

**Travels in Italy, : descriptive of the rural manners and economy of that country / by Frederick Lillin de Chateauvieux.**

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TRAVELS IN ITALY,

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Ship Master  
DESCRIPTIVE OF THE

RURAL MANNERS AND ECONOMY

OF THAT COUNTRY.

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BY

FREDERICK LILLIN DE CHATEAUVIEUX,

CITIZEN OF GENEVA.

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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UNTIL the appearance of these Travels, the system of Agriculture, as it is pursued in the different States of Italy, seems to have been but little understood. How much it is deserving of imitation, in various particulars, the reader will, on perusing them, not fail soon to perceive. The intelligent writer contends, in opposition to Arthur Young, and the generality of our modern political economists, that the system of small farms is not only highly favourable to population, but has the advantage of bringing the greatest quantity of produce to market. The farmer being stationed in the centre of his land, and within the reach of every part of it, is enabled to bestow more pains on its cultivation, and to regulate and superintend his crops with greater precision. By increasing the number of farms, the number of gardens, orchards, and poultry-yards—objects which are considered as trifling on a large farm, and which can alone be rendered productive by the daily attention of an economical and industrious family, is also increased. It is therefore much to be wished that the patriotic example of Count Lodi, in the management of his Piedmontese estate, and that of the Tuscan knights of St. Stephen, may be one day followed, under certain modifications, in our own country, which boasts of natural advantages denied to Italy. That territory possesses,



notwithstanding, a population of 1,237 inhabitants to the square league, an amount which greatly exceeds that of either Great Britain or France, and may accordingly be considered as one of the most flourishing countries of Europe.

A curious fact is noticed by the writer relative to the cultivation of the potatoe, which was not general in France until after two seasons of scarcity, in 1795 and 1811. It is owing to the French gens d'armes stationed in Italy, that this valuable production is now cultivated there very successfully; thus presenting a certain resource to the inhabitants whenever the corn-crops may chance to fail.

# TRAVELS

DESCRIPTIVE OF THE

## RURAL ECONOMY OF ITALY.

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TURIN, *May* 12, 1812.

It is now twenty years since I first visited Italy. That beautiful country then presented itself to my imagination as a land of enchantment, separated from the rest of the world by precipices scarcely accessible. I expected to find the countenances and manners of the people, as well as the face of nature, beyond the Alps, totally different from any thing that I had seen, and I bade adieu to my friends with the feeling that I was going to visit a region unknown.

I have just passed the Alps again, but without being sensible to the emotions they before inspired. The magnificent roads which have lately been opened amidst these precipices, have destroyed the barriers which nature had bestowed on Italy. These vast works are, doubtless, the noblest proofs of our civilization; but in levelling the rocks, we have lowered the Alps, and destroyed the illusion of the scene. These mountains no longer inspire terror by their name, or separate the nations between whom they are placed. This facility of communication tends to efface the originality of national character. A similarity of manners is acquired with similar habits, and similar necessities. National peculiarities gradually disappear amidst a community of all the customs of life; and the European traveller will soon find himself, wherever he goes, surrounded by the same people.

I was struck with this sentiment as soon as I arrived at Turin. I could have fancied myself in some large and handsome town of France; so great a resemblance was there in all the objects that met my eye. One would have supposed that the dresses, the ornaments, the shops, the promenades, and the placards in the streets, had been sent from Paris with the *Restaurateurs*, and the *Journal des Modes*.

I shall avoid mentioning those parts of Italy which have so often been described by travellers. I shall not speak of its edifices, of its monuments, of its cities, or of the arts which have adorned them. I shall relate its rural history; I shall



say how its fields are cultivated, and how its harvests are reaped. I shall endeavour to describe the landscapes of this beautiful country as I have seen them; at least as they have appeared to me, for the traveller is liable to deception, even when speaking of objects before his eyes. For the sake of order, I shall begin with dividing the several states of Italy into as many regions as I have observed differences in their situation, in their appearance, and in their rural economy.

Italy may be divided into three regions, distinguished from each other by the three systems of agriculture which prevail in them. The difference of their climates, of their productions, and of the manners of the peasantry, marks this distinction to the eye of the traveller; as well as to his observation.

The first of these regions commences at the Alps of Suza, and of Mount Cenis, and extends to the shores of the Adriatic. It comprises all the plain of Lombardy, divided by the course of the Po into two nearly equal parts. The fertile soil of this rich plain yields, in luxuriance, an uninterrupted succession of various productions; and from the skilful arrangement of the crops, it may be denominated the district of *Agriculture by Rotation*.

The second region stretches along the southern declivities of the Appennines, from the frontiers of Provence, to the boundaries of Calabria. I shall call it the Region of Olives, or of the *Canaanitish Cultivation*. This Oriental species of culture is confined to the hills and slopes. The sides of the mountains are graduated by a succession of terraces, supported by artificial walls of turf, and covered with various sorts of fruit-trees. I shall not have occasion to say much of this department of agriculture, in which there are neither meadows nor corn crops, because a very interesting description of it has already been given by M. Sismondi. I wish I may be equally successful in describing the rural economy of the third region, which I shall designate by the name of the *Region of the Malaria*, or of the Patriarchal system. It extends along the shores of the Mediterranean, from Pisa to Terracina, and comprehends all the plains lying between the sea and the first chain of the Appennines.

This region, which is happily the smallest, is depopulated by the scourge of a deadly atmosphere, which has destroyed its ancient prosperity, with its villages, its hamlets, and its farms. Its vast plains serve only as pasturage for flocks, which, like those of the first inhabitants of the world, constitute the whole wealth of their proprietors.

Besides these three grand divisions, Italy also encloses



within the bosom of its lofty mountains, savage tracts, the inhabitants of which subsist on the produce of the woods alone; and the meadows of the Po, watered by innumerable canals, and covered with cattle, remind the traveller, under this favoured sky, of the grazing system of Ireland, and the countries of the North.

I shall attempt, first, to describe the agriculture of Piedmont: from which it will be seen how greatly it increases the natural beauty of this country, surrounded by the Alps, and favoured with the choicest gifts of nature.

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*ASTI, July 10, 1812.*

THE first agricultural region of Italy extends, as has been observed, from the foot of the Alps to those of the Appennines, over that vast plain of aqueous formation which commences at the pass of Suza, and terminates only with the eastern boundaries of Italy. This extensive region may be termed the garden of Europe, and is unquestionably of all its countries the most favoured by nature.

The soil deposited by the waters, as rich as it is deep, is almost every where of a perfect level. It is only in the immediate vicinity of the mountains that stony banks are found: the whole of the plain consists of a black earth of great fertility. The lofty mountains by which Lombardy is every where surrounded, pour into it a prodigious number of streams, which art has not yet succeeded in entirely controuling, but whose currents are broken into an infinite number of canals for irrigation; so that there is scarcely a farm, or a meadow, which has not one of these canals, with its sluice, at command.

This copious irrigation, in so fine a climate, combines with the action of a southern sun, to produce the utmost luxuriance of vegetation.

These great natural advantages have, from a remote period, filled Lombardy with an immense population, and its usual consequences; such as numerous towns, and consequently markets, excellent roads leading from all parts of the country, and the subdivision of the land into innumerable small farms, each with a farm-house in the centre of it, together with a system of skilful cultivation, which allows neither time nor room to be lost. The harvests are inclosed by plantations of fruit-trees of all kinds, intermixed with mulberries, poplars, and oaks. The last two are not planted merely for their shade, but as supports for the vines, the branches of which,



spreading in every direction, cover them as it were with a canopy, and fall in festoons.

The luxuriance of the plantations throughout Lombardy is such, that the eye is unable to penetrate them; the horizon of the traveller is always contracted, and opens only as he advances. The succession of landscapes thus presented, which continually excites the imagination with the expectation of something new; the verdant freshness; the innumerable habitations, uniting a sort of elegance to commodiousness; the fields, whose shady inclosures have an agreeable air of wildness, while their rich cultivation announces all the economy of rural wealth; present at once a contrast and an harmony, which no other country possesses in an equal degree. The traveller finds, not the gigantic and monotonous vegetation of India; nor the extensive farms which occupy the uniform plains of the North; nor those savage scenes in which the cool vales of Switzerland are embosomed; but he traverses a region which partakes of the character of each of these diversities of scenery, and reminds him of them by seeming to unite them all.

Such are the fields which Lombardy thus invitingly offers to the art of the husbandman. The system pursued is simple, because it has been brought to great perfection, and because judicious practices in rural economy are become familiar, and as it were habitual, to all the farmers. The density of the population, and the great variety of the objects of cultivation, have naturally thrown the land into small farms; as is the case in all countries where the soil is highly fertile, and where the produce requires that minute and daily attention, which can be obtained only from a direct and individual interest in it. Those of Lombardy are seldom less than ten, or more than sixty acres in extent.

From the want of other employment for capital, all the landed property of the country has long been in the possession of the higher classes, who inhabit the towns. Scarcely any of the farmers are proprietors; they all occupy on the condition of paying half the produce to the landlord. This tenure is universal: leases at a fixed rent being nearly unknown.

Hence, though Lombardy seems destined by nature for farming on a large scale, it has become, through the effect of its social institutions, exclusively, a country of agriculture in detail.

In order to render the different operations of this system more intelligible, I shall give a description of the situation and rural economy of the charming estate of *Santenias*, situated



ten miles from Turin, on the other side of the hills which border the Po. The road to it lies over the hill of Montcallier, on the summit of which stands a mansion, formerly the residence of the royal family; but which is now uninhabitable, and retains nothing of its ancient grandeur but the fine landscape which it commands. From the terrace the eye follows the river, winding in numerous meanders through the country; its shores covered with plantations, which partly conceal the farm-houses and hamlets scattered among them. At the termination of the plain, the view is bounded by the majestic inclosure of the Alps and the Appennines, which rise like a noble amphitheatre to guard these happy vales. These bulwarks of nature still strike the imagination, at the same time that they teach us that the globe has no longer any ramparts insurmountable to the genius and enterprize of man.

I passed several days among the groves and orchards of Santenas, and carefully observed all the practices of its rural economy. They are so similar throughout the whole of Piedmont, that this specimen will give a complete idea of all the rest. The estate is divided into four farms, contiguous to each other, and of considerable extent, lying along the banks of a canal, from which they may be watered at pleasure. The dykes which keep in the water are shaded by a long line of alders, poplars, and other trees, the lofty branches of which appear to be a sufficient shelter against the most violent storms. Under these woods innumerable shrubs and flowers grow in luxuriance. When I traversed these paths, in an evening of the month of May, they were in full bloom, bent down under the weight of the dew, which is much more copious here than in France. The hay-harvest was going on; and its fragrant exhalations, blended with those of the roses and orange-trees, added an inexpressible charm to the verdant beauty of the scene.

The mansion stands at one end of the domain. Before it stretches a rich extent of turf, watered by the canal, and ornamented with groups of trees and shrubs. This is reserved for the proprietor. At the opposite extremity stands the first farm-house, with its roofs peeping above the fruit-trees which inclose the meadow; forming at once a pleasing object in the landscape, and an agreeable walk.

It is built of red brick, uniting solidity with a sort of rustic elegance, and is remarkable, as are all the farm-houses of Lombardy, for its numerous and costly buildings: these occupy a spacious court. In the centre of one of the sides stands a dwelling of two stories, of regular and agreeable proportions. The ground floor serves as a lodging for the farmer,



and to store his provisions: the upper-story is used as a granary. Two out-buildings extend, as wings, from the two sides of the house, and complete that side of the court. They are only a single story in height, and are used, one as a stable for oxen, and the other as a cow-house; there being an entrance to each from the interior. These stables, which are twelve feet in height, are arched, and whitewashed, so that the cattle are never incommoded by the dust falling on them. Nothing can be cleaner, or more carefully attended to, than these stables; and the beasts, which are plentifully supplied with litter, manifest by their gentleness how well they are satisfied with their treatment.

The three other sides of the court are occupied by a portico, from twenty to twenty-four feet wide, and from fifteen to sixteen in height; the roof of which is supported in the interior by a row of pillars, placed at equal distances from the wall, and from each other; so that the space between each forms a square.

Under the ample range of these porticoes, the forage, the straw, and other productions of the farm are deposited; together with the carts and agricultural implements. One half of the court is paved; the other forms an area for threshing the grain. The manure is deposited without, so that the court is never dirty, and presents, with its colonnade, an appearance of symmetry, neatness, and convenience, of which our filthy, slovenly, farms, can give no idea.

Such, with the exception of the dimensions, is the uniform model of all the farm-houses of Lombardy, and ought to be that of all Europe. It gives the greatest room with the least building: it affords the best protection for produce, with the greatest facility of disposal; it is at once the most economical, and the least in danger from fire. It certainly requires an enormous quantity of bricks; but each proprietor makes them on his own land: he prepares all the materials beforehand, and then contracts with the bricklayers for the building. It is neither so troublesome, nor so expensive a business as may be supposed, and as is generally represented.

The exterior walls of the farm were entirely covered with vines, bearing a large grape, but yielding very indifferent wine; it is, however, drank by the peasantry, and custom renders it tolerable. A door opens from the house into the garden, which is separated from the ploughed land by a hedge, and ornamented with fig-trees, shrubs, and flowers. Large gates open from the porticoes upon the cart roads, which communicate with, and divide, the several quarters of the farm.



The land bordering on the canal is laid down in a permanent meadow, flooded at pleasure, and the vigorous vegetation of which allows of its being mowed three times in the year. The turf is formed of oat-grass, meadow-grass, rye-grass, ribwort, plantain, and different species of trefoil. One fourth of the farm is usually thus occupied; the other three are reserved for the plough. The fields are divided by rows of trees, which are generally mulberries, but sometimes maples or cherry-trees; these support the vines, and thus increase the number of crops without taking up any room.

The whole extent of the farm may be about sixty acres. A road, shaded by mulberry-trees, conducts to the second farm, which is in every respect similar to it; and from that to a third. These three farms, with the land reserved for the proprietor, and a few woods, form one of the finest estates in Piedmont.

Each of them is occupied by a family, and frequently descends from father to son, like an ancient patrimony, without any renewal of the tenure, which is continued from generation to generation, on the same conditions, without writing or register. The stock belongs to the landlord, the farmer being allowed the benefit of it at a fixed rent, which he pays in cash, and which is estimated at half the net produce of the meadow, that is, at forty francs per acre. The clover crops he has to himself; but all the others, viz. the wheat, Indian corn, wines, hemp, silk, &c. are divided in kind, in presence of the proprietor's agent.

This sort of contract is singularly advantageous to the proprietor, who, without making any advances, unless for the payment of the taxes, receives a fixed rent for his meadowland, and a clear half of the gross produce of the other parts of his estate. On this he can safely speculate, so as to dispose of it at the most favourable moment; for having no disbursements to make for the business of the farm, he stands in the situation of a merchant, and seldom fails to profit by it. But this plan can only be adopted in a country where the small extent of the farms, and the contiguity of the land, allow of their being cultivated by a single family; where the work is done by bullocks, whose breed and manure are a profit to the farmer, instead of an annual expence, as is the case with horses; and where the climate and the fertility of the soil allow the continual employment of the land for a great variety of crops, and an extra produce of grain. Under these circumstances, the farmer having no stipulated rent to pay, and employing only his own family, is not called upon to advance any money; he lives upon his small crops, and provides him-



self with sufficient specie from the produce of his yard, and the sale of his corn.

This system possesses the further advantage of bringing the greatest quantity of produce to market. I make this assertion in opposition to the opinion of Arthur Young, who attributes this advantage exclusively to large farms. But, from the account just given, it is evident, in the first place, that the subdivision of the farms increases, at the same time, the number of plantations, gardens, and farm-yards; by which means an abundance of minor produce is obtained, which is lost on a large farm. In the second place, the farmer, from motives of economy, turns all his smaller produce to the best advantage for the consumption of his household, in order to save his most saleable article, his corn, for the market. This may be estimated at one-fourth of the gross amount, to which is to be added the whole of the landlord's share; so that three-fourths of the whole produce of the farm are thus brought to sale, in consequence of the increased production, and careful domestic economy, resulting from this system. I am of opinion, that not any country brings to market so large a proportion of its produce as Piedmont. In France the proportion cannot be more than one-third; judging by the relative numbers of the inhabitants of the towns and of the country. In England it may, perhaps, reach one-half. In Switzerland it scarcely amounts to any thing; and this is the reason why living there is so dear.

The number of towns in Piedmont is surprising; and yet this limited country, having a great part of its surface occupied by mountains, after satisfying its own wants, supplies the territory of Genoa, Nice, and even the port of Toulon, with corn and cattle. Without making an exact calculation, it is evident from this statement, that there must be a superfluity of produce in the country, which must be attributed rather to its rural economy than to its direct fertility, for the average return of corn in Piedmont is not quite six for one.

It must, however, be allowed, that the system here spoken of is suited only to those countries where the employment of capital has long brought agriculture to its highest degree of productiveness, where experience has established an excellent order of crops, and where the most suitable division of property has been finally fixed. In improving countries, where an advance of capital is necessarily required, nothing but long leases and fixed rents will procure the investment of it, and thus prepare the means of future prosperity.

But it is time that I should advert to the system of cultivation



pursued on the farm which I have undertaken to give an account of.

It is sixty acres in extent, of which fifteen are in meadow : the remainder is in tillage, with about ten acres of clover. This last crop, and the hay, maintain a stock of eight bullocks, and thirteen cows or calves, together with a miserable horse, whose only business is to go to market, and to thrash the corn : making a gross amount of twenty-two head of cattle, or about one per acre for the green crops. The cattle are of the breed of Querci, which prevails through all the south of France, Dauphiné, and Savoy. Here they are leaner, and have smaller horns, but possess, in other respects, the same characters. They are of the same clear dun colour, with the same difference of make between the male and female, the cow being small and ill looking, while the bull is large and muscular, though he never acquires a good shape.

Though there is a vast number of cattle in Piedmont, the farmers have not learned, from their neighbours in the Milanese, to make much advantage from their dairies. They milk but few cows, and derive their profits chiefly from the calves, and from the manure. On the farm I am speaking of, for instance, a pair of bullocks are reared every year. At three years old, they are put into harness for the lighter work of the farm ; and, during the two next, are in full work. At five years old, they are fattened, and often fetch as much as 1000, or 1100 francs, thus forming one of the principal sources of the farmers' profits. The forty-five acres of tillage employ two pair of bullocks, from four to five years old, which work two ploughs : add to these, a pair of three years old for the lighter work, and two pair of calves, with the *rosivante*, which thrashes the corn, and goes to market.

The Piedmontese plough has been so well described by M. Pictet, as well as the skill with which it is managed by the labourers, that it is not necessary for me to give an account of it here. I cannot, however, neglect to mention the dexterity with which they perform, with this single plough, all the operations of deep and surface ploughing, for which such a multitude of instruments have been invented in England. Nothing can be more neat and regular than the dressing given to the Indian corn, when in full vegetation, with a plough and a pair of oxen, so as completely to destroy all the weeds, without disturbing a single stem. In like manner, the potatoe crops which I admired at Hofwyl were not better managed than a field of twenty acres which I saw at La Mandria, where the plough alone had been used.

The rotation of crops is usually for four years, viz.



1st Year. Indian corn manured, beans, do. hemp do.

2d..... Wheat.

3d..... Trefoil, ploughed after the first cutting, and followed by a fallow.

4th..... Wheat.

This rotation may be considered as one of the most productive ; and the continued fertility of the soil, notwithstanding the repetition of farinaceous crops, shews that it may be pursued for any length of time. This, it is true, must be attributed to the abundant manure, supplied by a meadow mowed three times, the whole of which is spread on the arable land.

In this arrangement of crops, the Indian corn is considered as preparatory to the others ; all the manure is reserved for it, and the land is kept perfectly clean, by weeding and dressing. Nothing can be more beautiful than the harvest which follows. The plants, ranged in the most exact order, raise majestically their yellow heads, and give to the fields of Italy a certain pomp which adds to their beauty.

The produce of the Indian corn is very considerable, but its principal recommendation is, that it constitutes almost the sole article of subsistence with the country people, who eat it under every form of preparation. The crop is intermixed with beans of various kinds, and with hemp.

The harvest terminates in September, and as soon as it is got off the ground, the land is prepared for the wheat. It is sown in very narrow straight farrows, which the plough fills as it goes along. The soil having been sufficiently cleaned and manured in the spring, requires no further attention until the harvest, which takes place in the beginning of July.

After the corn has been dried in heaps, under the porticoes of the court-yard, during the latest days of August, it is thrashed on the area, at one of its ends. Instead of trampling it out by a herd of miserable jades, after the stupid custom of Provence, or of leaving it to be devoured by the mice for a year, as at Paris, it is thrashed by a cylinder, drawn by a horse, which a child guides : the labourers, in the mean time, turning over the straw with forks. This business takes up about a fortnight ; it is as economical as it is expeditious, and completely cleans the grain.

The trefoil is sown upon the wheat in spring : the quick vegetation of Italy brings it into flower in the early part of autumn ; and in October it is mown, supplying afterwards, with the meadow land, a latter-math. The following spring it shoots again, flowers, and is once more mowed ; but the hot weather coming on, prevents a second crop : it is therefore ploughed in, and the land left fallow for the wheat.

In the course of four years, therefore, we find three crops of



food for man, one fallow, and two crops for cattle. To these must be added the hemp, the produce of which is sometimes considerable, the silk, the wine, the vegetables, the fruit, the poultry; and, lastly, the young stock, the milk, and the manure.

From this account, it appears that a farm of sixty acres supports a family of eight or nine persons; that it feeds twenty-two head of cattle, of which three are every year fattened, besides one or two pigs; that it produces at least twenty-five louis in silk; that it supplies more wine than the domestic consumption requires; and that the preparatory crop of Indian corn and beans alone, is nearly sufficient for the whole maintenance of the household; so that almost all the wheat is disposable for the market, besides a number of minor articles. The superiority of the agriculture and rural economy of Piedmont, to that of perhaps every other country, may hence be easily conceived; and the phenomena of its great population, and extensive exportation of produce, will no longer appear extraordinary.

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LA MANDRIA DI CHIVAS, *July 20, 1812.*

THOUGH an excellent description of La Mandria has already been given by M. Pictet, I cannot quit Piedmont without noticing this establishment, the noblest perhaps of its kind in Europe.

It lies in the form of a perfect parallelogram of two thousand six hundred acres in extent, watered by a canal, and divided by cart roads into one hundred and twenty-six equal squares, one-third of which are in meadow, and the rest in tillage.

The object of the Pastoral Society, which undertook the management of this magnificent domain, was the feeding and improvement of a flock of six thousand merinos.

An enterprize like this, was an innovation in the agricultural system of Piedmont, where the land, consisting chiefly of irrigated meadows, without any fallows, is by no means suited for sheep. They do not, in fact, form any part of its rural economy, and could not even be kept alive, were it not for the vicinity of the Alps, where they are sent to pass five months every summer. On their return, they have the benefit of the after-crop for about six weeks, and are then fed from the rack. They do not, therefore, enter into the regular system even of La Mandria, and might perhaps be replaced to advantage by other stock.

But the richness of the mountain pastures, the abundance and quality of the winter keep, and the continual attention of Count Lodi, have had a great effect on the breed, which is now distinguished from all the rest, by its size and beauty. They are longer in the legs than the sheep of Rambouillet, but equal them



in weight, and in roundness and symmetry of form : the rams have short horns, and are not so fierce looking. Very heavy fleeces, the staple of which is slightly glossy, are clipped, and the wool resembles that of the Electorate of Saxony. This fine flock, which has, however, a rival in that of Messrs. Laval and Colegno, succeeded extremely well, till the year 1811, when the depreciation of wool gave a check to its progress, and brought all the inferior sheep to the slaughter-house, as well as all the lambs which were not bred from select animals. This circumstance, though unfortunate for the company of proprietors, has, however, tended still farther to improve the breed.

There is one circumstance attending the management of La Mandria with which I have been particularly struck, and which I think is worthy of observation, as an example for those countries where the farms are upon a large scale. I have before said that those of Piedmont are small, and the objects of cultivation numerous, but La Mandria, which was formerly the royal stud, presented an uniform and level surface of two thousand six hundred acres in extent, with a single farm-house in the centre. It thus seemed laid out for the system of agriculture on the grand scale which was, in fact, previously adopted upon it. But Count Lodi, aware of the advantages of the Piedmontese system, undertook to introduce it into the vast domain of La Mandria, and he has succeeded. The means he employed are as simple as they are judicious, being nothing more than the subdivision of the land, and a surprizing regularity in the business of the farm.

The soil of La Mandria being all alike, allowed of the same course of crops being adopted for the whole : and Count Lodi has followed the usual rotation of the country, that is—

- 1st Year..... Indian corn, manured.
- 2d Year..... Wheat.
- 3d Year..... Trefoil, followed by a fallow.
- 4th Year..... Wheat.

The only innovation he has made, is that of reserving twenty acres of the corn land for potatoes, for the use of the sheep.

With the view of adhering to this systematic arrangement, instead of availing himself of the great extent of the domain, to lay out his fields on a large scale, as is usually done, he divided it into regular plots of twenty acres each, inclosed with a fence of alders, and separated by a road running between them.

By this plan, the estate, instead of forming one vast whole, became merely an assemblage of small farms ; and such appears to have been the Count's view. Having determined on the course of crops to be followed, he did not, as is usual on large farms, aim at reducing, as low as possible, the number of his labourers, which usually leads to the neglect of the inferior and



distant parts of the farm. He estimated the labour necessary to carry his system into complete effect on every part of the estate, and regulated the number of his workmen accordingly. This was merely a matter of calculation: the difficulty lay in giving motion to a machine which was to represent the multiplied business of twenty farms lying within a common inclosure. This he accomplished, by establishing a sort of military subordination and responsibility; and by keeping, invariably, the same men to the same department.

The establishment consists of regular servants hired by the year, and of day-labourers, all of whom engage, on entering, to follow the order prescribed. The laying down of this rule was attended with some difficulty at first, but custom has long since removed it.

Both servants and labourers feed themselves, receiving their full recompense in money, and clubbing together at the board, as suits their convenience. The former have gardens, the size of which is proportioned to their rank in the household, and for the cultivation of which, a stated time is allowed them.

They are divided into companies, according to their occupations, each company having a foreman, or captain, who is responsible for the manner in which the work is executed, and has his lieutenants and subalterns under him. He receives his orders from the principal, and distributes them among the several squads. Thus, the shepherds form one company, the herdsmen another, the carters another, and the workmen employed in tillage a fourth. The day labourers are distributed among the several companies as they are wanted, and are under the orders of the officers of those companies, so long as they are attached to them. All the different employments commence and conclude regularly at the sound of a bell; and the corporals, who are never absent, superintend both their execution and their duration.

In order to preserve this regularity in the business of the farm, Count Lodi made it a rule never to separate the working companies on any account whatever. The fields being all of the same size, the men are set to work upon each of them, all at once, and the business must be completed in a given time. Both men and ploughs work in a line; and I have never beheld a finer rural sight than that of twenty ploughs, in one field, moving at equal distances, in an exact line, all turning at once at the word of command, and commencing their march, with a sort of silent solemnity, in the same order. It was not less gratifying to see a hundred and fifty mowers, ranged in an oblique line, cutting down, with measured strokes, a luxuriant herbage, and followed by a similar line of women, forming an exact parallel behind them, and turning over the swarth as fast as it dried.



It is by observing this strict order that the Count has succeeded in obtaining the most perfect regularity in the performance of the agricultural labours, and that he has been able to transfer the minute attention and precision of the small farm to an extent of two thousand six hundred acres. In the whole of this space there is not a single inch of ground neglected: the whole estate is included in the plan which has been laid down; every part receives an equal share of manure and of cultivation, and repays the care bestowed on it by crops, which could not have been expected from the mediocrity of the soil, and the greatness of the extent. But there is nothing which perseverance and resolution cannot accomplish.

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PARMA, *September 10, 1812.*

THE farther we advance towards the east, along the course of the Po, the deeper and more fertile does the soil become; but at the same time the rivers, which flow at a considerable depth within their beds in the vicinity of the Alps, rise to the level of the surrounding country, as they approach the Adriatic, and the soil is consequently more humid. We accordingly find less corn and more meadow land.

This change is apparent as soon as you reach the environs of Piacenza. The size of the farms, and their general management, are the same as in Piedmont; but the rotation of crops and the sources of profit are different. The wealth of this part of Lombardy consists more in cattle than in corn, and the landscape becomes so much the more beautiful and animated in its appearance. The whole right bank of the Po is planted with magnificent oaks, whose majestic branches, spreading from their lofty trunks, give to this part of the country an air of freshness and verdure which we do not expect to find in Italy. The acorns of these trees are of considerable value to the farmers, as they serve to feed an immense number of pigs; and I have been surprised to observe, that their shade does little or no injury to the crops which grow beneath them; a circumstance which must be attributed to the combined effect of the moisture and fertility of the soil, and of an Italian sun.

On the dairy-farms which border the course of the Po, the Parmesan cheese is made, of which there is so great a consumption all over Italy. These meadows are the most fertile in the world. Being constantly watered, they produce three, and sometimes four, crops of hay; but, as they are divided into a great number of small lots, few of the farms



are capable of supporting a dairy singly; because this would require the milk of fifty cows at least. It has, therefore, long been the custom for the neighbouring farmers to form themselves into societies, for the purpose of making their cheese together. The milk is carried twice a day to the general depôt, where the dairyman keeps an account of the quantity brought by each person. These accounts are settled every six months by a proportionate division of the cheese.

The breed of horned cattle about Piacenza is also different. We no longer see the large dun-coloured short-horned beasts of Piedmont; but a fine slate-coloured breed, distinguished by the smallness of their bones, the roundness of their make, their lively eye, and their long and regularly-turned horns. They are produced by the continual crossing of the Hungarian breed with that of the small Cantons of Switzerland.

The Hungarian breed is found pure in the South of Italy, and produces the finest and best cattle known; but they are bad milkers, and on this account the Lombards have found it necessary to cross them, in order to turn their meadows to advantage. Every year, from time immemorial, two thousand cows pass Mount St. Gothard to be dispersed over Lombardy, and produce that renovation of the species which alone preserves to the breed of Italy its valuable qualities.

These Swiss cows are not of the breed of Berne, so well known in France, and distinguished by their bright colours and fine shapes. They are from the small Cantons, and from their dull colours, long horns, and loose make, appear to me to be themselves the offspring of the Hungarian stock, greatly improved by care, food, and climate. This common origin renders it precisely adapted for mixing with the Italian breed.

The farms are let on the same terms as in Piedmont, namely, the payment of half the produce; but the rotation of crops is somewhat different. A greater proportion is laid down in meadow, and the Indian corn gives place, in a great degree, to the cultivation of hemp and winter-beans. The usual course is as follows:

1st Year,	Indian Corn and Hemp, manured.
2d ———	Wheat.
3d ———	Winter-beans.
4th ———	Wheat, manured.
5th ———	Trefoil, ploughed in after the first mowing.
6th ———	Wheat.

Tobacco has lately been cultivated in the neighbourhood of Parma with great success: in which case it takes place of the Indian corn and hemp the first year.

This course is still more productive than that of Piedmont;



but it arises from the richness of the soil, and the abundance of dung obtained from the cattle, which enables the farmer to manure every third year. In Piedmont this is only done every four years.

I shall not enlarge on this admirable rotation, which, in six years, gives four crops of grain, one of hemp, and one of fodder. Notwithstanding the rapidity of the succession, it is, as will be observed, so skilfully arranged, that the fertility of the soil is in no wise exhausted by it, while, at the same time, it gives all the opportunity necessary for preparing the land, and keeping it clean, by crops which are regularly weeded. The winter-bean is the only plant on which I wish to make a few remarks.

It has been successfully introduced within the last few years about Geneva, where the winter is very severe. It is, therefore, evidently hardy, and may be employed with advantage in the agriculture of the northern countries, for it will enter readily into almost any course.

The winter-bean resembles the spring-bean in its general appearance. It is sown at the beginning of September, and ought to acquire a certain degree of strength before winter, in order the better to withstand its severity. When the frost and snow come on the stalk dies; but early in the spring the plant throws up from the root two or three fresh stems, which flower in May, and are ripe by the end of July.

Its cultivation is extremely simple. After the wheat is got off, the land is broken up by a single ploughing, and left to lighten through the effect of the season. Early in September the beans are sown, either burying them with the plough, or covering them with the harrow, or, lastly, with the dibble, which last method affords an opportunity to clean them with the horse-hoe in the spring; otherwise they must be weeded by the hand some time in April.

As they are ripe as early as July, the farmer has plenty of time to prepare his land for the wheat crop which is to follow, and which almost always does well.

They succeed best on strong clayey soils, where roots will not thrive; they come in well with the different periods of ploughing and sowing, and keep up the fertility of the soil. They, therefore, possess every quality that can be desired, and I have no doubt, that the cultivation of them will rapidly extend itself.

Such is the sketch of the cultivation and general system of that portion of Lombardy which extends along the right bank of the Po; that is, of a part of the first agricultural division of Italy, laid down in a former letter. It will be observed,



that the crops are almost all destined for food, and that, excepting hemp and flax, there are none for the employment of industry. The result of this abundant supply of provisions, is a vast population, not any classes of which are manufacturers, because the raw materials are without their reach.

They may, therefore, be divided into four classes, namely, the soldiers and public functionaries; the landed proprietors, who live on their rents; the merchants and artisans; and, lastly, the farmers, who rent the land and live by their industry.

This last class, only, reside in the farm-houses scattered all over Lombardy; the other three live in the cities and large towns, and this is the reason why not any of the hamlets or villages inhabited by farmers of property, so frequent in France, are here to be seen. On the other hand, the whole of the landed property being in the possession of the capitalists, the number of persons thus living on the rents of their estates is greater in this part of Lombardy than elsewhere, and gives to the towns an agreeable appearance of affluence.

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SARZANA, *September 20, 1812.*

HAVING, in my former letters, given a brief account of the cultivation of Lombardy, that is, of the first of the agricultural districts into which I have divided Italy, I now proceed to describe my journey over the Appennines, which I crossed at the highest part; by which means some idea may be formed of their natural scenery and culture, and the customs of their inhabitants.

Being desirous to obtain some knowledge of the unexplored valleys of these mountains, and of the rural economy of the pastures by which their summits are covered, I set out from Parma, accompanied by Messrs. Ortali and Succchi, two proprietors of Merino flocks, with the view of traversing, in its whole extent, the lofty chain which separates the state of Modena from that of Genoa and Tuscany. This expedition cannot be performed otherwise than on horseback, or more generally on foot, the paths which lead over these mountains being steeper, and more rugged than those of the Alps.

We passed the first night at *Sala*, once the favourite villa of the late Grand Duchess, the sister of Marie Antoinette; it is situated at the foot of the mountains, at three leagues distance from Parma, and at present belongs to a contractor, who has let the estate and its dependencies to my travelling companions. The stables, coach-houses, &c. are converted into sheep-folds, within which two thousand Merinos pass the



winter; in the summer they are upon the mountains, where we were going to visit them. They are supplied with hay from extensive meadows situated beneath the chateau.

There are few situations finer than that of Sala. Being placed on the last of the ridges formed by the declivity of the mountains, it commands the whole plain of Lombardy; while it is itself protected from observation by an ancient forest of chesnut-trees. The majestic scenery which surrounds it is, however, its sole recommendation, the internal accommodations being very indifferent.

We left it at day-break, and proceeded along the foot of the hills in a direction parallel with the course of the Po. The road sometimes ran on a level with the plain, and at others, led along eminences shaded by chesnut-trees, or by trellises of vines, whence we enjoyed an enchanting prospect. The hills in which the Appennines terminate are intersected by streamlets, and covered with cottages; the vine is the principal object of cultivation, and the spots which are too rough for it, are shaded by the vast branches of the chesnut-trees.

Having reached the village of Berzola, we quitted the fertile plains of Lombardy, and, turning abruptly to the south, entered the ravaged valley, periodically devastated by the stream of the Parma, which we ascended to its source, and then entered on the savage parts of the mountains.

We followed the course of this valley for seven leagues, pursuing our way in the bed of the river, which at that time presented no other appearance than that of an arid tract, covered with loose stones, and extending to the mountains on either side, to the breadth of about half a league. The whole of this extensive channel is often covered with water; but the inundation never lasts more than a few days.

On each side of us ran two parallel chains of hills, which at first were no more than gentle declivities; but increasing in elevation as we advanced, at length joined the lofty range of the Appennines, from which they extended themselves, like arms, from north to south; the direction of the central chain being from east to west. These ramifications are evidently stony ridges which have resisted the violence of the waters, and there is a continued succession of them along the whole length of the Appennines.

During the early part of our journey these hills were enlivened by numerous cottages, interspersed with vineyards and cultivated fields, with here and there a steeple peeping up above the chesnut-trees. These symptoms of rural life, however, became more rare as we advanced into the vale, and soon neither vines nor elms were to be seen. The declivities,



too steep for cultivation, presented nothing to the eye but pasturage, with a few trees and fragments of rock. The cottages, which were thinly scattered, were small and dark; and their sloping roofs, covered with flat stones, indicated that we had already entered the region of snow. The beautiful cattle of the plain had also disappeared; a few miserable animals, with some goats and spotted sheep, were alone browsing the scanty herbage.

Towards the close of our progress, these appearances of animated nature abandoned us altogether. The valley became suddenly contracted; the bed of the river, instead of being wide and open, was confined by enormous rocks; and the mountains assumed a grander character, being marked by large masses of rock and forests. In short, all the surrounding objects bore the features of the Alps.

The path we were following now rose suddenly over a rocky steep, and displayed to us a gulph, at the bottom of which the waters were roaring; a bridge boldly thrown over the abyss; and, beyond it, on a woody knoll, the steeple of Bosco, the village which was to terminate our day's journey.

I cannot describe the effect produced upon me by the view of this village, which is the capital of the mountainous district. It bore no resemblance to any that I had seen, and gave me the idea of an Otaheitean hamlet, rather than of an European country town. It has no streets, or rows of houses, nor are there any gardens or cultivated grounds. A number of enormous chesnut-trees, rising at considerable distances from each other, upon a fine turf, unite their branches, and form a verdant canopy, under which the houses are scattered at random amidst this natural orchard. The church is built in an opening of the wood, and has rather an elegant appearance; close by it stands the parsonage-house.

At the time of our arrival, the vesper-bell had assembled all the inhabitants at the temple. They were on their knees before the porch; and although the sight of our party somewhat interrupted their attention, this scene of rural devotion had something inexpressibly interesting in it.

Strangers are always received with hospitality by these mountaineers. The clergy, more especially, practise this virtue with uncommon zeal and heartiness. The worthy curate of Bosco nearly dragged us off our horses to take us to his house. He was acquainted with my companions; but had they been equally strangers to him with myself, he would have received us with the same cordiality. Taken thus by surprise, he was at a loss how best to entertain us. He would have killed his whole dove-cote; he scolded his servant, and broke his bottles,



glasses, and eggs. The result of all this bustle, however, was, that he presented us with six brace of pigeons, and several omelets, which we eat with as much pleasure as he had in providing them.

After supper we were visited by the principal inhabitants of the village, who disputed the honour of being our guides the next day. I took advantage of this opportunity to obtain some information respecting the cultivation and manners of the country, which I shall now lay before the reader; it may be considered as a specimen of what prevails along the whole range of the highest chain of the Appennines.

The soil is too much broken by the torrents to admit of the cultivation of grain, and the climate is too severe for the growth of the vine, Indian corn, or pulse of any kind. The whole harvest is a little hay, grown on favourable spots, which, with the leaves of the beech-tree, forms the winter provision of the cattle. These consist of a few small horses of burden, some spotted sheep, and goats; together with pigs of an excellent quality, which are fed on chesnuts and skim-milk.

During the summer these animals range about the mountains in the neighbourhood of the hamlet; in winter they are kept in the stables. From the milk of the sheep and goats the inhabitants make small, hard, sour, cheeses, which form the principal part of their food. The wool of the sheep is spun during winter by the women, who contrive to weave it into a sort of stuff, which serves as clothing for the whole family.

Thus this uncultivated region supports its inhabitants solely by its spontaneous productions, that is, by its chesnut-trees. These grow in surprising luxuriance and abundance, on the sides of the mountains, and the chesnuts are much larger, and very superior in quality to those grown in the North. They are eaten in every sort of form; but the most usual one, namely, that of a flat cake, to which they give the name of bread, appears to me the only one that is disagreeable. The wheaten bread is brought from Parma, and is a luxury in which they indulge only on grand occasions.

Potatoes would be an important acquisition. There are various situations where they might be cultivated with success; and where, from the certainty of their produce, they would form a valuable addition to the resources of the country. I met with them further on; but here they are unknown. The curate had, indeed, heard them mentioned, and I exhorted him to make trial of them.

The means of subsistence of these inhabitants of the Appennines, who depend solely on the bounty of nature, consist, therefore, in their chesnuts, the produce of which is uncertain, and in



some trifling animal productions; to which may be added a great number of pigeons, who are nourished I know not how, and a tolerable quantity of bees. The population, notwithstanding, is pretty numerous, and the territory much divided. The people are very industrious, but their distinguishing characteristic is excessive economy. They themselves fabricate both their furniture and their clothes, and these form almost their only wants. They make a great deal of charcoal, which is their only method of clearing the woods; but their principal revenue arises from emigration. All the active part of the population quit their habitations to go and work during the summer in Lombardy, or more commonly in Tuscany, whence they bring home their savings, which form nearly the whole circulating capital of the country. They may, therefore, be denominated the Auvergnats of Italy. At this moment, great numbers of them are working on the new road leading from Genoa to Spezia, and are handsomely recompensed for their labours. They hold the French engineers in high esteem: so that the influence of the Polytechnic school is felt even here.

It is evident that a country, whose whole produce is scarcely sufficient to support its population, and which furnishes no marketable commodities, is not likely to attract the capitalist. We accordingly find, throughout all the range of the Appennines, that the farmers are also the proprietors of the land: a circumstance by which these regions are distinguished from every other part of Italy.

The sun was risen when we left our worthy curate, to ascend the high chain of the Appennines. Our party made no little shew, for not only had the whole village contributed, in the most friendly and hospitable manner, to supply us with provisions, but the principal people of the place insisted on accompanying us; so that we mustered fifteen horsemen at our departure from the parsonage-house.

We soon plunged into the midst of a forest of chesnut trees, which covered the first declivity of the mountain. Our road lay occasionally over a fine turf, but more commonly over rocks, covered with mosses, and entwined by the roots of the gigantic trees which overshadowed us, and beneath whose impenetrable shade an everlasting coolness prevails. We were two hours in traversing these woods, which from time immemorial have been the noblest ornament of these regions, and the manna of these deserts.

We had now reached the foot of a ridge of rocks, which we passed with considerable difficulty, and then entered the region of beech trees. The ascent now became so steep, that our horses could scarcely scramble up. At length, after a further progress



of two leagues, our guides cried out, that they saw the *Acqua santa*. Accordingly, having gained the highest summit, we found ourselves on the brink of a small lake. Its waters were pure and fresh, and its form a regular oval, like the crater of a volcano, from two to three hundred feet in depth. This declivity was covered with beech trees, whose verdure was reflected in the limpid waters of the basin; had it not been for this circumstance, I could have supposed myself on the shores of one of the lakes of the high Alps.

The country people attribute great virtues to these waters, which have no visible outlet, so that it is a sort of pilgrimage to visit the *Acqua santa*. I do not know at what height we were, but it must have been considerable, as masses of snow, which had survived the winter, lay around us.

Beyond the lake, commences the extensive summer pastures, called, by the inhabitants, *Macchie*. They extend over the summits of the whole of the high chain of the Appennines, beginning at the valley of La Magra, which separates the lower mountains of Genoa from those of Tuscany and Modena. They are intersected by crags of rocks, which overhang their sunken bases. A few strong-built huts are provided for the shepherds, but the flocks remain always in the open air.

Almost all these mountains belong to the Communes of the lower valleys. They are let for the season, at so much per head of cattle. The rate is a piastre, or crown, for a horse, five sols for a sheep, and three for a goat. The latter animals browse amongst the rocks and bushes; the best pastures being reserved for the horses.

The flocks all come from Tuscany, where they pass the winter in the pastures of the *Maremma*.\* They belong to migratory shepherds, who, like those of Spain, have no other property, nor any fixed residence. They always keep to one sort of animal, some having horses, others sheep, and others goats. They rent the winter pastures of Tuscany at the rate of three piasters for a horse, twelve sols for a sheep, and eight for a goat, for the season.

This erratic system, though injurious in countries capable of high cultivation, is greatly beneficial to those where this is interdicted by the nature of the soil, and whence nature seems, as it were, to have repelled man. The migration of the flocks, in the region of the Appennines, is attended with the double advantage of turning to use the herbage of the mountain summits, and of peopling the unhealthy districts with the only inhabitants capable of profiting by their spontaneous vegetation, as they remain there

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\* Plains, subject to the *Malaria*, or pestilential atmosphere, situated between the sea and the Appennines, in the Tuscan and some other Italian states.



only during winter. In short, it is the only way of converting the vegetable productions of these countries into wool and cheese, and is, therefore, the most suitable economy for them.

The first flock of sheep we met with, was of the common breed of Tuscany. They were rather low, but admirably formed. Their wool was white and plentiful, and they appeared to me, in all respects, the same with the migratory species of Provence. Their fleeces are rather fine: the wool was formerly shipped at Leghorn for England, but is now sold in Dauphiné. The produce of the cheese is, however, more considerable than that of the wool.

Close by was a herd of horses, which we had much difficulty in approaching. They were all young colts, the mares passing the whole year on the plains. As is the case with all the wild herds, they were moulded very much alike. They are elegantly made, their limbs clean, and small boned; but they were all mule-rumped, hollow-backed, and had the long narrow head of the Italian horses.

These little horses, however, though badly fed, and worse attended to, will gallop to a great distance, without losing either their spirit or their wind. They are fitter for the saddle than for draught, being deficient in shoulder, and in weight, for the collar. As, however, in Italy, all the heavy loads are drawn by oxen, this light little breed is very well adapted to the purposes for which it is needed.

On approaching a rocky tract, covered with bushes and brambles, I beheld a sight I had never before witnessed. This was a migratory flock of twelve hundred goats, which live constantly in the woods, and are never housed. They are perfectly wild, and never come near the herdsman except for the salt, which is given them twice a day, when they are milked; and this was the only time that I had an opportunity of seeing them. They were extremely handsome. I remarked one he-goat in particular, which would have made a figure, as the representative of his species, in a menagerie.

At some distance farther, on a noble pasture, was the flock of merinos belonging to my companions, and amounting to about two thousand. I never saw a flock of finer animals, or in better condition; not excepting even that of Rambouillet. It is true, they are managed differently from the Tuscan flocks. Instead of passing the winter in the Maremme, they descend in autumn to the folds of Sala, where they find shelter, and are supplied with the best of fodder. This especial care the merinos seem to require; for the proprietors, tempted by the low price of the wintering in the Maremme, sent a thousand thither in the year 1811, of which seven hundred perished with cold and hunger. From



many other facts of a similar nature, I am persuaded that these animals require more care and expence than any other breed of sheep.

The latter part of the day was thus spent by me in visiting the shepherd's huts, in inspecting the flocks, and in examining the other particulars of this part of the migratory system of Tuscany. We passed the night in one of the huts, and the next morning, at day break, I took leave of my companions, and set out, with a guide, on my descent towards the Mediterranean.

I had as yet traversed the northern side only of the high chain of the Appennines ; and was still half a league distant from their summits, which separate the territory of Parma from that of Tuscany. I began my ascent over a grassy turf, moistened with dew. I already commanded the view of all the chains of the Appennines ; but the moment I reached the extreme summit, a boundless horizon opened before me. Never had so noble a prospect met my eyes : all Italy was extended at my feet. In the cloudless distance, the long chain of the Alps stretched farther than the eye could reach, from the frontiers of France, to the boundaries of Illyria ; inclosing, as it were, in a silver frame, that vast plain, watered by so many rivers. To the south, the ground appeared to descend by terraces, from the height where I stood, to the shores of the sea. I distinguished the bay and castles of Spezia, and followed, with my eye, the magnificent curve in which the sea sweeps along the shores of Tuscany, to embellish, at a still greater distance, those of Naples.

The whole history of this ancient land presented itself before me ; from the landing of Eneas on the banks of the Tiber, to the battles of Lodi and Marengo. What a multitude of events recurred to my recollection ! What sensations were inspired by this theatre, whence, as in a panorama, I beheld all Italy depicted around me !

The site from which I enjoyed this view, is certainly one of the most remarkable in Europe. I would advise every traveller to visit it. He may easily accomplish this, by going by the new carriage road from Parma to Pontremoli, whence he may, on horseback, reach the point I have mentioned in three hours, and return the same day to Pontremoli. But this excursion, which is, perhaps, more interesting than that of the glaciers of Savoy, can only be made in summer ; and most foreigners devote the winter to visiting Italy. They, in consequence, can form no just idea of that country : their acquaintance with it is confined to its churches, its tombs, and monuments, but all the riches which nature displays there, remain unknown to them.

I was now on the frontiers of Tuscany ; and looking about me, to see how I was to get down, I perceived a commodious road,



six feet in width, skilfully carried along the declivities, which conducted me from mountain to mountain, till it brought me into the valley of La Magra, in which Pontremoli is situated.

This road, like so many other works of public utility, was made by Leopold, who extended his attentions even to the rendering of the pastures more accessible to the flocks, to which purpose only the road in question, which ought to serve as a model to the inhabitants of the Alps, was constructed.

As I descended towards the Mediterranean, the face of nature wore a totally different aspect. I had lost the fertile inclosures and corn-fields, the meadows and their canals, the oaks and the willows. I was in the region of the south, surrounded by woods of evergreen, oaks and olives, of laurels, and cypresses: and, instead of the clover-sprinkled turf, I beheld the hyacinth and the tuberose. I was on the mountains of Genoa.

Having crossed the valley of La Magra, which separates these lower chains from the high Appennines I had just descended, I entered the Genoese territory, distinguished by its pomp, its wretchedness, and its sterility. Continuing my way along barren ridges, on which grew a few stunted chesnut trees, through valleys devastated by the torrents, and villages which bore the aspect of wretchedness, as the countenances of their inhabitants did that of guilt, I passed through Compiano, a small town which supplies all Europe with exhibitors of monkies and wild beasts, and at length came into the road *della Cornice*, near the port of Bracco.

I have little to say concerning the agriculture of these mountains. They are destitute of herbage, and consequently do not afford pastures, although a few goats and sheep are occasionally to be seen. The valleys produce Indian corn, together with the olive and the vine, and supply some resources to the inhabitants, whose principal dependence, however, is on the sea and on emigration.

What particularly attracted my notice, was a number of little plots of potatoes in very good order; and near the port of Bracco, I saw a considerable quantity of them growing on a piece of land recently cleared, which appeared to be exceedingly well managed. I complimented, on this head, the post-master, whose property I supposed it to be; but he informed me that it belonged to the French gens d'armes stationed there. He told me that our soldiers, whose numbers it had been found necessary, for good reasons, to increase in these parts, had introduced the cultivation of the potatoe within the last five years. The peasants followed their example, and the last year of scarcity greatly contributed to its progress.



I could not help being struck at the singular means by which Providence had bestowed on this country, the only production, in my opinion, adapted to its wretched soil. Assuredly no Agricultural Society would have thought of it.

I had thus traversed the whole chain of the Appennines, and found myself on the *Riviera*, or coast of the Gulf of Genoa. I followed the windings of the shore to the top of the Gulf, whence, as from a throne, that celebrated city proudly domineers over these seas.

I shall not say any thing of the splendour of Genoa, of its palaces, or of the monuments of its ancient glory, as these have already been repeatedly described. I shall confine my account to the singular aspect of the barren, but majestic scenery by which it is surrounded; and I cannot do this better than by continuing the narrative of my journey.

At six o'clock in the evening of the 21st, I set out from Genoa, on my return to Tuscany, along the road by the sea side, called La Cornice. At present this road is a mere path, traced along the shore, or on the side of the mountains; but, in a few years, it will be formed into a noble terrace, encircling the Gulf, and thus uniting Italy to France. Some parts of it are already completed, but as they do not join, I could not profit by them, and therefore accompanied the courier, who still passes this way, on horseback.

It was a holiday, and the whole population of Genoa was come forth to breathe, during a fine evening, the refreshing breeze from the sea, and the perfume of the orange-trees. The sun was setting behind the mountains, and a semi-tint was beginning to steal over the villas built on their sides, so that I could scarcely distinguish the fresco paintings with which their fronts were ornamented. Elegantly-dressed women, attracted by the galloping of our horses, were peeping out from the numerous arbours which bordered the road side. They were not, as formerly, enveloped in a veil which concealed their whole figure. They had renounced the shawls known by the name of *mezzaros*, which, it is said, were not unfrequently employed for purposes of coquetry, and were dressed in the French style.

After an hour's riding, we were obliged to slacken our pace, the new road terminating here, and quitted these environs, so highly embellished by art, at the close of day. Our road was now a rocky path, the windings of which led us sometimes through woods of olive-trees, and at others, along the sea-shore. It was perfectly dark. The inhabitants had all retired to their dwellings. The plants which grew along our path, exhaled their nameless odours: the nightingales, concealed



amidst the foliage of the trees, poured forth their songs, and innumerable fire-flies, fluttering from flower to flower, illumined their blossoms with a transient light, and seemed, as it were, a shower of stars descended upon earth to cheer the night.

Trusting to my horse's acquaintance with the road, I threw the reins upon his neck, and committed myself, without fear, to his guidance. I inhaled the air, cooled by the freshness of the evening, but still soft and tepid. I listened to the murmur of the sea as it broke gently on the shore: for such was the serenity of the weather, that its waves, though coming from the main, made no more noise than the rippling of a brook. I would fain have stopped to enjoy, without interruption, the various sensations occasioned by this scene of repose. All nature seemed to speak a language in unison with the clearness of the sky, and the calmness of the sea. The deliciousness of the climate, and the perfume of the flowers, conspired to create around me an ideal world, which my fancy embellished at pleasure. I wished to protract this pleasing dream, for I foresaw that it would vanish with the return of day; and I regretted its approach, as the destruction of one of those reveries, the illusions of which are so delightful.

The rising sun revealed all the magnificence of the scene which surrounded me. I was then near Sestri, on one of the terraces recently cut in the rock, in the line of the projected road, whence I commanded the sea. It was less calm than the evening before, and its waves, raised by the southern wind, broke at the foot of the rocks, and bedewed the shrubs, which grew in their clefts, with spray. The mists of the morning were spreading, in silver tints, over the sides of the mountains; and villas, embosomed in vines and fig-trees, were seen, here and there, in their recesses. They were decorated with frescoes, which deceived the eye with the appearance of a noble architecture; and their flat roofs were surrounded by a balustrade, covered with jasmine and creeping plants. All around, the surface of the earth presented nothing but naked sterility, or useless shew. The mountains of Genoa seem intended to evince, that nature occasionally delights to invest herself in ostentatious pomp, without any purpose of utility. The vegetables which serve to support life, are utterly excluded, while those which are productive only of ornament, grow here in profusion. We find neither harvests nor fruits amidst these rocks, but every plant is a flower, and every shrub a laurel.

I travelled all day along narrow paths, amidst the magni-



ficence of this sterile region. I could, with difficulty, procure any thing to eat in the miserable dwellings at which we stopped, nor did our horses find a better supply on the mountains, where they were turned to graze. They were lean and small, but I could not help admiring the spirit with which they climbed up the sides of the mountains. They are brought from the Maremme of Tuscany, and from the wild habits in which they are bred, acquire surprizing obstinacy and spirit. At length, from an elevated point, I descried the extensive basin of Spezia, encompassed by hills covered with olive-trees. The road widens as it descends into the valley; and thence to Sarzana, the traveller again meets with the new one. It was just finished, not any carriage having, as yet, left its trace on the sand with which it was covered. None, in fact, are to be found in the neighbourhood: and I, therefore, continued my journey on horseback to Sarzana, where I arrived as the day closed.

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FLORENCE, *May 4, 1813.*

I SHALL not attempt, after M. Sismondi, to give a detailed account of the agriculture of Tuscany. My object is to convey a general idea of this charming country, for which purpose I shall adopt the course I have hitherto pursued, by continuing the narrative of my journey.

Tuscany comprehends three regions perfectly distinct. The Arno, flowing through its smiling vale, forms, amidst the mountains, a sort of basin, in the centre of which Florence is situated; and which extends southward as far as Cortona, and westward as far as Pisa. In the vicinity of the sea, this basin, which, higher up, is frequently very narrow, expands into a vast plain, of aqueous formation, level as a mirror.

The right bank of the Arno is bordered by the chain of the high Appennines: its left extends to the sea, and to the frontiers of the Ecclesiastical State. The surface of the latter is broken and irregular, the air, for the most part, unwholesome, and the hills crowned with ruins of all ages. The Appennine region comprises two-sixths of the whole extent of Tuscany: the rich vale of the Arno one-sixth only: the remainder is occupied by the tract known by the name of the Maremme, or the region of the Malaria, of which Sienna may be considered as the capital.

The fertile and beautiful part of Tuscany is thus limited to one-sixth of its whole extent, and it is to this alone that the descriptions given by travellers are confined. I shall add my account to the rest; but I wish also to make the reader



acquainted with that unhealthy, unknown, and savage country, which nature seems to have struck with premature sterility and death, and which every where bears the marks of happier times, and of former prosperity. Tuscany has been, at two distinct periods, the theatre of the highest civilization, and affords, perhaps, a better opportunity than can elsewhere be found, for observing the influence of man over the works of the creation.

I have, in the preceding letter, described the general character and scenery of the Appennines. They present nothing to the eye but valleys devastated by the waters, rocky tracts, wooded declivities, and natural pastures. The same features prevail in the mountains of Tuscany, and it would be superfluous to retrace them. There is, however, a softer character about the Florentine scenery, as if the vicinity of that terrestrial elysium shed a sweet influence around it. The mountains are not so high, their declivities are more gentle, their pastures greener, and their valleys more populous.

But here, as throughout the Appennines, the inhabitants are poor, living on chesnuts, and migrating, for employment, to Florence, Leghorn, the fertile vale of the Arno, and the mines of the island of Elba.

The Arno, before it reaches Florence, flows through the Val di Chiana. As this valley is, in every respect, similar to that known by the name of Val d'Arno, which extends from Florence to the sea, an account of my excursion through the latter, will give a sufficient idea of the whole course of the river.

I left Florence alone, and directed my course by Pistoia and Lucca, to Pisa, following the right bank of the Arno, along the foot of the mountains. Their bases are covered with olive-woods, whose foliage conceals from the eye innumerable little farms. The higher acclivities are occupied by the chesnut trees, whose vigorous verdure forms a pleasing contrast with the pale tint of the olives, and gives a sort of brilliancy to the entire scene.

The road I pursued was bordered on each side with rural habitations, not more than an hundred paces distant from each other: they are built of brick, and display a justness of proportion, and an elegance of form, unknown in more northern climes. They consist of a single story, with frequently only a door and two windows in front. They are always placed at a short distance from the road, from which they are separated by a low wall, and a terrace of a few feet in breadth. On this wall are usually placed vases, copied from the antique, in which are planted aloes, flowers, or young orange-trees. The



house itself is entirely covered with vines, so that in summer-time the traveller is at a loss to know whether they are verdant arbours, or habitations intended for winter.

Before these dwellings, bands of young girls, dressed in white, with corsets of silk, and straw-hats ornamented with flowers to shade the face, are busily employed in plaiting the fine mats of which the Florence hats are made. This manufacture is the source of the prosperity of the Val d'Arno. It brings in annually three millions of liras, which are earned exclusively by the women, the men not being concerned in this branch of business. The girls buy the straw for a few sols, and vie with each other in plaiting it as finely as possible. They themselves dispose of the hats they manufacture, and the profits they derive from them are their marriage portion. The father of the family has, however, a right to exact from the females of his household a certain share in the labours of his farm; but this is commonly performed by the women from the mountains, who are hired by the girls of the plain to do the work for them. The latter can, in fact, earn from thirty to forty sols a day by their plaiting, while the hire of a poor woman from the Appennines is not more than eight or ten. They observe, that the labours of the field would harden their fingers, and render them unfit for the delicacy of their work.

Such are the country girls of the Vale of Arno, whose graces and beauty are celebrated by every traveller; whose language Alfieri went to study; and who seem born to embellish the arts, and to supply them with models. They are Arcadian nymphs, but not shepherdesses; they have only their health and good-humour, without having to endure their toils and fatigue.

I have been told, that all the straw required for the manufacture of hats in Tuscany is grown on two acres of land. It is the stalk of a species of wheat without a beard, drawn up, and rendered delicate, by the poorness of the soil. It is sown very thick on calcareous spots on the hills, which are never manured, and is cut before the grain is quite ripe.

The vicinity of the habitations to each other, of itself indicates that the farms attached to them are small, and that property is very much divided in this valley. They are, in fact, not more than from three to ten acres in extent, lying round the dwelling-house, and divided into compartments by small canals, and rows of trees. These trees are sometimes mulberries, but generally poplars, the leaves of which are gathered for the cattle, while their stems are employed to support the



vines, which are interwoven among them in a thousand different ways.

These compartments, in the form of long squares, are sufficiently spacious to admit of being cultivated by a plough without wheels, drawn by a pair of oxen, which are kept by ten or twelve of the farmers at the common expence, and employed by them alternately. They are brought from the Campagna of Rome and the Maremme, and are of the Hungarian breed: they are taken great care of, and are covered with white housings, bedecked with red ribbons and embroidery.

Almost all the farmers keep a light, elegant-looking horse, used for drawing a small two-wheeled cart, tastefully constructed, and painted red, which serves for all the business of the farm; but more especially for taking the farmers' daughters to mass, or to the ball. On holidays, hundreds of these little cars may be seen moving in every direction on each of the roads, filled with young women, adorned with ribbons and flowers.

The farms in the Vale of Arno do not produce sufficient fodder for cows; but it is a part of the system to rear calves, which are bought in at three months old, kept for a year and a half, and then sold to the butcher. They are brought from the pastures of the Maremme to the fairs of the Vale of Arno, by the cattle dealers.

The reason of this practice will be better understood from an account of the rotation adopted in these vallies. There not being any natural meadows, the leaves of the trees, the remains of the vegetables, and a little trefoil, are the only food provided for the cattle. Every thing is reserved for man in this country, which is populous beyond measure, through the effect of long civilization. There is no absolutely fixed rotation in this region; but the following is the most prevailing one, and will give an idea of the rapid succession of crops.

1st Year, Indian Corn, French-beans, Peas, or other kinds of pulse, manured.

2d — Wheat.

3d — Winter-beans.

4th — Wheat.

5th — Trefoil, sown after the wheat cut in spring, and followed by *sorgo*, a species of large pannic, or millet, yielding a coarse flour, which is made into a wretched sort of soup, and *pollenta*.

There are thus six crops in five years, of which one only is destined for cattle.

Though the land is manured only once during this period,



the crops are nevertheless very fine. This must be attributed to the depth, fertility, and coolness of the alluvial soil; to the minute care with which it is cultivated; to the judicious intermixture of the crops; and finally, to the thickly-placed habitations, the fertilizing effect of which, though imperceptible to our senses, we are compelled to admit from experience.

The soil, thus subdivided, supports an immense population; but this is on terms of the strictest economy, never affording a surplus which may be reserved against years of failure. When these occur, the produce of wine, of oil, and of the straw manufacture, brings in return some supplies from the port of Leghorn, and from the markets of Romagna. It is not the natural fertility of a country, or the abundance which it displays, to the eye of the traveller, that constitutes the well-being of its inhabitants. It is the number of individuals among whom its produce is to be divided, and the portion which falls to the share of each; and which is here very small.

I have, as has been seen, described a charming country, fertile, well watered, and covered with a perpetual vegetation. I have displayed its innumerable enclosures, filled, like so many gardens, with a thousand various productions, and adorned by elegant dwellings, enwreathed with vines, and bedecked with flowers. But on entering these habitations you find an appearance of nakedness, a more than frugal table, and a total absence of all the conveniences of life. Not any of the families by whom they are inhabited are proprietors of the farms they cultivate; they are tenants only, and pay to the landlords the half of all their crops in kind. The latter, some of whom own from ten to a hundred farms, reside in the numerous towns of the fertile vallies of Tuscany; so that the population is divided into two classes, who never mix, the citizens proprietors, and the peasants non-proprietors. When we add to this the number of merchants and artizans, who also inhabit the towns, the cause of their great number and populousness becomes evident.

The amount of capital expended in the Vale of Arno, in building the innumerable farm-houses, in subdividing the land, and in bringing the whole system to its present state of perfection, must have been very considerable, without reckoning the extensive works it has been found necessary to establish, in order to preserve the low grounds from the fury of the waters. This valley being placed between two chains of mountains, one of which is very lofty, was periodically devastated by a multitude of torrents which precipitated themselves from them, loaded with stones and rubbish. It was necessary



to controul these torrents, and to restrain their violence, without losing the benefit of their waters, and of the soil which they brought with them.

To accomplish this double purpose, the courses of the torrents are embanked by strong walls, and thus formed into so many canals. These are made straight, that the violence of the waters may not break down any angle, and that they may deposit the stones they contain as they go along. Openings are made at regular distances, on a level with the average height of the stream, in order that the water, escaping laterally, may overflow the adjacent land, and deposit upon it the mud with which it is charged. A multitude of successive canals, from these openings, divide the principal current; and, while they moderate its violence, diffuse the benefits of its waters over the surrounding fields. These canals branch out into innumerable ramifications, so that there is not a single flat which is not inclosed by them. They are all cut at right angles, and inclosed by walls of brick.

Each torrent having a complete and separate system of restraint and subdivision, the vallies are overspread, as it were, with a net-work of little streams, which diffuse coolness and moisture over every part. A multitude of bridges and sluices connect these islets together, and regulate the communication between them; so that the capital employed in the construction of the whole must have been immense.

Far greater wealth was, however, required to erect the numerous towns and villages scattered along the course of the Arno. They have an appearance of splendour which is found only in the principal cities of other countries. Their temples, their fountains, their promenades, all their edifices, in short, unite to the most perfect elegance a striking appearance of magnificence and grandeur. The whole capital of Tuscany, at the present day, would be insufficient to build the churches which it contains, with their ornaments, their marbles, porphyries, &c.

I was more particularly struck with this architectural magnificence, this profusion of monuments, on arriving at Pistoia. Of this city it may be said, that it was built as a model, and that the inhabitants had come thither by accident;—for of forty thousand which it formerly contained, only eight thousand now remain. The population of all the towns has diminished nearly after the same rate; and yet its amount is still prodigious. In the prosperous times of Italy it must have exceeded every known proportion. The vastness of the buildings, and the small number of the inhabitants, give to the cities of Italy, at the present day, amid so many palaces, and so



great an architectural display, an air of solitude, and departed splendour.

Beyond Pistoia the country becomes more pleasant and fertile, because the alluvial soil is deeper, and the valley, as it opens, being further removed from the mountains, enjoys a warmer climate. The verdure accordingly is richer, the harvests more abundant, and the horizon more extended.

The road approaches the foot of the Appennines, near Pescia, a pretty town, situated on the side of a valley covered with olive-trees, in the midst of which, on the declivity of the hill, stands a smiling, rural dwelling, accessible only by a narrow path, concealed by groups of fig-trees, vines, and aloes. In this retreat I visited M. Sismondi, at that time engaged in writing the last volumes of his History of Italy. From his sheltered abode he beheld the vast theatre of the scenes he has described; while in the distance, towards the mountains of Volterra, ruined towns and castles seemed to present themselves as venerable testimonials of the traditions of the times.

A single hill, detached from the Appennines, stretches towards the mouths of the Arno, and separates the vale from the territory of Lucca. The plain of Lucca is still more fertile than the vale of Arno. Its agriculture is similar, and its produce much more abundant. But though its natural advantages are greater, the industry here displayed is far inferior. Neither the same elegance in the houses, nor the same care in the construction of the canals, is to be found: every thing is more rough and neglected. The women are ill clad, and have lost the graces of their language, as well as the charms of their figure.

The ancient city of Lucca stands in the middle of this plain, near the course of the Serchio. I know not whence it is, that it has not the least appearance of an Italian town. Its crooked streets, pointed roofs, and irregular construction, render it more like a city of Flanders. I have not been able to meet with an explanation of this singularity any where.

The road from Lucca to Pisa passes, along with the Serchio, through an opening of the hills which separate these two towns, and enters the vast plain of Pisa and Leghorn. On approaching Pisa and the sea, the garden-like cultivation which enlivens the vicinity of Florence, ceases; the trees become fewer, the houses are thinly scattered, and extensive fields lie open to the plough. The innumerable families of the vale have disappeared: a few large farmers occupy the land, for we are now on the confines of the region of the Malaria, and of the meadow-lands.



PISA, May 15, 1813.

BEFORE entering the Maremme of Tuscany, I wish to say a word of one of the most remarkable agricultural establishments in Europe, which is situated at the gate of Pisa, and visited by scarcely any travellers. It is called *San Rossore*, and was originally formed by the Medici family; but is now managed by Sig. Batistini with distinguished intelligence and ability.

Between Pisa and the sea, from the mouths of the Serchio to those of the Arno, the waters have left a plain of more than a square league in extent, the soil of which, being mixed with the sea-sand, was too poor to be worth cultivating. A wood of evergreen oaks stands in the middle of this plain, which is covered with a fine turf, and forms the domain of San Rossore.

I visited it on horseback, accompanied by Sig. Batistini. On leaving Pisa you pass by the celebrated hanging tower, which has remained in this impending position for centuries; and immediately enter an avenue, planted with elms, which leads to the casino, or hunting-villa, of San Rossore. On each side of the avenue extend meadows, which supply hay for the winter support of the stock of the farm. The surface of these meadows, however, is speedily converted into a short turf, scattered over with briars and evergreen oaks, which give it the appearance of a neglected park. The Italians designate these wild tracts, composed of wood and pasture, by the name of *Macchie*.

We soon after reached the casino, a pretty square building of two stories, adorned by Leopold with frescoes, representing the pleasures of the chase. Hence we directed our course northward towards the district watered by the Serchio, walking on the turf under the shade of the oaks. On our passage we came to a vast shed, supported by pillars, the upper part of which is used as a loft for hay, and the lower divided into several compartments by racks. Here the horses pass the night in bad weather, and are supplied with hay from the racks when the pasture fails.

A little farther on, in an opening of the wood, we stopped near a new sheep-fold, intended for two hundred Merinos, which have been lately introduced upon the farm. They pass the winter in these sandy pastures, and the summer on the mountains. Sig. Batistini's mode of treatment, which is exactly analogous to that of Spain, appeared to me to suit them; for the flock was in good condition, and contained some remarkably fine animals.



On the banks of the Serchio, where the herbage is more luxuriant, we found a stud of horses, which generally feed in this part. It consisted of twenty mares, with their followers, and a stallion. A little farther on was a similar herd. There are eight of them in the whole establishment. These horses are quite wild, and are left entirely at liberty, both on the plains, where they pass the winter, and on the mountains, where they pasture during summer: the only attention paid to them is on the journey.

What principally attracted my notice, with respect to them, was the separation of the mares, who form so many distinct herds, governed by their stallion. These herds never mix, or if they accidentally do, a mortal combat ensues between the stallions: for the fierce jealousy of these animals is altogether of an Asiatic character, far beyond that of the horses of the north.

Each herd has its district, to which it keeps, without any interference on the part of the keepers; and this division, which is strictly observed, is so fairly made, that each has an equal share of the pasturage, in the space which it has appropriated to itself.

These horses are all made very much alike. Their bones are small, but their joints are too weak and flexible. Their haunches are low and flat, the loins and withers prominent, the shoulder loose, the chest deer-shaped, and their heads disproportionably long and narrow. They are, in fact, execrable nags: fit, perhaps, for light cavalry, but good for nothing here. They are too light for draught, too high for the saddle, and too vicious in every respect; and are scarcely ever sold, except to the charcoal makers, and for post-horses.

Signor Batistini, aware of their defects, took a journey to Normandy, for the purpose of buying some horses there to improve the breed. The only produce of the cross that I saw, were foals of two months old; the awkward shape of the head was corrected, and they appeared altogether very handsome.

On leaving the quarter where the horses were, we directed our course towards the sea, through a wood of evergreen oaks. I remarked that the leaves of all these trees were cropped to the height of about twelve feet from the ground: not a leaf being left below that line. I was told that it was occasioned by the camels browsing the foliage as high as their necks would reach, and that we should soon see a herd of these foreign animals.

We had, in fact, scarcely left the wood, before we found ourselves on a vast sandy plain, bounded only by the sea and



the forest. It was truly an Arabian desert. Some of the camels which were lying down on the sand, got up at our approach, and others which were grazing along the shore, turned their heads, and gazed stupidly at us. More than two hundred of them were scattered over the plain, wandering silently about, and awaiting the heat of the day, to return to the forest. At some distance were a group of female camels, with their young, but they took to flight at our approach, and trotted with such rapidity, that our horses could with difficulty overtake them at full speed. In this rapid chase, the camels leaped, bounded, and displayed a vivacity which I did not suppose they possessed, and which their odd figure rendered not a little ridiculous.

The singular appearance of these animals; the profound solitude; together with the prospect of the sea, on which some English vessels, belonging to the Leghorn station, were cruising along the coast, as if tempted by the fineness of the day, gave to the whole scene a strange and oriental character, to which nothing similar can, perhaps, be found in Europe.

This Asiatic family has subsisted, in this district, ever since the time of the crusades, when they were brought thither by a Grand Prior of the order of St. John, who was a native of Pisa. They are more remarkable than useful, being employed in the work of the farm, but for no other purpose. They supply all the mountebanks in Europe with those which they lead about from town to town, at the moderate price of six or seven louis.

We had now reached the mouths of the Arno, at the southern extremity of the farm. Here feed, during the whole year, a herd of eighteen hundred wild cows, still more fierce than the horses or camels; it being always difficult, and often dangerous, to approach them. They are of a greyish slate colour, their limbs small boned, and their whole make round, and well set: they carry their heads nobly and gracefully, and seem proud of the immense horns with which nature has adorned their fronts.

It is impossible to milk these cows, nor indeed is it worth while to attempt it, as they become dry at the end of three months, as soon as they have weaned their calves. These are sold, as soon as they leave the mother, to the little farmers of the Vale of Arno. The cows are killed at seven or eight years old, for the sake of their hides and flesh. They are pursued by hunters armed with lances, or torreadors, as they are termed; a sort of festival which rarely passes without accident.

This establishment, the sole principle of which consists in



leaving nature entirely to herself, is found in the immediate vicinity of the country described in my preceding letter, where she has been so transformed by civilization, as not to have a single original feature remaining. These two extremes are necessary to each other. This Tartarian system supplies the industrious Florentine with animals which he has no means of rearing, but which are necessary for the labour of his farm; and a market is thus provided for the spontaneous productions of the desert. This reciprocal interchange subsists every where, to the mutual advantage of both parties, because it enables the respective farmers to devote themselves exclusively to that species of culture which best suits the nature of their land.

This equilibrium is most perfect in those countries where a happy intermixture of natural and artificial crops enables the agriculturist to make these exchanges on his own farm, and where one species of produce serves to fertilize another; as is the case in Lombardy, Belgium, and in every country where art employs the spontaneous vegetation of the earth, to obtain a more abundant supply of productions, selected by the choice of the cultivator.

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SIENNA, *May 25, 1813.*

A PART of my plan was to pass through Volterra, in my way to Sienna, and thus to traverse the country known by the title of the Maremme, or the region of the Malaria. It stretches along the Mediterranean, from Leghorn to Terracina, extending inland as far as the first chain of the Appennines.

It is a theatre in which are contained the remains of the ancient world, and of its vanished glory; a land of memory, where the traveller finds nothing but ruins. Nature, exhausted by her former efforts, seems to have renounced the work of production: the fields are steril and uninhabited: the waters unwholesome, and embued with sulphur: and the forests have no inhabitants but their aged oaks, which have bid defiance to time.

A recital of my journey will, however, give a better idea of this land of antiquity, than mere declamation.

After quitting Pisa, I re ascended the left bank of the Arno, as far as Empoli, where I left the great Florence road, and took that leading to Volterra and Piombino. This last, which was made by Leopold, and is the only one that leads to the Maremme, is carried skilfully along the side of the hills. It is only nine feet wide, but is kept in such nice order, that it resembles a gravel walk, rather than a high road.

From Empoli I proceeded directly southwards, advancing



towards the chain of hills which incloses the vale of Arno. I continued my way for another mile, under the verdant bowers which adorn the banks of that river, and then began to ascend the hill which was soon to hide this delicious vale from my sight.

As I ascended, the vegetation became weaker and more scanty. I was still surrounded by vines and olives, but their foliage was pale, like the soil from which they sprung. On the other side of the hill, I crossed several small valleys. They were still animated by villages, vineyards, and cultivated enclosures, and watered by a few canals; but the houses had lost the graceful character of the dwellings of the plain. They were clustered around the churches, and were neither adorned with flowers, nor enlivened by pretty peasant girls. A few villas and country houses were still to be seen, distinguishable, at a distance, by their long plantations of cypresses.

The land is here, also, much divided, and occupied by farmers who rent it. It produces good wine, a little oil, wheat, Indian corn, and sorgo; but inferior both in quality and quantity, the wheat yielding only three for one. Sain-foin is also cultivated, but to no great extent. It is grown for the horses, great numbers of which are kept here, being employed in the carriage of all kinds of goods. This description of country, which is by no means unpicturesque, continues as far as *Castel Fiorentino*, situated four leagues from Empoli, on the frontier of the desert.

Here all cultivation ceases, and we enter the Maremme. The surface of the country is undulated, like the vast waves of an immense ocean, but softened in their forms by time, and the labours of man. On the ridges were to be seen, from time to time, enclosures of mouldering walls, and ancient towers, which seemed still to make a shew of protection to the houses which were visible through their ruins.

In their valleys, were to be seen a few houses, scattered at great distances from each other, and unsurrounded by gardens, or verdure of any kind. They were merely habitations attached to some plots of Indian corn or sorgo, as if to inform the traveller that a few miserable beings still survived the dissolution of their country.

Above all the rest, rises the eminence on which the aged walls of Volterra repose. From a distance, that ancient city appears in the horizon like a vast assemblage of walls, steeples, and towers. One might term it the capital of the middle ages, separated, by the wilderness, from all those countries which have forgotten the manners of their ancestors, and their respect for times past.

After having travelled all day, I stopped, as it closed, to pass the night at a solitary house called *Castaneo*. The influence of



the pestilential atmosphere having already been felt here, the proprietors of the estate had abandoned it, and retired to San Gemignano, leaving, for the entertainment of strangers, a tall spare figure of a man, whose paleness had, for years, rendered him the image of death. I had no other companion than my guide; and had no sooner entered this dwelling, where hospitality had scarcely any thing to offer, than the shaking of the walls, occasioned by an earthquake, which we felt at three several intervals, compelled us to quit it. The shocks here were weak, but elsewhere were violent, having thrown down a house, as also a part of the church of San Casciano.

I sat down on the trunk of a tree, whence I contemplated the wilderness which surrounded me. It was in the state of the tracts called by the Italians *Macchie*, scattered over with a few aged oaks, which are never replaced; for, as those tracts are used for pasturage, the cattle devour all the young shoots as they appear. These ancient trees, the remains of former forests, indicate, by their presence, that they belong to a period when man, in these regions, was still able to watch over his possessions: at the present time he no longer attempts it.

While seated at this spot, mournfully contemplating these deserted fields, one of the little cars used in the vale of Arno approached. Two children were laid in it: and the mother walked on foot by the side of them, never taking her eyes off them for a moment. She was still handsome, but pale and fatigued, and seemed overwhelmed with distress. She lifted her children carefully out, and asked for milk for them to drink: there was none to be had. She gave them some water, which was yellow and sulphurous; anxiously watching them as they drank it, and seeming to count, as it were, every drop. These two poor children had been bitten by a mad dog, and the unhappy mother was taking them to Volterra. She told me that a nail of the true cross was kept there, which, if applied to wounds of this sort, prevented their fatal effects. I could not forbear insinuating some doubts as to its efficacy; but she assured me, that it had been employed as a remedy in Tuscany from time immemorial. I took the liberty of telling her that cauterization was considered as still more efficacious; but she then added, that before the sacred relic was applied to the wounds, it was made red-hot. This removed my fears as to the fate of these poor children.

It appears, then, that the secret of cauterizing, so lately introduced in surgery, in these cases, has been long practised in Tuscany. Nothing but the accidental visit of a traveller was wanting to make it known; but what traveller ever goes to Volterra?



The inhabitants of the Maremme fix the period of their decline to about the time of the pestilence which prevailed in the sixteenth century, by which a great part of the population appears to have been destroyed. From that period it has never been sufficiently numerous to resist the destructive influence of the Malaria, which augments in proportion as the resistance of civilization diminishes.

The decline of the population, by destroying competition, caused the price of property to fall: at which time the great capitalists of Tuscany obtained possession of it, and, from that moment, all productive activity was banished, without hope of return. The attempts made by Leopold to plant colonies in the Maremme, all failed, the colonists dying of the fever before the settlement could be established. The soil is become sterile, as if utterly exhausted by the labours of man: it presents merely a pure white clay, mixed with sulphur, which forms in great abundance in this region. Sulphureous springs are seen bubbling out of the ground, announcing themselves, at a distance, by an odour, and by exhalations which give a gloomy aspect to the face of the whole country. There is a frightful appearance about these *solfaterre*, which drives every inhabitant from their neighbourhood. Fetid flames rise amidst whirls of smoke from these little craters, the sides of which are covered with sulphureous incrustations, while a livid water boils in the centre.

There remained, therefore, no way of turning to advantage the soil of these countries, depopulated by nature, and fallen into the grasp of the great capitalists, but to abandon it to its indigenous productions, and to furnish it with a migratory population, which should reside there only during the healthy season, and pasture their flocks on the herbage spontaneously yielded by nature.

The genial climate permitting the growth of vegetation during the whole winter, there has been established, between the plains of the Maremme and the mountains of the Appennines, an exchange of population, by means of which, each of these regions is turned to the best account that its circumstances will admit.

The extensive pastures of the mountains belong to different parishes, to whom a floating capital would be as little advantageous, as to the great land-owners of the Maremme. An intermediate class has, therefore, naturally placed itself between them, consisting of migratory herdsmen and shepherds, whose only possessions are their flocks, and who follow them from the mountains to the plain, according to the season, hiring the pasturage necessary for their support, at so much per head.

Such is the agricultural system of the Maremme—a system,



the adoption of which has, in some measure, been necessitated by circumstances, and which is likely to be permanent ; for without it, there would be nothing but a perfect solitude. Its continuance is further secured by other circumstances, both of a local and general nature ; for the surrounding countries all depend for their supply of animal food on the produce of the Maremme.

Four hundred thousand sheep, thirty thousand horses, besides a vast number of horned cattle and goats, are fed in these regions, and make up for the total want of breeding stock in the vale of Arno. The effect of this arrangement has, no doubt, been to create a desert in the midst of Italy, and to people it with a set of half savage beings, who are seen scouring along these solitudes, like Tartars, armed with long lances, and clad in coarse cloth and raw skins. But this state of things is still more the work of nature than of man : and some intelligence was manifested in thus getting possession, as it were, in defiance of her, of a tract which seemed destined to be the dominion only of death.

The soil of the Maremme, at the same time that it has ceased to yield the vegetable productions necessary for the support of man, has become the subject of those chemical combinations by which sulphur, salt, and alum, are formed in immense quantities. The collecting of these furnishes subsistence to a great portion of the inhabitants, though the business is only pursued during the season when there is nothing to apprehend from the effects of the air. In the neighbourhood of Volterra, I was surprised to find the road assume a white colour, which the sun rendered perfectly dazzling. It arose from the alabaster of which the road was made. The whole mountain is composed of it, and it is from hence that the blocks used by the modellers and statuaries are cut. This road, paved with alabaster, gave me the idea of an avenue to an enchanted palace, and had a singular effect, when contrasted with the scene which surrounded me.

After having ascended, for about an hour, I reached the eminence on which Volterra is built. Ruined convents, deserted gardens, with a few olive-trees, mouldering walls, and roofless palaces, attest the ancient splendour of this city, in which three thousand inhabitants, for the most part peasants or manufacturers of alabaster, still vegetate.

No where are the traces of that gradual decay which silently undermines the works of creation, more awfully impressed, than on the walls of Volterra. Its pale inhabitants wander, like shades, amidst ruins of majestic grandeur ; and, as if dismayed at the sight of the surrounding desolation, do not attempt to preserve even their own habitations from the fate which threatens them. They abandon them to the elements, and await, with



resignation, the periodical scourge which nature has commissioned to decimate them every year.

I searched in vain for an inn, and was engaged in seeking for a lodging, when I was stopped by a well-dressed man, who accosted me in French, and our accent mutually discovered to us that we were natives of the same country. This great national tie immediately removed the reserve which so novel an acquaintance seemed to require. He informed me that there was no inn at Volterra, because the landlord could not make a living from it; and he invited me to take up my abode at his house, an offer which I thankfully accepted.

The person who shewed me all this politeness, was Receiver of the District: and as I was not aware that he had any other occupation, I was surprized to see so much bustle about his habitation. It was formerly an immense convent, the four sides of which enclosed, within their porticoes, a spacious court. In this court workmen were going backwards and forwards, and every thing announced bustle and activity. I expressed to him my surprise at this, on which he related to me, that a few years before, as he was rambling for amusement in the neighbourhood of the town, he came to a *solfaterra*, and was struck with the quantity of sulphur which the water had deposited on the banks. It was at a time when that substance was become more valuable, in consequence of the supply from Sicily and Egypt being cut off, and he knew that no one claimed the possession of it. He had a slight knowledge of chemistry, and sent to Leghorn for Chaptal's work, with the assistance of which he attempted to make the sulphur into rolls. He succeeded; sent samples to Marseilles, and was desired to send more. This gave him courage; he gradually extended his manufactory, and makes, at this moment, forty quintals a week, which are sent off, as fast as they are prepared, to Provence.

In the evening we went to the theatre, for no town in Italy, however paltry, is without one. It was sufficiently large, but as the lights were sparingly distributed, we were obliged to feel our way into it. The admission was only five sous, so that we could not complain of the scantiness of the illumination. At length candles were lighted in front of the orchestra, and the curtain drew up. The house was full. The play was a translation of *The Mines of Poland*, a melo-drama of the Ambigu theatre, for Italy no longer furnishes originals: they are content with translating the pieces performed at the Feydeau and the theatres of the Boulevards. The dresses and decorations were tolerably handsome, and the actors performed with a truth and nature which made me blush for ours, and captivated all my attention. The interest which I felt was, however, nothing, in comparison



with that displayed by the impassioned audience of this country town. The critics of Volterra shed tears, leaped, warned the heroine, by their cries, of the dangers to which she was exposed, clapped their hands, and congratulated each other on the happy stratagem by which M. de Pixéricourt accomplished her rescue.

From the towers of Volterra the view extends to a distance over sterile wastes. The nakedness of the prospect is broken only by a few woods of cypresses and evergreen oaks, whose deep verdure, set off by the yellow hue of the soil, makes them appear as if planted for the decoration of so many cemeteries. From the bottom of the vallies rises the continual smoke of the solfaterra, sometimes rolling along in volumes, and at others ascending in columns towards heaven, like the smoke of a sacrifice.

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ROME, *June 10, 1813.*

It is generally supposed that the noxious atmosphere which depopulates the plains of Italy, along the shores of the Mediterranean, proceeds from marshes and stagnating waters, which are every where found to render the air insalubrious. This may, perhaps, be the case in the Pontine marshes; but in the Maremme of Tuscany and the Campagna of Rome, it cannot be attributed to this cause; for we have seen, in the preceding letter, that these Maremme are an elevated region, where the winds and the air have free circulation, and where there are neither marshes nor stagnant waters; and yet I can testify, that this scourge is felt with as much violence on the lofty summit of Radicofani, as in the forests of Mount Soracte.

It would seem probable, that this corruption of the air arises from the chemical constitution of the soil of this volcanic region; a constitution which it has gradually acquired by a process of nature, and a course of events, unknown to us. It is certain at least, that the cause of these constant and terrible phenomena is not yet known. Both the medical men and the chemists, who have attempted to account for them, have alike failed; for their hypotheses are contradicted by facts, and they have never, to the present moment, been able to discover the source of that mysterious influence which diffuses itself like an invisible fluid; and the presence of which is not in any way indicated. The sky is as clear, the verdure as fresh, the air as serene, as elsewhere: the tranquillity of the scene seems calculated to inspire a feeling of perfect security, and yet I cannot describe the secret dread which one



experiences in spite of ones self on breathing this air, at once so soft and so deleterious.

The effect produced by this slow destruction of the human constitution, cannot be conceived except by those who have actually visited these provinces during the dangerous season. Their dejected inhabitants gradually lose the healthy colour of life; their complexion becomes livid and yellow: their strength declines daily; numbers of them perish before the end of the season; and even those to whom Providence reserves a few more years of existence, have scarcely spirits to desire them. They lose their animation, and fall into a complete despondency; and this moral debilitation tends, perhaps, equally with the pestilential atmosphere, to hasten the termination of their existence.

The effect of this physical and moral depression is a periodical suspension of all social intercourse, as well as of all the pursuits of industry; and the rural economy of these countries has necessarily been arranged with a reference to these circumstances. This economy I was desirous of studying, because it appears to me to have been misunderstood by all travellers: and I shall now attempt to describe it.

The great road from Florence to Rome passes through the Maremme of Tuscany as far as Acquapendente, where it enters the Roman territory. Here the nature of the soil, and with it the face of the country, changes. The argillaceous hills, whose whiteness and bareness fatigue the eye, have disappeared, and a luxuriant vegetation announces the fertility of the black volcanic sand of which the soil is composed. For several leagues the road successively rises and falls, till it reaches the lakes of Bolseno and Vico, around which immense forests, extending from the Appennines to the sea-shore, have grown for centuries. In the midst of these woods, which human industry seems to have forgotten, are openings of great extent, covered, like the savannahs of America, with natural grasses, and plants, whose singular growth gives a sort of African character to this neglected scenery.

From time to time we meet with towns and cities, with whose names history has rendered our imaginations familiar; but which, at the present day, seem like the mausolea of generations past, around which the inhabitants have taken up their melancholy residence, through veneration for their memory.

These towns are surrounded by fertile gardens and vineyards, where the vines are not trained over trees, as in Tuscany, but against trellises of reeds. Fig-trees and aloes grow every where amidst the ruins, and adorn them with their deep



verdure and Oriental forms; while at a distance, corn-fields, interspersed in the openings of the woods, display, amidst the wildness of nature, the only mark of the presence and industry of man.

The crops produced by these fields are most luxuriant. The land is previously suffered to repose for seven years in a state of pasturage; and such is its fertility, that immediately after the crop is off, it becomes spontaneously covered with vigorous herbage. In this state it feeds immense herds of horned cattle, horses, and sheep; but after a few years the turf wears out; briars, reeds, the ricinus, or palma-christi, and other broad-leaved plants, cover the soil, and the farmer, after having burned them, ploughs them up. During the year of fallow which succeeds, it is turned over by the spade no less than seven times, and it is not till after this labour, which is necessary to destroy the roots and germs of the wild vegetables, that the corn is sown. The land thus prepared yields a produce of eight for one, and is then again suffered to return to the state of natural pasture, from which it has been with so much trouble reclaimed.

In this part of Italy, therefore, of which Viterbo is the capital, one-seventh only of the land is in a state of cultivation; the rest being abandoned to its spontaneous vegetation, and to the pasturage of cattle. The whole extent of cleared land is, indeed, very limited, two-thirds of the country being covered by forests.

The vegetation of these majestic woods, cherished by the hand of nature, is too luxuriant to be employed, as in Tuscany, for pasturage. The eye cannot penetrate their depth; and the imagination peoples their gloom with the manes of that ancient people who formerly rendered these deserts illustrious, and delights in contemplating amidst the solitary shades thus consecrated by their memory.

The sound of the axe is rarely heard here, for the value of the timber would by no means repay the expence of felling it. It is only used in working the iron mines of the Island of Elba, the ore of which is brought to Bracciano and its vicinity. There is no other market near enough to render it worth the while to cut the timber. As for the consumption of the country, it is so trifling as to be scarcely perceptible.

The whole region I have been describing, is divided into vast estates, except the land immediately adjacent to the towns, where there are gardens and vineyards. These extensive domains are at once a result, and a cause, of the insalubrity of the atmosphere, and have long since banished all the rural population from the fields. Throughout the whole



country, not a village, not a hamlet, I may even say, not a farm-house, is to be seen. The peasantry live in the cities and towns, where landlords, farmers, labourers, merchants, and artisans, all vegetate together. The only erections that appear in the country are solitary buildings at great distances from each other, called *Casali*. They are attached to the several estates, but contain no families, or inhabitants of any kind; being merely a place of shelter, during the working season, for the herdsmen and labourers, who retire there of an evening to avoid the humidity of the nights, and to eat the provisions which are brought to them from the neighbouring town. There is nothing rural, nothing patriarchal, about these dwellings. The housewife never collects her children to the evening repast, the cock never summons the husbandman to his morning labours, the swallow never builds her nest there; nothing is heard but the croaking of the crows, which hover, like evil omens, about these abodes of melancholy.

The cattle which rove about these immense farms, under the care of a few herdsmen, are very superior to those found on the scanty pastures of Tuscany. They are of the most stately make and beautiful form, and their immense horns give them a proud and dignified air, which is heightened by a certain fierce expression, derived from their wild and savage habits of life. All their movements are measured and graceful, and their action is altogether different from the breeds of the North; insomuch, that they are employed in every description of work, even in carrying goods; for which purpose they are far preferable to the horses.

At Ronciglione, situated at the foot of the mountains of Viterbo, commences the celebrated plain which surrounds the city of Rome. It is bounded by the sea and by a range of mountains, enclosing it like an amphitheatre, from the promontory of Circe to the hills of ancient Etruria. The surface of this plain, which is thirty leagues in length, by ten or twelve wide, is not level and uniform, like those of aqueous formation; but forms a continued suite of undulations. These do not follow any common direction, nor are any of them much higher than the others, but they confine the view, so that you only see the country immediately around you.

This peculiar disposition of the soil indicates, at first sight, that it is not the effect of water, a fluid which is always uniform in its laws and direction, but of the volcanic action, which is every where recognizable, and which is altogether irregular.

The vallies which separate the hills of the Campagna of Rome are neither deep nor precipitous. They are mere slopes, softened down by time, cultivation, and the crumbling away



of the soil. The summits are not clothed with wood, but bare, and often entirely destitute of soil; while the sides and bottoms are for the most part very fertile. Throughout the whole of this plain, which bears the name of the Agro Romano, trees are very scarce. The meadows near Monte Rossi are, indeed, still surrounded with majestic white oaks; but thence to the mountains of Albano, we meet only with a few scattered green oaks, beaten by the winds, and which accident alone has preserved. Some rows of fir-trees, however, are occasionally seen at a distance, affording at once a grateful shade to the flocks, and an elegant ornament to these solitary fields.

The general appearance of the plain resembles that of the steppes of Tartary. Like them it presents an immeasurable extent of turf, spotted with tufts of thorns and briers. It is intersected by dead fences of wood roughly hewn, and stripped of its bark by decay. These inclosures separate the different pastures, and keep the cattle from injuring the corn which succeeds in due course, as the natural turf wears out. They contain from thirty to forty acres, belong to some vast domain, the *casale* of which appears in the distance, saddening, rather than embellishing the scene.

The traveller meets with nothing on the road but a few inns, or post-houses. Those of Baccano, and La Storta, belong to the princes Chigi and Borghese, and are built with a magnificence which alone, amidst the desert that surrounds him, reveals to him that he is in the vicinity of Rome. This he would not otherwise suspect, until he reaches the summit of Monte Mario, whence the Tiber, and the seven hills, with their domes and edifices, burst at once upon the view, with the cross of the Basilicum of St. Peter, sublimely towering above them all.

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ROME, June 29, 1812.

IN speaking of Rome I shall say nothing of the Coliseum, or the Capitol; but I shall endeavour to pourtray that city, bowed down with the weight of ages, and of glory, arrived at the final term of her destiny, and already presenting nothing but a mighty ruin. I shall simply relate the impressions which I experienced myself. Perhaps the reader may share them with me. Perhaps I may enable him to form some idea of the great scene of destruction, daily accomplishing within the walls of Rome; a scene, the melancholy grandeur of which is, however, beyond the reach of language, and more solemn than all human ceremonies. It is the great festival of the dead, to be worthily celebrated only by the voice of the desert, and the waves of the Tiber.



I was at Rome in 1791. The city, at that time, contained one hundred and sixty-six thousand inhabitants: the streets were filled with sumptuous equipages and liveries, and decorated with magnificent palaces, in which strangers were received with pressing hospitality: every thing, in short, had an appearance of opulence and splendour. On the present occasion, I entered the city by the same road, but, instead of equipages, it was filled with droves of cattle, goats, and half-wild horses, which a number of Tartar-looking herdsmen, armed with long pikes, and wrapped in cloaks, were driving before them. The air was filled with the clouds of dust which they raised.

These men come every evening with their flocks to seek an asylum within the walls of Rome, from the fate which awaits them in the fields. They take possession of the streets and palaces, which are abandoned by the inhabitants, as the population diminishes, and as the advance of the noxious atmosphere drives them towards the centre of the city. The Porta del Popolo, a part of the Corse, the entire quarters of the Quirinale, of La Trinità del Monte, and the Trastevere, are already deserted; and the country people have taken up their residence in them. The population is now reduced to one hundred thousand, and of this number, ten thousand are vine-dressers, herdsmen, or gardeners. There are extensive districts in Rome, which are nothing more than villages, inhabited by the peasantry, whom the pestilential atmosphere has compelled to abandon their habitations in the country.

So rapid a depopulation, in the space of twenty-two years, is almost without example. The political events which have occurred during that period, have, no doubt, contributed, in some degree, to occasion this reduction; but its principal cause must be referred to the general circumstances of the city, and to the effect of the Malaria. This scourge is every year advancing. Every year it invades some fresh street, some new square or quarter, and every year its terrible influence is augmented; for it increases precisely in the inverse ratio of the resistance occasioned by the population. The fewer inhabitants there are, the more victims: and one funeral is always the fore-runner of many others.

It is, therefore, probable, that we are arrived at that period of the history of this queen of cities, which is destined to strip her of her splendour, and leave to her, of all her glory, nothing but her immortal name. The walls of Rome, like those of Volterra, will contain nothing but a vast assemblage of monuments, palaces, and ruins of all ages. The goatherd, the vine-dresser, and the shepherd, will dwell in her porticoes. Thus will terminate the history of Rome. She has long survived her rivals;



but, like Athens and Persepolis, she must experience the common fate of all that the hand of man hath raised, and be destroyed.

The city presents every where the appearance of ruin. As there are many more houses than inhabitants, they are never repaired: when they get out of order, the occupiers move to others. Neither doors, stairs, nor roofs, are ever replaced: they tumble to pieces, and are left to remain where they fall. Multitudes of convents have thus acquired the appearance of ruins; and a great number of palaces, no longer habitable, are left without even a porter to take care of them. This universal neglect has, together with the droves of cattle, and Tartar-looking people, which fill the streets, already occasioned a striking appearance of desolation and decay.

Amidst this general neglect of all the private structures, a great bustle is seen about all the remains of antiquity which have been spared by time. The government has recently adopted a grand project of removing the rubbish by which they are obstructed, and of connecting, and grouping them together, so as to place these inestimable remains in the most picturesque and advantageous points of view.

The whole of the space comprehended within the Capitol, the Temple of Peace, the Coliseum, and the Tiber, is already cleared of all its modern edifices, and of all the walls and mean buildings which were accumulated about the Palatine mount, and which obstructed both the approach and the view of this noble area. It is intended to surround it with a double avenue of trees, within the enclosure of which, these ruined temples and triumphal arches will repose on the turf, forming a sort of unique pleasure ground, diversified by the Palatine and Aventine hills, and ornamented by the Capitol and the Coliseum.

This vast and noble design, inspired by the veneration of antiquity, is only a tribute of respect paid to its inanimate remains, and has no influence on the social state of modern Rome. Every thing there appears to be the work of former times: nothing new is to be seen. Each one uses his possessions to the last, as if a kind of presentiment deterred him from undertaking or attempting any thing: and this species of languor is, itself, a powerful cause of decline, because it extinguishes all productive industry. The labourer, and the artisan, perish for want of subsistence; the whole of the industrious population soon disappears; and the destruction of the class of consumers, ruins, in turn, that of the producers.

There is, in fact, no city where the necessities of life are so cheap as at Rome; the supplies provided for a population of one hundred and sixty-six thousand, being now consumed by one hundred thousand only. The only advantage of this low



price is, that it tempts the inhabitants to stay. For a long time to come, it is probable that a certain population, consisting of the possessors of property, will be concentrated about the middle of the city, and there struggle against the pestilential atmosphere; while all the rest of Rome, abandoned to the elements, will be nothing but a vast heap of solitary ruins.

Such is the scene which strikes you on passing through those quarters of the city which have been long deserted, and which present a singular mixture of town and country, of porticoes, and of miserable huts. I was, one evening, contemplating this scene, at once so impressive and extraordinary, from the garden of a ruined convent, between the Coliseum and the temple of Peace. Before me lay the valley which separates the Palatine hill from Mount Cælius, with the arch of Constantine, and the Via Sacra. On the summit of the hill of the Cæsars, rose the *deputy of Africa*, the palm-tree, displaying itself in the azure sky, like a last trophy of glories past; while, on the opposite hill, a row of cypresses extended like a funereal decoration to the verge of the horizon, and seemed to mourn that these glories were departed.

On the other side of the Tiber, towards the Basilicum of St. Peter, and the Porta Angelica, I passed through streets entirely deserted, and which were inhabited only by the herdsmen who come to pass the night in this insecure asylum. All the environs of the Vatican were abandoned in like manner. I was particularly struck with this loneliness on going early one morning to the church of St. Peter. The sun was just rising as I entered the area: the gates of the temple were still closed, a profound tranquillity reigned throughout, interrupted only by the distant tinkling of the bells of flocks which were returning to the pastures. The obelisk still rested on its brazen pediment, and the two fountains were pouring forth their everlasting streams. The pavement was not trodden by a single foot, and I arrived at the vestibule without meeting a human being. The freshness of the morning, and the tints of the dawn, diffused an inexpressible charm over this divine solitude: I contemplated at once the temple, the porticoes, and the heavens, and, for the first time, felt the full effect of those magnificent phenomena, with which nature accompanies the rising and the declining day.

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ALBANO, July 4, 1813.

I SHALL now endeavour to give a faithful delineation of the picturesque and rural scenery of the domain of Campo Morto, and its vicinity. The name will sufficiently apprize the reader



that this scenery does not consist of fertile vales or smiling fields, but of the plains which contain the ashes of the Romans.

The route which I pursued has, in part, been described by M. de Bonstetten, in his '*Voyage au Latium*,' and there is a degree of temerity in attempting, after him, to give an account of the solemn scenes which he has depicted with so much truth and beauty. But he visited them with the Eneid for his guide, in search of the City of Turnus, and the camp of the Trojans: while I have trodden in the steps of Columella, with the Bucolics and the Georgics for my companions. It will, perhaps, be found, that we have followed this path, traversed alike by the husbandman and the warrior, without meeting with each other, and I may, therefore, venture to delineate the same landscape, because my attention was not directed to the same objects.

The estate of Campo Morto is the only remaining endowment of the Church of St. Peter, and the revenue arising from it is the sole provision for its support. It is a vast tract, situated near the Pontine marshes, between Velletri and Nettuno, in the most unhealthy and desert part of the Agro Romano.

From the uniformity of the pastoral system, the agricultural history of one farm is that of all the rest; and, from the rural economy of Campo Morto, the reader may form an idea of that which prevails throughout the whole Patrimony of St. Peter.

I left Rome in company with Signor Trucci, who farms the estate. He was going to inspect his crops, and politely offered to be my conductor, and to explain to me the agricultural practices, and rural details, of his farm. The sky was brightening with the dawn as we set out, and the first beams of day were shot horizontally on the monuments and porticoes with which the entrance of Rome is adorned.

We followed the great road to Naples through a barren and dismal country, as far as the foot of the mountains of Albano. To the eastward, the horizon is bounded by long lines of arches, designed to convey the water to Rome;—a massive colonnade, covered with mosses and other cryptogamous plants, which has escaped the ravages of time. The view to the west is intercepted by a long chain of hills, covered with ruins belonging to the middle ages, which bear the name of *Roma Vecchia*: while the southern horizon is closed by Mount Albano, raising its pyramidical form to the clouds.

The character of this mountain is altogether distinct from that of the plain on which its base rests. Its sides extend themselves, in gentle swells, presenting no trace of their volcanic origin, except the distinct course of each of the streams of lava which have flowed at different times from the summit. These lavas have filled the cavities of the cliffs, and levelled their



inequalities, till at length, being cooled down and pulverized by a course of ages, they have nourished the vegetable germs sown by the tempests in their fertile ashes.

This comparatively youthful soil still enjoys all its native fertility, and by its lively tints, and wild luxuriance of vegetation, recalls to the imagination those primitive days of the world, passed amidst the solitude of nature, ere human industry had felled the forests, or directed the course of the waters, or confided the seed to the bosom of the earth. Every thing in this volcanic region seems to bear the marks of a peculiar and spontaneous creation, alternately destroyed, and renovated, by torrents of lava. It is a scene, the wild magnificence of which disdains the assistance of man, who derives no other advantage from it, than that of contemplating its silent beauty.

The Appian road winds through the plain round the foot of the mountain. Here the new road to Naples leaves it, rising in a direct and gradual ascent to the town of Albano, which stands about half way up the mountain, commanding a view of the Campagna of Rome. On the side towards the sea is a garden belonging to Prince Doria, the flowers and trees of which have long been suffered to grow wild; and whose ancient and entangled shades diffuse a solemn gloom, congenial with those recollections of the past which every thing around contributes to inspire.

At the other extremity of the town, the road, cut through a purple rock, and shaded by elms, descends to the bottom of a deep valley, which separates Albano from the ancient city of Aricia, now called La Riccia. Prince Chigi has surrounded this valley with an inclosure, as if he were desirous of keeping its beauties to himself; but the wall was broken down, and I had little difficulty in penetrating its profound retirement. It is shut in by rocks, watered by a streamlet, and covered with a thick foliage. Having been long abandoned by its proprietor to the care of nature, and the seasons, it is now the mansion of uninterrupted repose. It is inhabited only by a deer which strays and pastures there in undisturbed security; and thousands of birds, attracted by the same privilege, have taken up their abode in it. In all the countries which it has been my fortune to visit, I have no where beheld finer scenery than that of this valley, excepting, perhaps, the banks of the Flaon, near Lausanne.

Having quitted the Vale of Albano, I ascended the road which winds round the hill on which the village of La Riccia is situated. Just before it reaches the town, it passes over a precipice where a low wall is erected for the security of passengers. Leaning on this wall, I had a distant view of the sea, and of the promontory of Circe, in the horizon to the left. The intervening plain



appeared all of one monotonous yellow tint. No habitations were visible, and the deep verdure of a few woods alone, relieved the uniformity of the prospect. The hills, towards the foot of the mountain, appeared to be of the same volcanic origin. Some ruins were scattered on them, as also a few houses, which I could scarcely distinguish amidst the thick foliage of the vines and shrubs in which they were embosomed. Among these hamlets, one was pointed out to me, which still bore the name of Lavinia. A secret charm attached me to this spot, whence I could wander at pleasure over all the region described by Virgil: a region with which our early life is familiar, and on which we still dwell, with pleasure, in its decline.

Below me, in the fore-ground of the landscape, I observed a spacious garden, surrounded by a natural inclosure of rocks. It was watered by the brook which flowed through the valley; and its soil, which was perfectly level, and of the colour of ashes, produced an incredible quantity of fruit and vegetables. Surprised at its fertility, I enquired the cause of my companion, and was informed, that this favoured spot was the crater of an ancient volcano, which, from time immemorial, had been filled with water. It was the Lake of Aricia, on the shores of which Virgil relates that the martial trumpet of Turnus was heard, when he took up arms against the Trojans. Pope Alexander VII. opened an issue for the waters of the lake, and gave it as an inheritance to his nephew, Prince Chigi, in whose family it has ever since remained.

I pursued my way through the town, passing by the palace of Prince Chigi, which commands a view of the valleys I have just described, and entered a country which has returned to a state of nature. The forests which covered the sides of the mountains, as far as the town of Genzano, concealed the face of the country; and I should have supposed it to have been totally uninhabited, had it not been for the appearance of a church, the solitary resort of rural devotion. The architecture of this Christian edifice was in the style of that of the temples of Greece, and rendered the imagination for a moment doubtful to what religion it had been dedicated. The ideas thus awakened, accompanied me to the shores of the Lake of Nerni, alike consecrated by interesting and moral associations. Passing through the woods which cover its banks, we reached the town of Genzano, at a short distance beyond which, we quitted the road to Naples, turning to the west, from Mont Albano, towards the port of Nettuno, along a road, the traces of which were scarcely visible on the turf.

After riding for an hour and a half, corn-fields, and herds of cattle, announced that we were approaching Campo Morto. On



the whole of this vast estate, which extends from the foot of the mountains to the neighbourhood of the sea, there is no other building than the spacious Casale: a noble structure, but discoloured and decayed by time, and destitute of all the conveniences of life.

The fattore, or steward, ordered horses for us to visit the farm; and while they were getting ready, I examined this noble, but gloomy structure. It consisted of a spacious kitchen, and two large apartments adjoining, at the end of which were three other rooms, of similar dimensions: all totally destitute of furniture, not even having windows. These formed the ground-floor of the centre building. Above them were six other rooms of the same size, used as granaries: one only being furnished for the use of the superintendants. The wings were formed by capacious arched stables, at once airy and cool; and above them were lofts for hay. This part of the establishment is almost superfluous, being merely used to put up the cattle employed in the work of the farm during the resting time in the middle of the day: at all others they are turned to graze in the open air.

There was not the least appearance of care or neatness about the whole farm. Neither trees, gardens, nor vegetables, were to be seen. On my reproaching them with their negligence, they replied that the cattle would trample down and destroy whatever might be planted or sown, and that it was, therefore, more convenient to purchase their vegetables, at the same time with their bread, in the neighbouring towns, which are surrounded with vineyards and fertile gardens. The expense of carriage, which is so material an object on our small farms, is nothing on these large grazing ones, where there are always cattle in abundance. They put a loaf, and a bundle of hay, into the cart, and thus equipped, will often perform a journey of sixty miles without any expense.

This abundance of animals constitutes the only luxury of these farms. Neither bailiffs, superintendants, nor even the herdsmen, even think of going on foot. They are always on horseback, galloping at full speed over the plains, with a gun, or a lance, in their hands, and horses are always kept ready saddled in the stables; each person employed on the farm having two assigned to his use. Some of these are old, and employed to train the others: but the greater part are young ones, which the men amuse themselves in breaking, and which are sold as soon as they have become accustomed to the bit. The draught-horses are sold untrained, there being coachmen at Rome very skilful in that business.

The breeding of horses was formerly a favourite pursuit with the Roman nobility. Their estates were, at that time, managed by stewards on their own account, and their breeds of horses



were called after their names. Thus, in 1791, I saw some of the Borghese breed. They were bronze-coloured, like the Xerxes horses, and served as models to the Roman artists. The horses painted by Guido, harnessed to the car of Aurora, are of this description. These titled breeds are now mixed and lost: the nobility having let their estates. The horses reared by the farmers are all black, of a tolerable figure, and are used indifferently for the saddle or for harness.

As soon as we were mounted, the steward conducted us to the part of the farm where the harvest was commencing. Broad stripes, of a golden yellow, extended, at a distance, over the undulated surface of the soil, towards the sea; and we at length came in sight of a sort of army, in battle array, with the commanders on horseback, with lances in their hands, fixed to their stations. We passed several carts, drawn by oxen, which were loaded with bread, intended for the consumption of this army. In a short time we beheld before us a long file of a thousand reapers, surrounding a vast tract of corn, which was silently falling under their sickles; while twelve superintendants, on horseback, surveyed and animated them from behind. They raised a loud shout at our approach, which resounded through the solitude, and was intended as a salute to the master of the farm.

Soon after, the carts which we had passed drew up under the shade of some oaks, which were, providentially, still remaining in the middle of the plain, to shelter the reapers. At a signal given, they quitted their work, and the whole troop defiled before us. There were about as many men as women, all natives of the Abruzzi. The former were good figures, but the women were frightful. They were bathed in sweat, for the heat was terrible. Though it was only a few days since they left the mountains, the Malaria was beginning to affect them. Two only had as yet been attacked by the fever, but I was told that the number would increase daily, and that, by the end of the harvest, scarce half the troop would be left. "What becomes of these poor wretches?" enquired I. "We give them a piece of bread, and send them away." "But where do they go?" "They return towards the mountains: some of them die on the road, and the others reach home, exhausted with hunger and wretchedness, to recommence the same attempt next year."

The repast of this day was a festival, for the master, in order to render his visit the more welcome, had purchased, at Genzano, two cart loads of water melons, which were distributed to the reapers with the bread, which in general forms their only food. The eyes of these poor people were eagerly fixed on these fine fruits, and I cannot describe the joy which appeared in their countenances, when the large knives displayed their refreshing



juice, and ensanguined pulp, and spread around a delicious perfume.

They make three meals a day, which divides their labour into two periods ; and they are allowed two hours sleep in the middle of the day. Their slumbers at that time are unattended with danger ; but the earth still serves as their bed after the cold dews of the evening have descended upon it, and they pass the night on the moist turf, in the midst of sulphureous exhalations. Their employers say that they would lose too much time, were they to return every evening to sleep at the Casale, which, in these extensive farms, is often at a great distance.

The corn is left to dry in the heat of the sun for two days, before it is bound in sheaves. It is then formed into shocks, at regular distances in the field, and a fortnight after is trampled out by horses—for the roller used in Lombardy is not known here. Till within the last few years, the straw was left, after this operation, to be dispersed by the winds ; but since that time, an order of M. Degerando has compelled the farmers to form it into stacks, for the purpose of destroying the clouds of locusts which often devastate this part of the country, by setting fire to them ; a practice which has been found of such utility that it will probably be continued. These stacks, scattered over the country on the ridges, resemble African villages, and add to the wildness of its appearance. The corn is seldom left at the Casale, but is conveyed, as soon as it is threshed, to Rome.

Leaving the harvest scene, we proceeded towards a forest, which extended like a curtain before us, concealing from our view the sea. This forest continues, almost without interruption, along the whole coast, from Tuscany to the promontory of Circe, and consists of immense white oaks, which the vicinity of the sea gives an opportunity of exporting.

On the *steppes*, between the corn-fields and the forest, was a herd of an hundred oxen, of a grey colour, with long horns. Being old servants, they were not at all frightened at us. They are always in the pastures, except during the working season, when they are supplied with hay in abundance. Farther on, were some hundreds of wild cows, which seemed as if uncertain whether to attack us, or to take to flight. They decided on the latter, and fled with the swiftness of deer, preceded by the calves, and followed reluctantly by the bulls, which galloped heavily after them, and were the first to stop. They turned fiercely towards us, as if ashamed of their flight, blowing through their wide nostrils, and seeming to bid us defiance. The keepers came up at a gallop, and at the sight of them they became tranquil, and allowed us to pass them : such is the respect paid by the animal creation to man. These cows do not give any milk.



They are sold for slaughter at six or seven years old ; and this, with the calves, is all the return obtained from them : but, as they require very little attention, it is by no means inconsiderable. It is estimated at about forty francs per head : so that a herd of one hundred cows, with their followers, will produce, annually, 4000 francs. There are more than a thousand of these cows on many farms.

As we approached the woods, we found a vast number of pigs, partly concealed among the trees, while others were feeding on the plain : the whole number belonging to the farm was about two thousand. They wander, during the whole year, about the extensive tracts bordering on the sea ; and are so savage and ferocious in their appearance, that they might be taken for wild boars. They are, however, of a domestic breed, of a black colour ; and being fed on the acorns of the forest, their flesh is of exquisite flavour.

We returned to the Casale by another route, in the course of which we met with the horses and sheep. Of the former there were about four hundred, of which at least one hundred were trained for the use of the keepers : the rest were wild, of all ages, and are used for the sole purpose of treading out the corn. Though they have nothing particularly to recommend them, they are by no means despicable. They are tolerably well made, and not deficient either in strength, spirit, or wind. They are extremely well adapted for the cavalry : I have seen some of them that had stood the severest campaigns without injury. They are all black, a circumstance which distinguishes them from the Neapolitan horses, which are generally pied. The horses of the keepers are remarkably patient and docile : they will stand for hours together, exposed to the attacks of the flies, and set off, in a moment, at full speed, when any of the cattle require to be stopped. They are naturally less ferocious than the Tuscan horses, and suffer themselves to be caught and trained with much less difficulty.

The life of these keepers, who are to be met with all over the Maremme, is attended with a freedom and independence which is not without its attractions ; and to this is added, the interest they take in the cattle committed to their care, and in those which are their private property, and which are allowed to go with the others. They may be seen, armed with a gun and a lance, under the shade of an oak, observing, from their saddles, the direction taken by the flocks in the steppes. In this situation, they will remain motionless for hours, surveying the whole horizon with their dark eyes, and noting the smallest occurrence which takes place. Should a hare or rabbit squat within their range, they drop from their horses, and taking their gun, proceed



to the point with the instinct of a spaniel. Sometimes they ride off at full speed to turn the course of the herds : at others, they dart, with the rapidity of lightning, to separate the furious combats of the bulls. When these ferocious animals happen to meet, they send forth a dull bellowing, throwing clouds of dust into the air ; but no sooner has their jealous fury led them to the encounter, than the keeper comes upon them at full gallop. He wounds them with his lance, and drives them, terrified, away. They slowly recede, as if ashamed that their wounds were not received in a more glorious conflict.

The sheep occupied the most elevated part of the farm. The whole flock consisted of about four thousand, but I saw only a small part of them, the rest being at that time on the mountains. I had, however, an opportunity of examining the breed. There are two in the Maremme perfectly distinct. One is the sort called Negretti : they are small vigorous animals, with short legs and straight faces, well furnished with wool, and similar, in every respect, to the Dauphiné breed, except that their wool, though of a fine quality, is of a chocolate colour. The whole number of these dun sheep is about 80,000. Their wool was formerly used in making the dresses of the mendicant friars, and the cloaks of the herdsmen ; but is now principally sent to the manufactories of Dauphiné, where it is mixed for military great coats. The other breed, of which it is supposed there are more than 600,000, is that of Apulia, and is unquestionably the finest I have seen any where. Their backs are broad and straight, their bodies cylindrical, and their heads, which are disproportionably long and narrow, are ornamented with two long flapping ears, which fall down upon the face. They stand high, but are remarkably free and well set in their limbs ; traversing their pastures with a sedate and measured gait. Their wool, which is beautifully white, and almost equal in fineness to that of Arragon, grows only on the upper part of their bodies ; but to compensate this defect, they give a prodigious quantity of milk.

As mutton is never eaten in Italy, on account of its inferior quality, the male lambs are always killed, and even a part of the females ; and the sheep are milked for cheese. A single ewe will often yield to the amount of three piastres in the course of the season. In the middle of May they migrate to the mountains of Norcia and the Abruzzi, whence they return in October. At that season, and during winter, all these different animals, with their keepers, are to be found wandering, in uninterrupted silence, over these vast steppes, where not a village or a cottage is to be seen, and which appear as if set forth by Providence, as an awful example of the final destiny of the whole earth.



TERRACINA, July 13, 1813.

I AM just returned from visiting the Pontine Marshes, in company with the Inspector General of Engineers, who went to examine the draining canals lately opened by government, with a view of completing, if possible, the great works commenced by Pius VI. The opportunity was particularly valuable at this moment, on account of the escort provided for the Officers of Engineers against the banditti, who contribute, even more than the pestilential air, to render the approach of the marshes dangerous.

These banditti have been established from time immemorial in the mountains of Sabina and the Abruzzi: and it is almost impossible to extirpate them, because they are rooted, as it were, in the population of the country. They are not mere associations of robbers, without property or fixed residence, wandering in disguise: on the other hand, the hordes who infest the frontiers of the kingdom of Naples, are neither more nor less than the villagers who inhabit the neighbouring mountains. The men who follow this trade are possessed of families and property, and are employed in agriculture a part of the year; but as their labour, amidst these barren rocks, is insufficient to supply their pleasures, or, indeed, their wants, necessity, together with an almost invincible penchant to pillage and murder, leads them to unite in bodies, and not only attack travellers, but frequently the dwellings and resident inhabitants of the plains.

The principal part of the population is enrolled under the standard of a few chiefs, who have thus a little army always ready to take the field, and which is as quickly dispersed as assembled. No more men than are wanted are summoned on any expedition; and unless they are seized upon the spot, the police can never find them, for they return directly to their homes, where they resume their rustic dress and occupations, and are straightway transformed into peaceable peasants, living under the protection of their curate and mayor, whose indulgence is unbounded, and, as it is said, for very good reasons.

A few only of the chiefs are known, and after these the gens d'armes are continually in pursuit. During the last five years, several of them have been taken and executed, without, however, at all discouraging the survivors. Many of the banditti have been killed in the combats they have had with the military: and many have likewise been surrounded and taken, in the expeditions made against them. It was hoped that the execution of these would have intimidated the rest, but it has only rendered them a little more prudent; for they know that this predatory life exposes them to the danger of the scaffold, and are no more alarmed at it, than the sailor at the tempest.



The most formidable of their chiefs, who had for five years eluded all the researches of the French police, has lately been taken. He calls himself *Peter, the Calabrian*. At Rome, he is known simply by the title of "*The Calabrian, (Il Calabrese,*") and, under this designation, he figures continually in the narratives of the populace, who are always fond of the marvellous. By way of increasing his consequence, he assumed a political character, calling himself chief of the *La Vendée* of Rome. He entitled himself, Emperor of the Mountains, King of the Forests, and Governor of the road from Florence to Naples; but what rather tends to diminish his dignity is, that he was no less a marauder under Pius VII. than under the French government.

Leaving, however, his merits as a partizan out of the question, as a brigand chief he has displayed great talents. This man, who is by birth a mere peasant, presents a singular mixture of rapacity and devotion, of honour and of barbarism. He piques himself more especially upon his humanity. Never, he declares, has he shed a single drop of blood, except in battle; and he has always severely punished the cruelties which his band are but too ready to commit. This is probably true, for I have, myself, witnessed the regret which his arrest has caused in all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, who looked upon themselves as left henceforth without protection against the atrocity of his men.

The government is at present engaged in arranging a treaty with his successor *Gaetano*, similar to that by which Sixtus V. succeeded in repressing the robberies which were committed before his pontificate: viz. by arming the banditti against each other. The soldiers of *the Calabrian*, in despair at his capture, and desirous of saving his life on any terms, sent a herald, a woman who sold fruit at Rome, with a proposal of submission. They offered to protect the road against all the other bands, for a pay of thirty sous a day, on condition that *the Calabrian* should not be executed, but only transported to Corsica. The treaty was concluded, and a few days after, *Gaetano* informed the commander of the gend'armerie stationed at Sermoneta, that he had some evidence to give him of its execution on his part. The officer accordingly repaired to the place appointed on the mountains, where *Gaetano* delivered four heads to him, which he affirmed were those of four brigands whom his men had killed. Scarcely, however, had the officer returned to Sermoneta, than information was brought him that the bodies of four farmers of the neighbourhood had been found without their heads in an olive wood. The officer accordingly demanded a fresh interview, and reproached *Gaetano* warmly with his want of faith. The

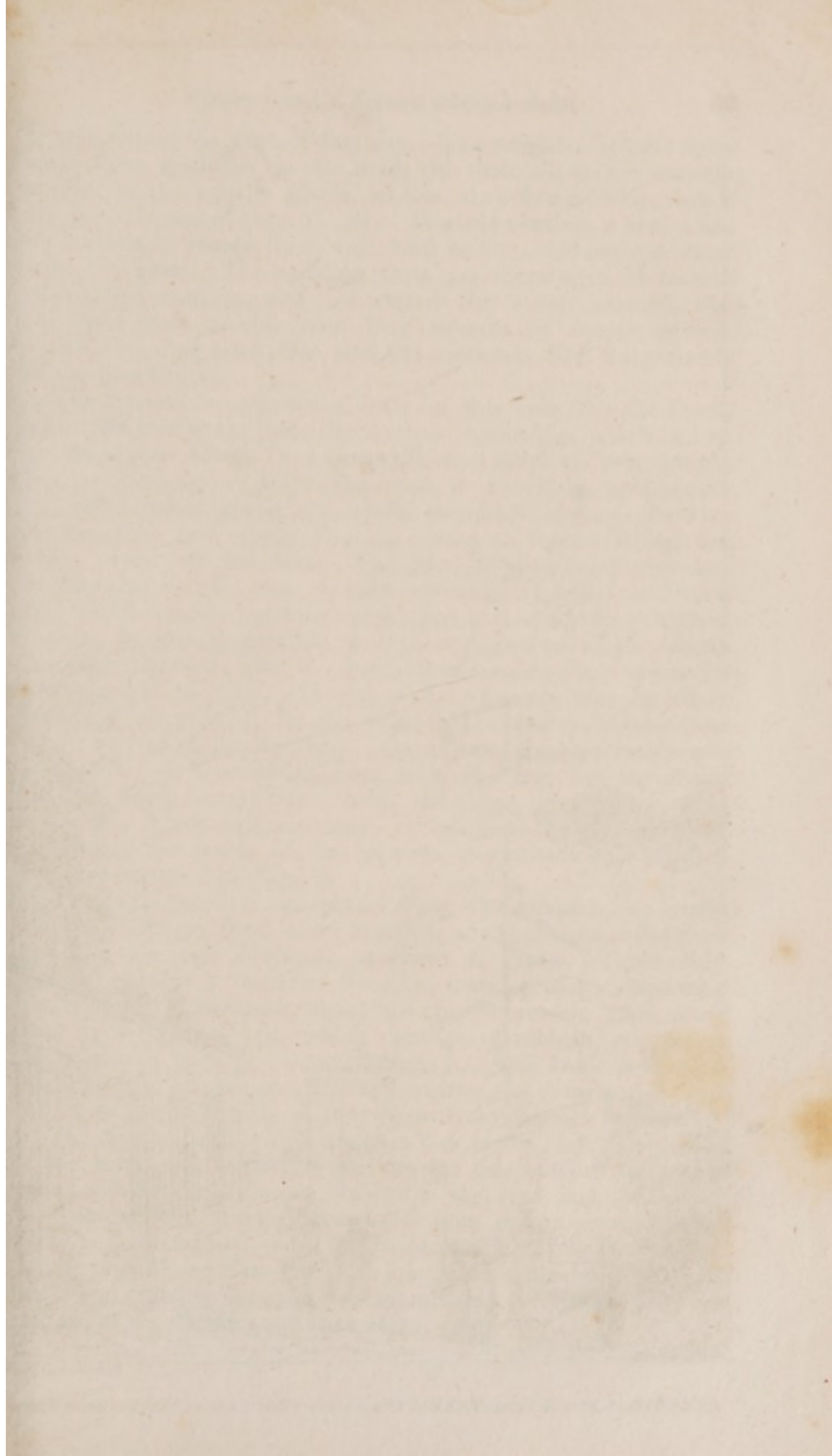


latter allowed there was some reason to complain, if the matter were to be nicely sifted, but that, taking one head to be as good as another, he thought it better to cut off those of four fellows whom he knew nothing about, than to assassinate his brother banditti, who, at the bottom, were very good friends of his. Notwithstanding this specious reasoning, however, the officer informed him, that if this was the way in which he intended to fulfil the treaty, the *Calabrian* should be executed immediately. This threat so alarmed the gang, that they promised faithfully to perform the conditions of the treaty. Some of them were already come to Terracina to undertake the guard of the road, and from the sight of them, I can fully imagine the terror they will inspire into the travellers whose safety is to be committed to them.

Velletri, situated on the southern side of Mont Albano, is the last town through which the traveller passes, before he enters the marshes. Hence the view extends over their vast solitudes, bounded to the east by the mountains of Sabina, and to the west by the open sea. The town is surrounded by vineyards, in an admirable state of cultivation. The branches of the vines are carefully trained in lines along trellises formed of large reeds, presenting the appearance of innumerable ranges of espaliers, extending as far as the eye can reach. In each of the vineyards stands a pretty cottage, inhabited by the vine-dresser, and every thing wears the aspect of the most active and animated industry. Such is the change which appears even in the states of the church, as soon as the region of the Malaria is passed. This fatal region is, however, close at hand. Scarcely had we proceeded half a league beyond Velletri, descending through the midst of vineyards, than we found ourselves on the plains of the desert. The road, as far as Cisterna, lies through a wild and irregular country, formed by streams of lava : it produces a few cork-trees with ragged trunks ; and a few farm-houses and corn-fields, still enliven the prospect.

Beyond Cisterna, all traces of human habitation entirely disappear. A vast domain belonging to Prince Cajetano extends hence to Tor Tre Ponti, distant two posts and a quarter. This tract does not properly belong to the marshes. It is a picturesque and wooded region, where fertile pastures, and rich harvests, successively present themselves, in the openings of the forests. Here and there, groups of huts, of a circular form, thatched with reeds, and inhabited by the shepherds and herdsmen, appear clustered on the plain like Hottentot kraals ; and around these are seen buffaloes wandering amidst the luxuriant herbage, which the moist soil of these savannahs causes to grow to a great height. They instinctively direct their slow and heavy course along beaten tracts leading to the miry ponds, where they









*View of the Pyramid of Cestius*

PYRAMIDAL ROCK NEAR TERRACINA, NAMED PESCULO, OR PESCIO MONTANO.



remain during the heat of the day. The weight of their bodies sinks them gradually in the mud, till their backs are entirely covered by the aquatic plants, so that their fierce-looking heads are the only part of them visible. Towards evening, a herdsman, on horseback, rouses them with loud shouts, striking the water with his lance. The buffaloes then put themselves in motion with sullen roarings, and rush out of the water, adorned, like the river gods of old, with long wreaths of aquatic plants, which they drag after them over the savannah, like the garlands of the Bacchantes.

The marshes commence a little on this side Tor Tre Ponti, where the road again joins the ancient Appia Via, which it had quitted below Albano, and is carried on a causeway in a straight line to Terracina. Below the road, to the right, commences the canal called Naviglio Grande, on which Horace sailed to Brundisium, and which Pius VI. caused to be repaired, at the same time with the road. The plan of that intelligent and unfortunate Pontiff, was to take advantage of a fall of seven feet which is found between the highest part of the marshes and the sea, by opening parallels at regular distances, which should discharge the water into it. Into these he intended to open a second set of parallels, at angles of forty-five degrees; by which means the benefit of the fall would have been extended to the whole surface of the marshes. Only two of the principal parallels, with their secondaries, have been finished; but the entire success which has attended them, has shewn the French engineers that it was only necessary to complete the undertaking, to restore the whole of the marshes to cultivation; and they are now occupied in doing it.

The grand parallels are carried along the marshes, in a longitudinal direction, from north to south, and discharge themselves into the sea near Terracina, at *Bocca di Fiume*. They could not be carried in a transverse direction, from the mountains to the sea, because a low bank, about a league in breadth, runs along the coast, and its soil, which consists of rubbish, renders it impracticable to carry a drain through it. This bank is covered with forests, and appears to the navigator like a mysterious veil which conceals the sight of Italy from the eyes of the profane.

The Appian road, which traverses this region, is covered with a fine sand, and shaded by an irregular line of elms on either side, which form a bower, both over the road and the canal, and extend like a long promenade from post to post. They were not planted, but were left on each side of the road, when it was repaired by Pius VI. The journey is performed with such ease and rapidity, that you are astonished, on arriving at Terracina, at the distance you have come.



Through the whole length of this causeway there is not a village, nor even a post-house. Pius VI. caused vast caravansaries to be erected at nearly equal distances, which stand amidst these solitudes, as noble monuments of his pontificate. There is something stately and singular about these edifices: the apartments, the stables, and other buildings, are all on a grand scale, but totally unfurnished. They appear at once magnificent and mean; splendid, and destitute of every thing. The beings who inhabit these palaces of the desert are half naked, ghastly, and consumed by a slow fever, which reduces them to such a state of weakness, that they have scarcely strength sufficient to harness the half wild horses which are put to the carriages. These animals, which are taken from their pastures, seem as if indignant at the momentary subjection imposed on them. They snort, paw the earth with their feet, and champ the bit, till they are permitted to set off, and then they dart away in a moment, with a fury which is not unattended with danger, and which increases, as they proceed, at the sight of their companions grazing at liberty in the meadows. This violent and untractable character of the horses in the Pontine Marshes, has obtained for them the name of *scampatores*.

Though the marshes on each side of the road are drained, the air is still as noxious as in the other parts of the Maremme. Thus they do not appear to have gained any thing in point of salubrity by this process; but, instead of producing rushes and reeds only, the dried part is covered with a fine turf, and bears harvests which repay twelve, and even fifteen, for one. Except in Belgium, finer corn crops are no where to be seen. But when Pius VI. undertook this grand project, he did not attempt, at the same time, to sow the seeds of industry and population in the country. He bestowed these immense domains on his nephew, the duke of Braschi, and a few other great proprietors, who contented themselves with proceeding on the usual system of the Maremme farms. A large mansion serves as a common residence, and the lands are pastured by vast herds of horned cattle, horses, and buffaloes; the soil being too wet for sheep. The driest parts are reserved for corn, and are fallowed much oftener than in the territory of Latium: for the land, like the virgin soil of America, being perfectly fresh and inexhausted, the natural herbage springs with such luxuriance, that it requires to be ploughed every two years to cleanse and prepare it for the grain crops.

A part of the drained lands, immediately contiguous to the feet of the mountains, is occupied by the inhabitants of Piperno, Sermoneta, and the villages situated on their declivities. The vicinity of these little farms to the habitations of the villages,



enables them to pursue their avocations without quitting their homes, and they raise fine crops of Indian corn, hemp, and pulse. I measured some of the stems of the Indian corn which were sixteen feet high, and the hemp was nearly as vigorous.

There is a luxuriance of vegetation on all sides of this canal, which seems to offer every thing that can support or charm the life of man ; but which in reality is found, as in India, to increase with the circumstances which are destructive of it. The level soil presents no obstacle to his steps. An unclouded sun beams in the sky, while bowers of foliage moderate its effulgence. A rich verdure springs every where in this fertile region ; and flowers of every hue bloom innumerable under the shade of the elms. Enormous fig-trees grow on the sides of the canal, and blend their flexible boughs and sugared fruits over the stream ; while between them aloes, the natives of the East, raise their lofty stems, like the sacred tapers of a solemn ceremonial. Groves of willows, oaks, and elms, protect these flowers and fruits from the storm ; and, to render their tufted foliage more dense and bowery, the vine entwines its aged stems around the lofty trees to their very tops, whence, like the climbing plants of the American forests, it extends its branches to the neighbouring trees, covering the whole canal with a verdant canopy. In autumn, innumerable clusters hang from these festoons, and invite the birds to partake of their juicy sweets.

But all this magnificence of nature displays itself in vain to the silence of the desert, and is usurped by the savage inhabitants of the forest. Herds of wild boars tear up the earth in search of the roots of vegetables. The hideous buffalo strays amidst the verdure, or lies concealed in the woods. The bird of prey quits his rocks to soar undisturbed over a solitude which he appears to regard as his rightful domain. At certain seasons of the year, multitudes of birds of passage resort hither to repose from their flight, and seem to consider the time which they pass amidst these grateful shades as a festival. Amidst these savage tribes of the brute creation, man now and then appears ; but he, even in this abode of peril, wears a hostile aspect. Sometimes a herdsman is seen, pursuing with his lance an enraged buffalo ; or the mountain robber, concealed amidst the flowers on the tufted fig-trees, awaits, with watchful eye and loaded fusil, the passage of a traveller. Should the unsuspecting stranger escape this peril, the delicious, but deadly atmosphere may yet breathe its secret poison into his veins.

I cannot describe the singular and mingled feeling of delight and terror, which the perpetual contrast between the vege-



table and animal worlds, in this extraordinary country, occasions. It presents a sort of grand image of life, which an unknown and indefinite danger perpetually menaces, while the imagination spreads its delusions around to banish this danger from our thoughts.

I was still occupied in these reflections when we arrived at a part of the road where a section had been made through the causeway to open a passage for one of the new discharging canals. Here the engineers stopped to inspect the works, and in the mean time I employed myself in examining the vertical plan presented by the section of the road. This road was the Appia Via; and the works of ages, if I may so express myself, lay bare before me. Three feet beneath the actual surface appeared the ancient pavement, constructed by Appius, resting on a mass of brick-work. Above this broad pavement appeared a second, formed in like manner of masonry, and raised about a foot higher. This was the new pavement laid by Trajan, which serves as a foundation for a bed of pebbles forming the road, as restored by Pius VI. The ancient mode of constructing pavements is still followed at Rome. They are not laid merely in sand, like ours, but on a bed of well-tempered masonry of flints and mortar, so that the pavements of the streets are like so many walls under the surface of the soil.

We here left our carriages, and mounted on horses, for the purpose of proceeding to examine the new works in the middle of the plain. The season of the year had already rendered it necessary to suspend them; but the workmen were summoned for the day of inspection. We traversed vast savannahs, where the grass was as high as the bodies of our horses, keeping as much as possible under the shade of the trees, for it was past noon, and the heat was intense. The buffaloes fled before us as we advanced, till they were prevented by the new canal from proceeding farther. They then turned round, and assumed a menacing attitude; but the workmen raising a loud shout, they fled precipitately along the line of the canal, and disappeared. The engineers then proceeded to examine the works, and I could not help admiring the wonderful power of human genius and civilization, which enabled M. Prony, at the distance of Paris, to calculate and direct the great works which were at length to change these solitary wilds into Elysian fields.

The part of the marshes which we were now traversing was not yet drained; and, instead of meadows and pastures, we met with nothing but reeds, interspersed with tufts of willows and other aquatic trees, whose pale foliage gave a grey



and monotonous aspect to the whole landscape. The soil was spongy, and the feet of our horses made no noise upon it. It was, however, firm enough to bear; and, by following the tracks of the buffaloes and wild boars amongst the reeds, we ran no risk of sinking in. At length, after riding nearly an hour, we reached the wooded zone, extending along the sea-shore, of which I have before spoken. Here the atmosphere, and with it the face of nature, suddenly changed, and we again beheld the mossy turf and the majestic oaks. Notwithstanding the immense size of these trees, the wild vines climbed to their very tops, forming a sort of natural vineyard, whose impenetrable shade afforded shelter to innumerable tribes of birds and insects. The confused and lively hum which arose from these, was truly agreeable after the silence of the marshes.

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NAPLES, *July 18, 1813.*

THE States of the Church terminate a little beyond Terracina, when the traveller enters those of Naples. On arriving at Fondi, the first town of Campania, he is struck with the irregular manner in which it is built, and with the wretched appearance of the inhabitants. It resembles the towns of the South of France, and its ancient towers recall the memory of those feudal times when men crowded into the inclosure of the cities, to seek, behind their ramparts, a protection which the open fields could not afford them.

This feudal and gothic character is every where visible the moment you enter the Neapolitan territory. The villages, placed on the summits of the hills, are surrounded by walls, whose mouldering battlements are covered with creeping plants, the natural decoration of ruins; and each object indicates, at the first view, that this kingdom has not participated, with the rest of Italy, in that glorious era, when the genius of the arts went hand-in-hand with the spirit of liberty:—that spirit which alone exalts the character of nations, by inspiring them with the love of all that is great.

The traces of this brilliant epoch are manifest in all the other parts of Italy; and one of the beauties of the country consists in the grandeur and elegance of the works of architecture, for which it is indebted to past ages. A refined taste has presided over the construction of all its edifices, from the decorations of its more splendid monuments, to the simple structures of rural life; and this universal character of elegance combines, with the system of cultivation and the natural forms of the landscape, to complete the effect of the whole. The general result, to the imagination of the traveller, is not



only a continued series of picturesque scenes, but a striking picture of life and enjoyment. It may, indeed, be deceitful, but the sensations to which it gives rise are not the less real.

We do not, in the beautiful part of Italy, meet with those crooked and dirty villages, which appear the very abodes of poverty; neither do we find any of those gloomy cabins, where the wretched inhabitants dwell promiscuously with their cattle and their harvests. We do not, and it is, perhaps, the only charm that is wanting to the scene, see, as in France, those village churches, shaded by lime-trees, and consecrated to the Eternal by simple hearts and unskilful hands. The churches of the Italian villages would be considered as ornaments to the cities of other countries. The solitary chapels which are met with in the woods, or by the road-sides, delight the eye by their graceful design. The hamlets, and even the farm-houses, are built with a sort of rural elegance, which the Italians think nothing of, because its general prevalence renders it familiar to them.

This perception of architectural beauty, so universal in Italy, can have originated only in those long habits which for so many ages have conspired to form the national taste. It commenced with the Romans; and the age of Leo X., by renewing the prosperous days of this ancient land of the arts, preserved that traditional skill which has transmitted the noble art of adorning the earth, by the edifices erected on its surface, to the present times. The genius of the painter perishes with him. Raphael was unable to bequeath the magic of his pencil to his successors; but architecture is a positive science, whose trophies may be imitated and perpetuated at pleasure.

But the times which beheld the revival of the fine arts in the rest of Italy had no influence on the kingdom of Naples. Conquered by the Normans in the eleventh century, the only fruit it reaped from that conquest, was the inheritance of their barbarous manners, and the establishment of the feudal system in its full extent. The social state of the middle ages was thus preserved unaltered, and one might, even recently, have contemplated at Naples its institutions and its effects. Against the difficulties opposed to it by these institutions, modern civilization has made but slow progress. Amidst the new customs lately introduced, the impression of an anterior period is constantly observable; and notwithstanding the fertility of this land of the South, there is a wildness in its general appearance which results from the luxuriance of nature having never been completely subdued by human industry; an appearance which few countries of the earth at present offer.

The miserable huts scattered over this fertile region are in-



habited by numerous families, who seem reduced to a state of indigence, so disorderly and neglected is every thing about them; but this repulsive appearance of poverty arises rather from the careless habits occasioned by the climate, than from real distress. In this favoured region, the necessaries of life are procured with such facility, that the extremity of indigence is never felt, nor is the increase of population retarded by it. As a proof of this I need only refer to the last census, by which it appears, that the number of inhabitants amounts to 6,345,000. There is no reason to distrust the accuracy of this statement, seeing that it was taken by the mayors of the several parishes, with the view of assessing levies of men and money. They were, therefore, not likely intentionally to augment it.

This immense population must be attributed to the long peace which this country enjoyed under the dynasty of the Bourbons, and which spread a profound tranquillity through the whole kingdom. The government had diffused a sort of languor through all the branches of the administration. Every thing went on in the same manner, from day to day. No one disturbed either himself or others, but every one enjoyed, in his own way, an uninterrupted security, which long habit had consecrated.

From the impulsion thus bestowed on the Neapolitans by their manners and institutions, it may be supposed that agriculture is almost the only art they cultivate. Devoid alike of vanity and of ambition, they never aim at magnificence, nor even at that external appearance of enjoyment, by which men in other countries seek to excite the envy of their fellows. The liberal arts, and even those which are simply mechanical, are unknown to them. Every article of luxury is, as well as the greater part even of those of the first necessity, supplied by foreigners, who carry away in exchange the surplus produce of the soil; for in these fertile fields heaven blesses abundantly the toil of the husbandman: his labour is easy, and his reward great.

The corn which is sown in the vallies and plains often produces a harvest of eight or ten for one; and the land, instead of being left to repose for a year after this abundant crop, as was the custom of the Romans, is immediately ploughed, and sown with something else. All these various productions grow with inconceivable luxuriance in this volcanic soil. The hope of the husbandman is thus renewed every succeeding spring and autumn, and the vicissitudes of the seasons seldom disappoint it. Frequently, after harvest, the land is sown with the scarlet trefoil, a plant indigenous in the South of Italy, and



which appears, when in flower, like a carpet of crimson extended upon the verdure of the fields. These gay inclosures are surrounded by elms and mulberry trees, festooned with vines, affording a grateful shade, and increasing the various productions of the soil.

The greater part of the kingdom is covered with lofty mountains, some of which retain the winter snows on their frozen summits throughout the year. Though not so elevated as the Alps, their scenery is nearly as savage; but the vegetation is richer, and they appear to have lost nothing of their original fertility by time. On their highest ridges, innumerable flocks find, during summer, a rich pasture, which the heats of the season do not scorch. Below this grassy region, the chesnut forests commence, covering the sides of the mountains with their shade. These trees are of such a size, that a small number of them are sufficient to cover a large space. I have seen single trees, the branches of which, descending to the ground on all sides, formed a complete dome. The ancient guardians of these mountains, these aged trees, defy the fury of the winds, and retain, by their roots, the soil which the rains would otherwise wash away. The lower declivities are covered with olive woods, which spring and flourish, as in their native soil, almost without assistance; requiring no other trouble from their possessors, during the whole year, than to collect the ripe fruit which falls from their branches. In the neighbourhood of the villages, the broken and rocky parts are occupied by fig-trees: the citron grows in the gardens; and rows of fruit-trees form the divisions of the farms.

Near Fondi, the orange-tree appears, for the first time, in its natural state: not stretched on espaliers, nor placed in formal rows in tubs, but free and wild, as the oaks of the forest. In these orange groves, the tree is seen in every stage of its growth. Sometimes a number of young shoots springing from the same root, cluster round an aged stem: at others, seedlings, scattered at random, push their young branches through the foliage. A streamlet, diverted from its course, flows in lines of silver at the feet of the trees, watering their roots as it sinks into the soil. One may ramble, or recline, at pleasure, in these woods: the branches are bowed down with ripe fruit, which presents itself to the hand.

Beyond Fondi the road reaches the foot of a chain of hills, which lead, by a long ascent, on the brink of a precipice, to the village of Itre, in the vicinity of which it follows the windings of the valleys, there connected with each other by the course of the streams, and by woods of evergreen oaks. On the sea-side, the solitary rocks, on which stands the citadel of Gaeta, present



themselves to the view ; and, beneath its ramparts, the fertile and smiling plain, watered by the Garigliano, named by the Italians Campagna Felice, commences. Through this elysium the traveller reaches Capua. The surrounding landscape, and the recollections associated with it, lead him to expect, as he approaches the town, to find a country still more rural, and scenery still more beautiful. On arriving at the gates, however, the delusion vanishes : he finds nothing but a fortress, guarded by sentinels, and surrounded with moats and bastions.

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NAPLES, *July 25, 1813.*

NAPLES, placed at the bottom of the gulf formed by the curvature of the shore, seems, itself, only an additional decoration to the richness of the amphitheatre ; and its lively agitation forms an interesting contrast to the profound tranquillity of the sea and the shores. The promontory, to the north of the bay, has accomplished the prediction of Virgil, and still bears the name of Misenus, which it received from Eneas. It is easily accessible from the sea, on which account the road which formerly led to it, has been suffered to fall to decay. Carriages can go no farther than Pozzuoli : the road, for the rest of the way, towards the ruins of Baiæ, runs along the shore, over rocks which can only be passed on foot, or on horseback. I preferred visiting the environs of the gulf in the former way, from the opportunity which it gave me of following all its indentures, and of enjoying, with perfect freedom, the sensations inspired by a scene which nature, time, and poetry, have alike contributed to embellish.

I left Naples at day-break, guided only by my former recollections, and arrived, without difficulty, at the entrance of the grotto of Pausilippo. The darkness of night was spread over its long vaults, which I could not pass through without a painful sensation ; for this deep avenue, the noble work of the Romans, has nothing to excite curiosity, and affects the imagination only by its gloom.

I beheld the light of day again with pleasure, and left the high road to avoid the dust. The fields around me were shaded by elms of sufficient height to allow of several branches of the vines they supported being trained from one to the other, so that successive rows of festoons, loaded with grapes, were seen waving one above another. Under the shade of these, a vigorous crop of young beans, sown since the harvest, were growing ; and reminded me of spring in my own country. Further on, the purple tinge of the Indian corn announced its approaching maturity ; while, in an adjoining field, long rows of melons diffused their perfume through the air. Self-sown tufts of figs,



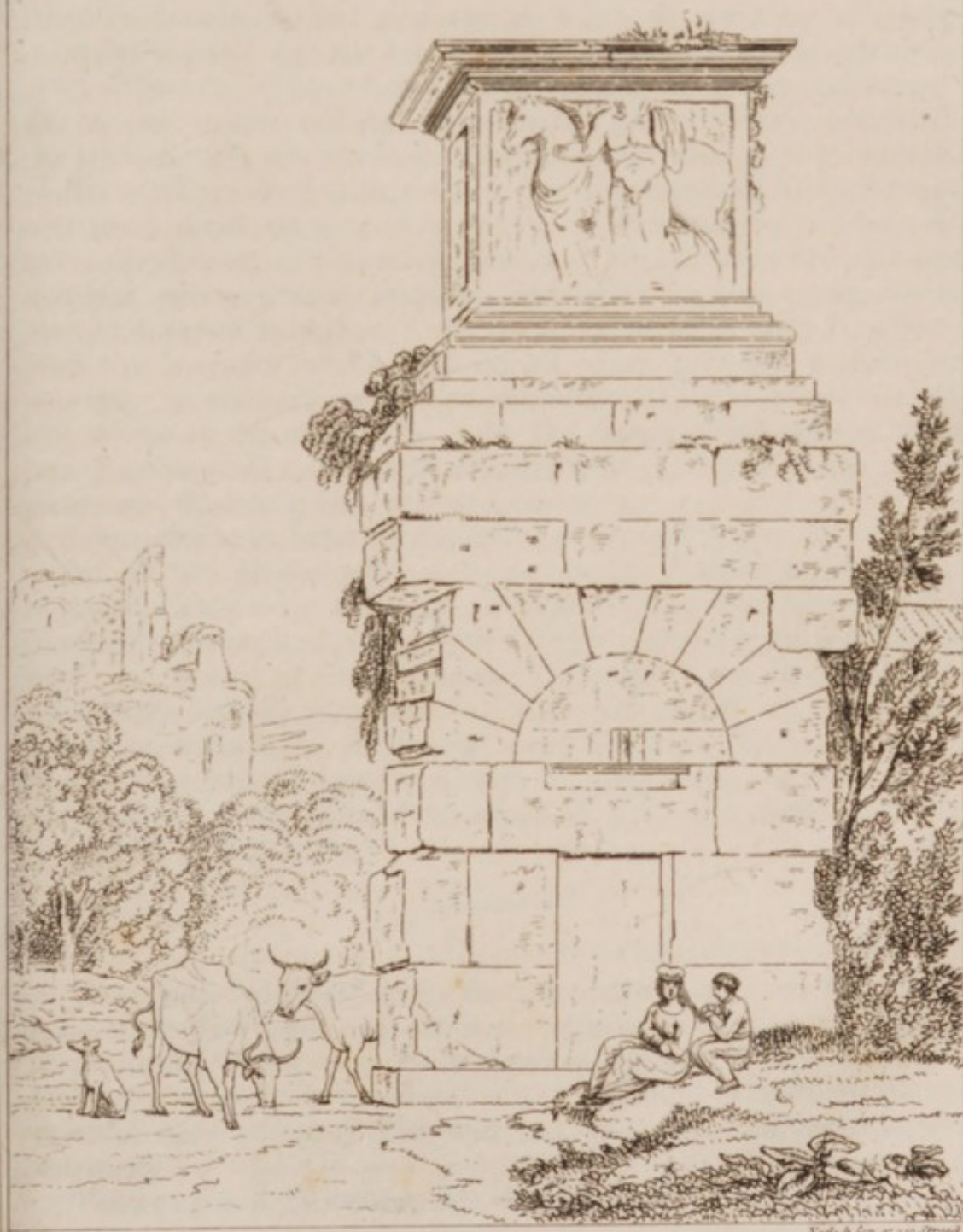
peach-trees, and aloes, grew by the sides of these fields, and seemed to invite the labourer to partake of their fruits.

While I was contemplating this rural scene, a band of young peasant girls, preceded by a tambour, passed me on their way to their rural labours. They held each other by the hand, and danced along the path I was pursuing. I would fain have arrayed these virgins of the south in the costume and freshness of the country girls of Florence; for they resembled them in nothing but their careless gaiety. Amidst the numerous privileges which Nature has bestowed on the females of Naples, she has denied them the roseate bloom of beauty, and the attractive graces of simplicity. Their features are hard, their complexions dark, and there is nothing pleasing about them, except the marvellous skill with which they divine the secret relations existing between motion, sound, and thought.

The ravages of time, and volcanic eruptions, have covered the shores of the gulf of Baiæ with rocks and ruins. Amidst the wild vegetation with which they are clothed, there appear here and there a few remaining shoots of the shrubs which, two thousand years ago, adorned the gardens of Campania. I passed the heat of the day at Pozzuoli; and, towards evening, rambled on the sea-side, near the ruins of the temple of Serapis, where the remains of the causeway, intended by Domitian to unite, by an easy communication, the two arms of the gulf, are still visible under the water. I there continued my walk along a path traced on the shore. The grasshoppers were chirping, and the waves, agitated by a gentle breeze, died in soft murmurs along the shore. The lake of Avernus, which I wished to visit, is not visible till you have passed a ridge, which I ascended by a rocky path-way. The hill over which it wound, was covered with flowering shrubs, which diffused their fragrance around. From the summit I beheld the lake, reposing in its circular basin amidst a profound solitude. I stood still to enjoy the prospect. The setting sun still gilded the eastern side of the lake, but the opposite shore was already in shade. Notwithstanding the fineness of the evening, it was silent as in the days of Virgil: neither the song of a bird, nor the chirp of a grasshopper, was heard. Not a cottage, or a patch of cultivation, is to be seen on the hills which surround it; and the imagination is left to indulge its reveries undisturbed, amidst its silent woods, and tranquil waters.

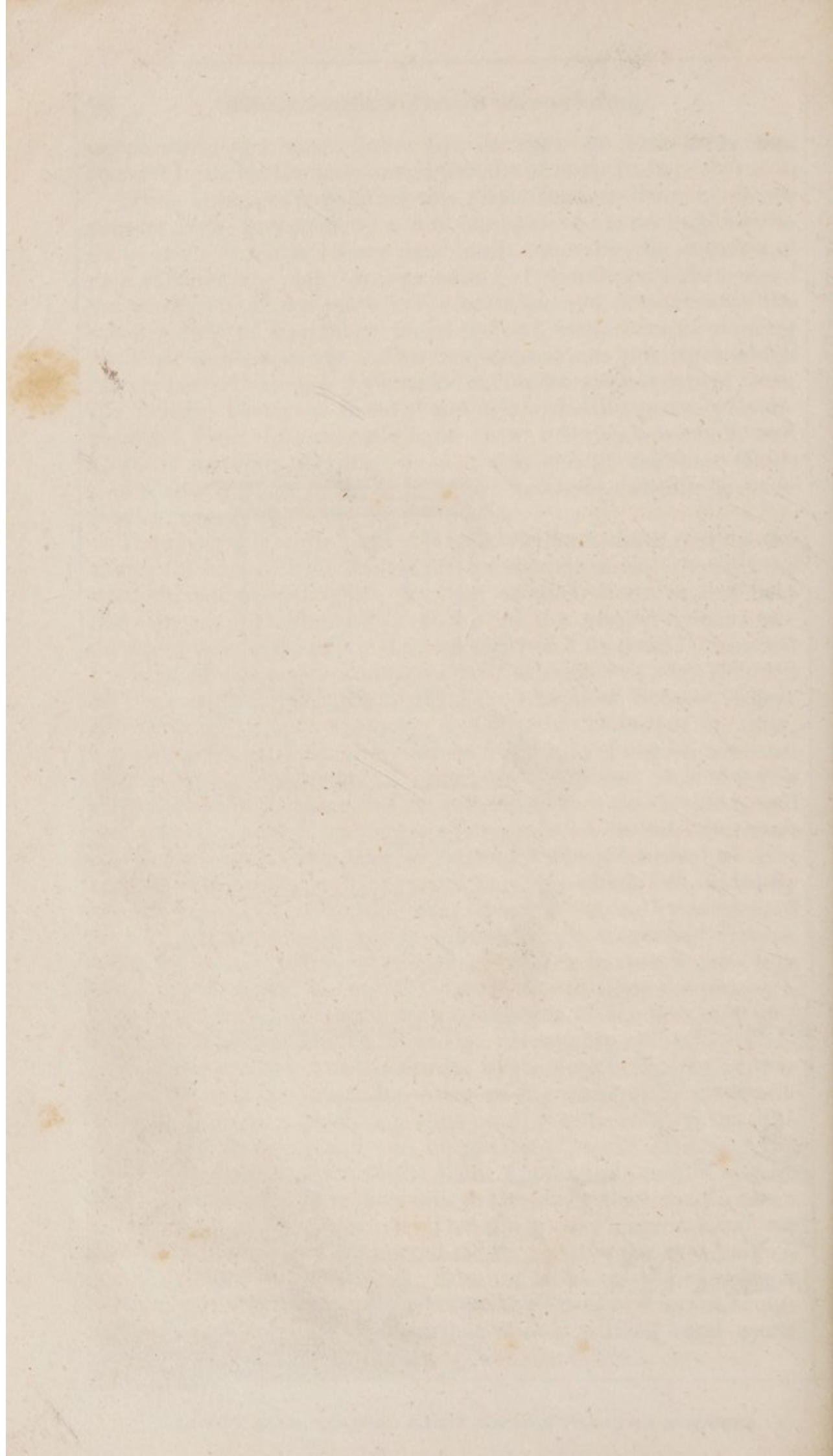
I proceeded, the next morning, to the place where the Cumæan Sibyll delivered her oracles. The guide who accompanied me lighted his torch, and conducted me into a subterraneous gallery, carefully cut through the rock, from the sides of which passages opened into other apartments, where the traces of elegant sculpture were still visible. The whole work is artificial, and wants



*Sculpsit J. B. de Sordani*

ANTIQUE ENTRANCE OF THE VILLA ADRIANA, NEAR TIVOLI.







that character of sublimity which nature alone can give. It is not thus that we picture to ourselves the abodes of the Prophets, or the sacred grottoes where oracles were pronounced. In this land of wonders, many caverns might have been selected for such a purpose, of deeper gloom, and wilder disorder.

As you advance towards Misenum, you still continue to meet with ruins, some of which retain the traces of their ancient beauty, but the greater part are buried under water. Nowhere is the destructive power of time more strikingly displayed, than in these scenes once so celebrated. The coast of Baïæ, and the remains with which it is covered, seem absolutely incapable of being restored to the scene of the world. The very access to them is destroyed, and you can only get at them by climbing over the rocks. On the top of the cliffs, the aspect of nature is very different. The renovated soil extends in gentle and irregular slopes intersected by streamlets. The meadows, refreshed by their waters, are clothed every morning with a new verdure. Tufts of aloes, and orange-trees, are interspersed, and cottages scattered amid these groves, where children are to be seen collecting oranges, or gathering flowers. When the mid-day heats become too powerful, grottoes, excavated in the earth, invite you to descend into them. Here a feeble light only is visible, and the cascades which fall on all sides, preserve a constant equality of temperature. The obscurity of these recesses, and the sound of the waterfalls, calm the imagination exerted by so many interesting scenes and recollections, and you return to the shore and its ruins with renewed curiosity.

I was desirous, before I departed, of proceeding to the extreme point of the promontory, to enjoy the finest scene presented by a single view in the universe. It was at Misenum, between the Avernian Lake, and the Elysian fields, near the ruins of Baïæ and the tombs of the Romans. Several vessels, impelled by a favourable breeze, were entering the road of Naples, and thousands of boats were skimming along the bay. The radiance of the setting sun streamed in sheets of gold along the sky; while the wearied earth seemed to await in profound tranquillity the mysteries of the night.

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PORTICI, *August 2, 1813.*

I AM just returned from an excursion to Vesuvius. This mountain has been so often described, that it may appear superfluous to say any thing further about it. But the eruption of a volcano is so grand a phenomenon of nature, that a faithful description of one will not, perhaps, tire the reader's curiosity.



It is now a long time since this awful scene has been exhibited; as if the earth, wearied by the political storms which have agitated her surface, was unwilling to add to the commotion, by her internal convulsions. But I was at Naples during the eruption of 1791, and the account which I am now about to give, is transcribed from a journal which I wrote at the time.

It was in the month of March, and I was about to leave Naples in order to reach Rome in time for the Easter festival. I had just returned to the Hotel de Venice, where I lodged, about eleven o'clock at night, when the people of the house came into my room to inform me that Vesuvius was beginning to throw up clouds of ashes, and that the flames which proceeded from it, announced an approaching eruption. The air was as hot as in the month of July, and as calm as on a fine summer's day. I immediately went out on the terrace of the house. The atmosphere was filled with a shower of ashes. You might feel them falling, but you could not see them. They descended gently and imperceptibly, and accumulated gradually on the surface of the ground. They silenced the noise of the carriages, and covered the whole of the adjacent territory with a dark tint, as if it had been attired in mourning.

The darkness was from time to time illumined by the flames, which darted in long flashes from the crater. Suddenly a luminous point appeared on the side of the mountain, about two hundred yards from the summit. It was the new crater through which the lava had just forced its way. At the same time a general exclamation burst from the whole city: "There is the lava! there is the new crater! It has opened on this side! May God and St. Januarius protect us!" In a moment the churches were all opened: the bells rung; and the whole population of Naples poured forth into the streets and squares. I also went towards the mole, to mingle with the crowd, and share in their alarm and their curiosity.

This spectacle, grand as it was, had not the appearance of a festival. Anxiety was depicted in every countenance, and all eyes were turned towards the luminous point which was visibly enlarging every instant. The priests were already assembled at the altars, and the crowd pressed into the churches. The people were impatient for the departure of the procession, in which they placed all their hopes. The banners were displayed amidst solemn hymns, and soon after they began to leave the churches. The murmur which preceded them, made the people give way; and, as they advanced, every one fell into their train. Even the women left their carriages, and marched through the ashes, with the rest of the faithful.



The processions from all the streets directed their course to the grand square of the palace. The king and the royal family were at the balcony, and the people, as they passed, saluted them with loud exclamations. The processions, from all quarters, met in this immense square. They kept crossing, going and coming, and increased in number continually, till at length, wearied out by their own terror, they returned, by long circuits, to the churches whence they set out.

The showers of ashes ceased towards day-break, and the first rays of morning destroyed the brilliance of the flames, which had appeared so vivid during the night. The return of day-light dissipated the fears of the people. They thought that heaven was appeased, and forgot the grand nocturnal scene they had witnessed, without considering that it would be renewed the succeeding evening.

I also retired to rest; for it is only in darkness that the full magnificence of a volcano is displayed, and I was desirous of taking a nearer view of it the following night.

I set out towards Vesuvius about seven o'clock in the evening, in company with a young Livonian. As the day declined, the flames of the volcano resumed their splendour; and, on reaching Portici, we were able to judge of the progress the lava had made during the day. It was no longer a luminous point, as on the preceding evening, but a broad stream, flowing slowly along the course which it had formed for itself.

We took guides at Portici, where we left our cabriolet, and mounted mules. We were provided with torches, but we stood in little need of them, for the sky was sufficiently illuminated by the flames. We ascended through the vineyards, to the hermitage of San Salvador, along a rugged path bestrewn with stones and cinders; but our mules being accustomed to it, pursued their way without difficulty, and left us at liberty to enjoy the grand scene which surrounded us.

In this manner we reached San Salvador, at that time inhabited by two hermits, one of whom was a Genoese, and the other a native of Paris. They lived in two separate cells, for they had quarrelled, and had not spoken to each other for several years. We were received by the Parisian, who placed before us dates and oranges. An eruption was a sort of festival to him: not that his curiosity was excited by the phenomenon, but because many strangers visited his cell at those times, and gave him an opportunity of talking.

Here we sent back our mules to Portici, for they could no longer be of any use to us. Two of the guides alone remained with us, to direct us to the part of the mountain where the lava had taken its course. Before we set off, we remained for some time before the hermitage, contemplating the fiery



clouds which the volcano was spreading around it. At length we continued our way towards the torrent of lava, which then threatened the unfortunate town of Torre del Greco. It escaped at that time: and was not destroyed till three years afterwards.

We proceeded through cinders and scoriæ, along obstructed paths: they at first led us across a wide valley, which separates the hermitage from the upper part of Vesuvius. This valley, which was destitute both of grass and shrubs, extended in an eastward direction, along the side of the mountain, opposite to the eruption. It was dark and still, except that a lucid light was reflected upon it from the clouds. It was the vale of death, and eternal silence: save that on this night its tranquillity was broken by the numerous parties whom curiosity had brought thither, and who were going and coming from the hermitage to the crater.

After marching for an hour, we began to climb with difficulty over heaps of scoriæ. We were obliged to grope our way through passages unknown to our guides, for at each eruption the lava alters its course. We soon found ourselves in a region where every thing bore the marks of fire. The air began to be scorching: the very stones were warm; and we beheld fiery clouds rolling over our heads, and leaving an ensanguined track in the sky.

We were within half a mile of the end of our journey, when we met with a lady, attended by two guides, who had been left behind on the mountain by her party. She was sitting on a rock, wrapped in a shawl, and was talking with great earnestness to her guides. Her accent explained to me that she was an English woman, and I went up to her to offer her my assistance, and to ask the cause of her agitation. She replied in French, with an eloquence inspired by the darkness and disorder of the surrounding scene. She informed me that her husband and a party of her countrymen had accompanied her as far as this place, but that the guides had persuaded him that it would be dangerous for her to proceed any farther. She had made many entreaties to be allowed to go on, but ineffectually; and had since used her best endeavours to prevail on the guides to take her forwards, but without success. She was mortified, she said, to the last degree, at being thus prevented from witnessing a scene which she had looked forward to with so much earnestness.

I ventured to offer her the assistance of my arm, for the short distance which remained. She accepted it with a readiness which surprised me, though it arose merely from her anxious desire of being present at the magnificent spectacle



displayed by Vesuvius ; and we set off, notwithstanding the remonstrances of her guides.

She leaned on my arm, and we proceeded slowly, because we sunk into the ashes, and the scorizæ wounded her feet. Nevertheless, we were drawing nearer the torrent of lava, and the glare which proceeded from it gave me an opportunity of observing my companion. She was young and beautiful, but pale with emotion, and seemed to share in the agitation and disorder of the scene.

The ground and the air became hot as we approached the glowing furnace, and gusts of smoke came rolling towards us. We endeavoured to avoid them, by getting out of the current of the wind, but the blast was so violent, that we were twice enveloped in these fiery clouds, and were near being suffocated. The soil gave way under our feet, and the fire appeared beneath the scorizæ, as they rolled down the precipices.

At length, with some difficulty, we reached the end of our journey. The friends of my young female companion were already arrived, but their attention was so fully engaged by the spectacle before them, that they had not perceived our approach. We were, therefore, obliged to introduce ourselves to them, and I was not without some uneasiness as to the reception we might meet with ; but success is always a sufficient justification. We had proceeded safely thither : our imprudence was forgiven ; and we had only to enjoy in silence the grand scene before us.

The lady's husband called her Florinda : the only name by which I have ever known her. Twenty-two years have elapsed since that period. Should Florinda read these letters, she will recollect this nocturnal scene upon the mountain, and know who the stranger was that conducted her to that ocean of fire.

We contemplated in silence the burning torrent, which was rolling its waves before us. They did not flow like those of an ordinary stream, but seemed to roll over like masses of rock. It kept continually increasing in breadth, because, as it went on, it rekindled the old scorizæ, so that the whole mountain seemed on fire.

The stream of lava, which was now some hundred feet broad, was gradually approaching the brink of a precipice, down which it threatened to fall before morning : we determined to await the catastrophe, measuring, with our eyes, the space which remained for it to traverse. It kept slowly, but continually, drawing nearer ; the scorizæ taking fire before it, and preparing its way. At length the ignited torrent reached the edge of the rocks, and precipitated itself down them with a tremendous noise. Clouds of smoke arose from the abyss,



abyss, and were driven by the wind in all directions, while the lava continued to fall into the gulph.

This natural reservoir arrested the violence of the torrent, and saved the habitations which it menaced. It would have required several days to have filled it, and the eruption happily ceased before that time. In that which took place three years afterwards, no such obstacle occurred: the lava took its course towards the sea, and utterly destroyed the town of Torre del Greco.

The dawn now appeared in the horizon; and, as if by a soft magic, the splendours of the night faded and disappeared before the radiance of day. The fire grew pale, the vapours became white, and there remained nothing but the singular appearance of a mountain moving by its own efforts.

It was time to retire, for the presence of the ignited matter, when veiled by the sun, is highly dangerous: the spectator may be consumed before he is aware of its approach. We therefore returned by the same course to San Salvador, and thence to Portici, where our carriages were waiting for us. Here I bade adieu to Florinda, whom I have never since seen.

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ROME, *September 10, 1813.*

As the traveller advances towards the south, the richness and grandeur of this volcanic country increase. I was, therefore, unwilling to return to Rome by the road I had already traversed, and determined to penetrate a little farther into the country, to have an opportunity of still enjoying this oriental climate, and its wild and majestic scenery. I hired one of the light carriages of the country, built to travel on rough roads, and set out from Naples, without having even settled the plan of my journey. The summer heats were beginning to decline, the nights were longer, and copious rains had cooled the air, and laid the dust. I could not have chosen a finer season.

I took the road by Portici, and proceeded, without stopping, to Pompeii, where I passed the rest of the day. I shall not repeat what has been so often, and so justly remarked, concerning the unexpected effect produced by the sight of these fine remains of antiquity. The lava has kept them in perfect preservation, and they seem to want nothing but inhabitants. I shall only observe that a great deal has been done within the last four years. A whole quarter has been cleared, the structure and ornaments of which show it to have been the residence of a richer class than the inhabitants of the houses before discovered; and another of the gates of the town has been found. A few



more years, and Pompeii will arise entire from the sepulchre where it has been for so many ages entombed.

There are no ruins in Italy, nor, perhaps, in the world, which inspire the same interest with those of Pompeii, because there is no uncertainty attending them. There is nothing left to conjecture or supposition. Every thing remains as the Romans left it; every thing points out their habits of life. We live with them, we use their furniture, eat at their tables, behold their pictures, and peruse their manuscripts. The whole period that has elapsed since Pliny perished there, seems effaced, and appears but as yesterday.

I staid a long time looking at the workmen employed on the ruins. They had just penetrated into the interior of a house, and at every stroke of the spade we anticipated a discovery. I know nothing in the world that excites so lively an interest as the progress of an excavation of this kind, in a classic country. Expectation, and curiosity, are raised to their height, and all the history of the scene recurs to the imagination. The eye involuntarily follows the trowel with which the workman carefully removes the ashes, for fear of injuring the objects he may chance to discover.

I remained fixed by the side of the workmen, who were throwing the ashes with their shovels into wheelbarrows. A wall, covered with fresco paintings, and arabesques, made its appearance, and we hoped to find something interesting on their medallions. Our expectation was however disappointed; they represented only Cupids and Bacchantes.

As the work went on, the chamber was emptied of the ashes with which it was filled, and we came to a lower apartment. The workmen now redoubled their caution, because they expected to find furniture, and other valuable articles. One of them at length touched a hard substance with his trowel. He carefully removed the ashes, and a bronze ornament made its appearance. Leaves, branches, and fruit, beautifully sculptured, successively rose from the soil. It was an orange-tree, the stem of which rested on a vase, formed of the same metal, which served as a pedestal for it. This elegant bronze was nothing more than a candelabrum, with numerous lights; each fruit being a lamp. The arts have never produced any thing more natural, or graceful, than this candelabrum, which was dug up before my eyes, as clear and bright, after the lapse of two thousand years, as when it first proceeded from the hands of the artist.

By the side of this bronze, and on the same shelf, was found a bust of Marius; and I flattered myself that I should have witnessed still more interesting discoveries, but the approach of night suspended the operations. The workmen and the an-



tiquaries retired, and I was obliged to follow them. From what I experienced during the short time I staid, I can imagine how a man might pass his whole life in these regions without a moment of weariness or ennui.

The next day I continued my way along the winding shores of the gulf, towards the promontory of Sorrento. In proportion as I got farther from Vesuvius, and the region, covered with scorice, which surrounds its base, I entered a rich volcanic soil. The road was bordered by the villas of the Neapolitan families, most of which were painted in fresco, and ornamented with statues copied from the antique. Their roofs were encompassed with a balustrade, and covered with shrubs, forming a kind of aerial grove, where may be enjoyed the coolness of the evening, and the beauty of the landscape. They were surrounded by gardens, of small extent, but carefully decorated. Large aloes, planted in vases formed from blocks of lava, were growing on the pedestals of the portal; and every thing reminded me of the ornamental taste of the ancients. The appearance of these decorated habitations was not unpleasing; for the regular works of art acquire an additional charm, when placed in the midst of wild and luxuriant scenery.

The coast, as far as Castellamare, is rich and populous. The eruptions have as yet spared the eastern side of the bay of Naples, and reserved a delicious rural retreat for its inhabitants. Beyond Pompeii, the traces of the disorder caused by Vesuvius cease, and nature appears young and vigorous. The shore falls in gentle slopes, covered with olives and mulberries, vines, and orange-trees. This tract, so favoured by heaven, extends all the way from Sorrento to Salerno, and bears the name of the *Piave di Sorrento*.

The plain of Sorrento is almost the only part of the kingdom of Naples where the operation of an intelligent and active industry is visible. The peasantry have here attempted, with success, the cultivation of cotton, an article which is now become almost a necessary of life. It was, before, partially grown about Naples for local consumption, but the continental system, by increasing the value of this article, increased also its cultivation; insomuch, that in 1812, sixty thousand bags of cotton were supplied by the farmers of these parts for the manufactories of Europe. The plantations which I have visited, promise this year, also, an abundant crop, and will enrich, by their produce, many families who were before deprived of the hope even of competency; a consideration which added not a little to the pleasure I felt in viewing them.

This plain, which is inclosed by the sea, nearly in the manner of a peninsula, terminates at Salerno; and a little beyond,



you once more enter a Maremma, that is to say, a region infected by the Malaria. The kingdom of Naples is not entirely exempt from this scourge. It re-appears, under similar circumstances, on all the shores of the Mediterranean, but no where in those of the Adriatic. These insalubrious tracts may be readily known by the want of inhabitants, and the cessation of cultivation. The land is divided into large domains, which have the appearance of so many deserts. As soon as you enter upon them, the road loses itself in the turf, or at least the traces of it are so faint, as to be scarcely sufficient to direct the passenger.

Evergreen oaks, aloes, and cypresses, are scattered over this Maremma; for in proportion as you approach the south, the soil becomes richer, and the vegetation more luxuriant. A few ruins, half Roman, half Gothic, appear here and there amongst the fig-trees. Sometimes a herdsman, armed with a lance, is seen near them, watching his flock: at others, these men are seen scouring along at full speed in the verge of the horizon, as if pursued by an enemy. The cattle which they tend, are as savage as themselves. The ferocious animals gaze, in stupid amazement, at the new objects which chance may bring within their range. They are the sole inhabitants of these plains, monopolizing a territory which Providence seems to have exclusively assigned to them.

The wild pastures of the Neapolitan Maremma have not even a casale upon them. There are no partially-inhabited remains of ancient towns; nor are they, like the Campagna of Rome, distinguished by a name which ennobles whatever has the privilege of bearing it. The herdsmen who inhabit these wildernesses, have no other dwellings than huts of reeds. The cattle lie around them, and ruminate in peace through the silence of the night.

After travelling for a long time in the Maremma, the traveller discovers, in the remote horizon, some solitary, but apparently perfect, edifices. On approaching them, they gradually increase in size, till at length they become immense; and a regular colonnade is distinguishable. These structures, the architecture of which is visible, in the clearness of the sky, at a great distance, are the three temples of Pæstum, where strangers usually terminate their tour.

Of all the ruins of Italy, these are the most ancient, and the most striking. Built in those unknown ages, anterior to history, which we people with demi-gods and heroes, these temples witnessed the long career of Rome, from its commencement to its conclusion, and seem destined, in like manner, to behold the termination of the world.

At what period of the earth are we to place the existence of those unknown and incomprehensible beings, who built in Italy



the walls of the Cyclops, and raised in Africa the pyramids of Djiza, and the avenue of the Sphinxes? History is silent; her records throw no light on this miraculous age, the monuments of which confound our reason, and surpass even our imagination; for they appear to have been beyond mortal power to raise. Nothing in nature has, to this day, revealed the mysteries of a period, the ruins of which still remain the astonishment of the world: which reared colossal altars to its gods, and constructed mountains for its sepulchres.

How is it that all trace is lost of that gigantic people, whose domestic animals were mammoths, and who built their ramparts with rocks? The ruins of those which remain, astonish us the more from our being able to form no idea of the genius of the age in which their foundations were laid. It is a world whose history has not reached us; and all that we can do is to contemplate, in silent amazement, the august monuments of it, which time has preserved by surrounding them with deserts.

Even nature herself, at the present day, seems too weak to destroy these mighty ruins, so enormous is their mass. The earth has borne them on her surface, until at length they appear, like the other works of the creation, to form a part of her substance.

These stupendous colonnades, unshaken by ages, behold the seasons roll over them in these solitudes, and serve now only as a retreat for the savage inhabitants of the plain, who seek beneath them a shelter from the storm. An old buffalo may be seen awaiting the return of the sun behind the columns, which has been his haunt for twenty years. The rest of the herd give place to him, as to the lord of the desert, and never dispute with him the retreat he has chosen.

I ought, perhaps, before I left these Maremme, to have learned from the herdsmen the particulars of their customs, and of their rural economy; but these details of actual life appeared so insipid in the presence of so venerable an antiquity, that my mind was wholly occupied with thoughts of ages for ever lost in the obscurity of time. I merely cast a passing glance at the unknown flowers which adorned these deserts, and the herds which were reposing among them. The latter consisted chiefly of buffaloes, which being of a dingy colour, did not at all contribute to enliven the landscape. In another part I saw several herds of cattle, of a different breed from that of Hungary. They were not grey, but of a bright fawn-colour: their horns, of a moderate length, but gracefully turned, and their lofty stature and beautiful make, gave them a noble appearance. From the account I have seen of them, I think it probable that they came originally from Africa.



There were also many horses in these plains. Their figure was much more graceful and spirited than that of those met with in the other parts of Italy, though they were still characterized by the length and straightness of the head. They were spotted with various colours, and in their make and action, bore a great resemblance to the Barbary horses; so that they may be considered as an intermediate race between the Spanish and Arabian breeds.

The Maremme terminate in the vicinity of the Appennines. As you approach these mountains nature seems to revive. The landscape is no longer embellished by the prospect of the sea; but the fields, though less cultivated, are nearly as fertile as those about Naples. They are not enlivened by the numerous cottages scattered over the hills of Tuscany and Umbria, nor is agriculture carried to the same degree of perfection as in those provinces. The inhabitants live in towns, advantageously situated for defence; and the principal growth of the country is the olive-tree, which, in this volcanic soil acquires a majestic size, and gives a great richness to the mountain scenery.

A little beyond Salerno, I left the road to Naples, and directed my course towards Nola, on the eastern side of Vesuvius, along a road which was only practicable for a light carriage. The country was well watered, irregular, picturesque, and full of ravines occasioned by the torrents and volcanic eruptions. It was productively, though negligently, cultivated. Fruit-trees grew spontaneously every where, and streamlets murmuring at the bottom of every dell, gave a wooded and rural appearance to the whole.

At Nola I was obliged to send back my carriage to Naples, and to continue my way on horseback, on account of the state of the roads. I found no difficulty in procuring good horses, which I engaged from station to station. The owners frequently accompanied me, in person, to bring them back; and I found it an advantage to be thus provided with guides resident in the country, because they gave me information respecting the different objects that presented themselves, which I could not otherwise have obtained.

From Nola I directed my course towards Alisi, still approaching the high chain of the Appennines, which constantly skirted the horizon; but I did not actually reach it, because I followed a nearly parallel direction. I went on from valley to valley, sometimes through savage defiles, and at others ascending acclivities more or less steep. The roads were mere tracks, but the country through which they led was enchanting. I wandered almost at random, trusting to fortune, who generally used me well. Travelers on these cross roads were formerly lodged in the convents;



but the duties of hospitality have now devolved upon the curates, by whom they are discharged with the utmost benevolence and simplicity. My guides seemed to consider my reception as a matter of course. They took me straight to the door of the parsonage, and desired me to alight, even before any of the family made their appearance.

The traveller is much less exposed to the attacks of banditti in these parts, than in the neighbourhood of the high roads. So few travellers pass this way, that it is not worth their while to lay in wait for them. Besides, it is not the custom to attack passengers in the interior of the country: the robber, whom it is so dangerous to meet near Terracina, here suffers the traveller to pursue his way unmolested, because he has been accustomed, from his childhood, to respect the territory of these vallies. Habit and opinion are every thing with mankind.

The continued succession of hill and vale through this country, has rendered the objects of cultivation various, and the size of the farms small. The soil and the climate are alike favourable to a thousand different productions. The chesnut, the olive, and the vine, grow here in the greatest vigour, and cover all the acclivities. Indian corn, wheat, beans, and pulse, are cultivated wherever the declivity is moderate.

At the season when I traversed the country, nothing could exceed the richness it displayed. The plants, shrubs, and trees, were alike loaded with fruit of all sizes and colours. Some, by their farinaceous quality, supplied the place of bread to the poorer classes. Others yielded oil, a product in these countries of almost equal necessity. Many sorts, cultivated in our gardens merely for ornament, here form articles of food; and the fruit which covers the frugal tables of the farmers, is coloured, by autumn, with tints which in our northern climates art in vain attempts to impart to them.

I re-entered the states of the church at Alatri. As I passed near Monte Casino, I was desirous of visiting it; but that cradle of the monastic institutions is now deserted, and I was separated from it by difficult roads, and uncultivated wilds. The scenery of this unknown part of the territories of the church is picturesque and mountainous, but much inferior in fertility to the kingdom of Naples. The mountains, no longer covered with volcanic ashes, are bare and steril. The chesnut woods no longer cover their sides with their protecting shade: a few stunted trees only are scattered here and there. The olive-tree, which delights in broken and rocky sites, alone retains its beauty. Notwithstanding the arid appearance of these mountains, innumerable torrents descend from their summits, and fall in foam over the rocks. The vines, in these parts, are neither carried in festoons



over the elms, nor trained close to the ground, as in the neighbourhood of Albano, but supported on lofty trellises formed of the branches of trees. These rise to the height of twelve or fifteen feet, and form so many bowers, beneath which hang the grapes. They are covered with the richest verdure, and afford an agreeable shade during the summer, but the foliage is so thick that nothing will grow underneath.

The surface of the ground is so much broken in these parts, that scarcely a spot suitable for tillage can be found. Indian corn, melons, and pulse, are grown on a few patches by the sides of the brooks, fenced with aloes and fig-trees. The mountains, which have no other vegetation than the few odoriferous shrubs which grow amongst the rocks, are pastured by a few sheep and goats. Horses could scarcely be kept alive in this arid region, so that the farmers are obliged to employ asses to do their work. These animals resemble ours in nothing but their hardiness. They stand high, are well made, and are extremely useful in these mountainous districts.

The scenery, though worn as it were by time and cultivation, still retains some beautiful features. The olive, the evergreen oak, and the vine, trained on trellises, still adorn the landscape. The forms of the mountains are bold and picturesque; and the outlines displayed by their numerous chains, as they run into each other, are as fine as the painter could select for his pencil.

The country, though enjoying the advantage of a pure air, as well as an unclouded sky, is, however, unable to support its inhabitants, who are obliged to migrate for subsistence into the Roman Maremme. They reap the harvests, and tend the flocks, of these unhealthy regions, and supply the places of those who are annually swept away by the pestilential atmosphere. Frequently, also, by way of filling up their time, in the intervals between the harvests, they join the troops of banditti, and attack travellers in the Pontine Marshes.

The road, winding under trellises of vines, and woods of olive-trees, led me, amidst a continuation of the same kind of scenery, to Subiaco. It is a mere path, sometimes so rough as to be nearly impassable, but affording, as it passes from valley to valley, continual and unexpected changes of scenery. I might have returned to Rome through Palestrina, by a better and more direct road, but I enjoyed so much this independent way of travelling, through an almost unknown country, that I wished to prolong my journey, and preferred going by Licenza and Tivoli.

Tivoli is only six leagues from Subiaco, but I was a long time in reaching it, for the road, which is a mere track along the side of the mountains, was at times so stony, that the horses were



obliged to proceed with caution. The country became still more wild, and was entirely uninhabited : nothing was to be seen but evergreen oaks and laurels, together with large aloes, which grew on the rocks, and, being in full flower, gave a sort of magnificence to these solitudes. This was the once smiling and populous vale of the Anio, celebrated by Horace, who had a country-house here. I stopped at Licenza for the purpose of visiting its ruins ; but I could find nothing but the foundations of some brick walls, just sufficient to shew that there had once been a building there. The private habitations of the Romans were not, indeed, calculated to endure. They were built of brick, and of such small dimensions, that, in the course of time, they soon crumbled to dust.

After about three hours travelling, the horizon began to open, and the diminished size of the mountains informed me that I was approaching Tivoli. A single hill was now all that separated me from the wide-stretching horizon of the Campagna of Rome. The noise of the waterfalls broke upon my ears when I had nearly reached its summit, and in a few moments I beheld once more the temples and roofs of Tivoli, with the rocks and dells which surround them. I entered the town by the bridge of the Anio, and turning down a narrow street, I alighted at the inn of the Sybil, where I had so often been before.

I reposed all the next day till evening, lulled by the sound of the cascades, and then revisited the gardens of the Villa Adriana, which place I left towards the approach of night, and two hours afterwards terminated my long excursion. I re-entered Rome, by the Porta Salare, with that sentiment of pleasure which the sight of this first of cities has never failed to afford me.

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PERUGIA, *September 25, 1813.*

I KNOW not whether the feelings I experienced on leaving Rome have been shared by other travellers ; but whenever I have quitted that city to return to more northern regions, it has been with reluctance and regret. This may be partly owing to those associations by which the countries of the South are enriched in our imaginations with all the choicest gifts of nature ; but is, no doubt, to be principally attributed to the agreeable life which a stranger leads there. The manners of the people are affable, obliging, and friendly. Their language is pure and harmonious, and remarkable for its graceful simplicity. No sort of restraint is imposed on you. You live in the centre of a population of a hundred thousand souls,

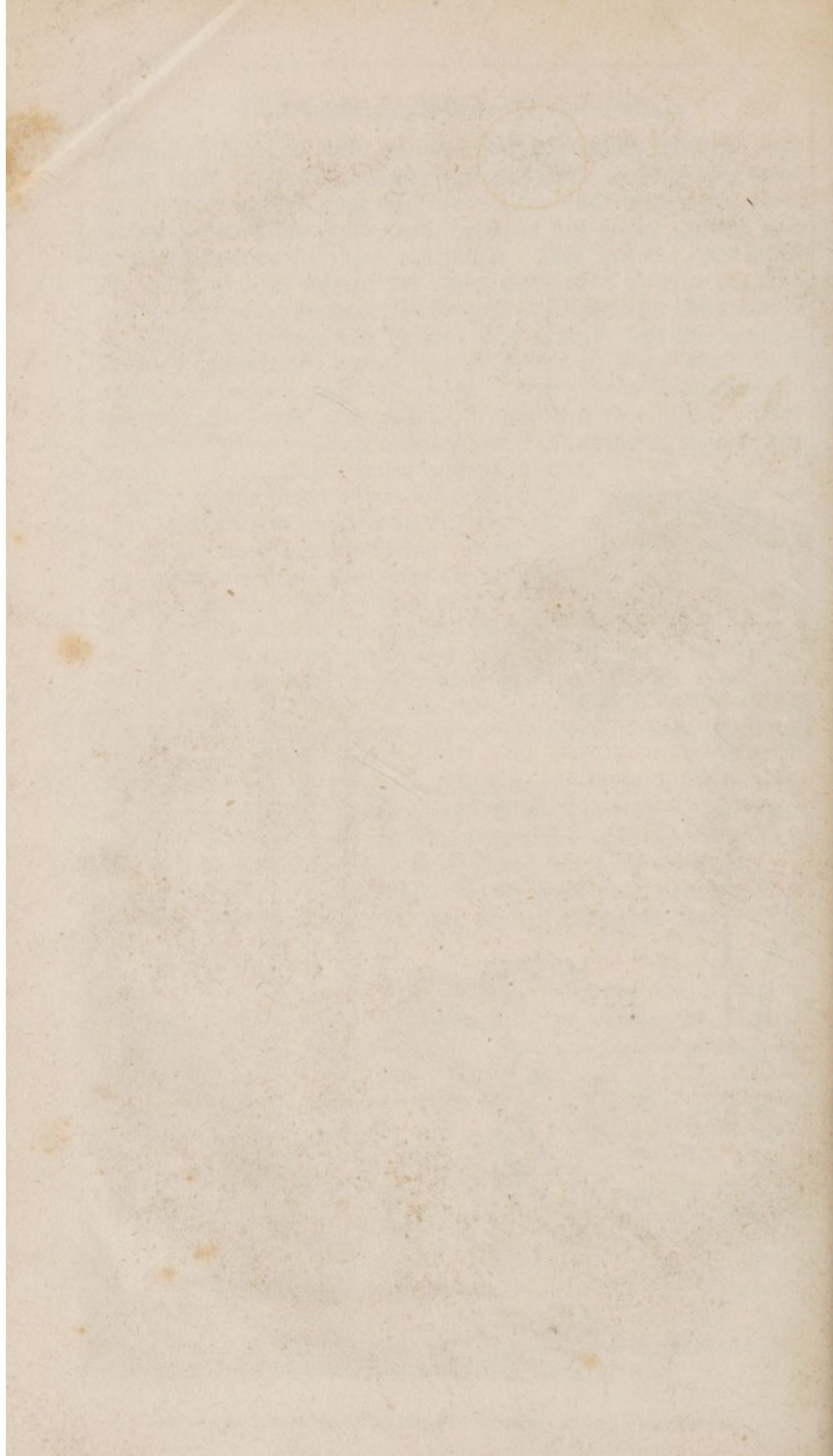




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INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER SERAPIS. AT POZZUOLI.







as much at liberty as if you were in the bosom of a rural retreat. At every step you meet with something to awaken your interest or your curiosity. The imagination is thus agreeably occupied, and the time filled up without effort. I never took a ramble amongst the hills of Rome, without experiencing new, and often profound sentiments of delight and admiration, inspired by the influence of those mighty names in whom all the glories of history repose. The monuments of those ages not only delight us by their elegance and beauty, but are so many testimonies of the truth of history; and, while they inspire us with additional confidence in her records, they give to them an interest, and a reality, which they nowhere else possess.

Before bidding adieu to this proud city, perhaps for ever, it remains for me to notice a few other particulars of her rural economy, and to describe that part of the States of the Church which borders on the Appennines.

The Roman farmers have not remained wholly strangers to that spirit of improvement which has prevailed all over Europe for the last twenty years. To have effected an entire change of the agriculture of the *Agro Romano*, would have required, not only an immense capital, but a new population, and a new atmosphere. This, therefore, they did not attempt; but when agriculturists were every where endeavouring to introduce the productions of India into Europe, the climate of Rome appeared highly favourable to such experiments. Sugar, indigo, and cotton, were among the productions attempted to be cultivated, and some plantations of sugar-canes were made near Terracina. They were not cut when I saw them; but appeared strong and vigorous. The indigo also succeeded well; but the climate is too variable for cotton, which has found its native sun and air only in the vicinity of Naples. It was tried on a large scale on the fertile lands near Rome; but in 1811 the plants were devoured by locusts, and in 1812, some heavy rains, which fell so early as the middle of September, caused the pods to burst, and the cotton was blown away by the winds. These repeated losses, which were very heavy, gave the farmers a disrelish for the cultivation of colonial produce, and will, probably, put a stop to any further experiments for the present. As I have before observed, the system has been imposed by local circumstances. It is the result of the long history of Rome, the vicissitudes of which it has followed. Her fields, like herself, were once the envy of mankind: like her they are now in ruins; nor when the capital of the world is reduced to a solitude, is it to be expected that her territory should be any other than a desert.



On leaving Rome to re-ascend the Tiber, in a northern direction, you are obliged to follow the great Florence road as far as Monte Rossi. Here you turn eastward to Ancona, by Tolentino, and so to Florence by Perugia. This was the road I intended to take, and I went on horseback from Monte Rossi to the farm of Torre in Pietro, near Civita Castellana, which I wished to visit. The country hereabouts is extremely fine. The road runs through a series of meadows, interspersed with tufts of oaks, under whose shade the cattle were feeding. The face of the country was woody, without being wild, for the light and air circulated freely amongst the trees, which were grouped upon the swells, as we see them in the landscapes of Poussin, who used to repair hither to select his subjects.

I was accompanied by Signor Giorgi, who farms the domain of Torre in Pietro, and with whom I had become acquainted at Rome. The ancient town of Veia<sup>e</sup> formerly stood on this spot, and he has lately been engaged in searching for its remains. He was encouraged to make this attempt by M. Millin, who visited the spot in the course of his researches, and his labours have hitherto been very successful. We left the high road, on the other side of the ancient city of Nepi, and soon reached the scene where they were carrying on. The antiques which had been discovered were in the house; and among them, a statue of Tiberius, who had a country seat here. He is represented sitting in a curule chair, in an attitude of command. This statue is highly esteemed by Canova, who places it among the chefs d'œuvre of antiquity. Another discovery, less admired, perhaps, by artists, is that of a temple, in perfect preservation, though completely buried in the earth. It is certainly not quite so large as those of Pæstum, nor even as the temple of Peace, or that of Vesta, being only ten feet in diameter, and of a correspondent height. It resembles the temple of Love in the gardens at Trianon, and was, probably, intended merely as an ornament to those of Tiberius, and not for the purpose of sacred worship. Whatever may have been its destination, this temple is characterized by a singularity hitherto unknown in the annals of architecture. Not one of the eight columns which support the roof belongs to any of the five orders which were supposed to comprehend every mode of just proportion that could be devised by art. The artist has had the talent to invent a different style for each of them, and, notwithstanding their singularity, they are all in the purest taste, and of exquisite workmanship. They seem like the production of an Indian imagination, purified by a transfusion through Greece. This monument will, no doubt, soon be engraved, and will supply new combinations to the artist, who



may henceforth indulge, without restraint, in all the innovations suggested by his genius, supported by a precedent of such antiquity.

Among the collection were several other statues of inferior merit, besides a number of smaller objects which were thrown promiscuously into two chests, as being of little value. They consisted of agricultural implements, vessels, and ornaments of bronze, horse shoes, bits, and iron work of all kinds. These common articles were of precisely the same form and size with those now employed in Italy for the same purposes. Time has not made the slightest alteration in the habits of the country, in these respects, from what they were in the days of the Romans. I rummaged for a long time among these chests, gratified with seeing the Roman gravity exhibited, as it were, in an every day dress; for even trifles relating to such a people are highly interesting. The whole collection was about to be transported to Rome, where it will, no doubt, soon become celebrated.

The country about Civita Castellana is broken by deep chasms, of a singular appearance, and for which it is difficult to assign a cause. The nature of the ground renders it improbable that these abysses should have been worn in the rocks by the torrents: they have rather the appearance of having been caused by some violent convulsion. The precipices which overhang them are crowned with wood, as if to conceal their horrors. You come suddenly upon a yawning gulf, into which immense purple rocks descend, covered with briars and ivy; while from the bottom rises a dark vapour which keeps them always moist, and covers them with a perpetual verdure.

In the centre of the region thus fortified by nature, rise the ancient ramparts of Castellana, covered with mosses and ivy. The points of the bastions are surmounted by antique stone watch-towers, which overlook the mouldering battlements now nearly effaced by time. These fortifications were erected by Julius II. and, consequently, are not of very remote date, but every thing seems to assume an appearance of antiquity about Rome.

As far as Otricoli the country continues to be occupied by large grazing farms. The cattle are left almost wholly to themselves, and rove about the pastures, or repose in the shade, at their pleasure, unrestrained by the careful attention bestowed on them in other countries.

But no sooner have we reached the first chain of mountains, than every thing assumes a different aspect. The air becomes salubrious, and the houses more frequent. Instead of large uninhabited farms, we find the cottages of the husbandman,



and of the vine-dresser, shaded by trellises, under which may be heard the cheerful sound of children at play, the voice of the mother, and the animation of a busy, active, and perhaps, happy family. Around these dwellings are vineyards, plantations of olives, and patches of Indian corn and wheat. The soil, though hilly and uneven, is cultivated throughout; industry appears every where. Farther on, after descending from the heights of Narni, the traveller enters a plain covered with crops of Indian corn, or wheat, and extending to the gates of Terni; where commence the fine olive-woods, which crown the valley leading to the magnificent basin in which Perugia is situated.

This superb amphitheatre is bounded on the right, by the high range of the Appennines, which separate it from the Adriatic, and on the left, by a less-elevated chain, to the westward of which begin the Maremme of Tuscany. The distant steeples of Fuligno appear in the centre. Still farther, on the side of the mountain, rise the antique towers of Perugia; while the ancient castle of the dukes of Spoleto, with its crenated walls, and half-ruined turrets, occupies the fore-ground.

The lofty mountains, whose snow-clad summits rise over the Adriatic, present to the eye nothing but forests and deep gulleys, whence issue streams which, tumbling in cascades from rock to rock, fall in silver spray into the valley, where they keep up a perpetual coolness. On the opposite side, the hills form a long succession of amphitheatres, sprinkled with innumerable habitations, scarcely distinguishable amidst the foliage of the trellises, and olive-trees, by which they are surrounded. The plain, as in Tuscany, is divided into an infinite number of little farms, planted with mulberry-trees, maples, and poplars, festooned with the garlands of the vine. Indian corn, wheat, and pulse, are cultivated within these inclosures, together with a little sainfoin, and scarlet trefoil. The only difference between this country and Tuscany, is, that it is in a less artificial state. The brooks are left to follow their natural course; their banks are shaded by large trees, and the graceful irregularity of nature is combined with the richer vegetation produced by art.

The pastures, with their numerous herds, have disappeared; a few oxen for the plough, some little black horses, and sheep, are the only animals to be seen. The mountain pastures are occupied during summer by the migratory flocks from the Maremme.

Many of the inhabitants of Rome have estates in this valley, where they come to pass the autumn, and to receive from their tenants their share of the harvest. The rest of the farms belong to persons of property residing in the three towns of Spoleto, Fuligno, and Perugia.



Spoletto, which is the nearest to Rome, is remarkable for its singular situation. An entire mountain, which, from a distance, appears to belong to the high chain of the Appennines, is separated from it by a torrent, whose waters roar at the bottom of a precipice. This isolated mountain appears to have been chosen for a citadel from times anterior to history, for it is surrounded by the remains of one of those walls which have been called by the name of the Cyclops', because no other appropriate one could be found for them. Upon this immense foundation, the emperor Trajan, at a later period, built other walls; and the dukes, or as they were termed, the tyrants of Spoletto, erected a fortress on the point of the rock, whence they fearlessly extended their sway over the whole valley. In order to convey a supply of water to this nearly inaccessible summit, they caused an arch to be thrown across the chasm at a terrific height. It has neither the nobleness, nor the elegance of the Pont du Gard, but it has a still more striking effect. The declivity of the mountain is covered with olive-woods, gardens, houses, and terraces, quite down to the plain. All the mountains round Spoletto abound with consecrated edifices. Here an ancient convent displays its front amidst the woods; and there you see a number of chapels which were formerly the residence of pious hermits. Farther on, stands a church decorated with a long colonnade; a lasting monument of the faith of the pilgrims, whose offerings contributed to erect it. By the side of the road is shown a humble chapel, where a taper is kept burning before a Madonna, which is protected by a grating. It was painted by Raphael, when, in his early youth, he pursued his studies at Perugia, under Pietro Perugino.

Beyond Fuligno, where the valley expands, is a large cathedral, the noble architecture of which is displayed, without obstruction, to the eye of the traveller. This is the church *degli Angeli*, the metropolitan of the order of St. Francis; and at a little distance on the side of the mountain, stands the town of Assisi. Thence the valley is terminated by a mountain of gradual ascent, which unites the two chains of the Appennines. The ancient city of Perugia crowns its summit; and on the opposite side the view extends, far as the eye can reach, over the vallies of Thrasymenus, winding through the distance till they join those of Arezzo and Florence.

The situation of Perugia is one of the finest I have seen. The gentle and varied slopes which surround the town, are covered by innumerable gardens, filled with trellises, fruits, and flowers. The numerous canals which water these gardens, together with the shade of the trees, and the fresh and elastic air of the mountains, constantly refresh vegetation, and make every



thing look smiling and verdant. Passing through these bowers, you arrive at the foot of the lofty walls which defend the town, and find yourself suddenly in the midst of ages long past. The streets, which are spacious, are adorned by palaces of an ancient and noble architecture : the lofty domes of the cathedrals are seen towering in the air, and the terraces of the town command a view of the whole surrounding country.

Vales still more umbrageous and picturesque, conduct to the shores of the lake of Thrasymentus. I should have been more struck with it, if I had not seen those of Nerni and Albano. It is inclosed by wooded and verdant hills, which are reflected in its tranquil waters, but offers nothing particularly to attract the attention. A little way beyond the lake, you re-enter Tuscany.

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FERRARA, October 5, 1813.

**THERE** is no country in Europe, nor perhaps in the world, which contains so great a variety of scenery as Italy. The traveller who visits its different provinces, passes, successively, over savage mountains, and cultivated hills, through fertile vales, and desert plains. His eye sometimes rests with delight on smiling fields, where every thing wear an aspect of social happiness ; while in the immediate vicinity of these, he finds other regions, which seem destined by Providence to be the tomb of the human race.

This endless variety of form, assumed by nature in Italy, arises from two causes, alike interesting to trace : namely, the original structure of the creation, and the power possessed by man of impairing or increasing its beauty.

The influence of man over the works of nature, is more visible in Italy than elsewhere, because she has no where been so long subjected to his empire. The vicissitudes of civilization have caused this fine country to experience every various degree of prosperity and decline. Its history presents us, in a manner, with a series of experiments, exemplifying the changes which the different combinations of society are capable of effecting in the elementary forms of the globe.

In traversing the several provinces of Italy, the different genius of their ancient governments is still plainly discernible. Thus, in the agriculture of Florence, we recognise a period of the highest civilization. Every thing about Genoa displays a state jealous of an independence often endangered, and seeking to preserve it by rendering its territory difficult of access. The ruins of Volterra bear testimony to its subjection ; and the solitudes of the Campagna of Rome, indicate the careless indifference of the government of the church in matters of secular policy. These historical testimonies give additional interest to



the tour of Italy, and supply the political economist with lessons of wisdom.

As an instance of this, I may mention a rural establishment in the Val di Chiana, below the City of Crotona. At the bottom of this valley a lake formerly subsisted, of small extent in itself, but surrounded by marshes which diffused their pestilential exhalations all around. This tract belonged to the order of St. Stephen, but, though rich and extensive, was lost to cultivation, and did not yield any revenue. The Tuscan genius, which at that epoch fertilized and embellished whatever came within the sphere of its influence, suggested to the Knights of St. Stephen a plan for draining the lake and its marshes.

It was ingeniously conceived, and skilfully executed. A canal was opened into the Arno, which carried off the water, reserving a supply to be distributed at pleasure through a multitude of secondary ones. The tract thus restored to cultivation, was nearly three thousand acres in extent. It seemed most natural to throw the whole into one grand domain, with a suitable mansion in the centre. But the Tuscans of those times were too well acquainted with rural affairs, thus to consign so valuable a tract to languor and inactivity. Instead of one farm only, it was divided into seventy, separated by roads, crossing each other at right angles, and bordered by canals, forming at once communications and divisions. On each farm was erected a rustic dwelling, of elegant form, and regular proportion, after the usual custom of Tuscany. The land was distributed into meadow and arable, and planted with trees, some of them bearing fruit, others foliage only, but all destined to support the vine, with whose festoons they are now loaded.

I turned out of my road at the entrance of this domain, for the purpose of visiting it, and observing its arrangement and cultivation. I walked on a border of turf by the side of innumerable canals, shaded by a sort of natural trellis, whose waters, distributed over the meadows by sluices, maintained, in the mid heats of summer, a fresh verdure, which charmed alike the senses and the imagination.

Each of the farms is about forty acres—a size sufficient to enable the peasants who occupy them to live comfortably. The produce consists of corn, wine, fruit, vegetables, and silk; and each farmer keeps a pair or two of oxen and a few cows. At the time I was there, they were busy sowing their wheat. The day was very favourable, for a gentle rain, which fell during the night, had softened the earth, and caused it to yield easily to the harrow. Every body was out in the fields. The women were employed in weeding. The father held the plough, and traced the furrow, while the children drove the oxen. Behind them



followed the sower, with measured step, scattering the grain from a linen cloth suspended to his neck, the end of which floated after him in the air like a drapery. An appearance of joy was diffused over the whole scene. It sprang from hope, that balm for all the sorrows of life, which may be said more peculiarly to preside over the day, when the husbandman, confiding in the bounty of Providence, commits his seed to the bosom of the earth. Though threatened by innumerable dangers, the experience of ages gives him an assurance that he shall still see his harvest, in the fields which were reaped by his forefathers.

The plain of Crotona displays one of the noblest triumphs of human industry. Nature had covered it with a lake : industry has transformed it into fertile meadows. It was formerly pestilential; it is now salubrious : it was formerly a desert; it is now inhabited by a happy population. Every thing, even to the streams of water, is formed and regulated by art ; but the effect is far from being monotonous. The fields are so verdant, the trees so thick ; there is such a buz of insects, and such a singing of birds, that you may fancy yourself in the midst of a wood, where nothing has been done but the opening of a few roads, and the clearing of a portion of the land.

Leaving this fertile valley, the traveller soon after arrives at Arezzo. Here the elegant architecture of Florence and Tuscany, which his eye seeks in vain in the wretched-looking towns of Naples, and the States of the Church, again appears. Spacious pavements, frequently repaired, render the streets commodious and clean. The promenades, the fountains, the buildings, and public edifices of every description, throughout Tuscany, are kept in the nicest repair, and respected equally with private property. Arezzo is situated in the fertile vale of the Chiana, at no great distance from the Arno ; but, a little below the town, that river takes a wide sweep along the foot of the high Appennines, through the woods of Vallombrosa, and does not reach Florence till after a long circuit. Here, therefore, the road leaves it, and pursues a shorter course over the calcareous hills which occupy the centre of Tuscany. They run through the whole of the territory, as far as Sienna and Montepulciano, and produce the best wines in Italy. The olive also grows on most of their declivities ; but the more bare and sterile parts are covered by pine forests. The rose-colour sainfoin has been lately cultivated with success on these hills. I saw some very fine crops of it on a farm belonging to Colonel Ricci. This gentleman, who has treasured up a great store of information, has reduced to practice the observations made by him in an extensive course of travelling. He has purchased the flock of Spanish sheep brought into Tuscany by M. de Lasterie. They pass the summer on the



Appennines; and he has prepared winter quarters for them on the dry hills between San Casciano and Incisa.

At length Florence, with its neat agriculture, and gracefully-attired population, re-appears, as you descend from the heights of San Donato, along a torrent embanked by gardens and terraces. On the delightful banks of the Arno, nature seems to display all her bloom, nor is it possible to be insensible to the beauty of the scene. But the picture, though charming, is painted in water colours, and possesses not the warm and vivid tints of the landscapes of the south.

There is great pleasure, when you are travelling, in returning to a place you have visited before. We insensibly contract a sort of attachment to the scenes where we have passed our time agreeably. The objects which surround us become familiar to us, and we feel ourselves in some sense at home. This pleasure I experienced on finding myself once more at Florence, in the same apartment I had occupied in my preceding excursions. The windows opened upon the Arno, and I could not help remarking the resemblance between this part of the city and the Louvre. When I recollected, however, that the buildings which embellish that quarter of Paris, were erected by two queens of the Medici family, I was no longer surprized at the conformity. Italy was, at that time, exclusively, the land of the arts, and the school of taste; and supplied models for the works of ornament erected in every other country.

On the day after my arrival, I went to Poggio a Cajano, the favourite residence of the Medici family. It is a large square building, situated on a rising ground near the Arno, in a heavy, yet simple and magnificent style of architecture, which has since been denominated the rustic style. A balcony, covered by the projecting roof, runs all around it, and affords a delightful view of the varied scene of mountain and valley. On the southern front is a walled garden, filled with trellises and espaliers: the others look over meadows intersected by canals, and shaded by various kinds of trees. The interior is handsomely fitted up, but its general appearance is nothing more than that of the residence of a gentleman of good property, whose object has been to render his house commodious, and his estate productive; planting even his avenues with fruit-trees, for the sake of the profit. All the works of the Medici family are of the same character.

The country between Florence and Bologna contains little that is remarkable. The road runs along the lowest range of the Appennines, so that you have neither the sublimity of the mountain scenery, nor the beauty of the valleys. The only thing which attracted my notice, was the improvements making upon the road. The works of this sort, undertaken or completed by



the French government in Italy, during the last five years, are astonishing. Bridges have been built, precipices levelled, and the communications opened all over the country : if the same improvements should be continued for three years longer, every part of Italy will be rendered easily accessible.

On reaching Filigare, situated on the summit of the Appennines, on the confines of the Bolognese territory, the Adriatic, the plains of Lombardy, Illyria, and the Alps, burst at once upon the view, and a new scene of rural opulence and fertility presents itself. The poetic vales of the Tiber and the Arno, with their magic names and cypress verdure, have disappeared. The radiant skies, and wild luxuriance of the south, are gone. The ash, the willow, and the alder re-appear in the meadows : corn and clover fields are seen ; and the landscape assumes the vegetation and the tints of the northern climates. The cattle have lost the fierce aspect and proud gesture of the wild herds. The sleek heifers of the Bolognese are seen indolently pasturing in the rich meadows, tended by children who are playing around them. Nature seems, as it were, drowsy with reflection, and every where teems with abundance. Here fields of wheat bend under the weight of the ear : there, the Indian corn raises its orange-coloured heads to the height of twenty palms. Farther on, the waters of the canal are seen streaming over the thirsty meadows, and, in a single night, restoring their verdure. In another part, long rows of water-melons cover the ground with their beautiful fruit. Towards evening, the farmer is seen, with his children, selecting the ripest of them, which the latter joyfully pile in heaps ; while the eldest, unyoking the oxen from the plough, brings a light cart, in which they are conveyed home, amidst the joyful shouts of the whole family. Nor is this exuberant fertility confined to the surface of the earth. The vine displays her purple clusters from every tree, and gives additional luxuriance to this scene of plenty.

The whole country, extending along the right bank of the Po, to Parma, is of this description ; but at the mouth of the river, towards the Adriatic, lies that singular and desolate region, known by the name of the Polesino. It commences above Ferrara, and widens, as it approaches the sea, like the Delta of Egypt.

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BELLINZONA, *October 20, 1813.*

THE country beyond the Polesino, on the left bank of the Po, is fertile in the highest degree. Situated at the foot of the loftiest mountains of Europe, it displays, in the immediate vicinity of their sterile rocks, all the various riches of the creation. The traveller contemplates, with awe, the Tyrolese Alps, whose naked precipices, lost amidst the clouds, and towering towards heaven,



seem calculated to withdraw the mind from terrestrial thoughts; while the plain, through which he pursues his easy way, abounds with all that art or nature can contribute to render this life delightful. The sun beams with a pure effulgence, while lofty trees and innumerable streams, refresh and skreen the earth from his parching rays; rendering the harvests ever plenteous, and the meadows ever verdant. And, as if to protect these blessings from every danger, the same hand which formed the mountains, has prepared at their feet natural basins to receive the torrents which fall from them. In these lakes, their fury is tranquilized; they assume a steady level, and flow in peaceful waves through the channels which human art has prepared for them. Every thing, even to the air which you breathe, is pure and serene in this delightful region of Upper Italy, bounded by the Alps, and by the five lakes, whose exquisite scenery gives additional charms to the beauty of the landscapes.

You pass through the finest part of the Milanese in going to Lodi, by way of Cremona. This province, called the Lodesan, from the name of the former city, is so fertile, and so abundantly supplied with water, that very little corn of any kind is cultivated in it; the spontaneous growth of the soil being found more productive. The meadows, which are irrigated at pleasure, are mown four times in the year, and yield a produce superior to that of the finest corn land; for the crops exceed in height and thickness any thing I have ever seen. The herbage consists of grasses, trefoils, broad-leaved plants, and a great quantity of ranunculuses, or butter-cups, which make the fields quite gaudy with their yellow flowers. Two of the crops are cut green for the cows, of which a great number are kept here; the other two are made into hay, for winter use. The cows are fed all the summer in the stables, and are not turned out till the latter end of autumn.

Owing to the great richness and value of the land, the farms of the Milanese are not very extensive, seldom exceeding from fifty to a hundred acres. They are, however, larger than in Tuscany, because grass land requires much less time and attention than the cultivation of fruits, vegetables, or corn. The farmers are also richer, from having fewer hazards, and less expences. Of the latter, one of the principal consists in the annual purchase of cattle; for, by some unaccountable singularity, the cows, after the third generation, always degenerate as milkers, and must be replaced by others from Switzerland; from which country all the horses are likewise imported. The stock belongs to the landlord; but is kept up at the expence of the tenant.



The whole surface of the country, which is perfectly level, is divided into plots of two or three acres, by canals, for the purpose of irrigating it at pleasure. This copious supply of water would in a short time injure the quality of the grass, were it not for a thick dressing of manure, which is spread on the meadows every third year. Notwithstanding this powerful corrective, the turf degenerates in time, and the polygamous and umbelliferous tribes gradually increase at the expence of the grasses and trefoil. The irrigation is then suspended, and the land ploughed, and sown the following spring with hemp, the only plant capable of subduing the natural vegetation on this soil. Its stems rise to a prodigious height; and, after it is pulled, the land is occupied with a crop of some kind of pulse till spring, when it is sown with oats, which are seen waving in the wind, at the height of six or seven feet. These crops are suffered to exhaust the ground previously to the wheat being sown, lest it should be rendered too succulent by an exuberance of fertility. Indian corn generally follows, and a second crop of wheat concludes the course. The land is then left to itself; and, a winter dressing of manure being given to it, soon becomes covered with fresh herbage, without requiring to be sown. As soon as the new turf is become sufficiently thick, the sluices of the adjoining canal are drawn up, and it is laid under water.

The canals of Lombardy are not faced with brick, as in Tuscany, and are wider, on account of the greater abundance of water. Osier beds are planted all along the sides, by way of strengthening the banks. Behind these are alders and willows, intermixed with large plantations of poplars. The latter require to be planted at considerable distances, for they do not rise pyramidically, like the cypress, nor do they grow close and round, like the French poplar, but spread their branches like the birch-tree, and aspire to an immense height. The canals having been long formed, these plantations are now grown up to their full size, and the water has worn the banks into little indentations, like those of the natural brook. The rugged and mossy trunks of the willows hang, covered with ivy and convolvuluses, over the stream. The poplars raise their symmetrical stems above them, like a vast colonnade, of unequal, but mighty proportions; and the whole scene is at once smiling and graceful in the details, and noble in its general effect.

To the westward of the Lodesan, on the banks of the Tesino, this fine country of wood and meadow terminates, and wide plains appear, extending to the horizon. Few houses or peo-



ple are to be seen : a pale monotonous verdure pervades the whole. You now enter the rice-grounds.

Before the traveller quits Italy,—while he yet lingers on her utmost limits, one would say that she is desirous of presenting him with a last display of her magnificence, and her beauty. On the shores of the lakes in the north of the Milanese, on the frontiers of Switzerland, oriental luxuriance, and Alpine grandeur, unite to form the fairest scenes with which the globe is embellished. The lofty mountains, where dwells eternal winter, and the fertile plains, “the green abodes of life,” are brought together, as if by magic ; and every various tint that colours the surface of the earth, every beautiful form that adorns it, are presented, in blended succession, to the eye. The plants of the northern and southern climates mingle their perfumes in the same valley : the orange-tree grows by the side of the fir, and the citron by the side of the cytissus.

The natural advantages, and enchanting scenery, of the lakes of Upper Italy, have long since attracted a numerous population to their shores. The hills are covered with habitations, which are not palaces, for the grounds attached to them would not have been sufficiently extensive. Neither are they cottages, for the inhabitants are too wealthy not to bestow some expence on their residences. They are small, but elegant and commodious dwellings, having nothing rustic about them but their beautiful situation, and the trellises by which they are shaded. They are surrounded by orchards, rising on terraces one above the other, in which the fruits of Europe, and of Asia, grow together ; while the streamlets which descend from the Alps bring with them the limpid coolness of their ices, and the murmur of their cascades. The verdure of the hills is reflected in broken images from the waters of the lake ; a moving picture painted by nature, as if to shew to man that her works were capable of being imitated.

The fineness of the day tempted me to continue my way to Switzerland across the lake of the Lugano. As I approached the Alps the hills became higher, the houses less frequent, and the trellises less verdant and bowery. The fruit-trees disappeared, and were succeeded by the lofty sons of the forest, whose vast branches were bent by the winds. The streamlets became torrents, and poured in cascades over the rocks. The song of the birds ceased, and nothing was heard but the distant moan which announced the approach of the snow-storm and the tempest. The air, no longer embalmed with the perfume of the orange-flowers, was filled with the wild odour of the fir. I had now reached the last turn of the lake. The boat entered a bay



surrounded with rocks, where the pale tint of the Alpine snows was reflected in the water ; and looking up to heaven, I beheld immediately before me those mighty mountains, whose majestic grandeur seems to render them worthy to be the sovereigns of the world.

I disembarked at the foot of the rocks, near Lugano, and pursued my way towards the wild secluded vales of the mountains, with a sort of melancholy feeling. The only habitations to be seen were a few huts scattered upon the sides of the mountains ; and I heard the distant tinkling of the bells of the flocks, the sound of which, repeated by the echoes, is so delightful to the ear of the Swiss shepherd. These simple sounds, one of the harmonies of the Alps, announced the approach of the herds which I soon after met. All the cattle of the valley were descending from the mountains for the winter. The shepherds did not wear garlands of flowers, as on the day of their departure to the pastures, for the flower season was passed ; but each carried a green branch. The villagers left their work, and came out of their cottages to meet their cows, the companions of their winters, and the supports of their families. The animals seemed sensible to their welcome, and each of them, recognizing the door of the shed where it had been reared, saluted the sheltering roof, and the family of its master, with joyful lowing.

The traits of this picture could not be mistaken : I beheld once more the simple scenes and manners of Switzerland ; but, though on my native soil, I could not forbear turning a last look towards Italy, and, with an inexpressible feeling of regret, I bade a final adieu to that delightful country, which no man ever quitted but with reluctance, or re-visited but with renewed pleasure.

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