers on the left, and, crossing the river on a truly Alpine bridge, enter this gloomy defile. Here the Rhine, tortured in its imprisoned boundaries, buffeted, struggling, and covering the rocks with its spray, bounds on and downward from rock to rock in a succession of wild cataracts which it is impossible to contemplate without feelings of terror and astonishment. The volume of water compressed in its tempestuous channel—formed by a dark and irregular chasm, overshadowed by a dismal chaos of rocks, and logs of pine—relieved only by the flashing waves—the roar and reverberation of the caverns, as they greedily imbibe and boisterously eject the headlong stream, form altogether a scene which few imaginations can exaggerate.

The entrance to this defile opens through an archway of about seventeen yards long, and hewn out of the rock. Looking back from this gallery, the course of the Rhine, with the foot-bridge across it, and the village of Suvers, already mentioned, present a scene at once pastoral and highly picturesque. Proceeding along the brink of the torrent, the din and discord are sensibly augmented: huge pines, bleached and mutilated by the storm—there arrested by opposing rocks, and here floating singly, or in shivered fragments, upon the torrent—bespeak its increased impetuosity; and, following the sound, we soon behold the whole stream hurried by one impetuous plunge over a ledge of precipitous rocks—dissipated in a cloud of spray†—and boiling up like steam from an immense cauldron. The grand and imposing effect of this scene, however, is produced rather by the wild and savage character of its accompaniments than by the fall itself, which, in point of height, is inconsiderable; but the great volume of the water, and the thunder and precipitation with which it descends, strike the spectator as peculiarly bold, and even terrific.

395,000; and further agreed to allow the annual transit, free of duty, of 30,000 quintals of grain and rice from Sardinia into the Grisons: he also tendered his good offices and interference wherever they could be employed in aid of the enterprise The expense of constructing this road (twenty-four leagues in extent), including compensation to the proprietors on its line, did not amount to 80,000*l.* sterling.—BROCKEDON'S *Excursions in the Alps*.

* In March, 1799, General Lecourbe marched his detachment across the Bernardino, an enterprise which at that period presented obstacles to the progress of an army which subsequent labour and ingenuity have greatly obviated.

† The View illustrative of the scene here presented is taken from this point.

In the midst of this dreary gorge human industry has also found means of occupation and profit, in the preparation of charcoal and the management of saw-mills, where the trees felled in the upper stages of the mountain, and lowered by a purposely constructed *slide*,* are shaped and sawed into planks.

At the extremity of the Val-Ferrara, the road is carried over a stupendous cataract of the Aversa, where the latter falls into the Rhine. The castle of Bärenburg, as we enter by an angulated descent into the valley of Schams—*Sexamniensis*—harmonizes well with the scene which now loses its austere aspect, and softens into the picturesque. The extent of this valley is about two leagues, bounded on the south by the Rheinwald, and on the east by the Val-Ferrara: the natives are Protestants, and speak *Romanche*. It is remarkable for a breed of goats, with horns like the chamois, and uniting, to a certain extent, the appearance and peculiarities of the two. The Castellasch, above Clügien, the old church of Mathorn, and the environs of the village of Lohn, are considered as offering the most striking and characteristic points of view. The view from Mont Beverin is most extensive. Nearly half way between the Rofla and Via Mala, the neat little town of Andeer, containing upwards of four hundred inhabitants, offers a pleasing reception to the traveller who would make a day's halt between the two gorges, and survey the numerous beauties which that short space embraces.

Among the numerous scenes presented to us in the sublime solitudes of the Alps, or which the strength of imagination had invested with peculiar horror, that of the Via Mala stands forth in fearful preeminence. It seems, indeed, the vestibule of desolation, conducting us into the very jaws of horror, and plunging us into the seeming precincts of a nether world. Much had been told us by preceding travellers of this defile, and much had been read and fancied of the dismal gorge, the precarious precipice, and the boiling whirlpool at its base—but all these fell short of the reality, and all previous imaginings became effaced by a personal investigation. The materials, it is true, are every where the same, but here they are so wildly arranged, so peculiarly grouped and disposed, as to form a picture which, perhaps, has no parallel among those awful recesses which have hitherto been thrown open for the convenience or the curiosity of man.

The interval between the bridges is the point where the distinctive features of this defile are more especially concentrated, and where the Demon of the Gorge manifests his presence by the display of every attribute that can surprise, startle, or appal, the spectator. The yawning avenue through which we slowly advance

* A particular account of these timber rail-roads—their construction, and velocity of conveyance—will shortly be given in our description of the Slide of Alpnach.

seems as if torn asunder in some awful convulsion, when the earth, tortured by internal fires, and gasping in agony, subsided at last from the struggle, but left in her scars and chasms the fearful evidence of primordial contest. Here the sun in its summer's strength scarcely penetrates beneath the brink of the chasm; a twilight, gradually deepening into night, invests the torrent with perpetual gloom, only broken at intervals by the flashing spray, which indicates the depth and furious rapidity of the stream. Scathed by the frequent tempest, the lightning, and avalanche, and fringed with enormous pines, the rocks plunge down to a depth of from fifty to fourscore fathoms; while, above our heads, the mountains soar to a height of from six to eight thousand feet. Over the gulf, which, in some places, is not ten fathoms wide, huge trees, suspended from the crevices, cast their mysterious shadows; or entangled in one another—the firm with the falling—are hurried together into the abyss. The usual evidence and accompaniment of a torrent are its deafening roar; but here, while watching its frantic course from the parapet,—such are its depth and distance from the ear,—we can hardly catch the sound, though we see and shudder at the contemplation of its waters.

“How fearful even upon the steadfast ledge
To lean, and watch where leaps the boiling surge,
Like lightning, through the abyss, whose frowning edge
Strewn thick with rocks, and pines whose trunks emerge
Majestic from the gulf—each, like a wedge,
Firm in its crevice—stoops with beetling verge
Above thee and below, and sheds a gloom
Of terror more appalling than the tomb!”

To erect bridges over this ravine was an enterprise of the highest conceivable danger and difficulty—such as we, who even now dare scarce trust our heads over the parapet, can but ill imagine. To facilitate the construction of these arches, large pines, hewn and lowered from opposite sides of the ravine, and firmly lashed together with ropes, were swung across the gulf, and thus a temporary scaffolding established for the workmen during the progress of their hardy undertaking. Of late years, and in connexion with the new route already described, most important alterations have been effected in this gorge, so that from having been a mere mule-path, it has been converted into an excellent carriage-road, and entitled, in this respect, to the reverse of its former character.*

* Der Lord ACLAND Schrieb bey Anlass seiner reise durch Andeer wo er sich mit seiner frau Gemahlin ein paar tãge aufhielt im Stambuch des Pfarrer daselbst folgendes—VIA MALA—VIA BONA. A. 1816. Whereupon the poet exclaims:—

Nicht ferner “*Via Mala*” wie bisher
Nein! *Via Bona* nennet mich viel mehr!
So recht veehrten mich die Engländer, &c.

The length of this defile is about three miles, every rood of which presents the wildest combinations, and, in the sombre twilight, opens upon the solitary pilgrim like the "region of the shadow of death." As a point where all its peculiar features are assembled in a single *coup-d'œil*, it is customary to halt on the arch of the middle, or Patten-brück, and from its narrow parapet to throw pieces of rock into the Rhine which, at a depth of several hundred feet, appears diminished to a thread of foam. Here the sides of the chasm are so perpendicular, that a stone let drop from the parapet falls at once into the torrent. On turning the eyes upwards, the threatening cliffs, darkly fringed with pines, and appearing to meet over head, offer so narrow a stripe of sky, that the spectator, in contemplating the scene above and below him, feels as if suspended between heaven and hades, and holding his existence by momentary tenure.* There is a powerful passage in Shelley's tragedy of the *Cenci*, which will afford the reader a vivid idea of scenes like the present.

The ruins of an ancient castle, perched on a rock which seems to shut up the pass, are singularly effective; and at this point the sudden transition from the gloom of the *Verlohren-loch*, into the serene and beautiful valley of Domschleg—rich in verdant pastures, and sprinkled with villages—occasions a delightful surprise by the new and pleasing impressions with which it relieves the spectator's mind. This scenery has been so accurately described by a native and resident bard, that we hope a few lines of extract from the original, will not be unacceptable to some of our German readers.†

* Our first View of this defile is taken from the second bridge; our next comprises the gallery and bridge; our third View shows the gallery of the *Trou Perdu*, or *Verlohren-loch*, from the opposite side looking back.

† The remarkable objects in the valley of Schams are thus enumerated: "Einst durch des Rheingewassers menge so ausgefüllt, so hoch aufstand, bis er da Keinen Raum mehr fand dann sich durch jener felsen enge ob *Via-Mala* eine bahn aus durchs *Verlorne-loch* gewann, und so der name "*See*" verschwunden es fragt sich nun: Wo ginge man von *Rheinwald* aus bis *Thusis* daun? Von *Suvers* bis den Berg hinauf, von dort noch weiter, höher auf durch den *Andeerer* Berg und Waiden durch der Arosen Alp und Thal wo man noch jetzt sieht überall viel Spuren auf derselben Haiden von dort durch Felsenwege fort bis man dann endlich zu den Ort herunter kam, der *Thusis* heisset. Trett auf! du *Via Mala*, so genannt sprich selbst: Warum man dich so sehr verkennet? Dein Wüster nahm ist uberall bekannt woher, das man noch immer böss dich nennet? Auf Wehre dich! es ist grad jetzt die zeit dass die mit aller offenherzigkeit den Wahren grund angäbst samt dar Geschichte," &c. &c. &c.

To the tourist who would farther satisfy himself as to the "march of intellect" in this part of the Grisons, we would recommend the work "*Geschichte und Gedichte, &c. von M. Conradi, V. D. M. Andeer*," which will convince him that if there be some poetry in this region of the Alps, there is, also, much patriotism. The preceding passage, as the reader will perceive, is in *rhyme*, and a quotation from the "*Geschichte*."

The next halting-place in our route is the lively and bustling little town of Tüsis, with a population of six or seven hundred, who profess the Protestant faith, and form, so to speak, a colloquial frontier between the German and *Romanche*. The Domleschgertal, of which it is the capital, is a continuation of the Schamsertal, and, in point of fertility, climate, and cultivation, may be described as the Devonshire of the ancient Rhætia. Here the Rhenish grape first arrives at maturity, and gives evidence of those qualities for which it is so distinguished in its subsequent course. The environs present numerous objects of attraction, one of which, the Schloss-Unterstagstein—a chateau built after the modern taste, and commanding a view in which every variety of landscape is strikingly embodied—will amply repay the traveller whom leisure, and love of scenery, may induce to take the view from its windows. Here also he will behold, in much of its native horror, the frightful gorge of the Via Mala from which he has just escaped. The ravine, through which the Nolla has so often discharged its destructive torrents—the periodical scourge of the valley—will afford to the naturalist much curious matter for investigation, and to every observer a field of vast and variegated interest. The inundations, for which this torrent claims a mournful notoriety, become at times suddenly dark and grumous, owing to their copious admixture with the torrents of mud and schistous decomposition, produced by subterraneous *éboulements* of the Lüschersee, a lake on Mount Tschappina, where the pasture has suffered greatly from this cause. The Nolla, at certain periods, has been so completely saturated and swollen by these adventitious floods,* as to stem, or so far impede the course of the Rhine at its conflux, and thereby occasion great devastations in the valley and imminent danger to the town. These regurgitations of the river are still frequent, and always formidable; so that there is much to be apprehended which no sagacity can foresee, nor precaution avert. So deeply impregnated is the Rhine, on these occasions, with the foreign substance conveyed into it by the Nolla, that it is said not to recover its cerulean tint till after it has left the Grison frontier. Twenty-five years ago, the ravages thus occasioned were numerous and severe, and left many vestiges behind them which no labour has hitherto been able to efface. The loss of territory is thus of frequent recurrence; and here, where a fertile field, or even a fruit-tree, is of such importance to the inhabitants, the mud-torrent becomes as much a calamity as the lava-flood of the South.

* The lake, or morass, which supplies these mud-torrents, seems of a peat or marly consistence, which, accumulated beyond a certain point, is carried down by a sudden disrapture of the basin into the Nolla, of which the popular description of the "Solway-flow," in our own country, will give the reader the nearest idea to the phenomenon in question.

This valley has long enjoyed a peculiar traffic in its dried fruits, which are prepared after a peculiar fashion, and sold in considerable quantities for exportation. It is a common saying here, that the water of Tuis is better than the wine of Bormio; and there certainly is something peculiarly good in the quality of the fountains—though still too little, probably, to convince the ordinary traveller, and justify the proverb—more particularly if he consults the worthy host of the *Croix Blanche*, before filling his cup at the *Craptaig*.*

On leaving Tuis the effect of the inundations is more striking, the scenery relaxes in its severity, and the bright verdure of Switzerland becomes identified; ruined towers—the relics of feudal times, but subsequently turned to some account in the cause of freedom—chapels and oratories, each with its legend of war, witchcraft, or Grison valour, sprinkle and diversify the heights. This portion of the route is highly interesting for the natural beauties by which it is enclosed, as well as rich in historical recollections. From an eminence near Retzins there is a remarkably fine view of the river, the convent, and numerous other characteristic features harmoniously grouped—among which is a bridge thrown over a wooded ravine, and in its position peculiarly effective.

“The scene—the hour—the convent’s mellow chime
Revive the legends of departed time;
And flitting round me, forms and shadows dim,
With mystic voices swell the vesper-hymn.”

The castle, or rather village, of Reichenau, is pleasantly situated at the conflux of the two principal branches of the Rhine, and remarkable for its two covered bridges, one of which has replaced the still more famous one, burnt down in 1799, and constructed by the celebrated Grubemann, after the plan of his chef-d’œuvre formerly at Schafhausen. From the castle gardens we enjoy a superb view of the environs, the confluence of the Upper and Lower Rhine; the former, of an emerald tint and of larger volume, acquires a deeper shade by intermixture with the latter, which, as already mentioned, holds the deep colouring matter received from the Nola in suspension for many leagues. In May, 1799, Reichenau was the scene of a bloody rencontre between the natives and the French.

Towards the close of the last century an excellent institution was here set on foot by the elder Tschärner, for the education of youth, but which, owing to the unhappy circumstances of that period, and others of a more private nature, it

* Une source qui jaillit de la base d’un rocher qu’on appelle *Craptaig*, et qui s’élève au-delà du ravin de la Nolla, fournit une eau délicieuse.—HEIDIGGER.

was found impossible to continue. In this castle the society in management of the mines of Tiefenkasten hold their meetings, and here, also, are their magazines. From this point rafts, freighted with from twenty to fifty quintals, are floated down the Rhine as far as the Lake of Constance, and as we gaze on its banks we cannot but exclaim—

“Once more,—from solitudes that nurse the storm,
In clouds where lightnings flash and whirlwinds form—
Regions, which scarce the chamois’ feet explore,—
’Tis sweet to linger on the Rhenish shore!”

From Reichenau to Coire the scenery, though still fine, suffers not a little by contrast with what we have just passed, and which appears more beautiful as we look back upon it.

“Those flowery pastures where the forest bee
Alights with every breeze, and banquets free;
And Rætia’s Alpine summer sweetly throws
Around each step the perfume of the rose!”

Chur, or Coire, the ancient Curia Rhætorum, and capital of the Grison League, is highly picturesque in situation, and, in its domestic economy, presents a *mélange* of German and Italian—but with the former predominant, and an air of Swiss freedom pervading the place and people. Its vestiges of Roman antiquity* are numerous, and under the name just stated, it formed the centre of a flourishing colony, by whom its previous territory was enlarged, strengthened, and improved. So early as the middle of the fifth century it was the see of a bishop: the cathedral was erected in 852, and contains in its archives several important grants of that and the following centuries. By long and persevering struggles it obtained, at last, its emancipation from the thralldom of its own bishops and the German empire, and in 1460 received from the latter the full acknowledgment of its independence,

“Matured by hardy virtues through long years.”

On the 19th October, 1798, Coire, at the request of the League, was occupied by Austrian troops, and a *levée en masse* ordered to oppose the entrance of the French, who, at that time, had been received in every other part of Switzerland. On the 7th of March, the following year, the French took possession of all the chief passages as well as the capital of the Grisons; General Lecombe, at the

* In 1806, during some excavations near the anterior gate, the workmen discovered two hundred copper medals of Roman emperors, but which were indiscriminately sold by the finders.—EBEL.

same time, succeeded in his expedition by the Bernardino; while Loison and Demont were equally successful—one by the Ober-alp, from the Valley of Ursern, the other by the Ganghelsberg; while fresh troops forced the passage of St. Lucia. In May following the Austrians returned to the charge, and on the 15th expelled the French from the Grisons. On the 5th October, General Suwarrow entered Coire at the head of the Russian army. In November the French again took possession, but were shortly after compelled by the Austrians to retreat. In July, the following year, the latter being attacked at every point in the Grison territory, were finally driven from Coire, and all the valleys of the Rhine. In November, the same year, General (afterwards Marshal) Macdonald passed through Coire, at the head of a second army of reserve, on his perilous march over the Splügen—an expedition of which we shall shortly speak.

From the dominion of the Franks down to the commencement of the fifteenth century, the people of Upper Rhætia had been tributaries or vassals of the Bishop of Coire, the abbots of Disentis and Pfeffers, and other spiritual lords, as well as of numberless counts, barons, and nobles. The citizens of Coire, although enjoying various privileges under their episcopal lord, had many causes of complaint; whilst the poor in the villages endured a succession of the greatest hardships—plundered during the almost incessant broils of their great or petty lords, and oppressed and impoverished by their exactions in time of peace. Never had Uri, Schwytz and Unterwalden more merciless tyrants than Rhætia; but, like these, goaded on to a point past endurance, Rhætia also found her *Tell*.

In the Valley of Engadine, from whose glaciers the impetuous Inn rushes down towards the Tyrol, crowning a rocky eminence above the village of Madulein, stood the castle of Gardoval,—the terror of the surrounding country. It happened that the castellan, passing one day through the opposite village of Camogask, was struck with the beauty of a young girl, daughter of a respectable peasant, who chanced to cross his path, and whom, like another Appius, he ordered his menials to seize and bring to his castle the same night. Long accustomed to the execution of such orders, the messengers soon appeared at the threshold of the girl's father, whose name was Adam. Readily surmising their errand, the father was horror-struck; and seeing his daughter overwhelmed with despair, made a powerful effort to disguise the indignation which boiled within him, and temporising with great presence of mind:—"My daughter," said he, "being quite unprepared for a message of such honour, I pray you grant her some little space to arrange her dress and ornaments, in order that she may

make her appearance with becoming dignity; and further, I beseech ye, assure his Grace that I will present her in person to him to-morrow morning."

Satisfied with this answer, the messengers returned to their master, while Adam, frantic with rage, and resolved to avenge the insult, hastened to communicate with his neighbours, and detailing the fact, exclaimed—"Are we men, or are we this lord's cattle?" His appeal was warmly responded to, and the effect electric. The same night a solemn vow was administered, by which they bound themselves either to put an end to the misery which desolated and degraded the valley, or to perish in the attempt.

Early next morning, Adam, in fulfilment of his promise, conducted his daughter in bridal attire to the castle, followed by several of the conspirators in procession, while others, well armed, had concealed themselves near the place to be ready to take advantage of the first signal. On perceiving the girl's arrival, the castellan quickly descended the steps, and advanced gaily to receive his expected victim from the hands of her father. The latter, however, while his daughter shrunk back to avoid the profane touch of the hand extended towards her, drew his sword, and plunged it into the tyrant's heart. Then, joined by his followers, and forcing an entrance into the castle, he despatched or secured the retainers within, and displaying the signal of freedom from the windows, fresh adherents poured in—Gardoval was delivered up to the flames, and, in one day the whole country below the sources of the Inn threw off the yoke of their oppressors.

About the same period (1430), an event in the rich pasture valley of Schams greatly expedited the cause of Grison liberty, and which we shall here briefly report. In the valley just named, delightfully situated amidst the highest Alps, and which we briefly noticed in our passage through the *Via Mala* (p. 91), the castles of Bärenberg and Fardun had been long notorious as the residences of two immitigable tyrants, from whom the inhabitants had long endured, in silent despondency, the grossest oppression, cruelty, and outrage. To this system of lawless despotism, John Chalder, as an example to all his brethren, had the uncompromising hardihood to stand singly opposed. An occasion speedily offered to bring his fortitude to the test; for the lord of Fardun having driven two of his horses to forage in Chalder's corn-field, the sturdy Grison was instantly roused into an act which sacrificed one of the animals on the spot. This fact was soon reported, and the offender sentenced to expiate it in irons and tortures, until his relations, by humiliating petitions, entreaties, and the payment of a heavy ransom, procured his release, and restored him to his family. Here, while he was one day seated with them at dinner, the lord of Fardun entered the apartment. The

family immediately rose to evince their respectful acknowledgment of his presence; but the disdainful lord returned their proffered homage by the disgusting act of spitting in the frugal soup served for dinner, and which they were just eating. This insult incensed Chalder beyond all sufferance: he seized the tyrant by the throat—"Swallow," cried he, "the soup thou hast so delicately seasoned!" and, thrusting his head into the scalding broth, he strangled him in his desperate gripe. He now hastened from his cabin, and raised the neighbourhood. All flew to arms, and, actuated by one resolute spirit, swore to rid the soil of their implacable task-masters. Their first act was to commit the castles of Fardun and Bärenberg to the flames, and sacrifice every retainer who opposed their purpose.*—This was the dawn of Grison liberty.

In point of extent, this canton is next to that of Berne, having a surface of one hundred and forty miles square. Forming the eastern frontier of Switzerland, with the Tyrol on the north, and the Lombardo-Venetian states on the south, it partakes, in language and national peculiarities, of the character of both countries, German and Italian. Its whole territory is one congeries of snow-clad Alps, interspersed with valleys, no less remarkable for their beauty and fertility than for the sublime and magnificent framework in which they are set. Here the works of nature are displayed in their most imposing forms; and here, too, the labour and ingenuity of man are seen in their most active and pleasing characteristics. By his incessant vigilance and industry the encroaching glacier, the landslip, and the avalanche, have been checked, removed, or modified into shapes and purposes essential to his comfort. Canals have been scooped, highways constructed, and bridges flung across chasms and defiles from the mere contemplation of which the stranger's eye shrinks back with instinctive horror. Here the watchful and hardy native has to maintain a daily conflict with the elements, and to guard against those awful manifestations of natural causes which neither times nor seasons can interrupt. Those dangers, however, to which, by the nature of the soil, he is exposed, serve only to strengthen his heart, and stimulate him to redoubled exertion. Amid scenes where the Lombard would starve or despair, the Grison secures ample remuneration for his labour, and, with its well-earned fruit, fosters the love of independence. The virtues of patience and perseverance are his natural inheritance, and, in a country where patriotism is felt and inculcated by all, the general prosperity is identified with his own, and elicits that labour of love which makes this land of Alps and glaciers a land of joy and fertility.

* For similar details, *vide* ZSCHOKKE'S *Hist.* (Germ. ed. Zurich.)

It is only in consequence of the revolution of 1798 that the Grisons have been united to the confederation of Switzerland. The country consists of three leagues, or federative republics, namely, the Grey league—the league of the House of God—the league of the Ten Jurisdictions, with its subdivisions into superior and inferior—which comprise no fewer than thirty more, and in many respects, are not only mutually independent, but even independent of the supreme council. In criminal judicature each possesses the absolute power of life and death; and each, in the cases of common law, has its hereditary form, points, and usages, by which all questions of local interest are determined. The constitution recognizes no exclusive privileges nor distinctions of rank. The supreme power is vested in the general assembly of the councils and municipalities of all the communes. The grand council is composed of sixty-five members, with the president of the league at their head; and all matters intended to be brought before them are prepared by a federal commission of nine. The daily administration of business is managed by an inferior council of three magistrates. The tribunal of appeal for this canton takes cognizance, in the last instance, of all matters involving litigation, and is formed of nine judges. In the court of appeal at Coire, it becomes an indispensable qualification that the judges should possess an intimate knowledge of all the laws, usages, and bye-laws, as recognized throughout the thirty jurisdictions. To each of these bodies every league furnishes an equal proportion of members.

The population is estimated at 74,000, or upwards, of whom 46,000 belong to the Protestant, and 28,000 to the Catholic, persuasion. The reformed clergy constitute a general synod, with three federal or provincial subdivisions. The Catholic priesthood is composed of four chapters, over which the bishop of Coire presides; but the valleys of Poschiavo and Brusio are under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Como. Independently of the episcopal chapter of Coire, there are seven convents in the diocese, at the head of which is the celebrated abbey of Disentis. The schools of the canton are daily attracting more attention and support on the part of government. The great public seminary now established in the capital may boldly vie, in the abilities of its functionaries, and the success of its discipline, with any similar institution in the whole confederation. There is a gradual development of mind, a general desire of knowledge and improvement, manifested throughout the canton, where numerous reading societies have lately sprung up.

The military force of the canton consists of a militia, in which are comprised all males capable of bearing arms. The contingent supplies, as fixed by the law of the 7th of August, 1815, amount to 1,600 men, with a sum equivalent to 42,000 francs.

Of the inhabitants, it is calculated that nearly one half speak the Romanche, one-seventh, Italian; and three-eighths, German. Their manner of living varies according to the localities, but the majority are engaged in the occupations of agriculture, and a pastoral life. Little short of 100,000 head of cattle, the same number of sheep, 75,000 goats, and hogs in proportion, are pastured in the valleys during summer. The tillage, however, falls far short of the necessary supply of grain, one half of which is imported from other sources; but the various passes which traverse the canton richly compensate for other disadvantages, and act like so many channels opened for the express increase of its domestic prosperity.

There is no country where the theme of liberty is extolled and dwelt upon with more self-complacence than among the Grey-leaguers:—"Ours," say the peasants, "is the only republic in the world; and we the only free people! Touch the very smallest of our rights, and revolt will follow."* It must be confessed, however, that this conviction originates rather in an amiable partiality, than in strict comparison or examination of their real political condition. The liberty of the press is much restricted; legal questions are heard and determined with closed doors; and the deliberations of the representative, or great council, conducted in private—facts which certainly militate against a position so generally advanced on the score of freedom, but well compensated by many other important and unquestionable advantages. There is no existing tax, burden, or impost of any kind. The great thoroughfare for the transit of merchandise through the canton supplies, at a moderate custom-duty, an ample fund for the discharge of all expenses incurred by government.† For some years past, indeed, the revenue drawn from this source has so far exceeded the annual expenditure, that the surplus, about 50,000 francs, has been applied to the liquidation of a small public debt. The whole revenue of the canton amounts to about 150,000 francs.

With the exception of the northern chain, the mountains of which consist of argillaceous schist and limestone, all the Grison Alps are of primitive rock, and very rich in minerals,—particularly in iron. Various lead mines continue to be worked, as well as others of copper, silver, and even gold. The lakes are numerous but small. The Rhine and the Inn have their sources in this canton. Mineral springs, of which St. Moritz is the chief, are found and much frequented

* The tourist or reader who is studious of Grison character as it really is, will find much pleasure in the perusal of an authentic and graphic sketch of this canton by Mr. Conway, 1830.

† Namely: the salaries of public offices; military pay and accoutrements; construction and repair of public buildings, roads, bridges, and aqueducts; with an allowance of a crown per day to each member of the council during the term of session.

in every part of the country. The latter is situated in the Upper Engadine, on the margin of a small lake; and during the months of June, July, and August, is crowded with visitors—Swiss, German, and Italian. The properties, as furnished by an analysis of the spring, are nearly the same as those of Schwalbach Spa and Pyrmont, but are confidently reported by those who have tried them, as much more efficacious than their German rivals. One great disadvantage to the place is the want of an inn for the reception of invalids, and the comfort of visitors generally. The source lies nearly an English mile from the village; and to drink the water, the visitors have to walk or ride this distance, and while there, to put up with a miserable shed as the only protection from the changes of weather, which, at an elevation of 4,000 feet, and surrounded by glaciers, is here very capricious and searching during even the summer months above stated. It is a subject of astonishment to foreigners to observe the bad policy of government in not furnishing the necessary accommodation in a place which, from its natural beauties and medicinal attractions, might become one of the most frequented in Europe.

PASSES OF THE SPLÜGEN AND ST. GOTHARD.

“ But journeying home, how rapt his spirits rose—
How light his footsteps crushed St. Gothard's snows!
How dear seemed even the waste and wild Schreckhorn,
Tho' wrapt in clouds, and frowning as in scorn
Upon a downward world of pastoral charms!” CAMPBELL.

RETRACING our steps through the valleys of Domschleg and Schams to the Splügen, the scenery appears as if we only saw it for the first time. The great land-marks are the same; but numerous objects, which had escaped us in our journey north, now start up on either hand, and enter into the most striking and varied combinations. The “banks of Rhine” seem cased in richer verdure, and the enclosing Alps of Beverin and Neerhorn more boldly defined. Reichenau and Tisis are particularly happy in their positions—each at the confluence of two rivers, and enjoying a soil and climate which, instead of suffering, seem fertilized and refreshed by their vicinity to the glaciers. In passing

through Reichenau, the bridge already mentioned invited a fresh inspection. It is constructed on a principle exactly opposite to that of the modern suspension-bridge, and consists of two lofty arches, composed of four tiers of timber, cut into blocks about five or six feet long, and resting on each other; these are firmly joined together by cross-beams, and between them is suspended the road; it is of great strength, and the vibration observed on the crossing of a heavy carriage scarcely perceptible.*

The elegant spire of Tüsis is a fine object in the landscape; where the natural sublimity of the picture is everywhere enriched by the labours of enlightened freedom and the relics of feudal despotism.

The gorge of the Via-Mala loses nothing of its terrific character by a re-visit. The story of the unhappy girl who was hurled into the abyss by her ghostly seducer, is recalled, with a doubly vivid sensation of horror, when standing on the very brink of the precipice where it is said that execrable deed was perpetrated.†

“ That dismal gulf, from which the startled owl
Shrinks back in terror, and the spectred night
Sits throned in chaos! . . . Lo, in solemn cowl
A phantom nears the brink—while young and bright—
And trusting her betrayer,—mid the scowl
Of midnight, here the doomed one met his sight!
Struggled—implored—till from the precipice
He spurned, and plunged his victim in the abyss!”

About three miles from this gorge, and close to the *Pigneuer-bad*, a Latin inscription records the completion of the route, and, at the same time, includes a lesson of sound political wisdom for the future observance of the Grey-leaguers.‡

Winding on through the glen of the Röffla, its savage features appear absolutely softened into the picturesque when compared with that from which we have just emerged. Sheds of charcoal burners, deserted mills and iron forges, huge piles of timber, and “wild-looking woodcutters, leaning on their rude staffs,

* For particulars see Walter's Letters from the Continent.—HEIDIGGER—EBEL.

† Le souvenir de l'action exécration d'un monstre de prêtre, qui, après avoir séduit une jeune fille, la précipita au fond de cet abîme, remplit l'âme de terreur et d'effroi!—EBEL.

‡ The annexed are the words :

JAM . VIA . PATET
HOSTIBUS . ET . AMICIS .
CAVETE . RHÆTI .
SIMPLICITAS . MORUM .
ET . UNIO .
SERVABUNT . AVITAM .
LIBERTATEM .

with the savage air of Retzsch's Miners in the outlines to Fridolin," were among the prominent features of the pass. From the luxuriant forests which enclose this defile, most of the building timber used by the Milanese is transported in waggons across the Splügen and Bernardino.

The route of the Splügen, which connects the valley of the Rhine with that of San-Giacomo, is one of the most ancient on record, and, within the last ten years, has been entirely reconstructed, widened, and secured. This great undertaking, in which the Austrian and Grison authorities, studying their own mutual interests, acted in concert, has opened another important channel of mercantile intercourse between the Rhine and Adriatic, along which every description of waggon is now conducted with comparative safety and despatch.

The highest point of the route is estimated by French engineers at 6,393 feet;* and although every thing that human ingenuity could devise has been employed to soften its asperities, and fortify the traveller against the dangers that threaten him, still its general features have lost nothing of their native and terrific aspect, and the stoutest heart will feel an involuntary shudder as the appalling brink of the Kardinell opens upon him.

Avalanches, though common in every department of the higher Alps, are peculiarly so in the canton of the Grisons, where they are reckoned upon as a periodical scourge, and, from time to time, commit the most deplorable ravages. In 1749, nearly the whole village of Rueras, in the Val-Tavetsch, was carried away by an avalanche, but with so little violence, that the inmates of several houses were not even roused from sleep by the catastrophe; and when they did awake, they were not aware, as they afterwards confessed, of their real situation, but greatly surprised at the length and darkness of the night! Of a hundred persons thus engulfed, sixty were rescued; but forty of their unhappy companions were swept away beyond the reach of human efforts. On the 10th of May, 1817, an avalanche fell into the gorge of Ems, at a short distance from Coire, and spread its skirts over a space of half a league in breadth—carrying along with it a mill, the dwelling-house and stables of the miller, and then discharging itself to a distance along the plain. No winter passes without a repetition of similar disasters, most of which involve a sacrifice of life more or less extensive, while others present remarkable instances of hair-breadth escapes under circumstances the most apparently hopeless and appalling.

In November, 1800, Marshal Macdonald passed the Splügen—at that time a

* Dr. Ebel makes it 6,170, and M. Glutz, 5,928—the truth lies between them.

mere mule path—at the head of his division; and after a series of disasters, supported with unparalleled fortitude, carried it on to victory in the plains of Marengo.

Having briefly stated, in a former page, the great international benefits resulting from the new route over the Bernardino, we shall here also offer a few particulars respecting the still greater undertaking on the part of the Austrian government, by which the route over the Splügen has been adapted to carriage intercourse. The works, which were begun in 1818, under the direction of the head engineer, Donegana,* involved questions of the deepest interest in that science, as well as innumerable dangers from those natural causes against which it was impossible, by the lessons of experience or scientific calculations, to provide. The success which had crowned the works on the Simplon, however, had given such encouragement to every similar enterprise, that what had previously appeared insurmountable by human art, now assumed a perfect feasibility. The mind of the engineer, stimulated to redoubled exertion by the example of his predecessors, and the spur of more recent competition in the pass of the Bernardino, seems to have brought the whole weight of experience to bear upon this, the last field where such difficulties presented themselves; and, in the success of his undertaking, has added one more to those wonderful monuments already existing in the passes of the Alps. Among the numerous obstacles which opposed the execution of this hardy design, were, the peculiar hardness of the rocks to be split—the precipices to be bridged over or blocked out—the torrents and avalanche-tracks to be diverted, or otherwise disarmed and modified in their violence—the constant difficulty of preserving an uniform descent where the mountain was shattered and precipitous;—here to suspend the route along the flank of chasms, and there again, as in the Simplon, to carry it through the solid rock, or protect it by arches. Besides the numerous works upon which the road itself was supported, the engineer had to construct four arched galleries, varying in length from 300 to 600 feet and upwards, with three houses of refuge. In the plan and construction of the whole route, the happiest combination of elegance and solidity is every where apparent; it preserves a nearly uniform breadth of from fifteen to eighteen feet,† protected, on every assailable point, by strong wooden balustrades, and with a slope and ascent so gradual, as scarcely to require much additional strength or precaution on the part of the conductor or his team.

* Antonio Talachini, of Milan, was the *aspaltatore*, or engineer in chief, for the route of the Splügen, and Donnéganna his assistant.—BROCKEDON. *Les travaux furent confiés à la Compagnie Talachini, sous la direction de M. Donegana.*—EBEL.

† The breadth within the Austrian frontier is eighteen, in that of the Grisons, fifteen feet.

That part of the route to which we more particularly allude, as within the Austrian territory, was completed in about two years; but the remainder, namely, that from the Grison frontier to the village of Splügen, ran some hazard of being postponed; for the funds just expended upon the route of the Bernardino, had so far weakened the Grison exchequer, that fresh resources could not be found to meet the expenses required for its completion. At this critical juncture, the proposal on the part of Austria, to finish what had been so successfully begun, was wisely accepted by the canton, and the remainder of the route, under the direction of Lera, a skilful engineer, carried triumphantly to its junction with that of the Bernardino.

From the village of Splügen, the highest point of the passage is reached in about two hours; while to perform the whole journey to Chiavenna, requires seven or eight. The elevation of this route falls short of the highest point on the Bernardino by about seventy feet. During a distance of *twelve* leagues and a half on the Swiss side, the route gradually ascends, and in that space reaches an elevation of 4,677 feet. From Chiavenna, on the contrary, situated about 737 feet above the level of the sea, the ascent in the space of *six* leagues and a quarter is 5,776 feet, which shows the comparative abruptness of the rise on the opposite flank. From the time of the Romans down to the middle ages, those over the Julier and Septimer were the only passes frequented by travellers from the north or south. By the latter of these, the distance from Coire to Chiavenna is twenty-one leagues, a succession of up-and-down hill, while by the Splügen it is only eighteen, with the great advantage of a regular and very gentle slope.*

It is by no means certain if what is found in the Itinerary by Antoninus concerning the road from *Curia* to *Tarvesede*, and thence to Chiavenna, has relation to any route over the Splügen; but it is certain, that in the twelfth century a communication existed between the village of Isola on the southern flank of the Splügen, and Neufannen in the Rheinwald. At that period there was an inn near the Schneehorn, which, as well as the *col* itself, has been covered for ages by an immense glacier, through the surface of which the bell of the buried *hospice* having emerged, was transported to Isola. At what precise period the glacier of Tambo extended itself so as to block up this ancient track by the

* Although several armies have been dispatched from Germany into Italy, particularly in the middle age, and although several emperors have sent troops through the Grisons to the Lake of Como, the route pursued has always been over the Septimer. The Splügen was only attempted successfully by the Swiss confederates and Grisons in the sixteenth century, on occasion of their battles fought in Italy; and subsequently in the early part of the seventeenth century, when the Spaniards had a garrison at Chiavenna. From the latter period, down to the close of the last century, profound peace reigned in the Alps, till interrupted by the invasion of French troops.

Schneehorn, is unknown; but the learned Dr. Ebel, who has weighed the subject, refers it to the commencement of the fourteenth century, when, for the first time, the track over the Splügen offered a substitute for the former, and, following the glens of the Piz Beverin, re-established the communication between Chiavenna and Thusis.

About the middle of the fifteenth century, when, by the gigantic efforts of a free people, the gorge of the Roffla and Via Mala had been rendered practicable, the passage of the Splügen rose into fresh importance, and as it opened a line of direct intercourse between Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, rivalled the St. Gothard as a medium of traffic. These paths, just broad enough for the employment of beasts of burden during summer, and of small sledges in winter, presented in those days nearly the same facilities, dangers, and accidents, for the transport of merchandize; but since the construction of the new routes, and notwithstanding the efforts made on the part of the canton of Uri to keep pace with the march of improvement, the route over the St. Gothard, with which so many striking recollections are associated, has lost one-half of its commercial importance.

The advantages conferred upon commerce in particular, are proved by the simple fact, that goods, which it formerly required six or seven days to forward from Coire to Chiavenna, are now transported over the same distance in two or three; while, by travelling post, that journey, once so formidable, is now performed daily in ten or twelve hours. Merchandize forwarded from Milan, under these circumstances, reaches Zurich in eight days; a fact, which furnishes incontestable evidence of the vast improvement which the last ten years have effected in commercial expedition. It is calculated that the annual transit of merchandize across the Splügen amounts to 25,000 quintals, and that, on an average, eight or nine waggons cross the summit daily. During one day in the month of August, upwards of two hundred waggons, laden chiefly with cotton for Switzerland, and timber for Italy, have been known to cross the summit.

The highest part of the route, or *col*, presents the form of a valley, through which the Hanslebach precipitates its thundering tide. Gradually descending from this point, and passing the Grison frontier, we reach the Casa Cantoniera inn, or *hospice*, of the Splügen, where, as on the Bernardino, shelter and refreshments may be had when required.* It serves also as an *entrepôt* for merchandize, and a residence for the inspector of tolls, and a body of custom-house officers.

* "And where, upon occasion"—as it has been *punningly* stated by a late tourist for the benefit of such of our fair countrywomen who *travail*—"ladies have been happily confined."—For the disastrous effects of the recent storm in this route, the reader is referred to the succeeding pages.

During the sudden *tourmentes*,* or snow-storms, to which this dreary spot is peculiarly subject, the bell of the inn is incessantly tolled for the direction of bewildered travellers; while the route, bordered by tall poles, or *staze*, which overtop the deepest snow, conducts the half-frozen pilgrim, when all other indications would have failed, to the house of refuge.

Owing to the marshy nature of the soil, it is probable that in remote times the whole valley, like many others, formed a lake till, discharged by some sudden disruption of the natural barrier, its bed gradually assumed the present marshy consistence. During excavations in several parts of this platform, and at an elevation of 5,800 feet, or upwards, roots of trees have been found—the last relics of primeval forests; while, in the present day, not a tree is to be seen within a league and a half of the *hospice*. In former ages, nevertheless, forests must have covered immense tracks in these Alps, where nothing but the lichen and rhododendron now flourish.

From the *hospice*, the traveller will notice in the distance numerous *chalets*, which are inhabited during the summer by Bergamese shepherds, who have large flocks at pasture there, as well as herds of cattle and horses. Here the well-known cheese, manufactured from a mixture of ewe and cow milk, is prepared during the fine season, and, having a flavour far from disagreeable, finds a ready sale. The pastoral economy observed by these shepherds differs, however, most materially, from that on the Swiss side of the mountain. Their manner of life descends from father to son, and for several ages the same people have been in the habit of resorting annually to the Grison Alps, and by renting the pasture for their numerous flocks, contribute no little to the revenue of the canton.

Of the dangers so frequently incurred in the passage of the Splügen, and of which every month furnishes some fresh detail, we offer a few general remarks. On the Splügen, the snow-falls commence in the end of October, or early part of November; instances, nevertheless, have occurred when scarcely a foot of snow has fallen up to Christmas, while at others, during the same period, it has attained a depth of from six to ten feet. The depth of snow, however, varies exceedingly according to the force and direction of the wind, by which, in certain places, it is diminished to thin layers, and in others,—the gorges and hollows, for example,—it is accumulated to an immense depth, and to this cause are attributable the dangers which infest certain portions of the route, while others are comparatively safe. In ordinary seasons, the snow disappears about the end of May; but in 1826, and so late as the end of June, the route had to be cleared

* See our account of St. Gothard.

through a layer of snow eight and ten feet deep. In those places where the mountain is broken into deep valleys, or ravines, the snow never melts during even the hottest summer. So long as the old route was frequented, it often happened that the passage over the summit was shut for ten and twelve days at a time; but at present, owing to the excellent arrangements on the part of the two governments, Swiss and Austrian, that inconvenience is seldom experienced for more than three or four days, even in the worst seasons. The letter-carriers, even during the period when the passage is blocked up, and pronounced to be impracticable, continue the exercise of their calling between the village of Splügen and Chiavenna, though always, it must be confessed, at the imminent risk of their lives. The regulations instituted by government for maintaining the communication open, are the same here as on the Bernardino. At the village of Splügen there are two distinct classes of workmen: the first, or *fürleite*, are charged with the duty of opening the way; and the inspector, or *fürleiter*, with a salary of 500 florins a year, is bound to go *every day* as far as the frontier, with one or two oxen, in order to open the track. When there is a fresh fall of snow, he is obliged to take from six to twelve oxen or horses, with the same number of labourers, named *ruther*, who receive a florin a day, in order to force the passage, by trampling the snow into a hardened consistency. The second class, whose duty is to *keep* the road open, consists of ten *weger*, whose chief, or *hauptweger*, has the superintendence and inspection of the works, and receives an annual salary of 200 florins. He is charged to keep the way fit for carriages or sledges, from the village of Splügen, over the summit as far as the frontier. The winter expenses attending this part of the management, amount to 12 or 1400 florins. The same process is adopted, by similarly organized bodies of workmen, on the Italian side; and it is truly surprising how few lives are actually lost in this perilous occupation. The knowledge, derived from daily experience, and the salutary measures enforced by government, and recommended by modern inventions, are such, that they know every step of the route; and when actually overtaken by any of the various forms in which dangers present themselves, their long familiarity with such phenomena, and that precaution, fortitude, and presence of mind, for which they are so remarkable, seldom forsake them in the hour of need. It is but too true, however, that at times, all these moral and physical resources have proved unavailing; and that accidents have frequently occurred, and ever must occur, in a route which the genius and ambition of man have wrested from the desolation of nature, and which her ever-working hand is seeking to retrieve. Here, in a few hours, every trace of human labour becomes obliterated; the fall of snow,

the rush of the avalanche or torrent, seem to resist the bold invasion of their territory, and demand its restitution; while it is only by unwearied vigilance, and unceasing labour, that art can maintain her uncertain empire, and defend herself against the desolating effects of so many awful and insidious causes. Yet, if in any situation more than another, it may be permitted for man to exult in the power of man, and to view with enthusiastic mind the proofs of his successful and daring enterprise, it is certainly in situations like the Splügen.

The gorge of the Cardinell,* so happily avoided in the construction of the new route, and along whose appalling brink the old road opened a most precarious path, is one of the most frightful passes that human imagination can conceive. Here, enormous avalanches, piled in subtle suspense over the head of the traveller, a breath—the slightest agitation of the atmosphere—may discharge from their slippery perch, with a roar that shakes the mountain to its foundation. The disasters recorded of this fearful gorge, as well as the many of which no record was ever heard—the solitary death and oblivion of travellers who have there perished, unknown and unlamented—are peculiarly affecting. It was here that the army under Macdonald, as already stated, lost so many of its infantry and horse.

“ Counting their triumphs—flushed with fierce desire
Of war's wild game—his serried legions passed :
Soldier, and steed, and train of engines dire,
And banners flaunting in the freezing blast !
Then rushed the whirlwind—folding in its ire
The famished victim :—then the lightnings cast
Their shafts around, and thundering *lawen* swept
The stragglers to their sepulchres of snow,
Where steed and rider in their harness slept—
And demons shrieked—*Woe to the invader, woe !*”—MS.

A singular incident is mentioned as having occurred at this time :—A French drummer having been precipitated, like many of his comrades, into this frightful gulf, appeared to have suffered so little injury that, having emerged from the snow, he was heard beating his drum for several hours afterwards. But for the poor fellow there was no possibility of human help ; and that drum, by which he

* Not far from the entrance to this tremendous pass are to be seen the remains of an ancient tower, and, at a few paces farther, some massy ruins. It is from this *donjon* (Spelunca) that the modern *Splügen* is supposed to be derived. The narrow path, as observed in the engraving of the subject, was cut along the side of perpendicular walls of rock, overhanging a frightful abyss ; and it will be easily conceived how terrible must have been the march of the French army along a terrace where, independently of natural causes, the slightest irregularity in the mass of troops was sufficient to unbalance a whole column.

had so often mustered his comrades in the field, or encouraged them in danger, could not now summon one solitary arm to his rescue.

It is calculated on an average that, in the different routes which traverse the Grison Alps alone, three conductors, with from seven to ten horses and mules, perish annually. Accidents were frequent some years ago, on that part of the route now under notice, which connects the *hospice* with Campodolcino, and where whole caravans with horses have been swept away by avalanches. Various instances, too, have occurred, where individuals have been snatched from destruction in a manner which appears little short of miraculous interposition. Thirty years ago, or upwards, a conductor, named Gredig, was precipitated into the gulf of the Cardinell, where, incredible as it may appear to those who have seen it, he continued all night, till, having cleared himself a passage through the upper layer of snow, ten feet thick, he was happily observed, and restored to the world. Another individual, named Bändli, though much frozen, was rescued from the same gorge in a similar way. A third, the courier from Lindau to Milan, named Jakob Spehler, happening to dismount for an instant, beheld his horse with the mail precipitated, by a sudden avalanche, into the abyss. Andreas Schwartz, of Splügen, was carried off in like manner, but his comrade had the happiness to rescue him, though apparently dead, and restore him to life. In 1807, Martin Meuli, of Neufannen, along with his comrade, Christian Menn, and several horses, having entered the gorge of the Cardinell late at night, in a moment after, both Menn and the horse he rode were precipitated headlong by an avalanche; while his companion Meuli, feeling that he had escaped without severe bodily harm, though surrounded on all sides by the wreck of the avalanche, spent the night under a projecting ledge of rock, and there, wrapt up in some folds of cloth, which he carried on his horse, succeeded in effecting his miraculous escape.

From the first opening of this pass, in the fourteenth century, down to the period of its reconstruction in 1822, the defile, as already stated, was only practicable for pedestrians and beasts of burden. Of the latter it is calculated that three hundred crossed the Splügen *weekly* between Coire and Chiavenna without changing their load; while an additional number of from twenty to thirty horses were daily met at the Splügen by the same number from Campodolcino, where, having severally exchanged freightage, they retraced their steps. Their conductors were called *strakführleute*, three-fourths of whom were Grisons, and the remainder from the valley of S. Giacomo. The journey from Coire to the village of Splügen was generally performed in two days, and thence to Chiavenna, under favourable circumstances, in two more; so as to divide the distance into four stages,

of five leagues each. At each of these stations the conductors had their regular assistants, who, for a slight remuneration, assisted them in loading and unloading. During the five months of winter, sledges were frequently substituted for the summer mode of transport, although the latter was by no means laid aside; and it was only in the depth of winter, when the snows had filled up the inequalities, and the road was every where practicable, that the sledge came into general use. The *strakführleute*, however, seldom or never changed their mode of transport with change of season, because, however practicable for sledges the northern portion of the route might be found, still the southern, from the earlier melting of the snow, might be expected to present insurmountable obstacles to the employment of these vehicles.

Owing to the greater facilities which the frozen state of the snow during that period afforded, the winter presented the greatest show of traffic; for by means of sledges the expedition of wine, brandy, and other bulky commodities, was more readily effected. The price usually paid for horses trained to this service was about fifteen pounds sterling, and the average term for efficient labour, about eight years. It is difficult to ascertain how much profit, all necessary expenses deducted, could be actually realized upon each horse in this perilous traffic. Such of the conductors as speculated a little in the wine and brandy trade, and observed strict economy, have occasionally realized a moderate independence; but of these a few only have made from two to five thousand louis d'or: while those again who did not speculate in the same way were generally ruined. It may be easily supposed that an occupation, which obliged these people to live continually on the great thoroughfares of the Alps, was not only painful and exhausting to themselves personally, but also that it exposed them every hour to the imminent hazard of life or limb. Many of them had their hands and feet frozen, or, by fractures and mutilations, were rendered utterly helpless for the rest of their days. Some, by sudden inflammatory attacks, were hurried to the tomb; some fell victims to their intemperate indulgence in stimulating liquors; while others were smothered in *tourmentes*, buried alive under the fall of avalanches, or—precipitated to depths beyond the hope of rescue, perished by a lingering death. It may be affirmed, without extravagance, that the hardships encountered by our gallant countrymen in their search of a north-west passage, were scarcely greater than those repeatedly encountered in the passage of the Alps.

In spite of these dangers, however, and notwithstanding the little profit that accrued to the followers of this life of enterprise, the business of conductor was looked upon by many with envy, and its attainment considered as an object of no ordinary ambition. It is one of those adventurous, or exciting states of existence,

which the enthusiasm or the thoughtlessness of youth are apt to invest with the wild extravagance of romance, and to which, it must be confessed, the life of the conductors themselves gives no small countenance and support. The subtle air of the Alps is of itself a stimulant; and accompanied by the romantic scenes on the route, joyous cheer at the inns,—where, in order to support their excessive fatigue, and fortify both mind and body against the many ills this “life is heir to,” they have a liberal supply of wine, with intervals of rest and refreshment—they are enabled to look with pity, or at least without envy, on the plodding population from which they have emerged. It may be remarked, however, that the hired portion of this craft seldom reach old age: intemperance and the vicissitudes of climate soon impair the most robust constitution, and it is only among the proprietors that we meet with individuals who have attained an advanced age.

Respecting the annual migration of northern birds across the Splügen, some interesting particulars have been communicated by M. de Balenstein, of Coire, to Dr. Ebel, whose admirable work on this pass is condensed in Meyer's “*Voyage dans les Grisons*.” These migrations of various birds, peculiar to northern latitudes, commence about the month of August, and continue till November. Their flight takes place during the night, early in the morning, or evening; and when the sky is unclouded, they are seen at a great height above all the peaks and summits of the Alps, yet without pursuing any direct course. But should the weather prove bad during the passage of one of these species, the sky cloudy, or a succession of rain supervene, they lower their flight, cross the valleys, and, following the natural winding of the Alps, pursue their flight in the direction of the great routes. At Chiavenna, where the two valleys of the Splügen and Septimer terminate, all the birds which approach the south by these passes form a general rendezvous; and it is curious to remark, that a much greater number of them arrive by the ancient pass of the Septimer, than by that of the Splügen. No sooner, however, have the feathered strangers attempted to refresh themselves by rest, after their long journey, and tasted of that food to which natural instinct had directed them, than a thousand snares are busily employed for their destruction; so that in the neighbourhood of Chiavenna alone, the number thus taken in the course of a season is calculated at one hundred thousand. Here, nevertheless, their persecution only commences, for the instant they have passed the lake of Como, and entered the defiles of the Valtelline, they fall into the hands of innumerable fowlers; to many of whom they become a source of considerable profit. The consequence of this, as observed by the amiable naturalist above quoted, is a strikingly apparent diminution among these birds in the Alps. In the country of the Grisons, says Dr. Ebel, in his remarks on

this fact, these feathered travellers were always received with hospitality, and suffered to prosecute their appointed journey in security; but now, unfortunately for the credit of man, and much to the disgrace of the Italian Capuchins, who introduced them, snares have been sanctioned in various districts for the destruction of these peaceful colonies.

But we return to our route.* Having reached Isola, the precipitous descent to which is counteracted by numerous doublings of the new route—twenty and upwards, the scene undergoes a striking change to green pastures, fields of rye and barley, hemp, lint, and potatoes; gardens, gaudy with sunflowers and cherry-trees; while the maple and ash indicate the returning power of the soil, and the approach to a new climate. On escaping from the horrid defiles of the Splügen, where not a blade of vegetation refreshes the eye; where glaciers overhang the

* We here interrupt the course of our narrative, to introduce a brief detail of the frightful devastations committed on this route within the last two months, and to which a distinguished author*—prosecuting at the time his philosophical researches in the Rhetian Alps—was an eye-witness. The disasters severally experienced by the cantons of Uri, Valais, and Tessin, will be noticed in their proper place, and in the mean time we advert, with exceeding regret, to the catastrophes which a hurricane of unprecedented violence has inflicted along our present line of route, and such as in many instances neither time nor expenditure can efface. Early in the morning of the 17th of August last, a storm, coming from the west, speedily extended itself over the whole country of the Grisons, and continued its ravages, without interruption, till the following day. Innumerable cataracts, suddenly discharged from the mountains, carried away every thing that opposed their course. An immense quantity of trees, fifty houses, and upwards of *thirty* bridges, were either destroyed or entirely swept off by the torrents. The magnificent route which we lately described between Coire and Splügen, and chiefly in the Schamserthal, has been almost entirely obliterated—the vast embankments broken down—and that beautiful valley transformed into a lake, where the waters, swollen to a height far exceeding the disastrous inundations of 1817, carried off several inhabitants, and much cattle. In this district alone the damage is stated at upwards of one million of florins. The valleys of Grub, Medels, Tavetsch, and Vals, have suffered extremely. In the Oberland the bridges were all, or in great part destroyed. In the village of Splügen five men perished; a handsome building, lately erected, a dozen other houses, the great stone bridge over the Serända, were all swept down by the torrent, and it was only with the greatest difficulty and hazard of life that the bridge over the Rhine (see the Plate) was saved. Between Splügen and Naufanen the dykes gave way, and several houses and sheds of cattle were borne down by the torrent. In one of these houses, only an hour previously, the family were quietly seated at their evening meal.

But the disasters are much too numerous to be recorded here. In the village of Isola alone, thirty houses and stabling were entirely destroyed; and of the pleasing features hitherto presented by the valley of S. Giacomo, not a vestige is left—every trace of cultivation or crop vanished in a single night. All the houses between Porta Rezia, Lirone, and Gallivaggia have disappeared, and in one of them a mother and three children fell a sacrifice to this awful visitation. The route between S. Giacomo and Isola has been so completely effaced, that it appears impossible to re-establish the communication without entirely quitting the ancient track. Various other details have reached us, but which, although exceedingly interesting, we must reserve for a future occasion.

* DR. JAMES JOHNSON, by whom we are favoured with original notes on some most interesting phenomena observed during his autumnal excursion in the Alps, and which will be found in a future part of this work. See also his "*Philosophy of Travelling*," 4th edit.

road, and gulfs yawn at our feet, this little valley presents the appearance of an island in the midst of a tempestuous ocean, where travellers, like ships that have happily weathered the passage, are glad to anchor for a little in smooth water.

The height of this valley above the sea, is stated at 3,867 feet: it forms the upper part of the vale of S. Giacomo, betwixt which and that of Misocco, formerly described, the powers of vegetation, and the variety of the productions, form a curious contrast. In the Val Misocco, for example, large forest trees thrive at an elevation of 6,500 feet; while in this of S. Giacomo, which opens from north to south, forest-trees disappear at the height of 4,420 feet. In the former, again, wheat is cultivated at a height of 4,903 feet, and the vine at 3,026 feet; while, in the latter, these productions are limited, respectively, to the heights of 3,867 feet and 1,149 feet. The cause of this great difference, in point of fertility, is explained by the simple fact, that the Val Misocco, which runs east and west, is thereby secured from the effects of the *tramontana*, or north-wind; a scourge to which the less-favoured S. Giacomo is exposed.*

Between Isola and Campodolcino, a distance of one league, the plain gradually closes; the rocky boundaries contract, and the Lira, roaring across the gorge of *Muta Mala*, rushes precipitously into the second plain of Campodolcino. This valley is as level as a lake; and, from careful examination, it would appear extremely probable that the several platforms which succeed each other in this route, have all originally been basins, placed at different stages of elevation; till the first of these, having forced its banks, the precipitous rush of its waters gave such impetus to the others, as finally to convert their beds into valleys. And what other origin have most of the Swiss and Alpine valleys? By some powerful natural cause, the original lake finds vent—its waters are drained off—vegetation comes with time; till, on the introduction of man, the bed of the ancient lake becomes a fertile and habitable valley. It often happened, while the old route was frequented, that horses and mules were lost in this descent. At the opening of this picturesque gorge, the new road enters the fourth gallery,

* Among the inhabitants of S. Giacomo, almost the only names which have attained public notoriety are those of the Stuppa family, of whom Pietro rose to the rank of generalissimo of the Swiss and Grison troops in the French service, and died at an advanced age in 1701. His brother, Baptista, some time pastor of a Protestant chapel in London, was well known to Cromwell, by whom he was employed in various political intrigues on the continent, till becoming suspected by the Protector, he was obliged to quit England and retire to Paris. But there, like a sensible courtier, having presented the queen with a *monkey*, he soon obtained the royal favour, and a captaincy in his brother's regiment. Thus, like our own Whittington by his cat, Stuppa, by his monkey, rose into great consideration. Having obtained the command of a regiment, he died of wounds received at the battle of Steinkirk. Others of the same family rose to distinction in the same manner.

called the Piannazzo, 367 feet long, by 12 in breadth, lighted by ten lateral openings, and formed for the protection of the traveller against the avalanches, which, in former times, were so terrific at this point. About a furlong from this, the cascade of Piannazzo presents a magnificent spectacle, while nearly opposite, another from the Val Sartano greatly heightens the grandeur of the scene. The first of these is variously estimated at from 700 to 900 feet, according to Dr. Ebel; stated at "nearly 300 feet" by Mr. Brockedon, and at 700 by Mr. Walter—*sub judice lis est*.

At the lower extremity of this valley, we pass by a series of *tourniquets* over the rugged precipice of the Stozzo, and enter a third valley, where the handsome village church of Vho, surrounded by maple trees, offers a very pleasing point of view. Here the mountains again contract, and for several leagues the journey is performed across a desert, strewn with shattered blocks of granite;* many of which, fifty feet in height, are grouped up in wild confusion on one another—"the fragments of a former world." During two leagues of this chaotic pass, called Cima di Ganda, the Lira forms a continued cataract. About a league from Campodolcino, another fine church, that of Santa Maria Gallivaggia, arrests the attention, and with the miserable cabins from which it rises, looks like a haughty despot enriched by the plunder of his starving retainers.

At this point the chestnut-trees begin to vegetate. Passing the Val d'Aver, the Val Serta, S. Giacomo, and Uggiate, with the lateral valley of Gonasca on the left, the road very soon quits the banks of the Lira, and taking an eastern direction towards Bett, opens with an extensive view over the rich and delicious valley of Piuro, or Plurs, whose fearful story, though probably familiar to most of our readers, we shall here briefly relate.

* From the village of Splügen, upwards, we observe layers of calcareous rock, of a bluish grey tint and fine grain, the blocks of which lie scattered in various directions. After these comes the micaceous schist, intermixed with layers of white marble, dolomite, and alabaster, till we arrive at the summit. Micaceous schist, or mica-slate, is frequently incumbent on gneiss, or granite, covered by common slate, and is essentially composed of mica and quartz intimately combined. Dolomite (so called in honour of the celebrated Dolomieu) is composed of magnesia and calcareous earth—forty-eight of the former to fifty-two of the latter: that which is observed here, and on the S. Gothard, closely resembles white primary limestone. On the left, in the pasture of Rüzuns, there is a quarry of white marble, alluded to in our former notice of the village, and seen from the road, which a few years since was worked by Italians at a moderate rental. After passing the summit, large blocks of a bright grey porphyry are scattered over the surface, but particularly along the base of the high rocks to the eastward. This remarkable rock continues across the whole valley where the *hospice* is situated, and as far as the second *refuge*, where the micaceous schist again appears. Beautiful crystals of brown transparent quartz are found in these rocks. The micaceous schist disappears once more near the first bridge below Isola, and is succeeded by gneiss, which continues as far as Campodolcino, and then gives place to granite, which continues as far as Chiavenna—a distance of three leagues. The layers, in general, run from south-west to north-east, with an inclination to the south-east.

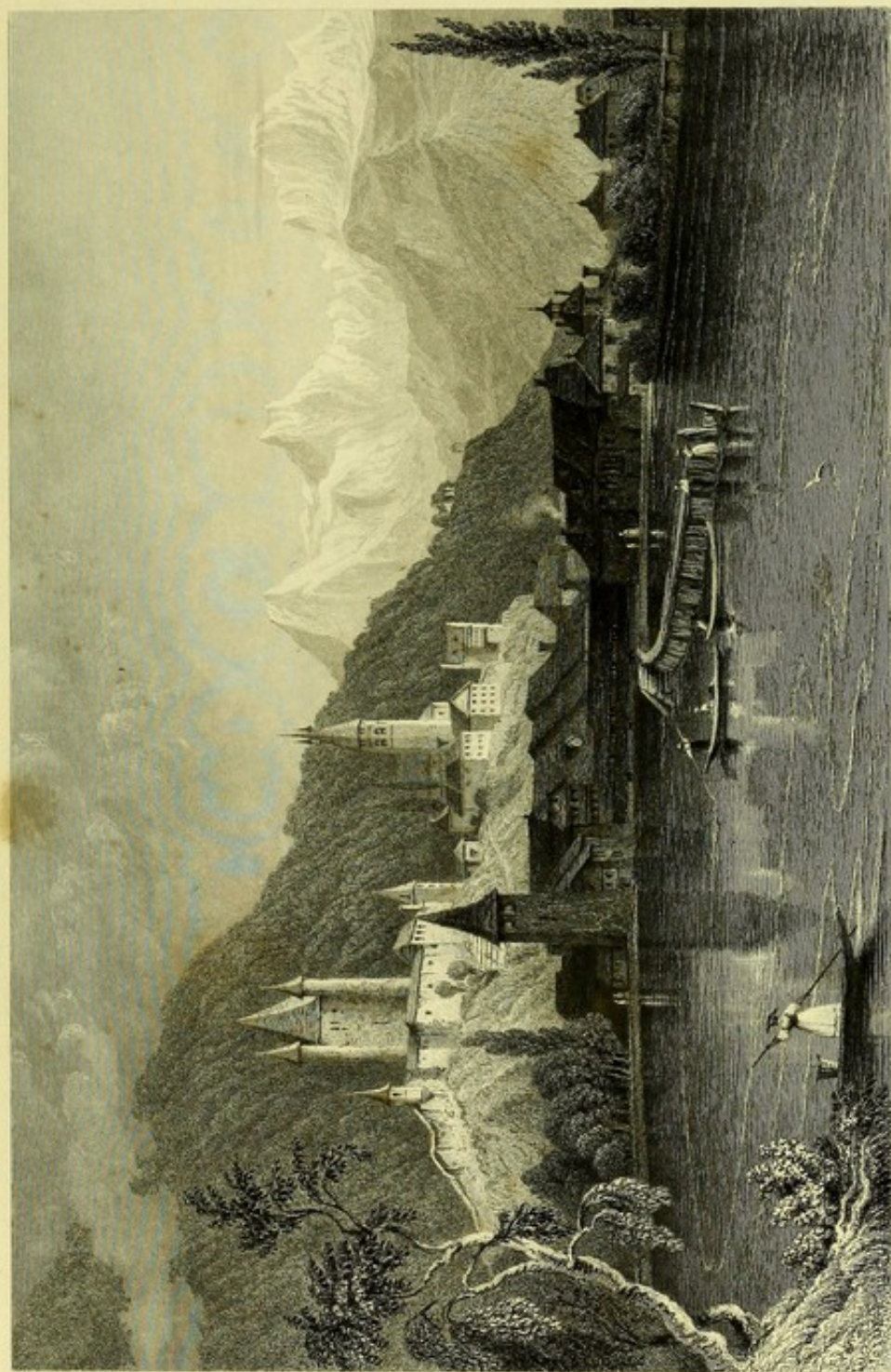
LIST OF THE PLATES

Contained in this Volume.

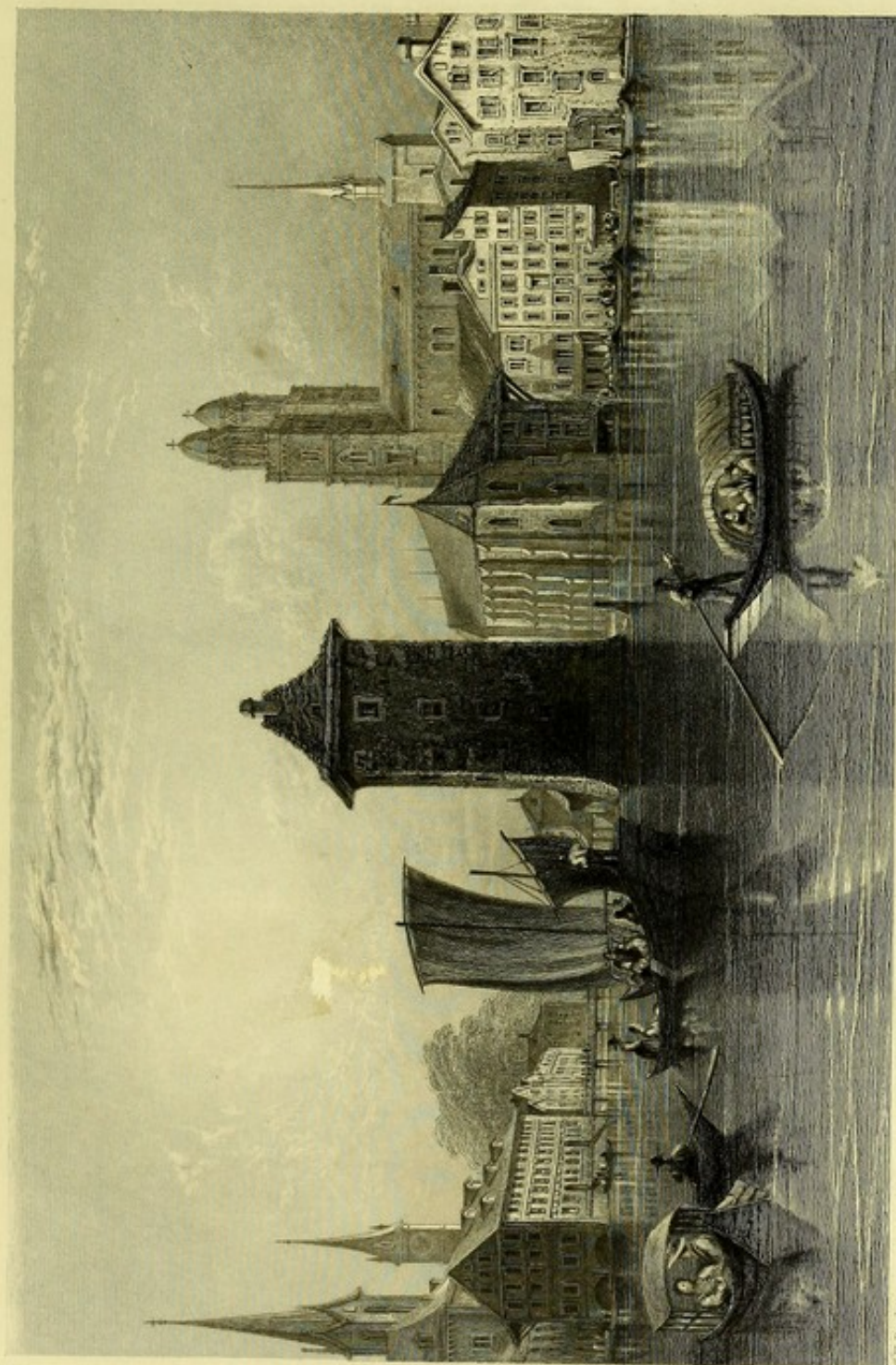
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| 1. Vignette—Cottage near Thun | 20. Chateau Wufflens |
| 2. Thun, Bernese Alps | 21. The Convent of la Madonna del Sasso |
| 3. Zurich | 22. Geneva, from Coligny |
| 4. Castle of Spiez | 23. The Valais and Martigny |
| 5. Val d'Ossola | 24. Lake of Lungern |
| 6. Sion, from the West | 25. Upper Cascade of the Reichenbach |
| 7. Mont Blanc | 26. St. Peter's Island |
| 8. Ruins of the Episcopal Palace, Sion | 27. The Lake of Lucerne |
| 9. Lugano | 28. Village of Splugen |
| 10. Freybourg | 29. Gallery on the "Tête Noire" |
| 11. Lausanne | 30. Thun, from the Cemetery |
| 12. Fall of the Rhine | 31. The Source of the Arveiron |
| 13. The Devil's Bridge | 32. Ouchy, Lake of Geneva |
| 14. Fall of the Stautbach | 33. The Bernese Alps |
| 15. Gallery in the "Trou Perdu" | 34. Cluse, on the Arve |
| 16. The Gorge of the Rhine | 35. Castle and Valley of Missocco |
| 17. Scene on the Tessin | 36. Castle of Lausanne |
| 18. The Jungfrau | 37. Place de Palud |
| 19. Geneva, from the Ramparts | |
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. As it would interrupt the order of the Narrative to have noticed some of the Views given in the present Volume a reference to them will be made in the Second, which will be ready for Delivery on the 1st of September, 1835.

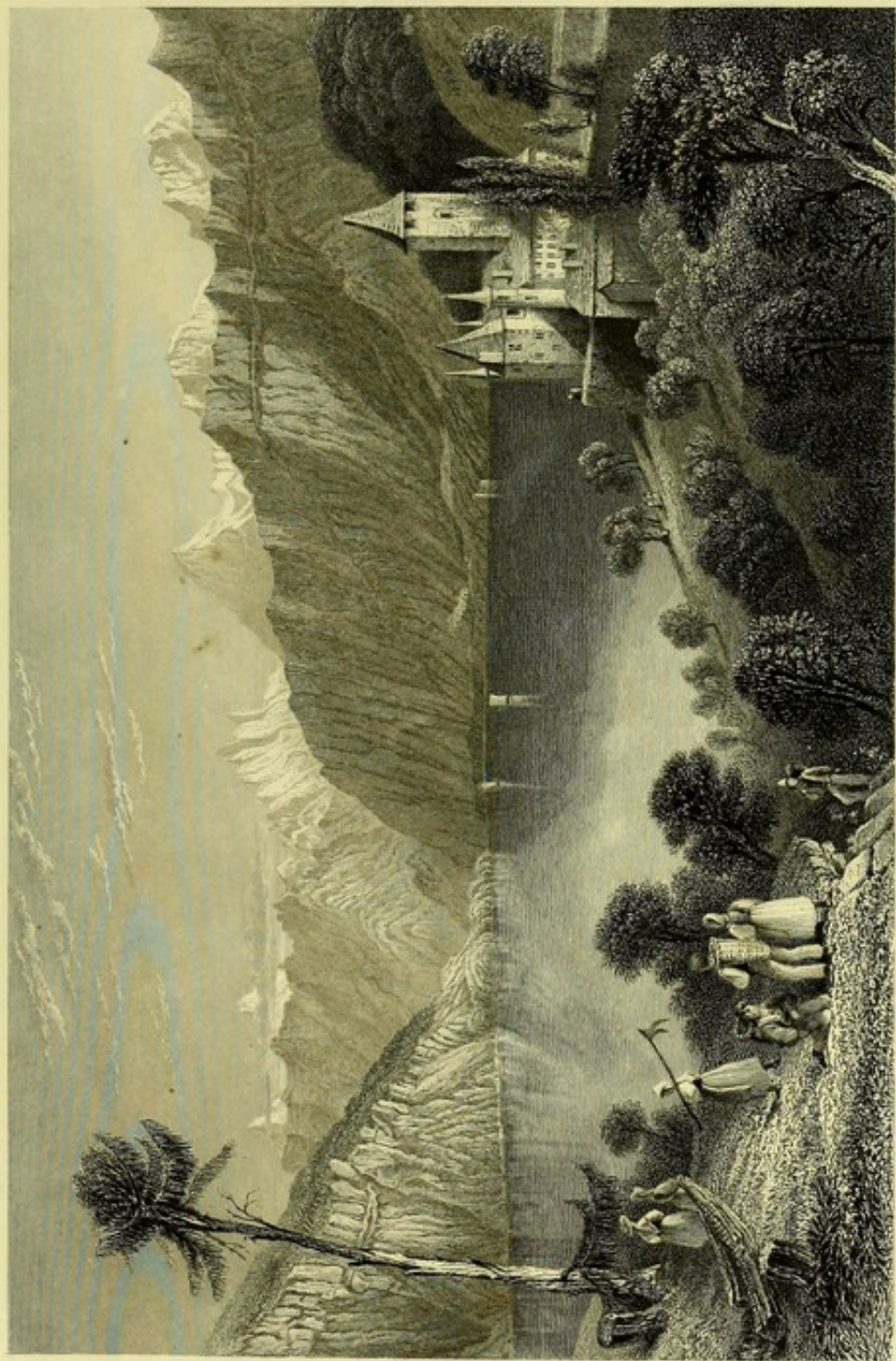
Directions for placing the Plates will be given at the end of the Work.



THE CASTLE OF MONTMARTRE, SEEN FROM THE VALLEY OF THE MARNE.



ZURICH.



CASTLE OF SPIEZ, LAKE OF THUN.

Engraving.



VAL D' OSSOLA.

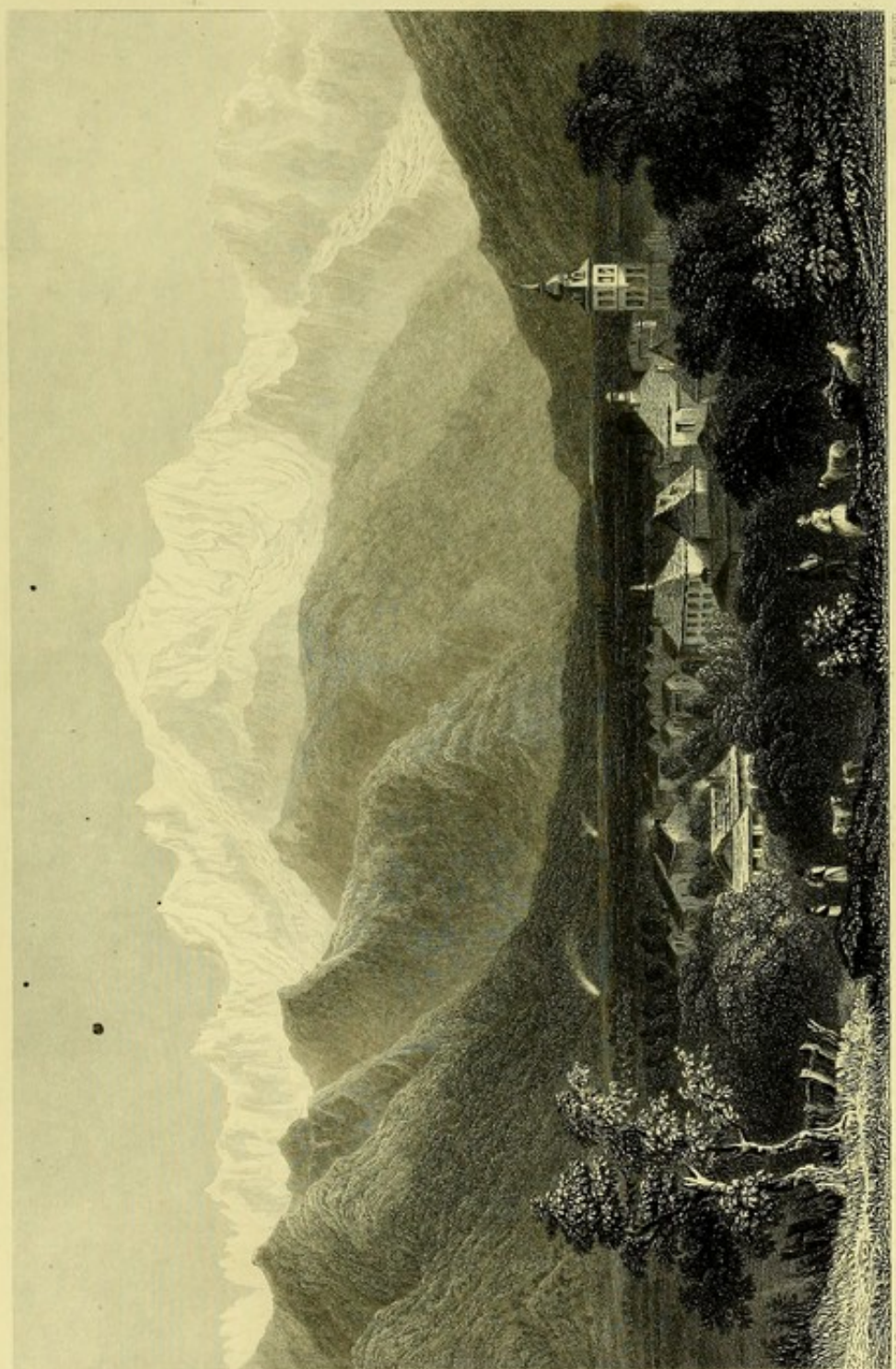
From the Sempione.



E. Wallis

W. H. Bartlett

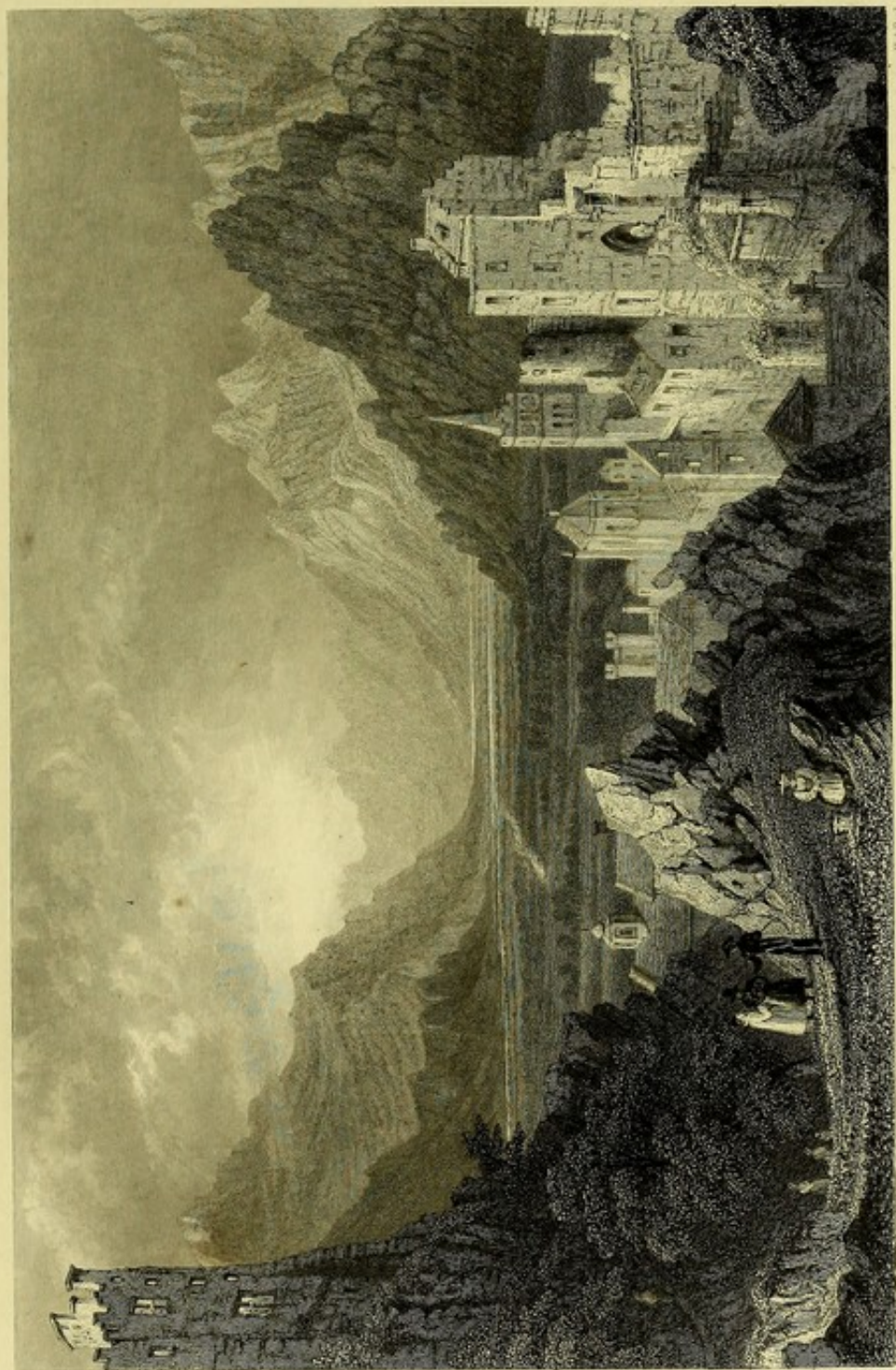
SION, FROM THE W.



E. Burrows

W. H. Bartlett

MONT BLANC FROM ABOVE SALLENCEE.



RUINS OF THE EPISCOPAL PALACE, SION.

(Canton Valais.)



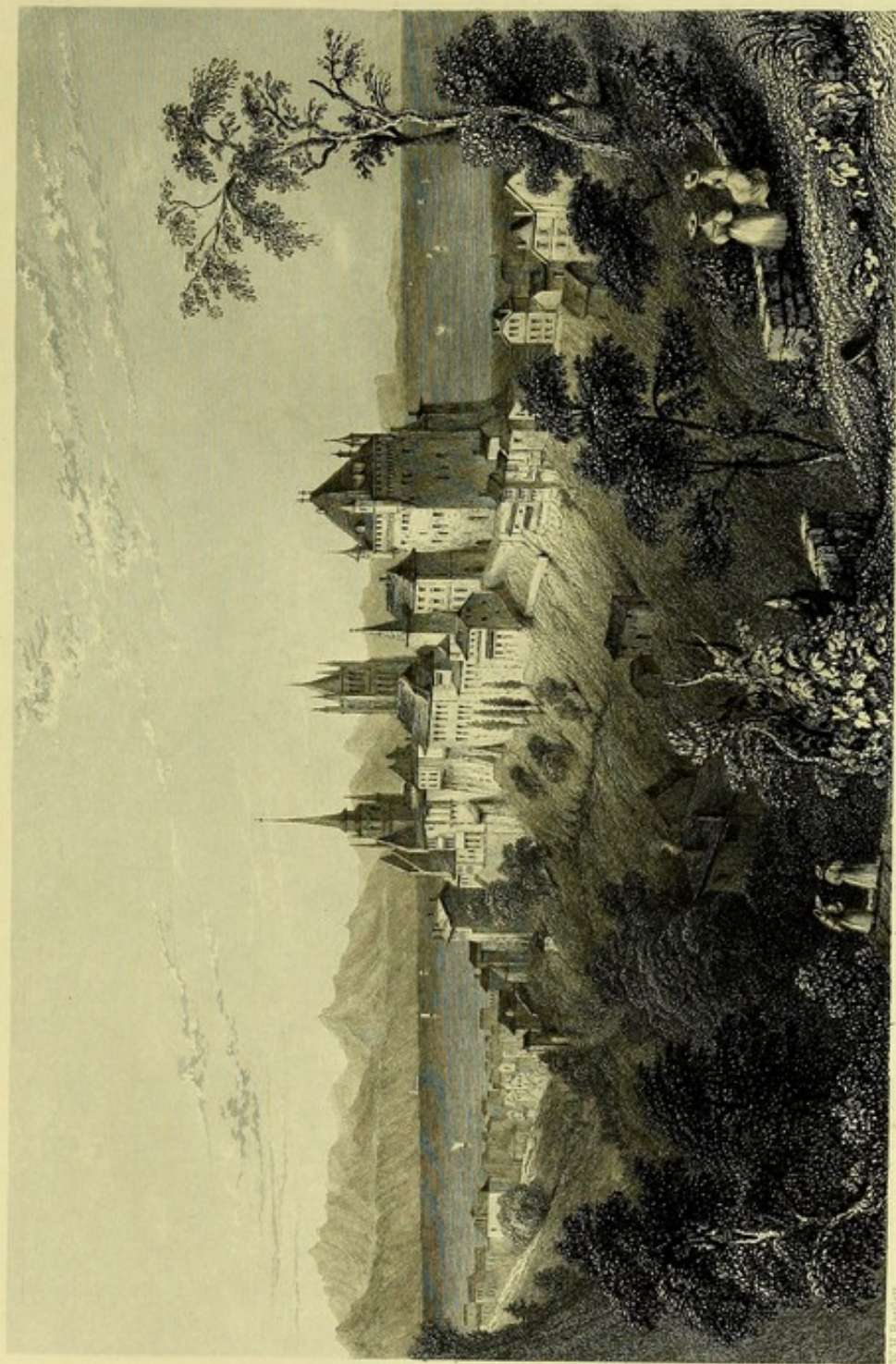
LUCERNE.
(Canton Uri.)



J. B. Allen

W. H. Burden

FREYBURG.
(Canton Freyburg.)

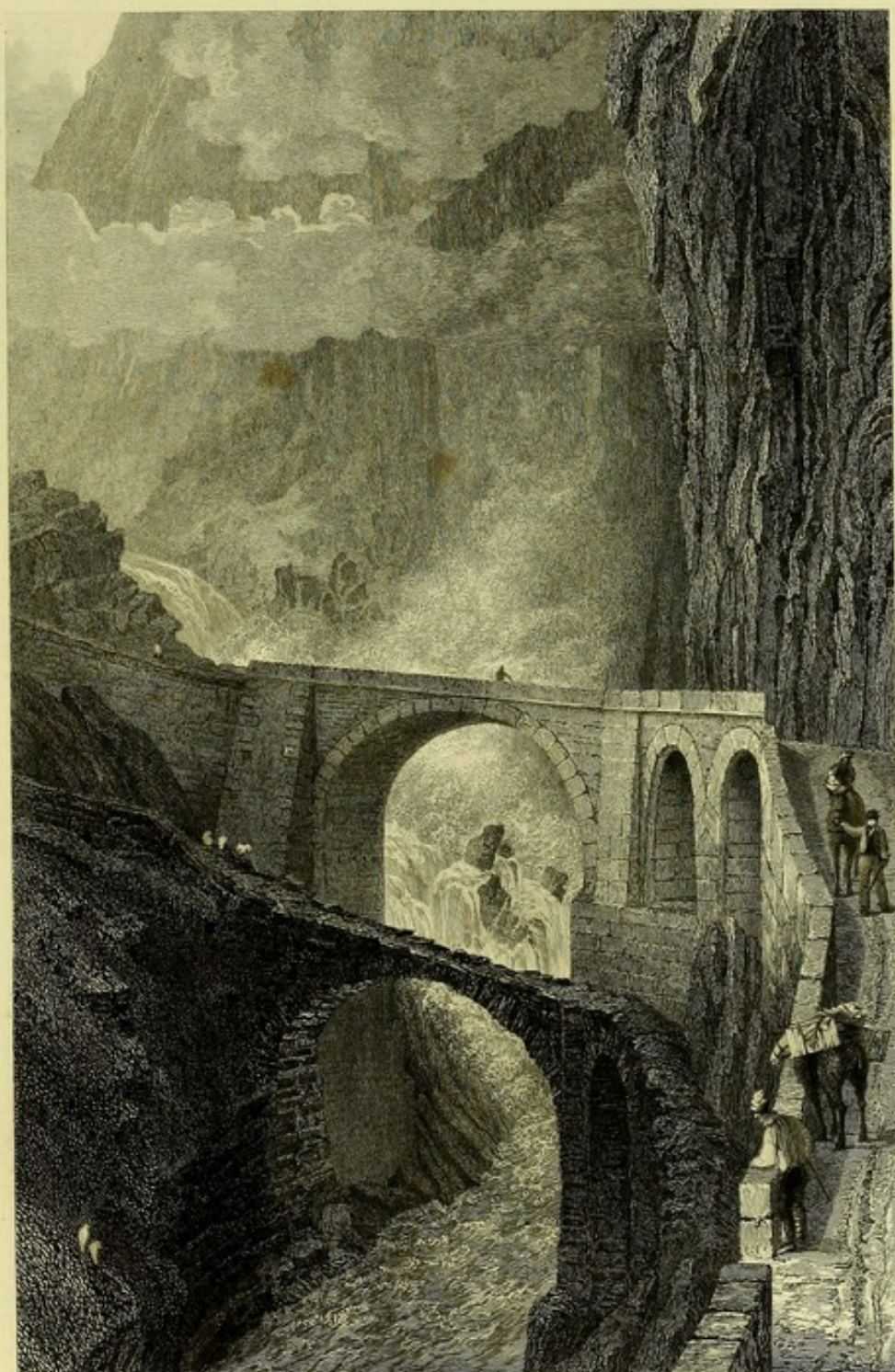


LAUSANNE.
(Canton Vaud.)



FALL OF THE RHINE IN THE ROFFLA.

(Prisoners.)

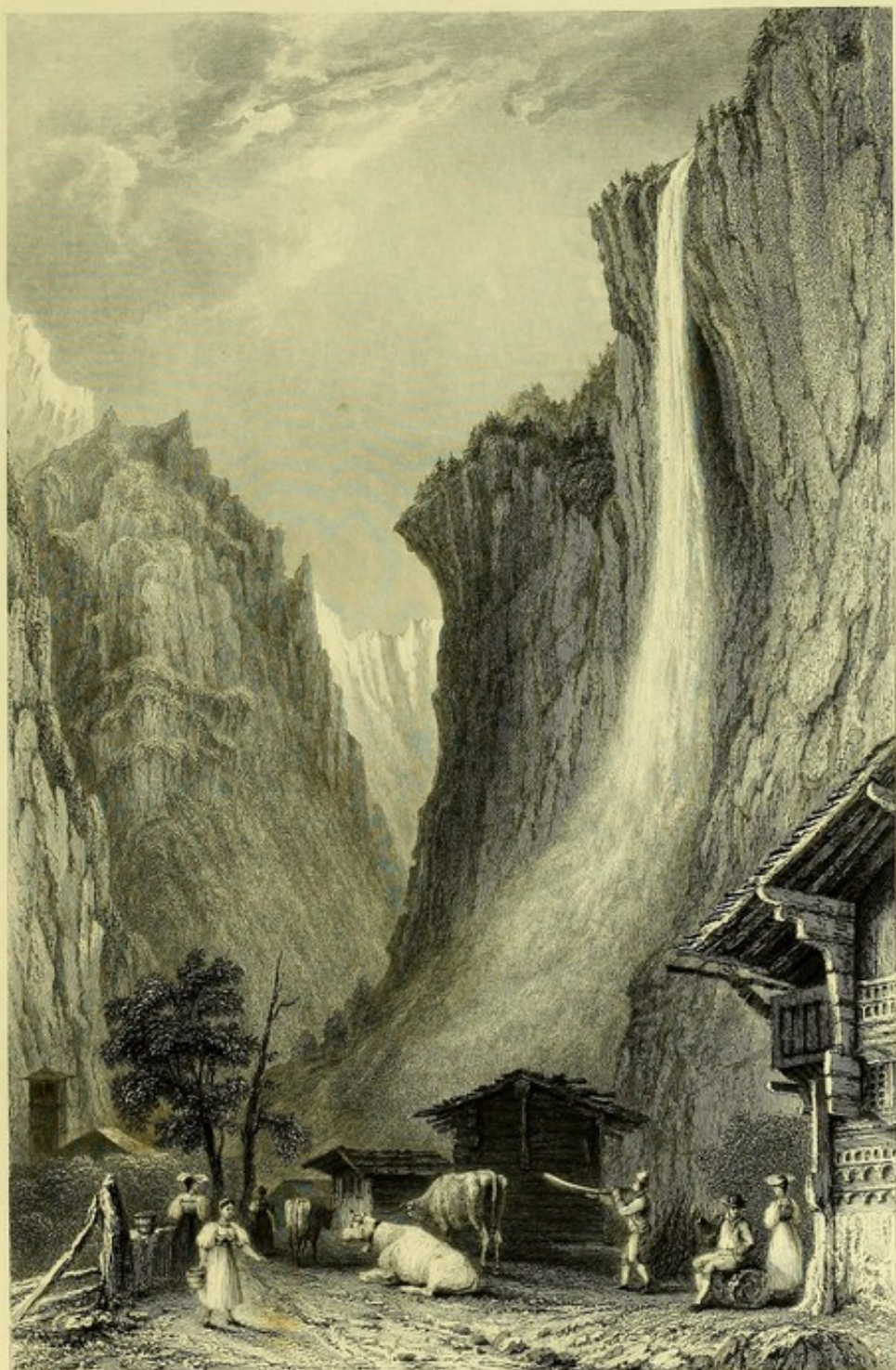


W.H. Bates.

G. Richardson.

THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE.

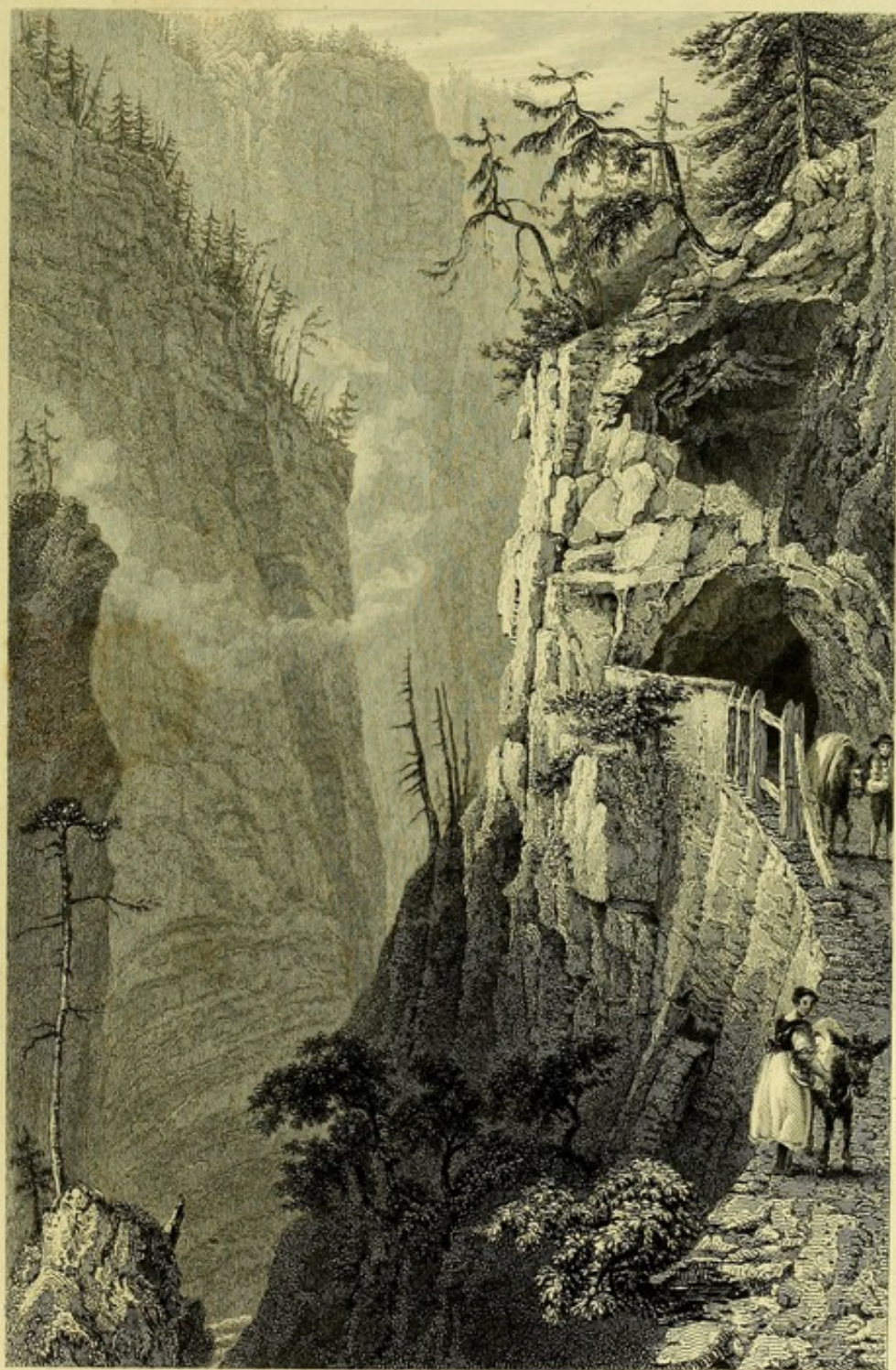
(Canton Uri.)



W. H. Bartlett.

J. Stephenson.

FALL OF THE STAUBBACH.
(Canton Bern.)



W. H. B. 1834

J. Smith

GALLERY IN THE "TROU PERDU" NEAR TUSE.

(Grisons.)



W. H. Bartlett

W. Woolnath

THE GORGE OF THE RHINE, VIA MALA.

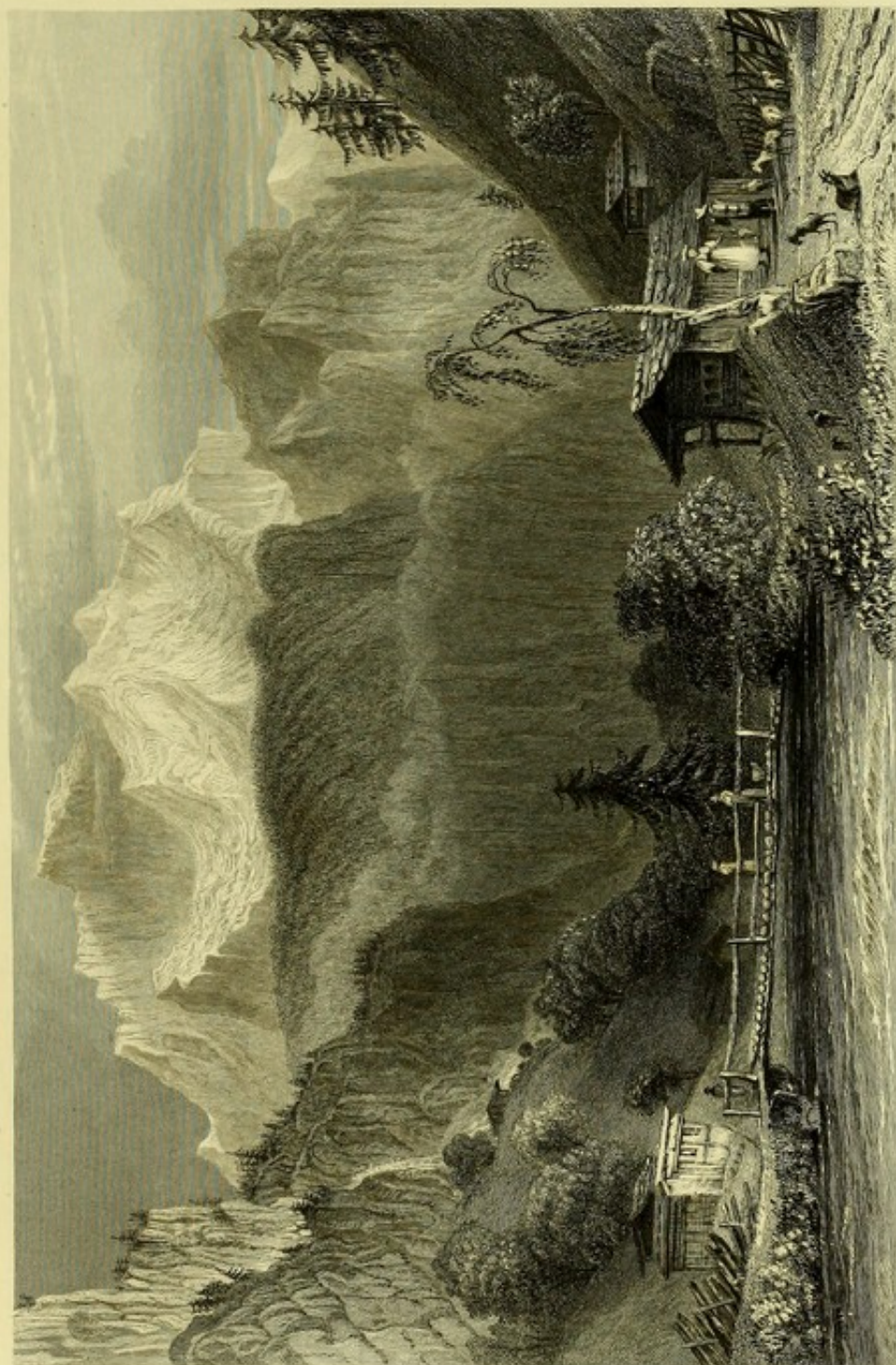
(Grisons.)



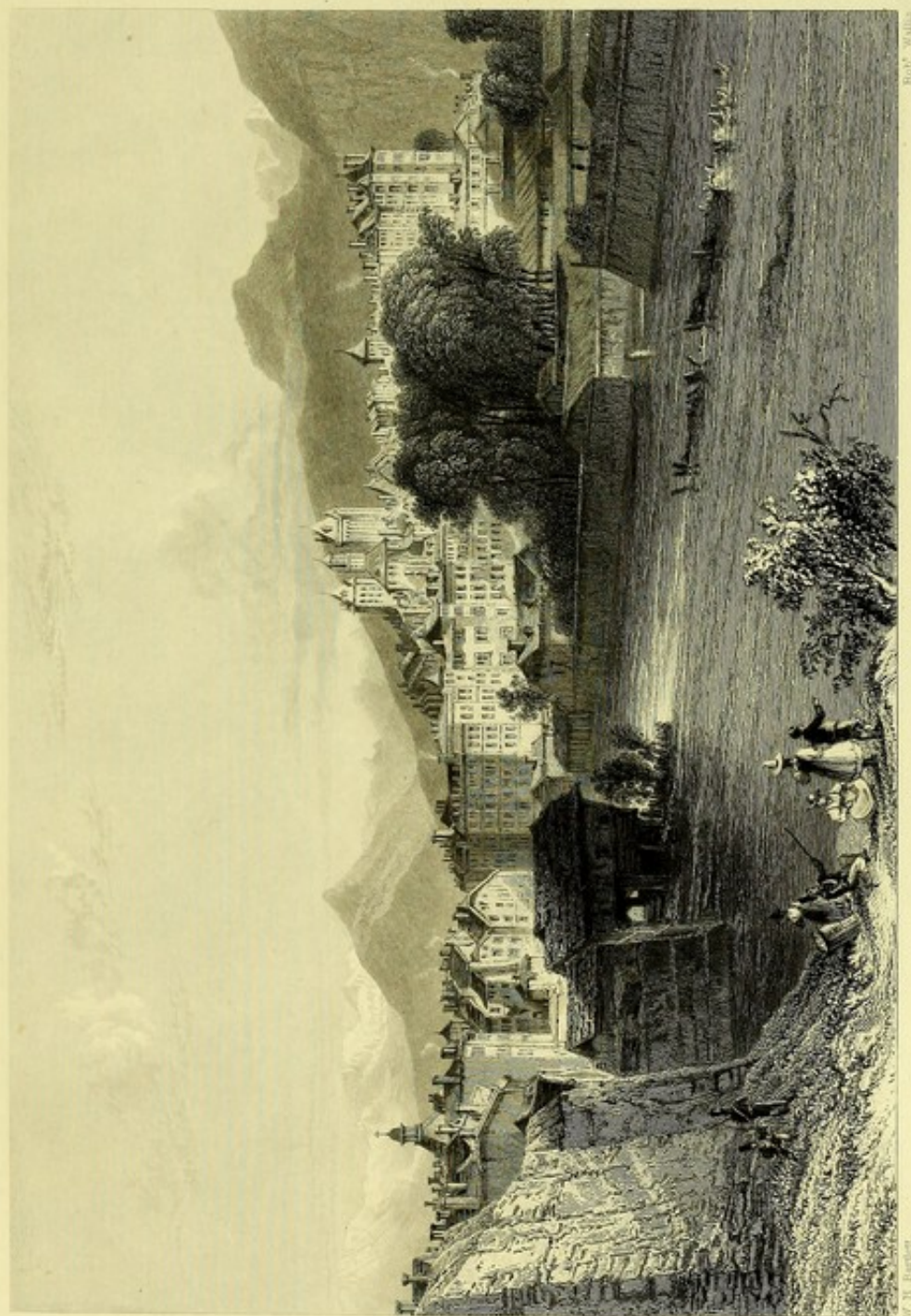
W. H. Barker

W. H. Barker

SCENE ON THE TESSIN, AT MONTE PIOTINO.



THE JUNGFAU.
(Bernese Oberland.)

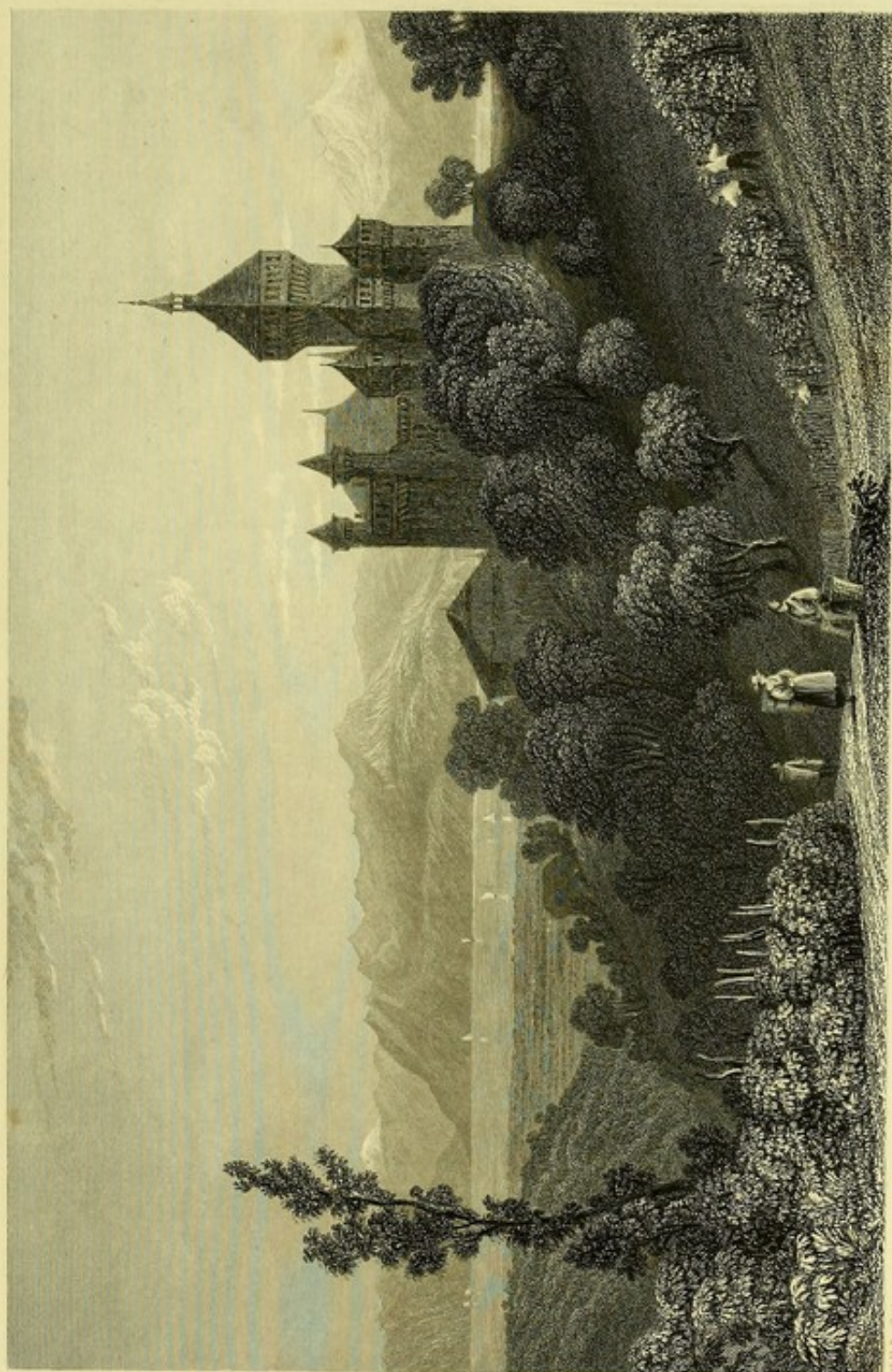


W. H. Burden

Robt. Wallis

GENEVA FROM THE RAMPARTS.

London, Published for the Proprietors by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, Augst 1, 1834



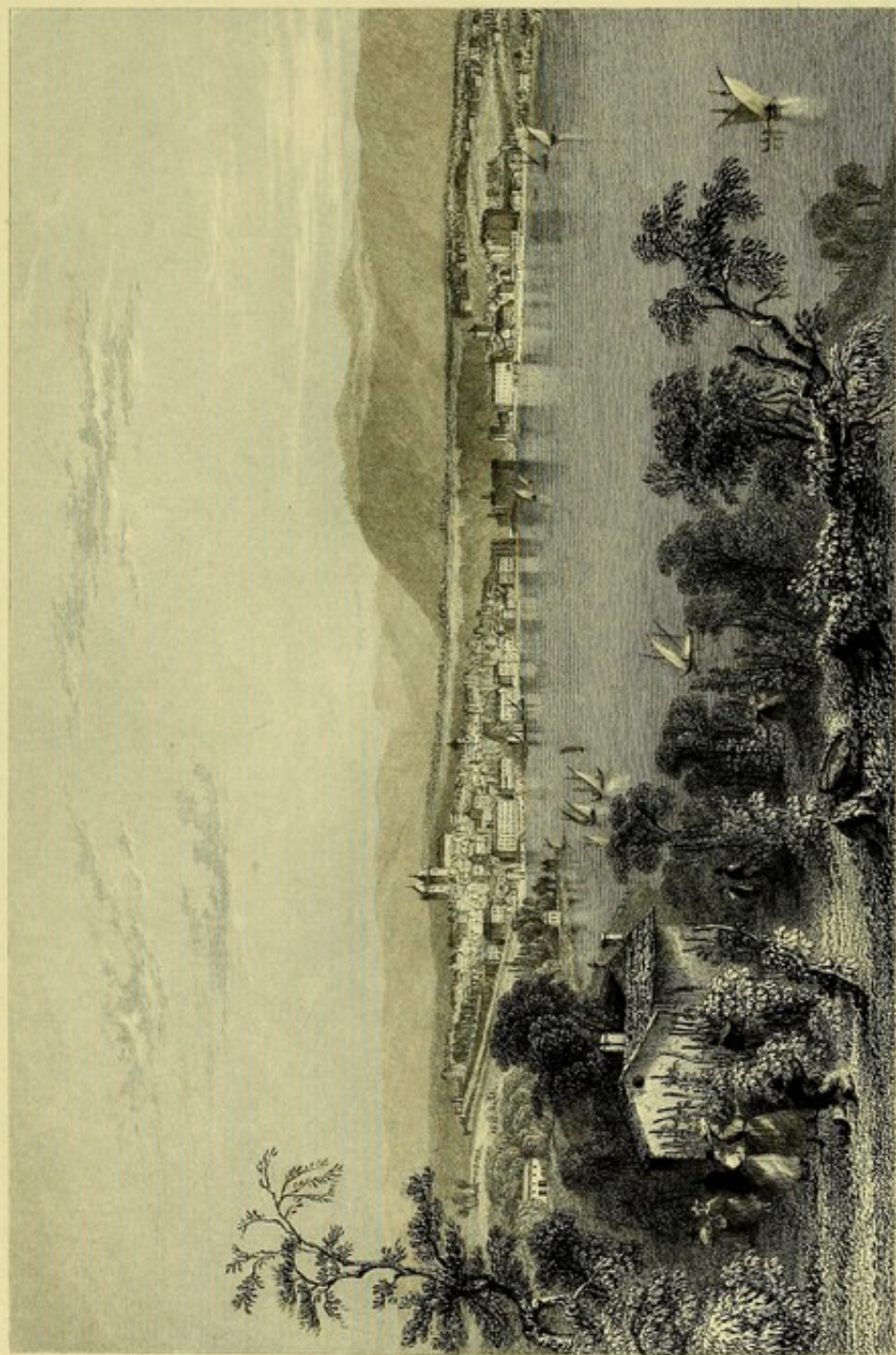
CHATEAU D'ORFÈVRES.

[From the 'Vues de France']



THE CONVENT OF LA MADONNA DEL SASO—ABOVE LOCARNO.

(Canton Tessin.)



Robt. Wallis.

W. H. Burdett.

GENEVA FROM COLIGNY.



THE VALAIS & MARTIGNY FROM THE FORCLAS, PASS OF THE TETE NOIRE.



LAKE OF LUNGERN.

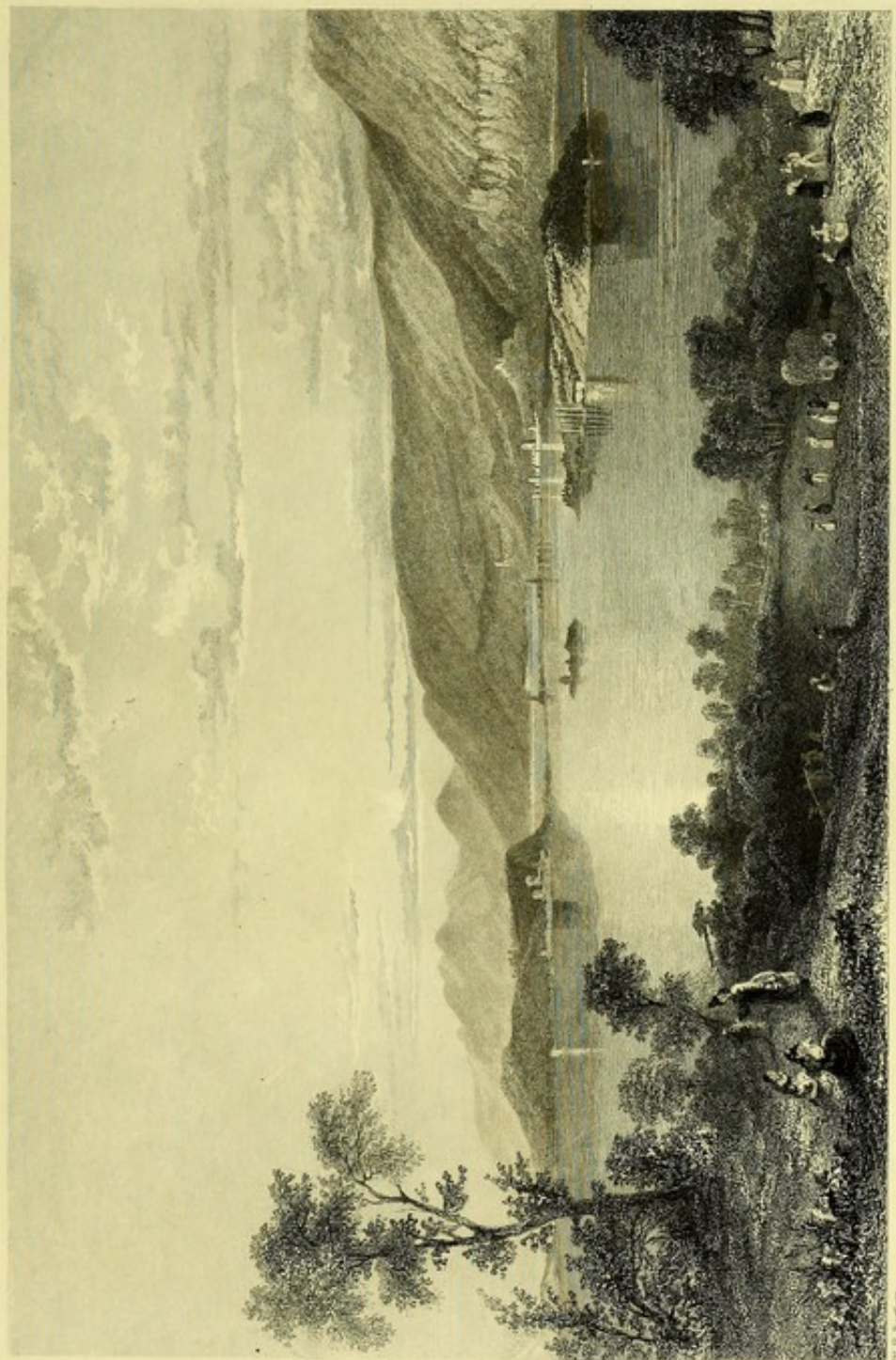
(Canton of Unterwalden.)



W. H. Bartlett

J. T. Wallace

UPPER CASCADE OF THE REICHENBACH.
(Canton Bern)

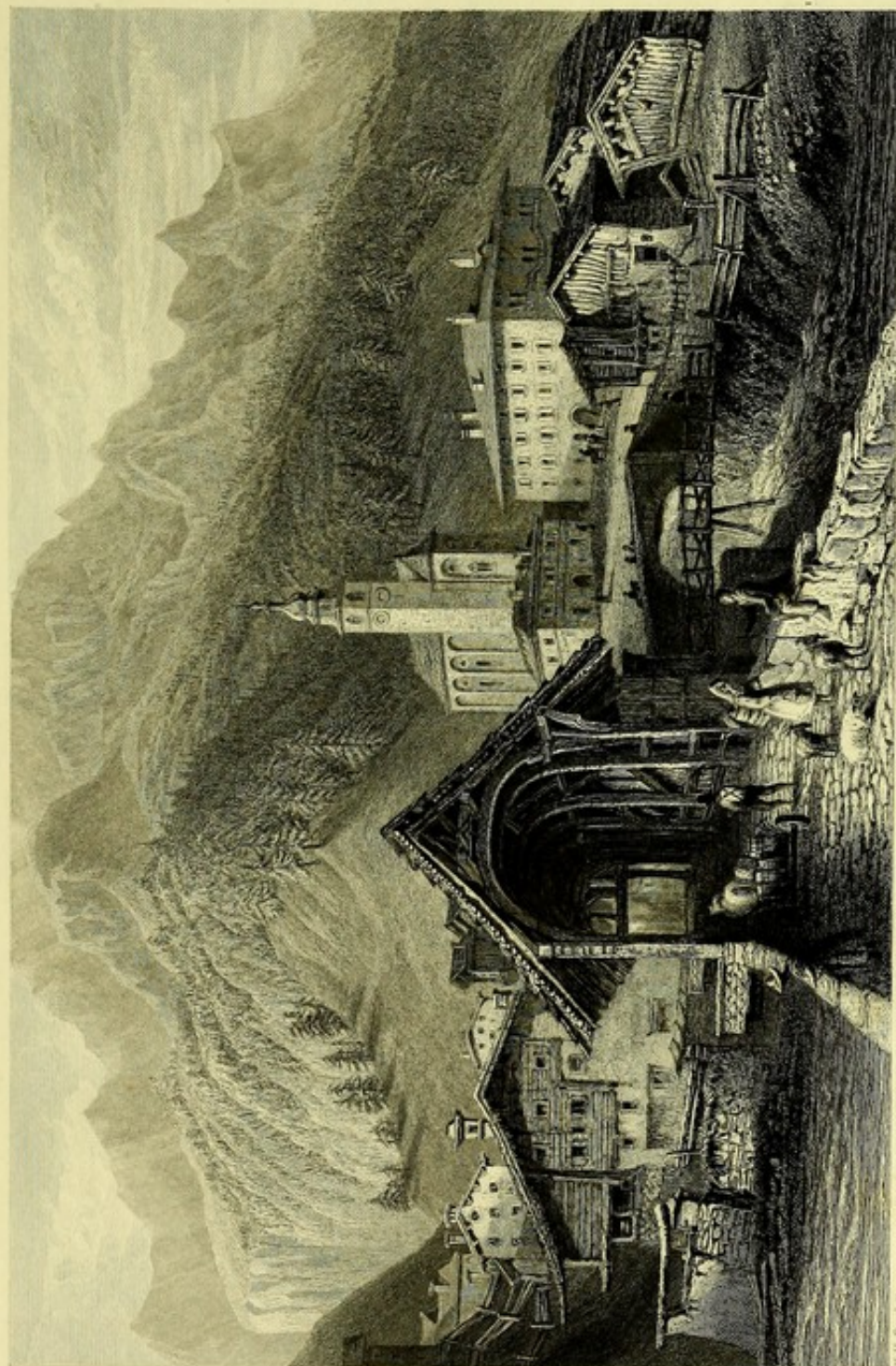


ST PETERS ISLAND, LAKE OF BIENNE.

London, Published for the Proprietors by Geo. W. Jones, 26, Dry Lane, 1835



THE LAKE OF LUCERNE FROM THE RIGHT.
(Caption Unrevised.)



W. Wallis

W. H. Parry

VILLAGE OF SPLUGEN.

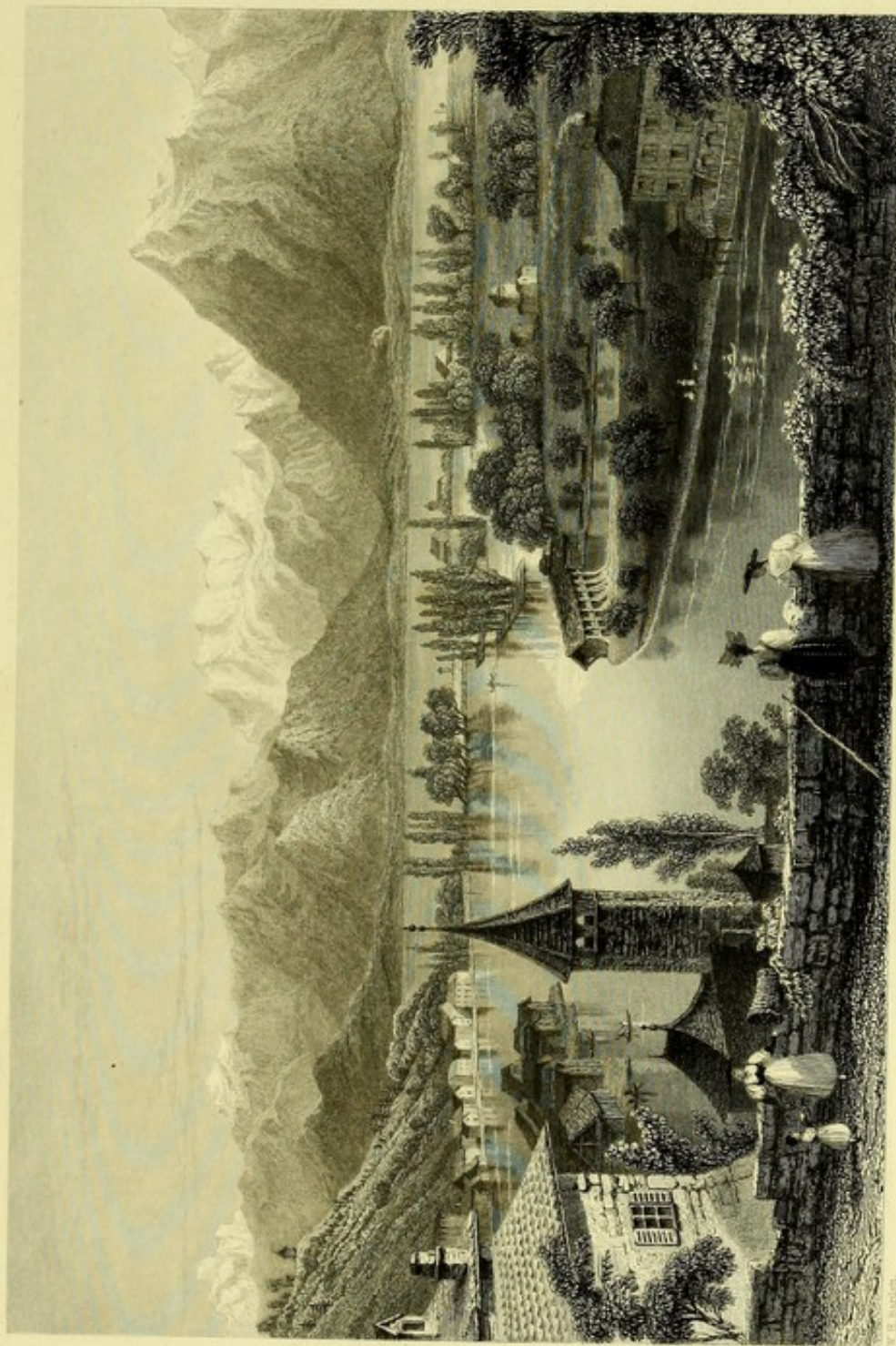
London, Published for the Proprietors by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, Sept. 1, 1834.



W. H. Bartlett.

J. W. Appleton.

GALLERY ON THE "TÊTE NOIRE" NEAR TRIENT.



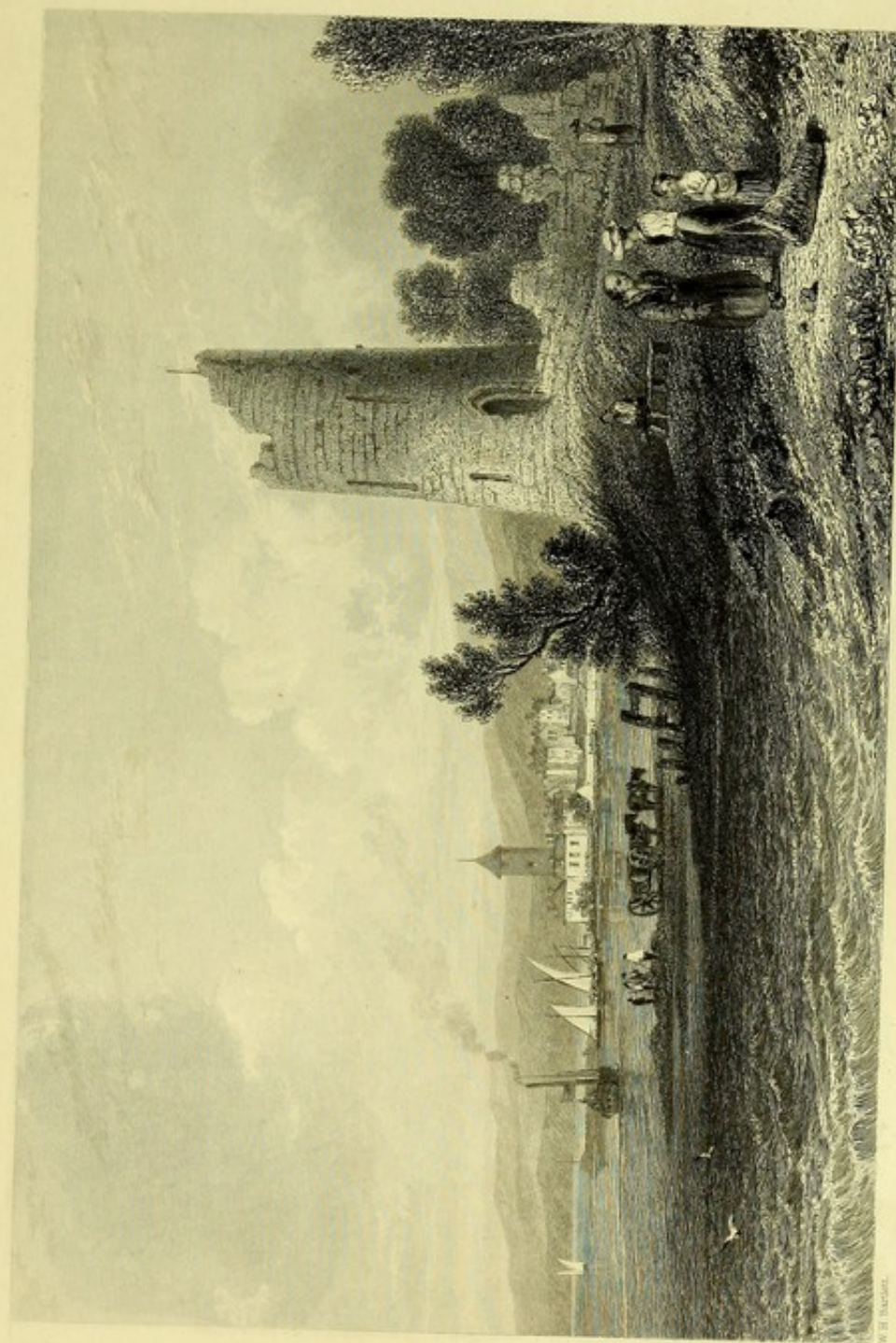
Henry Wallis

THORN, FROM THE CEMETERY.

London. Published for the Proprietors by Geo. Virtue, 20, Jew Lane. 1835.



THE SOURCE OF THE ARVEIRON. VALLEY OF CHAMOUNI.

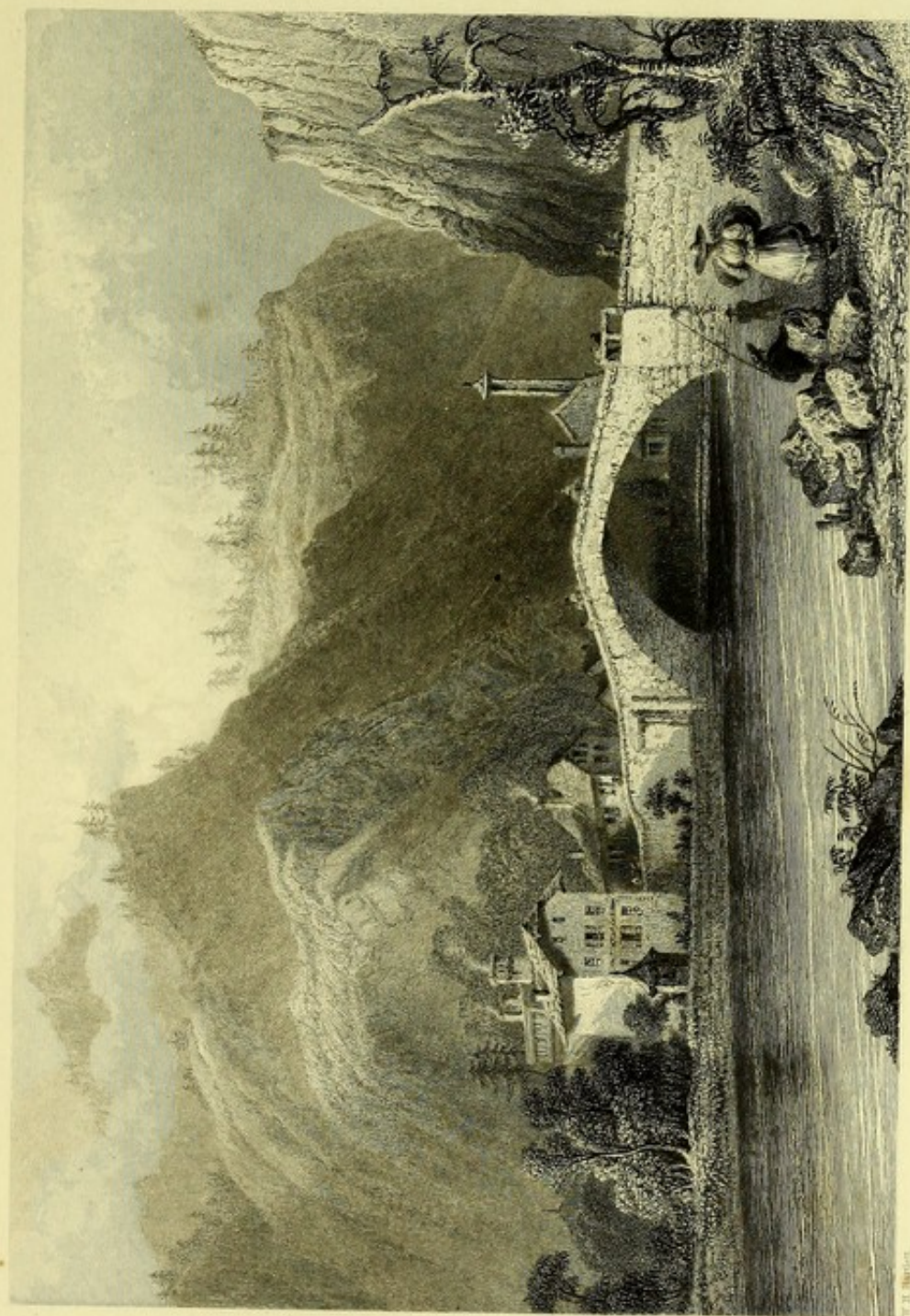


CHURCH, LAKE OF GENEVA.



THE BREWSTER ALPS.

London, Published for the Proprietors by Geo. Virtue, 28, Ivy Lane, 1835.



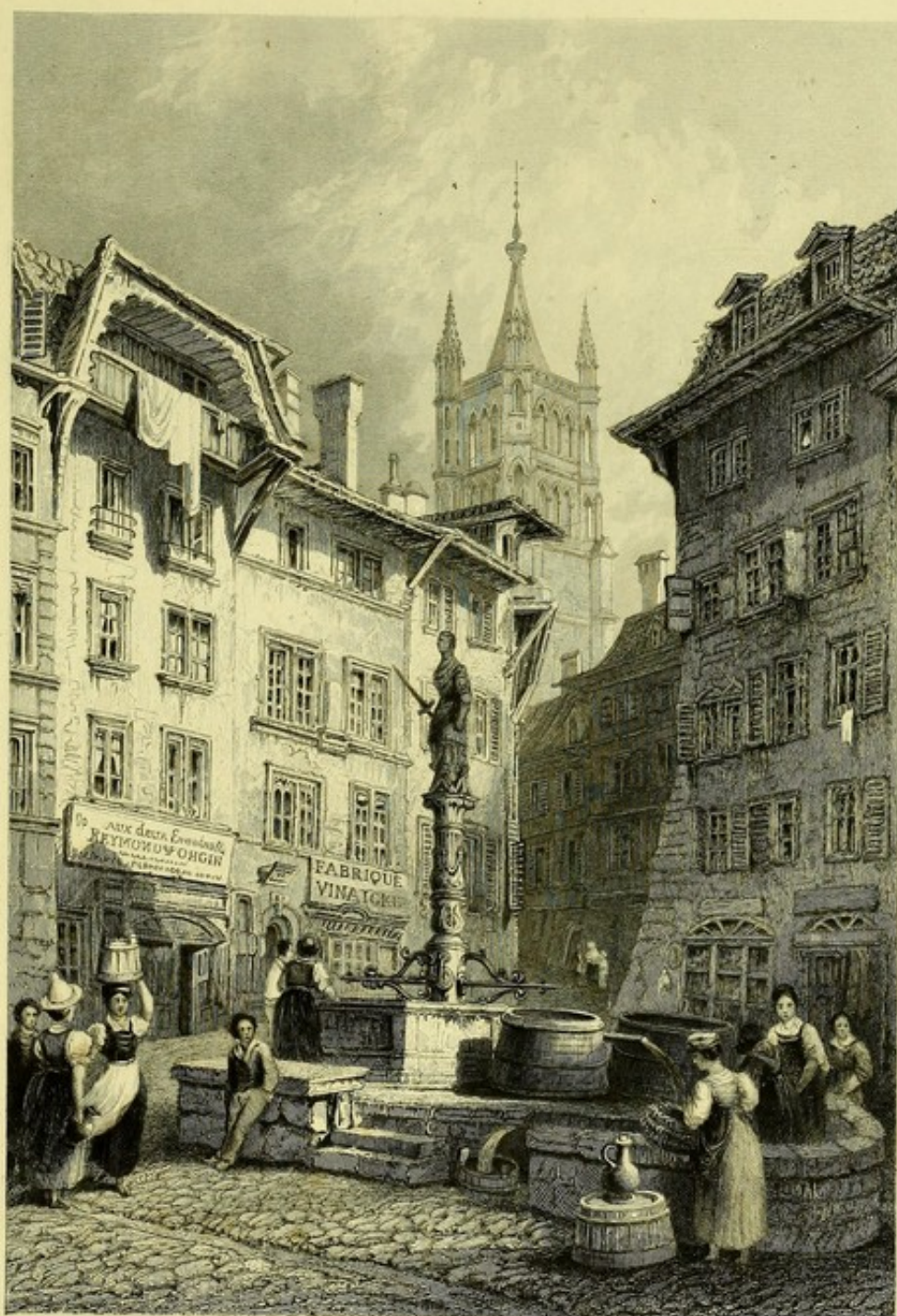
CLUSE, ON THE ARVE - SAVOY.



CASTLE & VALLEY OF MISOCCO LOOKING TOWARDS SOAZZA.



CASTLE OF LAUSANNE.



W. B. Barthol.

W. Wallis

PLACE DE PALUD, LAUSANNE.

