

Observations and Reflections Made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany, Vol. I eBook

Observations and Reflections Made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany, Vol. I by Hester Thrale

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OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

MADE IN THE COURSE OF A

JOURNEY

THROUGH

FRANCE, ITALY, AND GERMANY.

By Hester Lynch Piozzi.

IN TWO VOLUMES

Vol. I.

LONDON:

Printed for A. Strahan; and T. CADELL in the Strand,

MDCCLXXXIX.

PREFACE.

I was made to observe at Rome some vestiges of an ancient custom very proper in those days—it was the parading of the streets by a set of people called *Preciae*, who went some minutes before the *Flamen Dialis* to bid the inhabitants leave work or play, and attend wholly to the procession; but if ill omens prevented the pageants from passing, or if the occasion of the show was deemed scarcely worthy its celebration, these *Preciae* stood a chance of being ill-treated by the spectators. A Prefatory introduction to a work like this, can hope little better usage from the Public than they had; it proclaims the approach of what has often passed by before, adorned most certainly with greater splendour, perhaps conducted too with greater regularity and skill: Yet will I not despair of giving at least a momentary amusement to my countrymen in general, while their entertainment shall serve as a vehicle for conveying expressions of particular kindness to those foreign individuals, whose tenderness softened the sorrows of absence, and who eagerly endeavoured by unmerited attentions to supply the loss of their company on whom nature and habit had given me stronger claims.

That I should make some reflections, or write down some observations, in the course of a long journey, is not strange; that I should present them before the Public is I hope not too daring: the presumption grew up out of their acknowledged favour, and if too kind culture has encouraged a coarse plant till it runs to seed, a little coldness from the same quarter will soon prove sufficient to kill it. The flattering

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partiality of private partisans sometimes induces authors to venture forth, and stand a public decision; but it is often found to betray them too; not to be tossed by waves of perpetual contention, but rather to sink in the silence of total neglect. What wonder! He who swims in oil must be buoyant indeed, if he escapes falling certainly, though gently, to the bottom; while he who commits his safety to the bosom of the wide-embracing ocean, is sure to be strongly supported, or at worst thrown upon the shore.

On this principle it has been still my study to obtain from a humane and generous Public that shelter their protection best affords from the poisoned arrows of private malignity; for though it is not difficult to despise the attempts of petty malice, I will not say with the Philosopher, that I mean to build a monument to my fame with the stones thrown at me to break my bones; nor yet pretend to the art of Swift's German Wonder-doer, who promised to make them fall about his head like so many pillows. Ink, as it resembles Styx in its colour, should resemble it a little in its operation too; whoever has been once *dipt* should become *invulnerable*: But it is not so; the irritability of authors has long been enrolled among the comforts of ill-nature, and the triumphs of stupidity; such let it long remain! Let me at least take care in the worst storms that may arise in public or in private life, to say with Lear,

—I'm one
More sinn'd against, than sinning.

For the book—I have not thrown my thoughts into the form of private letters; because a work of which truth is the best recommendation, should not above all others begin with a lie. My old acquaintance rather chose to amuse themselves with conjectures, than to flatter me with tender inquiries during my absence; our correspondence then would not have been any amusement to the Public, whose treatment of me deserves every possible acknowledgment; and more than those acknowledgments will I not add—to a work, which, such as it is, I submit to their candour, resolving to think as little of the event as I can help; for the labours of the press resemble those of the toilette, both should be attended to, and finished with care; but once complete, should take up no more of our attention; unless we are disposed at evening to destroy all effect of our morning's study.

OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

MADE IN A JOURNEY THROUGH

France, Italy, and Germany.

* * * * *

FRANCE.

CALAIS.

September 7, 1784.

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Of all pleasure, I see much may be destroyed by eagerness of anticipation: I had told my female companion, to whom travelling was new, how she would be surprized and astonished, at the difference found in crossing the narrow sea from England to France, and now she is not astonished at all; why should she? We have lingered and loitered six and twenty hours from port to port, while sickness and fatigue made her feel as if much more time still had elapsed since she quitted the opposite shore. The truth is, we wanted wind exceedingly; and the flights of shaggs, and shoals of maycril, both beautiful enough, and both uncommon too at this season, made us very little amends for the tediousness of a night passed on ship-board.

Seeing the sun rise and set, however, upon an unobstructed horizon, was a new idea gained to me, who never till now had the opportunity. It confirmed the truth of that maxim which tells us, that the human mind must have something left to supply for itself on the sight of all sublunary objects. When my eyes have watched the rising or setting sun through a thick crowd of intervening trees, or seen it sink gradually behind a hill which obstructed my closer observation, fancy has always painted the full view finer than at last I found it; and if the sun itself cannot satisfy the cravings of a thirsty imagination, let it at least convince us that nothing on this side Heaven can satisfy them, and *set our affections* accordingly.

Pious reflections remind one of monks and nuns; I enquired of the Franciscan friar who attended us at the inn, what was become of Father Felix, who did the duties of the quete; as it is called, about a dozen years ago, when I recollect minding that his manners and story struck Dr. Johnson exceedingly, who said that so complete a character could scarcely be found in romance. He had been a soldier, it seems, and was no incompetent or mean scholar: the books we found open in his cell, shewed he had not neglected modern or colloquial knowledge; there was a translation of Addison's Spectators, and Rapin's Dissertation on the contending Parties of England called Whig and Tory. He had likewise a violin, and some printed music, for his entertainment. I was glad to hear he was well, and travelling to Barcelona on foot by orders of the superior.

After dinner we set out to see Miss Grey, at her convent of Dominican Nuns; who, I hoped, would have remembered me, as many of the ladies there had seized much of my attention when last abroad; they had however all forgotten me, nor could call to mind how much they had once admired the beauty of my eldest daughter, then a child, which I thought impossible to forget: one is always more important in one's own eyes than in those of others; but no one is of importance to a Nun, who is and ought to be employed in other speculations.

When the Great Mogul showed his splendour to a travelling dervise, who expressed his little admiration of it—"Shall you not often be thinking of me in future?" said the monarch. "Perhaps I might," replied the religieux, "if I were not always thinking upon God."

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The women spinning at their doors here, or making lace, or employing themselves in some manner, is particularly consolatory to a British eye; yet I do not recollect it struck me last time I was over: industry without bustle, and some appearance of gain without fraud, comfort one's heart; while all the profits of commerce scarcely can be said to make immediate compensation to a delicate mind, for the noise and brutality observed in an English port. I looked again for the chapel, where the model of a ship, elegantly constructed, hung from the top, and found it in good preservation: some scrupulous man had made the ship, it seems, and thought, perhaps justly too, that he had spent a greater portion of time and care on the workmanship than he ought to have done; so resolving no longer to indulge his vanity or fondness, fairly hung it up in the convent chapel, and made a solemn vow to look on it no more. I remember a much stronger instance of self-denial practised by a pretty young lady of Paris once, who was enjoined by her confessor to wring off the neck of her favourite bullfinch, as a penance for having passed too much time in teaching him to pipe tunes, peck from her hand, &c.—She obeyed; but never could be prevailed on to see the priest again.

We are going now to leave Calais, where the women in long white camblet clokes, soldiers with whiskers, girls in neat slippers, and short petticoats contrived to show them, who wait upon you at the inn;—postillions with greasy night-caps, and vast jack-boots, driving your carriage harnessed with ropes, and adorned with sheep-skins, can never fail to strike an Englishman at his first going abroad:—But what is our difference of manners, compared to that prodigious effect produced by the much shorter passage from Spain to Africa; where an hour's time, and sixteen miles space only, carries you from Europe, from civilization, from Christianity. A gentleman's description of his feelings on that occasion rushes now on my mind, and makes me half ashamed to sit here, in Dessein's parlour, writing remarks, in good time!—upon places as well known as Westminster-bridge to almost all those who cross it at this moment; while the custom-house officers intrusion puts me the less out of humour, from the consciousness that, if I am disturbed, I am disturbed from doing *nothing*.

CHANTILLY.

Our way to this place lay through Boulogne; the situation of which is pleasing, and the fish there excellent. I was glad to see Boulogne, though I can scarcely tell why; but one is always glad to see something new, and talk of something old: for example, the story I once heard of Miss Ashe, speaking of poor Dr. James, who loved profligate conversation dearly,—“That man should set up his quarters across the water,” said she; “why Boulogne would be a seraglio to him.”

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The country, as far as Montreuil, is a coarse one; *thin herbage in the plains and fruitless fields*. The cattle too are miserably poor and lean; but where there is no grass, we can scarcely expect them to be fat: they must not feed on wheat, I suppose, and cannot digest tobacco. Herds of swine, not flocks of sheep, meet one's eye upon the hills; and the very few gentlemen's feats that we have passed by, seem out of repair, and deserted. The French do not reside much in private houses, as the English do; but while those of narrower fortunes flock to the country towns within their reach, those of ampler purses repair to Paris, where the rent of their estate supplies them with pleasures at no very enormous expence. The road is magnificent, like our old-fashioned avenue in a nobleman's park, but wider, and paved in the middle: this convenience continued on for many hundred miles, and all at the king's expence. Every man you meet, politely pulls off his hat *en passant*; and the gentlemen have commonly a good horse under them, but certainly a dressed one.

Sporting season is not come in yet, but, I believe the idea of sporting seldom enters any head except an English one: here is prodigious plenty of game, but the familiarity with which they walk about and sit by our road-side, shews they feel no apprehensions.

Harvest, even in France, is extremely backward this year, I see; no crops are yet got in, nor will reaping be likely to pay its own charges. But though summer is come too late for profit, the pleasure it brings is perhaps enhanced by delay: like a life, the early part of which has been wasted in sickness, the possessor finds too little time remaining for work, when health *does* come; and spends all that he has left, naturally enough, in enjoyment.

The pert vivacity of *La Fille* at Montreuil was all we could find there worth remarking: it filled up my notions of French flippancy agreeably enough; as no English wench would so have answered one to be sure. She had complained of our *avant-coureur's* behaviour. "*Il parle sur le bant ton, mademoiselle*" (said I), "*mais il a le coeur bon*[A]:"
"*Ouyda*" (replied she, smartly), "*mais c'est le ton qui fait le chanson*[B]."

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote A: He sets his talk to a sounding tune, my dear, but he is an honest fellow.]

[Footnote B: But I always thought it was the tune which made the musick.]

The cathedral at Amiens made ample amends for the country we passed through to see it; the *Nef d'Amiens* deserves the fame of a first-rate structure: and the ornaments of its high altar seem particularly well chosen, of an excellent taste, and very capital execution. The vineyards from thence hither shew, that either the climate, or season, or both, improve upon one: the grapes climbing up some not very tall golden-pippin trees, and mingling their fruits

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at the top, have a mighty pleasing effect; and I observe the rage for Lombardy poplars is in equal force here as about London: no tolerable house have I passed without seeing long rows of them; all young plantations, as one may perceive by their size. Refined countries always are panting for speedy enjoyment: the maxim of *carpe diem*[Footnote: Seize the present moment.] came into Rome when luxury triumphed there; and poets and philosophers lent their assistance to decorate and dignify her gaudy car. Till then we read of no such haste to be happy; and on the same principle, while Americans contentedly wait the slow growth of their columnal chesnut, our hot-bed inhabitants measure the slender poplar with canes, anxiously admiring its quick growth and early elegance; yet are often cut down themselves, before their youthful favourite can afford them either pleasure or advantage.

This charming palace and gardens were new to neither of us, yet lovely to both: the tame fish, I remember so well to have fed from my hand eleven or twelve years ago, are turned almost all white; can it be with age I wonder? the naturalists must tell. I once saw a carp which weighed six pounds and an half taken out of a pond in Hertfordshire, where the owners knew it had resided forty years at least; and it was not white, but of the common colour: Quere, how long will they live? and when will they begin to change? The stables struck me as more magnificent this time than the last I saw them; the hounds were always dirtily and ill kept; but hunting is not the taste of any nation now but ours; none but a young English heir says to his estate as Goliath did to David, *Come to me, and I will give thee to the beasts of the field, and to the fowls of the air*; as some of our old books of piety reproach us. Every trick that money can play with the most lavish abundance of water is here exhibited; nor is the sight of a *jet d'eau*, or the murmur of an artificial cascade, undelightful in a hot day, let the Nature-mongers say what they please. The prince's cabinet, for a private collection, is not a mean one; but I was sorry to see his quadrant rusted to the globe almost, and the poor planetarium out of all repair. The great stuffed dog is a curiosity however; I never saw any of the canine species so large, and withal so beautiful, living or dead.

The theatre belonging to the house is a lovely one; and the truly princely possessor, when he heard once that an English gentleman, travelling for amusement, had called at Chantilly too late to enjoy the diversion, instantly, though past twelve o'clock at night, ordered a new representation, that his curiosity might be gratified. This is the same Prince of Conde, who going from Paris to his country-seat here for a month or two, when his eldest son was nine years old, left him fifty louis d'ors as an allowance during his absence. At his return to town, the boy produced his purse, crying "*Papa! here's all the money safe, I have never touched it once*"—The Prince, in reply, took him gravely to the window, and opening it, very quietly poured all the louis d'ors into the street; saying, "Now, if you have neither virtue enough to give away your money, nor spirit enough to spend it, always *do this* for the future, do you hear; that the poor may at least have a *chance for it*."

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PARIS.

The fine paved road to this town has many inconveniencies, and jars the nerves terribly with its perpetual rattle; the approach however always strikes one as very fine, I think, and the boulevards and guingettes look always pretty too: as wine, beer, and spirits are not permitted to be sold there, one sees what England does not even pretend to exhibit, which is gaiety without noise, and a crowd without a riot. I was pleased to go over the churches again too, and re-experience that particular sensation which the disposition of St. Rocque's altars and ornaments alone can give. In the evening we looked at the new square called the Palais Royal, whence the Due de Chartres has removed a vast number of noble trees, which it was a sin and shame to profane with an axe, after they had adorned that spot for so many centuries.—The people were accordingly as angry, I believe, as Frenchmen can be, when the folly was first committed: the court, however, had wit enough to convert the place into a sort of Vauxhall, with tents, fountains, shops, full of frippery, brilliant at once and worthless, to attract them; with coffeehouses surrounding it on every side; and now they are all again *merry* and *happy*, synonymous terms at Paris, though often disunited in London; and *Vive le Duc de Chartres!*

The French are really a contented race of mortals;—precluded almost from possibility of adventure, the low Parisian leads a gentle humble life, nor envies that greatness he never can obtain; but either wonders delightedly, or diverts himself philosophically with the sight of splendours which seldom fail to excite serious envy in an Englishman, and sometimes occasion even suicide, from disappointed hopes, which never could take root in the heart of these unambitious people. Reflections of this cast are suggested to one here in every shop, where the behaviour of the matter at first sight contradicts all that our satirists tell us of the *supple Gaul*, &c. A mercer in this town shews you a few silks, and those he scarcely opens; *vous devez choisir* [Footnote: Chuse what you like.], is all he thinks of saying, to invite your custom; then takes out his snuff-box, and yawns in your face, fatigued by your inquiries. For my own part, I find my natural disgust of such behaviour greatly repelled, by the recollection that the man I am speaking to is no inhabitant of

A happy land, where circulating pow'r
Flows thro' each member of th'embodied state—

S. JOHNSON.

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and I feel well-inclined to respect the peaceful tenor of a life, which likes not to be broken in upon, for the sake of obtaining riches, which when gotten must end only in the pleasure of counting them. A Frenchman who should make his fortune by trade tomorrow, would be no nearer advancement in society or situation: why then should he solicit, by arts he is too lazy to delight in the practice of, that opulence which would afford so slight an improvement to his comforts? He lives as well as he wishes already; he goes to the Boulevards every night, treats his wife with a glass of lemonade or ice, and holds up his babies by turns, to hear the jokes of *Jean Pottage*. Were he to recommend his goods, like the Londoner, with studied eloquence and attentive flattery, he could not hope like him that the eloquence he now bestows on the decorations of a hat, or the varnish of an equipage, may one day serve to torment a minister, and obtain a post of honour for his son; he could not hope that on some future day his flattery might be listened to by some lady of more birth than beauty, or riches perhaps, when happily employed upon a very different subject, and be the means of lifting himself into a state of distinction, his children too into public notoriety.

Emulation, ambition, avarice, however, must in all arbitrary governments be confined to the great; the *other* set of mortals, for there are none there of *middling* rank, live, as it should seem, like eunuchs in a seraglio; feel themselves irrevocably doomed to promote the pleasure of their superiors, nor ever dream of sighing for enjoyments from which an irremeable boundary divides them. They see at the beginning of their lives how that life must necessarily end, and trot with a quiet, contented, and unaltered pace down their long, straight, and shaded avenue; while we, with anxious solicitude, and restless hurry, watch the quick turnings of our serpentine walk; which still presents, either to sight or expectation, some changes of variety in the ever-shifting prospect, till the unthought-of, unexpected end comes suddenly upon us, and finishes at once the fluctuating scene. Reflections must now give way to facts for a moment, though few English people want to be told that every hotel here, belonging to people of condition, is shut out from the street like our Burlington-house, which gives a general gloom to the look of this city so famed for its gaiety: the streets are narrow too, and ill-paved; and very noisy, from the echo made by stone buildings drawn up to a prodigious height, many of the houses having seven, and some of them even eight stories from the bottom. The contradictions one meets with every moment likewise strike even a cursory observer—a countess in a morning, her hair dressed, with diamonds too perhaps, a dirty black handkerchief about her neck, and a flat silver ring on her finger, like our alewives; a *femme publique*, dressed avowedly for the purposes of alluring the men, with not a very small crucifix hanging at her bosom;—and the Virgin Mary's sign at an alehouse door, with these words,

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Je suis la mere de mon Dieu,
Et la gardienne de ce lieu[C].

[Footnote C:

The mother of my God am I,
And keep this house right carefully.

]

I have, however, borrowed Bocage's Remarks upon the English nation, which serve to damp my spirit of criticism exceedingly: She had more opportunities than I for observation, not less quickness of discernment surely; and her stay in London was longer than mine in Paris.—Yet, how was she deceived in many points!

I will tell nothing that I did not see; and among the objects one would certainly avoid seeing if it were possible, is the deformity of the poor.—Such various modes of warping the human figure could hardly be observed in England by a surgeon in high practice, as meet me about this country incessantly.—I have seen them in the galleries and outer-courts even of the palace itself, and am glad to turn my eyes for relief on the Duke of Orleans's pictures; a glorious collection! The Italian noblemen, in whose company we saw it, acknowledged with candour the good taste of the selection; and I was glad to see again what had delighted me so many years before: particularly, the three Marys, by Annibale Caracci; and Rubens's odd conceit of making Juno's Peacock peck Paris's leg, for having refused the apple to his mistress.

The manufacture at the Gobelins seems exceedingly improved; the colouring less inharmonious, the drawing more correct; but our Parisians are not just now thinking about such matters; they are all wild for love of a new comedy, written by *Mons. de Beaumarchais*, and called, "Le Mariage de Figaro," full of such wit as we were fond of in the reign of Charles the Second, indecent merriment, and gross immorality; mixed, however, with much acrimonious satire, as if Sir George Etherege and Johnny Gay had clubbed their powers of ingenuity at once to divert and to corrupt their auditors; who now carry the verses of this favourite piece upon their fans, pocket-handkerchiefs, &c. as our women once did those of the Beggar's Opera.

We have enjoyed some very agreeable society here in the company of Comte Turconi, a Milanese Nobleman who, desirous to escape all the frivolous, and petty distinction which birth alone bestows, has long fixed his residence in Paris, where talents find their influence, and where a great city affords that unobserved freedom of thought and action which can scarcely be expected by a man of high rank in a smaller circle; but which, when once tasted, will not seldom be preferred to the attentive watchfulness of more confined society.

The famous Venetian too, who has written so many successful comedies, and is now employed upon his own Memoirs, at the age of eighty-four, was a delightful addition to

our Coterie, *Goldoni*. He is garrulous, good-humoured, and gay; resembling the late James Harris of Salisbury in person not manner, and seems justly esteemed, and highly, by his countrymen.

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The conversation of the Marquis Trotti and the Abate Bucchetti is likewise particularly pleasing; especially to me, who am naturally desirous to live as much as possible among Italians of general knowledge, good taste, and polished manners, before I enter their country, where the language will be so very indispensable. Mean time I have stolen a day to visit my old acquaintance the English Austin Nuns at the Fosse, and found the whole community alive and cheerful; they are many of them agreeable women, and having seen Dr. Johnson with me when I was last abroad, enquired much for him: Mrs. Fermor, the Prioress, niece to Belinda in the Rape of the Lock, taking occasion to tell me, comically enough, "That she believed there was but little comfort to be found in a house that harboured *poets*; for that she remembered Mr. Pope's praise made her aunt very troublesome and conceited, while his numberless caprices would have employed ten servants to wait on him; and he gave one" (said she) "no amends by his talk neither, for he only sate dozing all day, when the sweet wine was out, and made his verses chiefly in the night; during which season he kept himself awake by drinking coffee, which it was one of the maids business to make for him, and they took it by turns."

These ladies really live here as comfortably for aught I see as peace, quietness, and the certainty of a good dinner every day can make them. Just so much happier than as many old maids who inhabit Milman Street and Chapel Row, as they are sure not to be robbed by a treacherous, or insulted by a favoured, servant in the decline of life, when protection is grown hopeless and resistance vain; and as they enjoy at least a moral certainty of never living worse than they do to-day: while the little knot of unmarried females turned fifty round Red Lion Square *may* always be ruined by a runaway agent, a bankrupted banker, or a roguish steward; and even the petty pleasures of six-penny quadrille may become by that misfortune too costly for their income.—*Aureste*, as the French say, the difference is small: both coteries sit separate in the morning, go to prayers at noon, and read the chapters for the day: change their neat dress, eat their little dinner, and play at small games for small sums in the evening; when recollection tires, and chat runs low.

But more adventurous characters claim my present attention. All Paris I think, myself among the rest, assembled to see the valiant brothers, Robert and Charles, mount yesterday into the air, in company with a certain Pilatre de Rosier, who conducted them in the new-invented flying chariot fastened to an air-balloon. It was from the middle of the Tuilleries that they set out, a place very favourable and well-contrived for such public purposes. But all was so nicely managed, so cleverly carried on somehow, that the order and decorum of us who remained on firm ground, struck me more than even the very strange sight of human creatures floating in the wind: but I have really been witness to ten times as much bustle and confusion at a crowded theatre in London, than what these peaceable Parisians made when the whole city was gathered together. Nobody was hurt, nobody was frightened, nobody could even pretend to feel themselves incommoded. Such are among the few comforts that result from a despotic government.

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My republican spirit, however, boiled up a little last Monday, when I had to petition *Mons. de Calonne* for the restoration of some trifles detained in the custom-house at Calais. His politeness, indeed, and the sight of others performing like acts of humiliation, reconciled me in some measure to the drudgery of running from subaltern to subaltern, intreating, in pathetic terms, the remission of a law which is at last either just or unjust; if just, no felicitation should, methinks, be permitted to change it; if unjust, what can be so grating as the obligation to solicit?

We mean to quit Paris to-morrow; I therefore enquired this evening, what was become of our aerial travellers. A very grave man replied, "*Je crois, Madame, qu'ils sont déjà arrives ces Messieurs la, au lieu ou les vents se forment*[D]."

[Footnote D: I fancy, Ma'am, the gentlemen are gone to see the place where all the winds blow from.]

LYONS.

Sept. 25, 1784.

We left the capital at our intended time, and put into the carriage, for amusement, a book seriously recommended by Mr. Goldoni; but which diverted me only by the fanfaronades that it contained. The author has, however, got the premium by this performance, which the Academy of Berlin promised to whoever wrote best this year on any Belles Lettres subject. This gentleman judiciously chose to give reasons for the universality of the French language, and has been so gaily insolent to every other European nation in his flimsy pamphlet, that some will probably praise, many reply to, all read, and all forget it. I will confess myself so seized on by his sprightly impertinence, that I wished for leisure to translate, and wit to answer him at first, but the want of one solid thought by which to recollect his existence has cured me; and I now find that he was deliciously cool and sharp, like the ordinary wine of the country we are passing through, which having *no body*, can neither keep its little power long, nor even use it while fresh to any sensible effect.

The country is really beautiful; but descriptions are so fallacious, one half despairs of communicating one's ideas as they are: for either well-chosen words do not present themselves, or being well-chosen they detain the reader, and fix his mind on *them*, instead of the things described. Certain it is that I had formed no adequate notion of the fine river called the Yonne, with cattle grazing on its fertile banks: those banks not clothed indeed with our soft verdure, but with royal purple, proceeding from an autumnal daisy of that colour that enamels every meadow at this season. Here small enclosures seem unknown to the inhabitants, who are strewed up and down expansive views of a most productive country; where vineyards swell upon the rising grounds, and young

wheat ornaments the valleys below: while clusters of aspiring poplars, or a single walnut-tree

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of greater size and dignity unite in attracting attention, and inspiring poetical ideas. Here is no tedious uniformity to fatigue the eye, nor rugged asperities to disgust it; but ceaseless variety of colouring among the plants, while the caerulean willow, the yellow walnut, the gloomy beech, and silver theophrastus, seem scattered by the open hand of lavish Nature over a landscape of respectable extent, uniting that sublimity which a wide expanse always conveys to the mind, with that distinctness so desired by the eye; which cultivation alone can offer and fertility bestow. Every town that should adorn these lovely plains, however, exhibits, upon a nearer approach, misery; the more mortifying, as it is less expected by a spectator, who requires at least some days experience to convince him that the squalid scenes of wretchedness and dirt in which he is obliged to pass the night, will prove more than equivalent to the pleasures he has enjoyed in the day-time, derived from an appearance of elegance and wealth—elegance, the work of Nature, not of man; and opulence, the immediate gift of God, and not the result of commerce. He who should fix his residence in France, lives like Sir Gawaine in our old romance, whose wife was bound by an enchantment, that obliged her at evening to lay down the various beauties which had charmed admiring multitudes all day, and become an object of odium and disgust.

The French do seem indeed an idle race; and poverty, perhaps for that reason, forces her way among them, through a climate that might tempt other mortals to improve its blessings; but, as the motto to the arms they are so proud of expresses it—“*they toil not, neither do they spin.*” Content, the bane of industry, as Mandeville calls it, renders them happy with what Heaven has unsolicited shaken into their lap; and who knows but the spirit of blaming such behaviour may be less pleasing to God that gives, than is the behaviour itself?

Let us not, mean time, be forward to suppose, that whatever one sees done, is done upon principle, as such fancies will for ever mislead one: much must be left to chance, when we are judging the conduct either of nations or individuals. And surely I never knew till now, that so little religion could exist in any Christian country as in this, where they drive their carts, and keep their little shops open on a Sunday, forbearing neither pleasure nor business, as I see, on account of observing that day upon which their Redeemer rose again. They have a tradition among the meaner people, that when Christ was crucified, he turned his head towards France, over which he pronounced his last blessing; but we must accuse them, if so, of being very ungrateful favourites.

This stately city, Lyons, is very happily and finely situated; the Rhone, which flows by its side, inviting mills, manufactures, &c. seems resolved to contradict and wash away all I have been saying; but we must remember, it is five days journey from Paris hither, and I have been speaking only of the little places we passed through in coming along.

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The avenue here, which leads to one of the greatest objects in the nation, is most worthy of that object's dignity indeed: the marriage of two rivers, which having their sources at a prodigious distance from each other, meet here, and together roll their beneficial tribute to the sea. Howell's remark, "That the Saone resembles a Spaniard in the slowness of its current, and that the Rhone is emblematic of French rapidity," cannot be kept a moment out of one's head: it is equally observable, that the junction adds little in appearance to their strength and grandeur, and that each makes a better figure *separate* than *united*.

La Montagne d'Or is a lovely hill above the town, and I am told that many English families reside upon it, but we have no time to make minute enquiries. L'Hotel de la Croix de Malthe affords excellent accommodations within, and a delightful prospect without. The Baths too have attracted my notice much, and will, I hope, repair my strength, so as to make me no troublesome fellow-traveller. How little do those ladies consult their own interest, who make impatience of petty inconveniences their best supplement for conversation!—fancy themselves more important as less contented; and imagine all delicacy to consist in the difficulty of being pleased! Surely a dip in this delightful river will restore my health, and enable me to pass the mountains, of which our present companions give me a very formidable account.

The manufacturers here, at Lyons, deserve a volume, and I shall scarcely give them a page; though nothing I ever saw at London or Paris can compare with the beauty of these velvets, or with the art necessary to produce such an effect, while the wrong side is smooth, not struck through. The hangings for the Empress of Russia's bed-chamber are wonderfully executed; the design elegant, the colouring brilliant: A screen too for the Grand Signor is finely finished here; he would, I trust, have been contented with magnificence in the choice of his furniture, but Mr. Pernon has added taste to it, and contrived in appearance to sink an urn or vase of crimson velvet in a back ground of gold tissue with surprising ingenuity.

It is observable, that the further people advance in elegance, the less they value splendour; distinction being at last the positive thing which mortals elevated above competency naturally pant after. Necessity must first be supplied we know, convenience then requires to be contented; but as soon as men can find means after that period to make themselves eminent for taste, they learn to despise those paltry distinctions which riches alone can bestow.

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Talking of Taste leads one to speak of gardening; and having passed yesterday between two villas belonging to some of the most opulent merchants of Lyons, I gained an opportunity of observing the disposal of those grounds that are appropriated to pleasure; where the shade of straight long-drawn alleys, formed by a close junction of ancient elm trees, kept a dazzling sun from incommoding our sight, and rendering the turf so mossy and comfortable to one's tread, that my heart never felt one longing wish for the beauties of a lawn and shrubbery—though I should certainly think such a manner of laying out a Lancashire gentleman's seat in the north of England a mad one, where the heat of the sun ought to be invited in, not shut out; and where a large lake of water is wanted for his beams to sparkle upon, instead of a fountain to trickle and to murmur, and to refresh one with the idea of coolness which it excites. Here, however, where the Rhone is navigable up to the very house, I see not but it is rational enough to form jet d'eaux of the superfluous water, and to content one's self with a Bird Cage Walk, when we are sure at the end of it to find ourselves surrounded by an horizon, of extent enough to give the eye full employment, and of a bright colouring which affords it but little relief. That among the gems of Europe our island holds the rank of an *emerald*, was once suggested to me, and I could never part with the idea; surely France must in the same scale be rated as the *ruby*; for here is no grass, no verdure to repose the sight upon, except that of high forest trees, the vineyards being short cut, and supported by white sticks, the size of those which in our flower gardens support a favourite carnation; and these placed close together by thousands on a hill rather perplex than please a spectator of the country, who must wait till he recollects the superiority of their produce, before he prefers them to a Herefordshire orchard or a Kentish hop-ground.

Well! well! it is better to waste no more words on places however, where the people have done so much to engage and to deserve our attention.

Such was the hospitality I have here been witness to, and such the luxuries of the Lyonnois at table, that I counted six and thirty dishes where we dined, and twenty-four where we supped. Every thing was served up in silver at both places, and all was uniformly magnificent, except the linen, which might have been finer. We were not a very numerous company—from eighteen to twenty-two, as I remember, morning and evening; but the ladies played upon the pedal harp, the gentlemen sung gaily, if not sweetly after supper: I never received more kindness for my own part in any fortnight of my life, nor ever heard that kindness more pleasingly or less coarsely expressed. These are merchants, I am told, with whom I have been living; and perhaps my heart more readily receives and repays their caresses for having heard so. Let princes dispute, and soldiers reciprocally support their quarrels; but let the wealthy traders of every nation unite to pour the oil of commerce over the too agitated ocean of human life, and smooth down those asperities which obstruct fraternal concord.

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The Duke and Duchess of Cumberland lodge here at our hotel; I saw them treated with distinguished respect to-night at the theatre, where *a force de danser*[Footnote: By dint of dancing alone], I actually was moved to shed many tears over the distresses of *Sophie de Brabant*. Surely these pantomimes will very soon supplant all poetry, when, as Gratiano says, “Our words will suddenly become superfluous, and discourse grow commendable in none but parrots.”

Some conversation here, however, struck me as curious; the more so as I had heard the subject slightly touched upon at Paris; but faintly there, as the last sounds of an echo, while here they are all loud, all in earnest, and all their heads seemed turned, I think, about something, or nothing, which they call *animal magnetism*. I cannot imagine how it has seized them so: a man who undertakes to cure disorders by the touch, is no new thing; our Philosophical Transactions make mention of Gretrex the stroaker, in Charles the Second’s reign. The present mountebank, it is true, seems more hardy in his experiments, and boasts of being able to cause disorders in the human frame, as well as to remove them. A gentleman at yesterday’s dinner-party mentioned, that he took pupils; and, before I had expressed the astonishment I felt, professed himself a disciple; and was happy to assure us, he said, that though he had not yet attained the desirable power of putting a person into a catalepsy at pleasure, he could throw a woman into a deep swoon, from which no arts but his own could recover her. How difficult is it to restrain one’s contempt and indignation from a buffoonery so mean, or a practice so diabolical!—This folly may possibly find its way into England—I should be very sorry.

To-morrow we leave Lyons. I should have liked to pass through Switzerland, the Derbyshire of Europe; but I am told the season is too far advanced, as we mean to spend Christmas at Milan.

ITALY

TURIN.

October 17, 1784.

We have at length passed the Alps, and are safely arrived at this lovely little city, whence I look back on the majestic boundaries of Italy, with amazement at his courage who first profaned them: surely the immediate sensation conveyed to the mind by the sight of such tremendous appearances must be in every traveller the same, a sensation of fulness never experienced before, a satisfaction that there is something great to be seen on earth—some object capable of contenting even fancy. Who he was who first of all people pervaded these fortifications, raised by nature for the defence of her European Paradise, is not ascertained; but the great Duke of Savoy has wisely left his name engraved on a monument upon the first considerable ascent from Pont Bonvoisin,

as being author of a beautiful road cut through the solid stone for a great length of way,
and having by this means

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encouraged others to assist in facilitating a passage so truly desirable, till one of the great wonders now to be observed among the Alps, is the ease with which even a delicate traveller may cross them. In these prospects, colouring is carried to its utmost point of perfection, particularly at the time I found it, variegated with golden touches of autumnal tints; immense cascades mean time bursting from naked mountains on the one side; cultivated fields, rich with vineyards, on the other, and tufted with elegant shrubs that invite one to pluck and carry them away to where they would be treated with much more respect. Little towns flicking in the clefts, where one would imagine it was impossible to clamber; light clouds often sailing under the feet of the high-perched inhabitants, while the sound of a deep and rapid though narrow river, dashing with violence among the insolently impeding rocks at the bottom, and bells in thickly-scattered spires calling the quiet Savoyards to church upon the steep sides of every hill—fill one's mind with such mutable, such various ideas, as no other place can ever possibly afford.

I had the satisfaction of seeing a chamois at a distance, and spoke with a fellow who had killed five hungry bears that made depredation on his pastures: we looked on him with reverence as a monster-tamer of antiquity, Hercules or Cadmus; he had the skin of a beast wrapt round his middle, which confirmed the fancy—but our servants, who borrowed from no fictitious records the few ideas that adorned their talk, told us he reminded *them* of *John the Baptist*. I had scarce recovered the shock of this too sublime comparison, when we approached his cottage, and found the felons nailed against the wall, like foxes heads or spread kites in England. Here are many goats, but neither white nor large, like those which browse upon the steeps of Snowdon, or clamber among the cliffs of Plinlimmon.

I chatted with a peasant in the Haute Morienne, concerning the endemial swelling of the throat, which is found in seven out of every ten persons here: he told me what I had always heard, but do not yet believe, that it was produced by drinking the snow water. Certain it is, these places are not wholesome to live in; most of the inhabitants are troubled with weak and sore eyes: and I recollect Sir Richard Jebb telling me, more than seven years ago, that when he passed through Savoy, the various applications made to him, either for the cure or prevention of blindness by numberless unfortunate wretches that crowded round him, hastened his quitting a province where such horrible complaints prevailed. One has heard it related that the goistre or gozzo of the throat is reckoned a beauty by those who possess it; but I spoke with many, and all agreed to lament it as a misfortune. That it does really proceed merely from living in a snowy country, would be well confirmed by accounts of a similar sickness being endemial in Canada; but of an American goistre I have never yet heard—and Wales, methinks, is snowy enough, and mountainous enough, God knows; yet were such an excrescence to be seen *there*, the people would never have done wondering, and blessing themselves.

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The mines of Derbyshire, however, do not very unfrequently exhibit something of the same appearance among those who work in *them*; and as Savoy is impregnated with many minerals, I should be apter to attribute this extension of the gland to their influence over the constitution, than to that of snow water, which can scarcely be efficacious in a degree of power equal to the producing so very violent an effect.

The wolves do certainly come down from these mountains in large troops, just as Thomson describes them:

Burning for blood; boney, and gaunt, and grim.—

But it is now the fashionable philosophy every where to consider this creature as the original of our domestic friend, the dog. It was a long time before my heart assented to its truth, yet surely their hunting thus in packs confirms it; and the Jackall's willingness to connect with either race, shews one that the species cannot be far removed, and that he makes the shade between the wolf and rough haired shepherd's cur.

Of the longevity of man this district affords us no pleasing examples. The peasants here are apparently unhealthy, and they say—short-lived. We are told by travellers of former days, that there is a region of the air so subtle as to extinguish the two powers of taste and smell; and those who have crossed the Cordilleras of the Andes say, that situations have been explored among their points in South America, where those senses have been found to suffer a temporary suspension. Our *voyageurs aeriens*[Footnote: Our aerostatic travellers] may now be useful to settle that question among others, and Pambamarca's heights may remain untrodden.

As for Mount Cenis, I never felt myself more hungry, or better enjoyed a good dinner, than I did upon it's top: but the trout in the lake there have been over praised; their pale colour allured me but little in the first place, nor is their flavour equal to that of trout found in running water. Going down the Italian side of the Alps is, after all, an astonishing journey; and affords the most magnificent scenery in nature, which varying at every step, gives new impression to the mind each moment of one's passage; while the portion of terror excited either by real or fancied dangers on the way, is just sufficient to mingle with the pleasure, and make one feel the full effect of sublimity. To the chairmen who carry one though, nothing can be new; it is observable that the glories of these objects have never faded—I heard them speak to each other of their beauties, and the change of light since they had passed by last time, while a fellow who spoke English as well as a native told us, that having lived in a gentleman's service twenty years between London and Dublin, he at length begged his discharge, chusing to retire and finish his days a peasant upon these mountains, where he first opened his eyes upon scenes that made all other views of nature insipid to his taste.

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If impressions of beauty remain, however, those of danger die away by frequent reiteration; the men who carried me seemed amazed that I should feel any emotions of fear. *Qu'est ce donc, madame?*[Footnote: What's the matter, my lady?] was the coldly-asked question to my repeated injunction of *prenez garde*[Footnote: Take care.]: not very apparently unnecessary neither, where the least slip must have been fatal both to them and me.

Novalesa is the town we stopped at, upon entering Piedmont; where the hollow sound of a heavy dashing torrent that has accompanied us hitherto, first grows faint, and the ideas of common life catch hold of one again; as the noise of it is heard from a greater distance, its stream grows wider, and its course more tranquil. For compensation of danger, ease should be administered; but one's quiet is here so disturbed by insects, and polluted by dirt, that one recollects the conduct of the Lapland rein-deer, who seeks the summit of the hill at the hazard of his life, to avoid those gnats which sting him to madness in the valley.

Suza shewed nothing that I took much interest in, except its name; and nobody tells me why it is honoured with that old Asiatick appellation. At the next town, called St. Andre, or St. Ambroise, I forget which, we got an admirable dinner; and saw our room decorated with a large map of London, which I looked on with sensations different from those ever before excited by the same object, Amsterdam and Constantinople covered the other sides of the wall; and over the door of the chamber itself was written, as our people write the Lamb or the Lion, "*Les trois Villes Heretiques*"[Footnote: The three Heretical Cities]."

The avenue to Turin, most magnificently planted, and drawn in a wide straight line, shaded like the Bird-cage walk in St. James's Park, for twelve miles in length, is a dull work, but very useful and convenient in so hot a country; it has been completed by the taste, and at the sole expence, of his Sardinian majesty, that he may enjoy a cool shady drive from one of his palaces to the other. The town to which this long approach conveys one does not disgrace its entrance. It is built in form of a star, with a large stone in its centre, on which you are desired to stand, and see the streets all branch regularly from it, each street terminating with a beautiful view of the surrounding country, like spots of ground seen in many of the old-fashioned parks in England, when the etoile and vista were the mode. I think there is[5] still one subsisting even now, if I remember right, in Kensington Gardens. Such symmetry is really a soft repose for the eye, wearied with following a soaring falcon through the half-sightless regions of the air, or darting down immeasurable precipices, to examine if the human figure could be discerned at such a depth below one. Model of elegance, exact Turin! where Italian hospitality first consoled, and Italian arts first repaid, the

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fatigues of my journey: how shall I bear to leave my new-obtained acquaintance? how shall I consent to quit this lovely city? where, from the box put into my possession by the Prince de la Cisterna, I first saw an Italian opera acted in an Italian theatre; where the wonders of Porporati's hand shewed me that our Bartolozzi was not without a competitor; and where every pleasure which politeness can invent, and kindness can bestow, was held out for my acceptance. Should we be seduced, however, to waste time here, we should have reason in a future day to repent our choice; like one who, enamoured of Lord Pembroke's great hall at Wilton, should fail to afford himself leisure for looking over the better-furnished apartments.

This charming town is the *salon* of Italy; but it is a finely-proportioned and well-ornamented *salon* happily constructed to call in the fresh air at the end of every street, through which a rapid stream is directed, that *ought* to carry off all nuisances, which here have no apology from want of any convenience purchasable by money; and which must for that reason be the choice of inhabitants, who would perhaps be too happy, had they a natural taste for that neatness which might here be enjoyed in its purity. The arches formed to defend passengers from the rain and sun, which here might have even serious effects from their violence, deserve much praise; while their architecture, uniting our ideas of comfort and beauty together, form a traveller's taste, and teach him to admire that perfection, of which a miniature may certainly be found at Turin, when once a police shall be established there to prevent such places being used for the very grossest purposes, and polluted with smells that poison all one's pleasure.

It is said, that few European palaces exceed in splendour that of Sardinia's king; I found it very fine indeed, and the pictures dazzling. The death of a dropsical woman well known among all our connoisseurs detained my attention longest: the value set on it here is ten thousand pounds. The horse cut out of a block of marble at the stairs-foot attracted me not a little; but we are told that the impression it makes will soon be effaced by the sight of greater wonders. Mean time I go about like Stephano and his ignorant companions, who longed for all the glittering furniture of Prospero's cell in the Tempest, while those who know the place better are vindicated in crying, "*Let it alone, thou fool, it is but trash.*"

Some letters from home directed me to enquire in this town for Doctor Charles Allioni, who kindly received, and permitted me to examine the rarities, of which he has a very capital collection. His fossil fish in slate—blue slate, are surprisingly well preserved; but there is in the world, it seems, a chrystalized trout, not flat, nor the flesh eaten away, as I understand, but round; and, as it were, cased in chrystal like our *aspiques*, or *fruit*

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in jelly: the colour still so perfect that you may plainly perceive the spots upon it, he says. To my enquiries after this wonderful petrefaction, he replied, "That it might be bought for a thousand pounds;" and added, "that if he were a *Ricco Inglese*[Footnote: Rich Englishman], he would not hesitate for the price:" "Where may I see it, Sir?" said I; but to that question no intreaties could produce an answer, after he once found I had no mind to buy.

That fresh-water fish have been known to remain locked in the flinty bosom of Monte Uda in Carnia, the Academical Discourse of Cyrillo de Cremona, pronounced there in the year 1749, might have informed us; and we are all familiar, I suppose, with the anchor named in the fifteenth book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Strabo mentions pieces of a galley found three thousand stadii from any sea; and Dr. Allioni tells me, that Monte Bolca has been long acknowledged to contain the fossils, now diligently digging out under the patronage of some learned naturalists at Verona.—The trout, however, is of value much beyond these productions certainly, as it is closed round as if in a transparent case we find, hermetically sealed by the soft hand of Nature, who spoiled none of her own ornaments in preserving them for the inspection of her favourite students.

The amiable old professor from whom these particulars were obtained, and who endured my teizing him in bad Italian for intelligence he cared not to communicate, with infinite sweetness and patience grew kinder to me as I became more troublesome to him: and shewing me the book upon botany to which he had just then put the last line; turned his dim eyes from me, and said, as they filled with tears, "You, Madam, are the last visitor I shall ever more admit to talk upon earthly subjects; my work is done; I finished it as you were entering:—my business now is but to wait the will of God, and die; do you, who I hope will live long and happily, seek out your own salvation, and pray for mine." Poor dear Doctor Allioni! My enquiries concerning this truly venerable mortal ended in being told that his relations and heirs teized him cruelly to sell his manuscripts, insects, &c. and divide the money amongst *them* before he died. An English scholar of the same abilities would be apt enough to despise such admonitions, and dispose at his own liking and leisure of what his industry alone had gained, his learning only collected; but there seems to be much more family fondness on the Continent than in our island; more attention to parents, more care for uncles, and nephews, and sisters, and aunts, than in a commercial country like ours, where, for the most part, each one makes his own way separate; and having received little assistance at the beginning of life, considers himself as little indebted at the close of it.

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Whoever takes a long journey, however he may at his first commencement be tempted to accumulate schemes of convenience and combinations of travelling niceties, will cast them off in the course of his travels as incumbrances; and whoever sets out in life, I believe, with a crowd of relations round him, will, on the same principle, feel disposed to drop one or two of them at every turn, as they hang about and impede his progress, and make his own game single-handed. I speak of *Englishmen*, whose religion and government inspire rather a spirit of public benevolence, than contract the social affections to a point; and co-operate, besides, to prompt that genius for adventure, and taste of general knowledge, which has small chance to spring up in the inhabitants of a feudal state; where each considers his family as himself, and having derived all the comfort he has ever enjoyed from his relations, resolves to return their favours at the end of a life, which they make happy, in proportion as it *is* so: and this accounts for the equality required in continental marriages, which are avowedly made here without regard to inclination, as the keeping up a family, not the choice of a companion, is considered as important; while the lady bred up in the same notions, complies with her *first* duties, and considers the *second* as infinitely more dispensable.

GENOA.

Nov. 1, 1784.

It was on the twenty-first of last month that we passed from Turin to Monte Casale; and I wondered, as I do still, to see the face of Nature yet without a wrinkle, though the season is so far advanced. Like a Parisian female of forty years old, dressed for court, and stored with such variety of well-arranged allurements, that the men say to each other as she passes.—“Des qu’elle a cesse d’estre jolie, elle n’en devient que plus belle, ce me semble[E].”

[Footnote E: She’s grown handsomer, I think, since she has left off being pretty.]

The prospect from St. Salvatore’s hill derives new beauties from the yellow autumn; and exhibits such glowing proofs of opulence and fertility, as words can with difficulty communicate. The animals, however, do not seem benefited in proportion to the apparent riches of the country: asses, indeed, grow to a considerable size, but the oxen are very small, among pastures that might suffice for Bakewell’s bulls; and these are all little, and almost all *white*; a colour which gives unfavourable ideas either of strength or duration.

The blanche rose among vegetables scatters a less powerful perfume than the red one; whilst in the mineral kingdom silver holds but the second place to gold, which imbibing the bright hues of its parent-sun, becomes the first and greatest of all metallic productions. One may observe too, that yellow is the earliest colour to salute the rising year, the last to leave it: crocuses, primroses, and cowslips give the first earnest

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of resuscitating summer; while the lemon-coloured butterfly, whose name I have forgotten, ventures out, before any others of her kind can brave the parting breath of winter's last storms; stoutest to resist cold, and steadiest in her manner of flying. The present season is yellow indeed, and nothing is to be seen now but sun-flowers and African marygolds around us; *one* bough besides, on every tree we pass—*one* bough at least is tinged with the golden hue; and if it does put one in mind of that presented to Proserpine, we may add the original line too, and say,

Uno avulfo, non deficit alter[F].

[Footnote F:

Pluck one away, another still remains.

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The sure-footed and docile mule, with which in England I was but little acquainted, here claims no small attention, from his superior size and beauty: the disagreeable noise they make so frequently, however, hinders one from wishing to ride them—it is not braying somehow, but worse; it is neighing out of tune.

I have put nothing down about eating since we arrived in Italy, where no wretched hut have I yet entered that does not afford soup, better than one often tastes in England even at magnificent tables. Game of all sorts—woodcocks in particular. Porporati, the so justly-famed engraver, produced upon his hospitable board, one of the pleasant days we passed with him, a couple so exceedingly large, that I hesitated, and looked again, to see whether they were really woodcocks, till the long bill convinced me.

One reads of the luxurious emperors that made fine dishes of the little birds brains, phenicopter's tongues, &c. and of the actor who regaled his guests with nightingale-pie, with just detestation of such curiosity and expence: but thrushes, larks, and blackbirds, are so very frequent between Turin and Novi, I think they might serve to feed all the fantastical appetites to which Vitellius himself could give encouragement and example.

The Italians retain their tastes for small birds in full force; and consider beccafichi, ortolani, &c. as the most agreeable dainties: it must be confessed that they dress them incomparably. The sheep here are all lean and dirty-looking, few in number too; but the better the soil the worse the mutton we know, and here is no land to throw away, where every inch turns to profit in the olive-yards, vines, or something of much higher value than letting out to feed sheep.

Population seems much as in France, I think: but the families are not, in either nation, disposed according to British notions of propriety; all stuffed together into little towns and large houses, *entessees*, as the French call it; one upon another, in such a strange

way, that were it not for the quantity of grapes on which the poor people live, with other acescent food enjoined by the church, and doubtless suggested by the climate, I think putrid fevers must necessarily carry off crowds of them at once.

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The head-dress of the women in this drive through some of the northern states of Italy varied at every post; from the velvet cap, commonly a crimson one, worn by the girls in Savoia, to the Piedmontese plait round the bodkin at Turin, and the odd kind of white wrapper used in the exterior provinces of the Genoese dominions. Uniformity of almost any sort gives a certain pleasure to the eye, and it seems an invariable rule in these countries that all the women of every district should dress just alike. It is the best way of making the men's task easy in judging which is handsomest; for taste so varies the human figure in France and England, that it is impossible to have an idea how many pretty faces and agreeable forms would lose and how many gain admirers in those nations, were a sudden edict to be published that all should dress exactly alike for a year. Mean time, since we left Deffeins, no such delightful place by way of inn have we yet seen as here at Novi. My chief amusement at Alexandria was to look out upon the *huddled* marketplace, as a great dramatic writer of our day has called it; and who could help longing there for Zoffani's pencil to paint the lively scene?

Passing the Po by moon-light near Casale exhibited an entertainment of a very different nature, not unmixed with ill-concealed fear indeed; though the contrivance of crossing it is not worse managed than a ferry at Kew or Richmond used to be before our bridges were built. Bridges over the rapid Po would, however, be truly ridiculous; when swelled by the mountain snows it tears down all before it in its fury, and inundates the country round.

The drive from Novi on to Genoa is so beautiful, so grand, so replete with imagery, that fancy itself can add little to its charms: yet, after every elegance and every ornament have been justly admired, from the cloud which veils the hill, to the wild shrubs which perfume the valley; from the precipices which alarm the imagination, to the tufts of wood which flatter and sooth it; the sea suddenly appearing at the end of the Bocchetta terminates our view, and takes from one even the hope of expressing our delight in words adequate to the things described.

Genoa la Superba stands proudly on the margin of a gulph crowded with ships, and resounding with voices, which never fail to animate a British hearer—the Tailor's shout, the mariner's call, swelled by successful commerce, or strengthened by newly-acquired fame.

After a long journey by land, such scenes are peculiarly delightful; but description tangles, not communicates, the sensations imbibed upon the spot. Here are so many things to describe! such churches! such palaces! such pictures! one would imagine the Genoese possessed the empire of the ocean, were it not well known that they call but fix galleys their own, and seventy years ago suffered all the horrors of a bombardment.

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The Dorian palace is exceedingly fine; the Durazzo palace, for ought I know, is finer; and marble here seems like what one reads of silver in King Solomon's time, which, says the Scripture, "*was nothing counted on in the days of Solomon*" Casa Brignoli too is splendid and commodious; the terraces and gardens on the house-tops, and the fresco paintings outside, give one new ideas of human life; and exhibits a degree of luxury unthought-on in colder climates. But here we live on green pease and figs the first day of November, while orange and lemon trees flaunt over the walls more common than pears in England.

The Balbi mansion, filled with pictures, detained us from the churches filled with more. I have heard some of the Italians confess that Genoa even pretends to vie with Rome herself in ecclesiastical splendour. In devotion I should think she would be with difficulty outdone: the people drop down on their knees in the street, and crowd to the church doors while the benediction is pronouncing, with a zeal which one might hope would draw down stores of grace upon their heads. Yet I hear from the inhabitants of other provinces, that they have a bad character among their neighbours, who love not the *base Ligurian* and accuse them of many immoralities. They tell one too of a disreputable saying here, how there are at Genoa men without honesty, women without modesty, a sea with no fish, and a wood with no birds. Birds, however, here certainly are by the million, and we have eaten fish since we came every day; but I am informed they are neither cheap nor plentiful, nor considered as excellent in their kinds. Here is macaroni enough however!—the people bring in such a vast dish of it at a time, it disgusts one.

The streets of the town are much too narrow for beauty or convenience—impracticable to coaches, and so beset with beggars that it is dreadful. A chair is therefore, above all things, necessary to be carried in, even a dozen steps, if you are likely to feel shocked at having your knees suddenly clasped by a figure hardly human; who perhaps holding you forcibly for a minute, conjures you loudly, by the sacred wounds of our Lord Jesus Christ, to have compassion upon *his*; shewing you at the same time such undeniable and horrid proofs of the anguish he is suffering, that one must be a monster to quit him unrelieved. Such pathetic misery, such disgusting distress, did I never see before, as I have been witness to in this gaudy city—and that not occasionally or by accident, but all day long, and in such numbers that humanity shrinks from the description. Sure, charity is not the virtue that they pray for, when begging a blessing at the church-door.

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One should not however speak unkindly of a people whose affectionate regard for our country shewed itself so clearly during the late war: a few days residence with the English consul here at his country seat gave me an opportunity of hearing many instances of the Republic's generous attachment to Great Britain, whose triumphs at Gibraltar over the united forces of France and Spain were honestly enjoyed by the friendly Genoese, who gave many proofs of their sincerity, more solid than those clamorous ones of huzzaing our minister about wherever he went, and crying *Viva il General ELIOTT*; while many young gentlemen of high station offered themselves to go volunteers aboard our fleet, and were with difficulty restrained.

We have been shewed some beautiful villas belonging to the noblemen of this city, among which Lomellino's pleased me best; as the water there was so particularly beautiful, that he had generously left it at full liberty to roll uncondacted, and murmur through his tasteful pleasure grounds, much in the manner of our lovely Leasowes; happily uniting with English simplicity, the glowing charms that result from an Italian sky. My eyes were so wearied with square edged basins of marble, and jets d'eau, surrounded by water nymphs and dolphins, that I felt vast relief from Lomellino's garden, who, like me,

Tir'd with the joys parterres and fountains yield,
Finds out at last he better likes a field.

Such felicity of situation I never saw till now, when one looks upon the painted front of this gay mansion, commanding from its fine balcony a rich and extensive view at once of the sea, the city, and the snow-topt mountains; while from the windows on the other side the house, one's eye sinks into groves of cedar, ilex, and orange trees, not apparently cultivated with incessant care, or placed in pots, artfully sunk under ground to conceal them from one's sight, but rising into height truly respectable.

The sea air, except in particular places where the land lies in some direction that counteracts its influence, is naturally inimical to timber; though the green coasts of Devonshire are finely fringed with wood; and here, at Lomellino's villa, in the Genoese state, I found two plane trees, of a size and serious dignity, that recalled to my mind the solemn oak before our duke of Dorset's seat at Knowle—and chesnuts, which would not disgrace the forests of America. A rural theatre, cut in turf, with a concealed orchestra and sod seats for the audience, with a mossy stage, not incommensurable neither, and an admirable contrivance for shifting the scenes, and savouring the exits, entrances, &c. of the performers, gave me a perfect idea of that refined luxury which hot countries alone inspire—while another elegantly constructed spot, meant and often used for the entertainment of tenants and dependants who come to rejoice on the birth or wedding day of a kind landlord, make one suppress one's sighs after a free country—at least suspend them; and fill one's heart with tenderness towards men, who have skill to soften authority with indulgence, and virtue to reward obedience with protection.

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A family coming last night to visit at a house where I had the honour of being admitted as an intimate, gave me another proof of my present state of remoteness from English manners. The party consisted of an old nobleman, who could trace his genealogy unblemished up to one of the old Roman emperors, but whose fortune is now in a hopeless state of decay:—his lady, not inferior to himself in birth or haughtiness of air and carriage, but much impaired by age, ill health, and pecuniary distress; these had however no way lessened her ideas of her own dignity, or the respect of her cavalier servente and her son, who waited on her with an unremitted attention; presenting her their little dirty tin snuff-boxes upon one knee by turns; which ceremony the less surprised me, as having seen her train made of a dyed and watered lutestring, borne gravely after her up stairs by a footman, the express image of Edgar in the storm-scene of king Lear—who, as the fool says, *“wisely reserv’d a blanket, else had we all been ‘shamed.”*

Our conversation was meagre, but serious. There was music; and the door being left at jar, as we call it, I watched the wretched servant who staid in the antichamber, and found that he was listening in spite of sorrow and starving.

With this slight sketch of national manners I finish my chapter, and proceed to the description of, or rather observations and reflections made during a winter’s residence at

MILAN.

For we did not stay at Pavia to see any thing: it rained so, that no pleasure could have been obtained by the sight of a botanical garden; and as to the university, I have the promise of seeing it upon a future day, in company of some literary friends. Truth to tell, our weather is suddenly become so wet, the roads so heavy with incessant rain, that king William’s departure from his own foggy country, or his welcome to our gloomy one, where this month is melancholy even, to a proverb, could not have been clouded with a thicker atmosphere surely, than was mine to Milan upon the fourth day of dismal November, 1784.

Italians, by what I can observe, suffer their minds to be much under the dominion of the sky; and attribute every change in their health, or even humour, as seriously to its influence, as if there were no nearer causes of alteration than the state of the air, and as if no doubt remained of its immediate power, though they are willing enough here to poison it with the scent of wood-ashes within doors, while fires in the grate seem to run rather low, and a brazier full of that pernicious stuff is substituted in its place, and driven under the table during dinner. It is surprising how very elegant, not to say magnificent, those dinners are in gentlemen’s or noblemen’s houses; such numbers of dishes at once; not large joints, but infinite variety: and I think their cooking excellent. Fashion keeps most of the fine people

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out of town yet; we have therefore had leisure to establish our own household for the winter, and have done so as commodiously as if our habitation was fixed here for life. This I am delighted with, as one may chance to gain that insight into every day behaviour, and common occurrences, which can alone be called knowing something of a country: counting churches, pictures, palaces, may be done by those who run from town to town, with no impression made but on their bones. I ought to learn that which before us lies in daily life, if proper use were made of my demi-naturalization; yet impediments to knowledge spring up round the very tree itself—for surely if there was much wrong, I would not tell it of those who seem inclined to find all right in me; nor can I think that a fame for minute observation, and skill to discern folly with a microscopic eye, is in any wise able to compensate for the corrosions of conscience, where such discoveries have been attained by breach of confidence, and treachery towards unguarded, because unsuspecting innocence of conduct. We are always laughing at one another for running over none but the visible objects in every city, and for avoiding the conversation of the natives, except on general subjects of literature—returning home only to tell again what has already been told. By the candid inhabitants of Italian states, however, much honour is given to our British travellers, who, as they say, *viaggiono con profitto*[Footnote: Travel for improvement], and scarce ever fail to carry home with them from other nations, every thing which can benefit or adorn their own. Candour, and a good humoured willingness to receive and reciprocate pleasure, seems indeed one of the standing virtues of Italy; I have as yet seen no fastidious contempt, or affected rejection of any thing for being what we call *low*; and I have a notion there is much less of those distinctions at Milan than at London, where birth does so little for a man, that if he depends on *that*, and forbears other methods of distinguishing himself from his footman, he will stand a chance of being treated no better than him by the world. *Here* a person's rank is ascertained, and his society settled, at his immediate entrance into life; a gentleman and lady will always be regarded as such, let what will be their behaviour.—It is therefore highly commendable when they seek to adorn their minds by culture, or pluck out those weeds, which in hot countries will spring up among the riches of the harvest, and afford a sure, but no immediately pleasing proof of the soil's natural fertility. But my country-women would rather hear a little of our *interieur*, or, as we call it, family management; which appears arranged in a manner totally new to me; who find the lady of every house as unacquainted with her own, and her husband's affairs, as I who apply to her for information.—No house account, no weekly bills perplex *her* peace; if eight servants

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are kept, we will say, six of these are men, and two of those men out of livery. The pay of these principal figures in the family, when at the highest rate, is fifteen pence English a day, out of which they find clothes and eating—for fifteen pence includes board-wages; and most of these fellows are married too, and have four or five children each. The dinners drest at home are, for this reason, more exactly contrived than in England to suit the number of guests, and there are always half a dozen; for dining *alone* or the master and mistress *tete-a-tete* as we do, is unknown to them, who make society very easy, and resolve to live much together. No odd sensation then, something like shame, such as we feel when too many dishes are taken empty from table, touches them at all; the common courses are eleven, and eleven small plates, and it is their sport and pleasure, if possible, to clear all away. A footman's wages is a shilling a day, like our common labourers, and paid him, as they are paid, every Saturday night. His livery, mean time, changed at least *twice a year*, makes him as rich a man as the butler and valet—but when evening comes, it is the comicallest sight in the world to see them all go gravely home, and you may die in the night for want of help, though surrounded by showy attendants all day. Till the hour of departure, however, it is expected that two or three of them at least sit in the antichamber, as it is called, to answer the bell, which, if we confess the truth, is no light service or hardship; for the stairs, high and wide as those of Windsor palace, all stone too, run up from the door immediately to that apartment, which is very large, and very cold, with bricks to set their feet on only, and a brazier filled with warm wood ashes, to keep their fingers from freezing, which in summer they employ with cards, and seem but little inclined to lay them down when ladies pass through to the receiving room. The strange familiarity this class of people think proper to assume, half joining in the conversation, and crying *oibo*[Footnote: Oh dear!], when the master affirms something they do not quite assent to, is apt to shock one at beginning, the more when one reflects upon the equally offensive humility they show on being first accepted into the family; when it is exposed that they receive the new master, or lady's hand, in a half kneeling posture, and kiss it, as women under the rank of Countess do the Queen of England's when presented at our court.—This obsequiousness, however, vanishes completely upon acquaintance, and the footman, if not very seriously admonished indeed, yawns, spits, and displays what one of our travel-writers emphatically terms his flag of abomination behind the chair of a woman of quality, without the slightest sensation of its impropriety. There is, however, a sort of odd farcical drollery mingled with this grossness, which tends greatly to disarm one's wrath; and

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I felt more inclined to laugh than be angry one day, when, from the head of my own table, I saw the servant of a nobleman who dined with us cramming some chicken pattes down his throat behind the door; our own folks humorously trying to choak him, by pretending that his lord called him, while his mouth was full. Of a thousand comical things in the same way, I will relate one:—Mr. Piozzi's valet was dressing my hair at Paris one morning, while some man sate at an opposite window of the same inn, singing and playing upon the violoncello: I had not observed the circumstance, but my perrucchiere's distress was evident; he writhed and twisted about like a man pinched with the cholic, and pulled a hundred queer faces: at last—What is the matter, Ercolani, said I, are you not well? Mistress, replies the fellow, if that beast don't leave off soon, I shall run mad with rage, or else die; and so you'll see an honest Venetian lad killed by a French dog's howling.

The phrase of *mistress* is here not confined to servants at all; gentlemen, when they address one, cry, *mia padrona*[Footnote: My mistress], mighty sweetly, and in a peculiarly pleasing tone. Nothing, to speak truth, can exceed the agreeableness of a well-bred Italian's address when speaking to a lady, whom they alone know how to flatter, so as to retain her dignity, and not lose their own; respectful, yet tender; attentive, not officious; the politeness of a man of fashion *here* is *true* politeness, free from all affectation, and honestly expressive of what he really feels, a true value for the person spoken to, without the smallest desire of shining himself; equally removed from foppery on one side, or indifference on the other. The manners of the men here are certainly pleasing to a very eminent degree, and in their conversation there is a mixture, not unfrequent too, of classical allusions, which strike one with a sort of literary pleasure I cannot easily describe. Yet is there no pedantry in their use of expressions, which with us would be laughable or liable to censure: but Roman notions here are not quite extinct; and even the house-maid, or *donna di gros*, as they call her, swears by *Diana* so comically, there is no telling. They christen their boys *Fabius*, their daughters *Claudia*, very commonly. When they mention a thing known, as we say, to *Tom o'Styles and John o'Nokes*, they use the words, *Tizio and Sempronio*. A lady tells me, she was at a loss about the dance yesterday evening, because she had not been instructed in the *programma*; and a gentleman, talking of the pleasures he enjoyed supping last night at a friend's house, exclaims, *Eramo pur jeri sera in Appolline[G]!* alluding to Lucullus's entertainment given to Pompey and Cicero, as I remember, in the chamber of Apollo. But here is enough of this—more of it, in their own pretty phrase, *seccarebbe pur Nettunno[H]*. It was long ago that Ausonius said of them more than I can say, and Mr. Addison has translated the lines in their praise better than I could have done.

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FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote G: We passed yester evening as if we had been in the Apollo.]

[Footnote H: Would dry up old Neptune himself.]

“Et Mediolani mira omnia copia rerum:
Innumerae cultaeque domus facunda virorum
Ingenia et mores laeti.”

Milan with plenty and with wealth overflows,
And numerous streets and cleanly dwellings shows;
The people, bless'd by Nature's happy force,
Are eloquent and cheerful in discourse.

What I have said this moment will, however, account in some measure for a thing which he treats with infinite contempt, not unjustly perhaps; yet does it not deserve the ridicule handed down from his time by all who have touched the subject. It is about the author, who before his theatrical representation prefixes an odd declaration, that though he names Pluto, and Neptune, and I know not who, upon the stage, yet he believes none of those fables, but considers himself as a Christian, a Catholick, &c. All this *does* appear very absurdly superfluous to *us*; but as I observed, *they* live nearer the original feats of paganism; many old customs are yet retained, and the names not lost among them, or laid up merely for literary purposes as in England. They swear *per Bacco* perpetually in common discourse; and once I saw a gentleman in the heat of conversation blush at the recollection that he had said *barba Fove*, where he meant God Almighty.

It is likewise unkind enough in Mr. Addison, perhaps unjust too, to speak with scorn of the libraries, or state of literature, at Milan. The collection of books at Brera is prodigious, and has been lately much increased by the Pertusanian and Firmian libraries falling into it: a more magnificent repository for learning, a more comfortable situation for students, so complete and perfect a disposition of the books, will scarcely be found in any other city not professedly a university, I believe; and here are professors worthy of the highest literary stations, that do honour to learning herself. I will not indulge myself by naming any one, where all deserve the highest praise; and it is so difficult to restrain one's pen upon so favourite a subject, that I shall only name some rarities which particularly struck me, and avoid further temptations, where the sense of obligation, and the recollection of partial kindness, inspire an inclination to praises which appear tedious to those readers who could not enter into my feelings, and of course would scarcely excuse them.



Thirteen volumes of MS. Psalms, written with wonderful elegance and manual nicety, struck me as very curious: they were done by the Certosini monks lately eradicated, and with beautiful illuminations to almost every page. A Livy, printed here in 1418, fresh and perfect; and a Pliny, of the Parma press, dated 1472; are extremely valuable. But the pleasure I received from observing that the learned librarian had not denied a place to Tillotson's works, was counteracted by finding Bolingbroke's philosophy upon the same shelf, and enjoying exactly the same reputation as to the truth of the doctrine contained in either; for both were English, and of course *heretical*.

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But I must not live longer at Milan without mentioning the Duomo, first in all Europe of the Gothic race; whose solemn sadness and gloomy dignity make it a most magnificent cathedral; while the rich treasures it conceals below exceeded my belief or expectation.

We came here just before the season of commemorating the virtues of the immortal Carlo Borromeo, to whose excellence all Italy bears testimony, and Milan *most*; while the Lazaretto erected by him remains a standing monument of his piety, charity, and peculiar regard to this city, which he made his residence during the dreadful plague that so devastated it; tenderly giving to its helpless inhabitants the consolation of seeing their priest, provider, and protector, all united under one incomparable character, who fearless of death remained among them, and comforted their sorrows with his constant presence. It would be endless to enumerate the schools, hospitals, infirmaries, erected by this surprising man. The peculiar excellence of his lazaretto, however, depends on each habitation being nicely separated from every other, so as to keep infection aloof; while uniformity of architecture is still preserved, being built in a regular quadrangle, with a chapel in the middle, and a fresh stream flowing round, so as to benefit every particular house, and keep out all necessity of connection between the sick. I am become better acquainted with these matters, as this is the precise time when the immortal Carlo Borromeo's actions are rehearsed, and his praises celebrated, by people appointed in every church to preach his example and record his excellence.

A statue of solid silver, large as life, and resembling, as they hope, his person, decorated with rings, &c. of immense value, is now exposed in church for people to venerate; and the subterranean chapel, where his body lies, is all wainscoted, as I may say, with silver; every separate compartment chased, like our old-fashioned watch-cases, with some story out of his life, which lasted but forty-seven years, after having done more good than any other person in ninety-four; as a capuchin friar said this morning, who mounted the pulpit to praise him, and seemed to be well thought on by his auditors. The chanting tone in which he spoke displeased me, however, who can be at last no competent judge of eloquence in any language but my own.

There is a national rhetoric in every country, dependant on national manners; and those gesticulations of body, or depressions of voice, which produce pity and commiseration in one place, may, without censure of the orator or of his hearers, excite contempt and oscitancy in another. The sentiments of the preacher I heard were just and vigorous; and if that suffices not to content a foreign ear, woe be to me, who now live among those to whom I am myself a foreigner; and who at best can but be expected to forgive, for the sake of the things said, that accent and manner with which I am obliged to express them.

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By the indulgence of private friendship, I have now enjoyed the uncommon amusement of seeing a theatrical exhibition performed by friars in a convent for their own diversion, and that of some select friends. The monks of St. Victor had, it seems, obtained permission, this carnival, to represent a little odd sort of play, written by one of their community chiefly in the Milanese dialect, though the upper characters spoke Tuscan. The subject of this drama was taken, naturally enough, from some events, real or fictitious, which were supposed to have happened in, the environs of Milan, about a hundred years ago, when the Torriani and Visconti families disputed for superiority. Its construction was compounded of comic and distressful scenes, of which the last gave me most delight; and much was I amazed, indeed, to feel my cheeks wet with tears at a friar's play, founded on ideas of parental tenderness. The comic part, however, was intolerably gross; the jokes coarse, and incapable of diverting any but babies, or men who, by a kind of intellectual privation, contrive to perpetuate babyhood, in the vain hope of preferring innocence: nor could I shelter myself by saying how little I understood of the dialect it was written in, as the action was nothing less than equivocal; and in the burletta which was tacked to it by way of farce, I saw the soprano fingers who played the women's parts, and who see more of the world than these friars, blush for shame, two or three times, while the company, most of them grave ecclesiastics, applauded with rapturous delight.

The wearisome length of the whole would, however, have surfeited me, had the amusement been more eligible; but these dear monks do not get a holiday often, I trust; so in the manner of school-boys, or rather school-girls in England (for our boys are soon above such stuff), they were never tired of this dull buffoonery, and kept us listening to it till one o'clock in the morning.

Pleasure, when it does come, always bursts up in an unexpected place; I derived much from observing in the faces of these cheerful friars, that intelligent shrewdness and arch penetration so visible in the countenances of our Welch farmers, and curates of country villages in Flintshire, Caernarvonshire, &c. which Howel (best judge in such a case) observes in his Letters, and learnedly accounts for; but which I had wholly forgotten till the monks of St. Victor brought it back to my remembrance.

The brothers who remained unemployed, and clear from stage occupations, formed the orchestra; those that were left *then* without any immediate business upon their hands, chatted gaily with the company, producing plenty of refreshments; and I was really very angry with myself for feeling so cynically disposed, when every thing possible was done to please me. Can one help however sighing, to think that the monastic life, so capable of being used for the noblest purposes, and originally suggested by the purest motives, should, from the vast diversity of orders, the increase of wealth and general corruption of mankind, degenerate into a state either of mental apathy, as among the sequestered monks, or of vicious luxury, as among the more free and open societies?

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Yet must one still behold both with regret and indignation, that rage for innovation which delights to throw down places once the retreats of Piety and Learning—Piety, who fought in vain to wall and fortify herself against those seductions which since have sapped the venerable fabric that they feared to batter; and Learning, who first opened the eyes of men, that now ungratefully begin to turn them only on the defeats of their benefactress.

The Christmas functions here were showy, and I thought well-contrived; the public ones are what I speak of: but I was present lately at a private merrymaking, where all distinctions seemed pleasingly thrown down by a spirit of innocent gaiety. The Marquis's daughter mingled in country-dances with the apothecary's prentice, while her truly noble parents looked on with generous pleasure, and encouraged the mirth of the moment. Priests, ladies, gentlemen of the very first quality, romped with the girls of the house in high good-humour, and tripped it away without the incumbrance of petty pride, or the mean vanity of giving what they expressively call *foggezzione*, to those who were proud of their company and protection. A new-married wench, whose little fortune of a hundred crowns had been given her by the subscription of many in the room, seemed as free with them all, as the most equal distribution of birth or riches could have made her: she laughed aloud, and rattled in the ears of the gentlemen; replied with sarcastic coarseness when they joked her, and apparently delighted to promote such conversation as they would not otherwise have tried at. The ladies shouted for joy, encouraged the girl with less delicacy than desire of merriment, and promoted a general banishment of decorum; though I do believe with full as much or more purity of intention, than may be often met with in a polished circle at Paris itself.

Such society, however, can please a stranger only as it is odd and as it is new; when ceremony ceases, hilarity is left in a state too natural not to offend people accustomed to scenes of high civilization; and I suppose few of us could return, after twenty-five years old, to the coarse comforts of *a roll and treacle*.

Another style of amusement, very different from this last, called us out, two or three days ago, to hear the famous *Passione de Metastasio* sung in St. Celso's church. The building is spacious, the architecture elegant, and the ornaments rich. A custom too was on this occasion omitted, which I dislike exceedingly; that of deforming the beautiful edifices dedicated to God's service with damask hangings and gold lace on the capitals of all the pillars upon days of gala, so very perversely, that the effect of proportion is lost to the eye, while the church conveys no idea to the mind but of a tattered theatre; and when the frippery decorations fade, nothing can exclude the recollection of an old clothes shop. St. Celso was however left clear from these disgraceful ornaments:

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there assembled together a numerous and brilliant, if not an attentive audience; and St. Peter's part in the oratorio was sung by a soprano voice, with no appearance of peculiar propriety to be sure; but a satirical nobleman near me said, that "Nothing could possibly be more happily imagined, as the mutilation of poor St. Peter was continuing daily, and in full force;" alluding to the Emperor's rough reformatiions: and he does not certainly spare the coat any more than Jack in our Tale of a Tub, when he is rending away the embroidery. Here, however, the parallel must end; for Jack, though zealous, was never accused of burning the lace, if I remember right, and putting the gold in his pocket. It happened oddly, that chatting freely one day before dinner with some literary friends on the subject of coat armour, we had talked about the Visconti serpent, which is the arms of Milan; and the spread eagle of Austria, which we laughingly agreed ought to eat *double* because it had *two necks*: when the conversation insensibly turned on the oppressions of the present hour; and I, to put all away with a joke, proposed the *fortes Homericae* to decide on their future destiny. Somebody in company insisted that I should open the book—I did so, at the omen in the twelfth book of the Iliad, and read these words:

Jove's bird on sounding pinions beat the skies;
A bleeding serpent of enormous size
His talons trussed; alive and curling round
She stung the bird, whose throat receiv'd the wound.
Mad with the smart he drops the fatal prey,
In airy circles wings his painful way,
Floats on the winds, and rends the heavens with cries:
Amid the hosts the fallen serpent lies;
They, pale with terror, mark its spires unroll'd,
And Jove's portent with beating hearts behold.

It is now time to talk a little of the theatre; and surely a receptacle so capacious to contain four thousand people, a place of entrance so commodious to receive them, a show so princely, so very magnificent to entertain them, must be sought in vain out of Italy. The centre front box, richly adorned with gilding, arms, and trophies, is appropriated to the court, whose canopy is carried up to what we call the first gallery in England; the crescent of boxes ending with the stage, consist of nineteen on a side, *small boudoirs*, for such they seem; and are as such fitted up with silk hangings, girandoles, &c. and placed so judiciously as to catch every sound of the fingers, if they do but whisper: I will not say it is equally advantageous to the figure, as to the voice; no performers looking adequate to the place they recite upon, so very stately is the building itself, being all of stone, with an immense portico, and stairs which for width you might without hyperbole drive your chariot up. An immense sideboard at the first lobby, lighted and furnished with luxurious and elegant plenty, as many people send

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for suppers to their box, and entertain a knot of friends there with infinite convenience and splendour. A silk curtain, the colour of your hangings, defends the closet from intrusive eyes, if you think proper to drop it; and when drawn up, gives gaiety and show to the general appearance of the whole: while across the corridor leading to these boxes, another small chamber, numbered like *that* it belongs to, is appropriated to the use of your servants, and furnished with every conveniency to make chocolate, serve lemonade, &c.

Can one wonder at the contempt shewn by foreigners when they see English women of fashion squeezed into holes lined with dirty torn red paper, and the walls of it covered with a wretched crimson fluff? Well! but this theatre is built in place of a church founded by the famous Beatrice de Scala, in consequence of a vow she made to erect one if God would be pleased to send her a son. The church was pulled down and the playhouse erected. The Arch-duke lost a son that year; and the pious folks cried, "A judgment!" but nobody minded them, I believe; many, however, that are scrupulous will not go. Meantime it is a beautiful theatre to be sure; the finest fabric raised in modern days, I do believe, for the purposes of entertainment; but we must not be partial. While London has twelve capital rooms for the professed amusement of the Public, Milan has but one; there is in it, however, a ridotto chamber for cards, of a noble size, where some little gaming goes on in carnival time; but though the inhabitants complain of the enormities committed there, I suppose more money is lost and won at one club in St. James's street during a week, than here at Milan in the whole winter.

Every nation complains of the wickedness of its own inhabitants, and considers them as the worst people in the world, till they have seen others no better; and then, like individuals with their private sorrows, they find change produces no alleviation. The Mount of Miseries, in the Spectator, where all the people change with their neighbours, lay down an undutiful son, and carry away with them a hump-back, or whatever had been the source of disquiet to another, whom he had blamed for bearing so ill a misfortune thought trifling till he took it on himself, is an admirably well constructed fable, and is applicable to public as well as private complaints.

A gentleman who had long practised as a solicitor, and was retired from business, stored with a perfect knowledge of mankind so far as his experience could inform him, told me once, that whoever died before sixty years old, if he had made his own fortune, was likely to leave it according as friendship, gratitude, and public spirit dictated: either to those who had served, or those who had pleased him; or, not unfrequently, to benefit some charity, set up some school, or the like: "but let a man once turn sixty," said he, "and his natural heirs *are sure of him*:" for having

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seen many people, he has likewise been disgusted by many; and though he does not love his relations better than he did, the discovery that others are but little superior to them in those excellencies he has sought about the world in vain for, he begins to enquire for his nephew's little boy, whom as he never saw, never could have offended him; and if he does not break the chain of a favourite watch, or any other such boyish trick, the estate is his for ever, upon no principle but this in the testator.

So it is by those who travel a good deal; by what I have seen, every country has so much in it to be justly complained of, that most men finish by preferring their own.

That neither complaints nor rejoicings here at Milan, however, proceed from affectation, is a choice comfort: the Lombards possess the skill to please you without feigning; and so artless are their manners, you cannot even suspect them of insincerity. They have, perhaps for that very reason, few comedies, and fewer novels among them: for the worst of every man's character is already well known to the rest; but be his conduct what it will, the heart is commonly right enough—*il buon cuor Lombardo* is famed throughout all Italy, and nothing can become proverbial without an excellent reason. Little opportunity is therefore given to writers who carry the dark lanthorn of life into its deepest recesses—unwind the hidden wickedness of a Maskwell or a Monkton, develop the folds of vice, and spy out the internal worthlessness of apparent virtue; which from these discerning eyes cannot be cloaked even by that early-taught affectation which renders it a real ingenuity to discover, if in a highly polished capital a man or woman has or has not good parts or principles—so completely are the first overlaid with literature, and the last perverted by refinement.

* * * * *

April 2, 1785.

The cold weather continues still, and we have heavy snows; but so admirable is the police of this well-regulated town, that when over-night it has fallen to the height of four feet, no very uncommon occurrence, no one can see in the morning that even a flake has been there, so completely do the poor and the prisoners rid us of it all, by throwing immense loads of it into a navigable canal that runs quite round the city, and carries every nuisance with it clearly away—so that no inconveniencies can arise.

Italians seem to me to have no feeling of cold; they open the casements—for windows we have none (now in winter), and cry, *che bel freschetto!*[Footnote: What a fresh breeze!] while I am starving outright. If there is a flash of a few faggots in the chimney that just scorches one a little, no lady goes near it, but sits at the other end of a high-roofed room, the wind whistling round her ears, and her feet upon a perforated brass box, filled with wood embers, which the *cavalier fervente* pulls out from time to

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time, and replenishes with hotter ashes raked out from between the andirons. How sitting with these fumes under their petticoats improves their beauty of complexion I know not; certain it is, they pity *us* exceedingly for our manner of managing ourselves, and enquire of their countrymen who have lived here a-while, how their health endured the burning *fossils* in the chambers at London. I have heard two or three Italians say, *vorrei anch'io veder quell' Inghilterra, ma questo carbone fossile!* [Footnote: I would go see this same England myself I think, but that fuel made of minerals frights me!] To church, however, and to the theatre, ladies have a great green velvet bag carried for them, adorned with gold tassels, and lined with fur, to keep their feet from freezing, as carpets are not in use here. Poor women run about the streets with a little earthen pipkin hanging on their arm, filled with fire, even if they are sent on an errand; while men of all ranks walk wrapped up in an odd sort of white riding coat, not buttoned together, but folded round their body after the fashion of the old Roman dress that one has seen in statues, and this they call *Gaban*, retaining many Spanish words since the time that they were under Spanish government. *Buscar*, to seek, is quite familiar here as at Madrid, and instead of *Ragazzo*, I have heard the Milanese say *Mozzo di Stalla*, which is originally a Castilian word I believe, and spelt by them with the *c con cedilla*, *Moco*. They have likewise Latin phrases oddly mingled among their own: a gentleman said yesterday, that he was going to Casa *Sororis*, to his sister's; and the strange word *Minga*, which meets one at every turn, is corrupted, I believe, from *Mica*, a crumb. *Piaz minga*, I have not a crumb of pleasure in it, &c.

The uniformity of dress here pleases the eye, and their custom of going veiled to church, and always without a hat, which they consider as profanation of the *temple* as they call it, delights me much; it has an air of decency in the individuals, of general respect for the place, and of a resolution not to let external images intrude on devout thoughts. The hanging churches, and even public pillars, set up in the streets or squares for purposes of adoration, with black, when any person of consequence dies, displeases me more; it is so very dismal, so paltry a piece of pride and expiring vanity, and so dirty a custom, calling bugs and spiders, and all manner of vermin about one so in those black trappings, it is terrible; but if they remind us of our end, and set us about preparing for it, the benefit is greater than the evil.

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The equipages on the Corso here are very numerous, in proportion to the size of the city, and excessively showy: the horses are long-tailed, heavy, and for the most part black, with high rising forehands, while the sinking of the back is artfully concealed by the harness of red Morocco leather richly ornamented, and white reins. To this magnificence much is added by large leopard, panther, or tyger skins, beautifully striped or spotted by Nature's hand, and held fast on the horses by heavy shining tassels of gold, coloured lace, &c. wonderfully handsome; while the driver, clothed in a bright scarlet dress, adorned and trimmed with bear's skin, makes a noble figure on the box at this season upon days of gala. The carnival, however, exhibits a variety unspeakable; boats and barges painted of a thousand colours, drawn upon wheels, and filled with masks and merry-makers, who throw sugar-plums at each other, to the infinite delight of the town, whose populousness that show evinces to perfection, for every window and balcony is crowded to excess; the streets are fuller than one can express of gazers, and general mirth and gaiety prevail. When the flashing season is over, and you are no longer to be dazzled with finery or stunned with noise, the nobility of Milan—for gentry there are none—fairly slip a check case over the hammock, as we do to our best chairs in England, clap a coarse leather cover on the carriage top, the coachman wearing a vast brown great coat, which he spreads on each side him over the corners of his coach-box, and looks as somebody was saying—like a sitting hen.

The paving of our streets here at Milan is worth mentioning, only because it is directly contrary to the London method of performing the same operation. They lay the large flag stones at this place in two rows, for the coach wheels to roll smoothly over, leaving walkers to accommodate themselves, and bear the sharp pebbles to their tread as they may. In every thing great, and every thing little, the diversity of government must perpetually occur; where that is despotic, small care will be taken of the common people; where that is popular, little attention will be paid to the great ones. I never in my whole life heard so much of birth and family as since I came to this town; where blood enjoys a thousand exclusive privileges, where Cavalier and Dama are words of the first, nay of the only importance; where wit and beauty are considered as useless without a long pedigree; and virtue, talents, wealth, and wisdom, are thought on only as medals to hang upon the branch of a genealogical tree, as we tie trinkets to a watch in England.

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I went to church, twenty yards from our own door, with a servant to wait on me, three or four mornings ago; there was a lady particularly well dressed, very handsome, two footmen attending on her at a distance, took my attention. Peter, said I, to my own man, as we came out, *chi e quella dama? who is that lady? Non e dama*, replies the fellow, contemptuously smiling at my simplicity—*she is no lady*. I thought she might be somebody's kept mistress, and asked him whose? *Dio ne liberi*, returns Peter, in a kinder accent—for there *heart* came in, and he would not injure her character—God forbid: *e moglie d'un ricco banchiere*—she is a rich banker's wife. You may see, added he, that she is no lady if you look—the servants carry no velvet stool for her to kneel upon, and they have no coat armour in the lace to their liveries: *she* a lady! repeated he again with infinite contempt.

I am told that the Arch-duke is very desirous to close this breach of distinction, and to draw merchants and traders with their wives up into higher notice than they were wont to remain in. I do not *think* he will by that means conciliate the affection of any rank. The prejudices in favour of nobility are too strong to be shaken here, much less rooted out so: the very servants would rather starve in the house of a man of family, than eat after a person of inferior quality, whom they consider as their equal, and almost treat him as such to his face. Shall we then be able to refuse our particular veneration to those characters of high rank here, who add the charm of a cultivated mind to that situation which, united even with ignorance, would ensure them respect? When scholarship is found among the great in Italy, it has the additional merit of having grown up in their own bosoms, without encouragement from emulation, or the least interested motive. His companions do not think much the more of him—for *that* kind of superiority. I suppose, says a friend of his, he must be fond of study; for *chi pensa di una maniera, chi pensa d'un'altra, per me sono stato sempre ignorantissimo*[1].

[Footnote 1: One man is of one mind, another of another: I was always a sheer dunce for my own part.]

These voluntary confessions of many a quality, which, whether possessed or not by English people, would certainly never be avowed, spring from that native sincerity I have been praising—for though family connections are prized so highly here, no man seems ashamed that he has no family to boast: all feigning would indeed be useless and impracticable; yet it struck me with astonishment too, to hear a well-bred clergyman who visits at many genteel houses, say gravely to his friend, no longer ago than yesterday—that friend a man too eminent both for talents and fortune—“Yes, there is a grand invitation at such a place to-night, but I don't go, because *I am not a gentleman*—*perche non sono cavaliere*; and the master desired I would let you know that *it was for no other reason* that you had not a card too, my good friend; for it is an invitation of none but *people of fashion you see*.” At all this nobody stares, nobody laughs, and nobody's throat is cut in consequence of their sincere declarations.

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The women are not behind-hand in openness of confidence and comical sincerity. We have all heard much of Italian ciccisbeism; I had a mind to know how matters really stood; and took the nearest way to information by asking a mighty beautiful and apparently artless young creature, *not noble*, how that affair was managed, for there is no harm done *I am sure*, said I: “Why no,” replied she, “no great *harm* to be sure: except wearisome attentions from a man one cares little about: for my own part,” continued she, “I detest the custom, as I happen to love my husband excessively, and desire nobody’s company in the world but his. We are not *people of fashion* though you know, nor at all rich; so how should we set fashions for our betters? They would only say, see how jealous he is! if *Mr. Such-a-one* sat much with me at home, or went with me to the Corso; and I *must* go with some gentleman you know: and the men are such ungenerous creatures, and have such ways with them: I want money often, and this *cavaliere servente* pays the bills, and so the connection draws closer—*that’s all*.” And your husband! said I—“Oh, why he likes to see me well dressed; he is very good natured, and very charming; I love him to my heart.” And your confessor! cried I.—“Oh, why he is *used to it*”—in the Milanese dialect—*e assuefaa*.

Well! we will not send people to Milan to study delicacy or very refined morality to be sure; but were the crust of British affectation lifted off many a character at home, I know not whether better, that is *honester*, hearts would be found under it than that of this pretty girl, God forbid that I should prove an advocate for vice; but let us remember, that the banishment of all hypocrisy and deceit is a vast compensation for the want of *one great virtue*.—The certainty that the worst, whatever that worst may be, meets your immediate inspection, gives great repose to the mind: you know there is no latent poison lurking out of sight; no colours to come out stronger by throwing water suddenly against them, as you do to old fresco paintings: and talking freely with women in this country, though you may have a chance to light on ignorance, you are never teized by folly.

The mind of an Italian, whether man or woman, seldom fails, for ought I see, to make up in *extent* what is wanted in *cultivation*; and that they possess the art of pleasing in an eminent degree, the constancy with which they are mutually beloved by each other is the best proof.

Ladies of distinction bring with them when they marry, besides fortune, as many clothes as will last them seven years; for fashions do not change here as often as at London or Paris; yet is pin-money allowed, and an attention paid to the wife that no Englishwoman can form an idea of: in every family her duties are few; for, as I have observed, household management falls to the master’s share of course, when all

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the servants are men almost, and those all paid by the week or day. Children are very seldom seen by those who visit great houses: if they *do* come down for five minutes after dinner, the parents are talked of as *doting* on them, and nothing can equal the pious and tender return made to fathers and mothers in this country, for even an apparently moderate share of fondness shewn to them in a state of infancy. I saw an old Marchioness the other day, who had I believe been exquisitely beautiful, lying in bed in a spacious apartment, just like ours in the old palaces, with the tester touching the top almost: she had her three grown-up sons standing round her, with an affectionate desire of pleasing, and shewing her whatever could sooth or amuse her—so that it charmed me; and I was told, and observed indeed, that when they quitted her presence a half kneeling bow, and a kind kiss of her still white hand, was the ceremony used. I knew myself brought thither only that she might be entertained with the sight of the foreigner—and was equally struck at her appearance—more so I should imagine than she could be at mine; when these dear men assisted in moving her pillows with emulative attention, and rejoiced with each other apart, that their mother looked so well to-day. Two or three servants out of livery brought us refreshments I remember; but her maid attended in the antichamber, and answered the bell at her bed's head, which was exceedingly magnificent in the old style of grandeur—crimson damask, if I recollect right, with family arms at the back; and she lay on nine or eleven pillows, laced with ribbon, and two large bows to each, very elegant and expensive in any country:—with all this, to prove that the Italians have little sensation of cold, here was no fire, but a suffocating brazier, which stood near the door that opened, and was kept open, into the maid's apartment.

A woman here in every stage of life has really a degree of attention shewn her that is surprising:—if conjugal disputes arise in a family, so as to make them become what we call town-talk, the public voice is sure to run against the husband; if separation ensues, all possible countenance is given to the wife, while the gentleman is somewhat less willingly received; and all the stories of past disgusts are related to *his* prejudice: nor will the lady whom he wishes to serve look very kindly on a man who treats his own wife with unpoliteness. *Che cuore deve avere!* says she: What a heart he must have! *Io non mene fido sicuro*: I shall take care not to trust him sure.

National character is a great matter: I did not know there had been such a difference in the ways of thinking, merely from custom and climate, as I see there is; though one has always read of it: it was however entertaining enough to hear a travelled gentleman haranguing away three nights ago at our house in praise of English cleanliness, and telling his auditors how all the men in London, *that were noble*, put on a clean shirt every day, and the women washed the street before his house-door every morning. “*Che schiavitu mai!*” exclaimed a lady of quality, who was listening: “*ma natural mente fara per commando del principe.*”—“*What a land of slavery!*” says Donna Louisa, I heard her; “*but it is all done by command of the sovereign, I suppose.*”

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Their ideas of justice are no less singular than of delicacy: but those are more easily accounted for; so is their amiable carriage towards inferiors, calling their own and their friends servants by tender names, and speaking to all below themselves with a graciousness not often used by English men or women even to their equals. The pleasure too which the high people here express when the low ones are diverted, is charming.—We think it vulgar to be merry when the mob is so; but if rolling down a hill, like Greenwich, was the custom here, as with us, all Milan would run to see the sport, and rejoice in the felicity of their fellow-creatures. When I express my admiration of such condescending sweetness, they reply—*e un uomo come un altro;—e battezzato come noi*; and the like—Why he is a man of the same nature as we: he has been christened as well as ourselves, they reply. Yet do I not for this reason condemn the English as naturally haughty above their continental neighbours. Our government has left so narrow a space between the upper and under ranks of people in Great Britain—while our charitable and truly Christian religion is still so constantly employed in raising the depressed, by giving them means of changing their situation, that if our persons of condition fail even for a moment to watch their post, maintaining by dignity what they or their fathers have acquired by merit, they are instantly and suddenly broken in upon by the well-employed talents, or swiftly-acquired riches, of men born on the other side the thin partition; whilst in Italy the gulph is totally impassable, and birth alone can entitle man or woman to the society of gentlemen and ladies. This firmly-fixed idea of subordination (which I once heard a Venetian say, he believed must exist in heaven from one angel to another) accounts immediately for a little conversation which I am now going to relate.

Here were two men taken up last week, one for murdering his fellow-servant in cold blood, while the undefended creature had the lemonade tray in his hand going in to serve company; the other for breaking the new lamps lately set up with intention to light this town in the manner of the streets at Paris. “I hope,” said I, “that they will hang the murderer.” “I rather hope,” replied a very sensible lady who sate near me, “that they will hang the person who broke the lamps: for,” added she, “the first committed his crime only out of revenge, poor fellow! because the other had got his mistress from him by treachery; but this creature has had the impudence to break our fine new lamps, all for the sake of spiting *the Arch-duke*.” The Arch-duke meantime hangs nobody at all; but sets his prisoners to work upon the roads, public buildings, &c. where they labour in their chains; and where, strange to tell! they often insult passengers who refuse them alms when asked as they go by; and, stranger still! they are not punished for it when they do.

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Here is certainly much despotic power in Italy, but, I fancy, very little oppression; perhaps authority, once acknowledged, does not delight itself always by the fatigue of exertion. *Sat est prostrasse leoni* is an old adage, with which perhaps I may be the better acquainted, as it is the motto to my own coat of arms; and unless sovereignty is hungry, for ought I see, he does not certainly *devour*.

The certainty of their irrevocable doom, softened by kind usage from their superiors, makes, in the mean time, an odd sort of humorous drollery spring up among the common people, who are much happier here at Milan than I expected to find them: every great house giving meat, broth, &c. to poor dependents with liberal good-nature enough, so that mighty little wandering misery is seen in the streets; unlike those of Genoa, who seem mocked with the word *liberty*, while sorrow, sickness, and the most pinching want, pine at the doors of marble palaces, whose owners are unfeeling as their walls.

Our ordinary people here in Lombardy are well clothed, fat, stout, and merry; and desirous to divert themselves, and their protectors, whom they love at their hearts. There is however a degree of effrontery among the women that amazes me, and of which I had no idea, till a friend shewed me one evening from my own box at the opera, fifty or a hundred low shop-keepers wives, dispersed about the pit at the theatre, dressed in men's clothes, *per disimpegno* as they call it; that they might be more *at liberty* forsooth to clap and hiss, and quarrel and jostle, &c. I felt shocked. "*One who comes from a free government need not wonder so,*" said he: "On the contrary, Sir," replied I, "where every body has hopes, at least possibility, of bettering his station, and advancing nearer to the limits of upper life, none except the most abandoned of their species will wholly lose sight of such decorous conduct as alone can grace them when they have reached their wish: whereas your people know their destiny, future as well as present, and think no more of deserving a higher post, than they think of obtaining it." Let me add, however, that if these women *were* a little riotous during the Easter holidays, they are *dilletantes* only. In this city no female *professors* of immorality and open libertinage, disgraceful at once, and pernicious to society, are permitted to range the streets in quest of prey; to the horror of all thinking people, and the ruin of all heedless ones.

With which observation, to continue the tour of Italy, we this day leave, for a twelvemonth at least, Milano il grande, after having spent, though not quite finished the winter in it; as there fell a very heavy snow last Saturday, which hindered our setting out a week ago, though this is the sixth of April; and exactly five months have now since last November been passed among those who have I hope approved our conduct and

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esteemed our manners. That they should trouble themselves to examine our income, report our phrases, and listen, perhaps with some little mixture of envy, after every instance of unshakable attachment shewn to each other, would be less pleasing; but that I verily believe they have at last dismissed us with general good wishes, proceeding from innate goodness of heart, and the hope of seeing again, in a year's time or so, two people who have supplied so many tables here with materials for conversation, when the fountain of talk was stopt by deficiencies, and the little stream of prattle ceased to murmur for want of a few pebbles to break its course.

We are going to Venice by the way of Cremona, and hope for amusement from external objects: let us at least not deserve or invite disappointment by seeking for pleasure beyond the limits of innocence.

FROM MILAN TO PADUA.

The first evening's drive carried us no farther than Lodi, a place renowned through all Europe for its excellent cheese, as our well-known ballad bears testimony:

Let Lodi or Parmesan bring up the rear.

Those verses were imitated, I fancy, from a French song written by Monsieur des Yveteaux, of whose extraordinary life and death much has been said by his cotemporary wits, particularly how some of them found him playing at shepherd and shepherdess in his own garden with a pretty Savoyard wench, at seventy-eight years old, *en habit de berger, avec un chapeau couleur de rose*[Footnote: In a pastoral habit, and a hat turned up with pink], &c. when he shewed them the famous lines, *Avoir peu de parens, moins de train que de rente*, &c. which do certainly bear a very near affinity to our Old Man's Wish, published in Dryden's Miscellanies; who, among other luxuries, resolves to eat Lodi cheese, I remember.

The town, however, bringing no other ideas either new or old to our minds, we went to the opera, and heard Morichelli sing: after which they gave us a new dramatic dance, made upon the story of Don John, or the Libertine; a tale which, whether true or false, fact or fable, has furnished every Christian country in the world, I believe, with some subject of representation. It makes me no sport, however; the idea of an impenitent sinner going to hell is too seriously terrifying to make amusement out of. Let mythology, which is now grown good for little else, be danced upon the stage; where Mr. Vestris may bounce and struggle in the character of Alcides on his funeral pile, with no very glaring impropriety; and such baubles serve beside to keep old classical stories in the heads of our young people; who, if they *must* have torches to blaze in their eyes, may divert themselves with Pluto catching up Ceres's daughter, and driving her away to

Tartarus; but let Don John alone. I have at least *half a notion* that the horrible history is *half true*; if

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so, it is surely very gross to represent it by dancing. Should such false foolish taste prevail in England (but I hope it will not), we might perhaps go happily through the whole book of God's Revenge against Murder, or the Annals of Newgate, on the stage, as a variety of pretty stories may be found there of the same cast; while statues of Hercules and Minerva, with their insignia as heathen deities, might be placed, with equal attention to religion, costume, and general fitness, as decorations for the monuments of *Westminster Abbey*.

The country we came through to Cremona is rich and fertile, the roads deep and miry of course; very few of the Lombardy poplars, of which I expected to see so many: but Phaeton's sisters seem to have danced all away from the odoriferous banks of the Po, to the green sides of the Thames, I think; meantime here is no other timber in the country but a few straggling ash, and willows without end. The old Eridanus, however, makes a majestic figure at Cremona, and frights the inhabitants when it overflows. There are not many to be frightened though, for the town is thinly peopled; but exquisitely clean, perhaps for that very reason; and the cathedral, of a mixed Grecian and Gothic architecture, has a respectable appearance; while two enormous lions, of red marble, frown at its door, and the crucifixion, painted by Pordenone, with a rough but powerful pencil, strikes one at the entrance: I have seen nothing finer than the figure of the Centurion upon the fore-ground, who seems to cry out, with soldier-like courage and apostolic fervour, Truly this is the Son of God.

The great clock here too is very curious: having, besides the twenty-four hours, a minute and second finger, like a stop watch, and shews the phases of the moon, with her triple rotation clearly to all who walk across the piazza. Yet I trust the dwellers at Cremona are no better astronomers than those who live in other places; to what purpose then all these representations with which Italy is crowded; processions, paintings, &c. besides the moral dances, as they call them now? One word of solid instruction to the ear, conveys more knowledge to the mind at last, than all these marionettes presented to the eye.

The tower of Cremona is of a surprising height and elegant form; we climbed, not without some difficulty, to its top, and saw the flat plains of Lombardy stretched out all round us. Prospects, however, and high towers have I seen; that in Mr. Hoare's grounds, dedicated to King Alfred, is a much finer structure than this, and the view from it much more variegated certainly; I think of greater extent; though there is more dignity in these objects, while the Po twists through them, and distant mountains mingle with the sky at the end of a lengthened horizon.

What I have never seen till now, we were made to observe in the octagon gallery which crowns this pretty structure, where in every compartment there are channels cut in the stone to guide the eye or rest the telescope, that so a spectator need not be fruitlessly

teized, as one almost always is, by those who shew one a prospect, with *Look there! See there! &c.* At this place nothing needs be done but lay the glass or put the eye even with the lines which point to Bergamo, Mantua, or where you please; and *look there* becomes superfluous as offensive.

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The bells in the tower amused us in another way: an old man who has the care of them, delighted much in telling us how he rung tunes upon them before the Duke of Parma, who presented him with money, and bid him ring again: and not a little was the good man amazed, when one of our company sate down and played on them himself: a thing he had never before been witness to, he said, except once, when a surprising musician arrived from England, and performed the like feat: by his description of the person, and the time of his passing through Cremona, we conjectured he meant Dr. Burney.

The most dreadful of all roads carried us next morning to Mantua, where we had letters for an agreeable friend, who neglected nothing that could entertain or instruct us. He shewed me the field where it is supposed the house stood in which Virgil was born, and told me what he knew of the evidence that he was born there: certain it is that much care is taken to keep the place fenced, from an idea of its being the identical spot, and I hope it is so.

The theatres here are beautiful beyond all telling: it is a shame not to take the model of the small one, and build a place of entertainment on the plan. There cannot surely be any plan more elegant.

We had a concert of admirable music at the house of our new acquaintance, in the evening, and were introduced by his means to many people of fashion; the ladies were pretty, and dressed with much taste; no caps at all, but flowers in their heads, and earrings of silver filagree finely worked; long, light, and thin: I never saw such before, but it would be an exceeding pretty fashion. They hung down quite low upon the neck and shoulders, and had a pleasing effect.

Mantua stands in the middle of a deep swampy marsh, that sends up a thick foggy vapour all winter, a stench intolerable during the summer months. Its inhabitants lament the want of population; and indeed I counted but five carriages in the streets while we remained in the town. Seven thousand Jews occupy a third part of the city, founded by old Tiresias's daughter, where they have a synagogue, and live after their own fashion. The dialect here is closer to that Italian which foreigners learn, and the ladies speak more Tuscan, I think, than at Milan, but it is a *lady's* town as I told them.

"Ille etiam patriis agmen ciet Ocnus ab oris
Fatidicae *Mantus* et Tusci filius amnis,
Qui muros matrisque dedit tibi. *Mantua* nomen."

Ocnus was next, who led his native train
Of hardy warriors thro' the wat'ry plain,
The son of Manto by the Tuscan stream,
From whence the *Mantuan* town derives its name.

DRYDEN.

The annual fair is what contributes most to keeping their folks alive though, for such are the roads it is scarce possible any strangers should come near them, and our people complain that the inns are very extortionate: here is one building, however, that promises wonders from its prodigious size and magnificence; I only wonder such accommodation should be thought necessary.

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The gentleman who shewed us the Ducal palace, seemed himself much struck with its convenience and splendour; but I had seen Versailles, Turin, and Genoa. What can be seen here, and here alone, are the numerous and incomparable works of Giulio Romano; of which no words that I can use would give my readers any adequate idea. —For such excellence language has no praise, and of such performances taste will admit no criticism. The giants could scarcely have been more amazed at Jupiter's thunder, than I was at their painted fall. If Rome is to exhibit any thing beyond this, I shall really be more dazzled than delighted; for imagination will stretch no further, and admiration will endure no more.

* * * * *

Sunday, April 10.

Here is no appearance of spring yet, though so late in the year; what must it be in England? One almond and one plum tree have I seen in blossom; but no green leaf out of the bud: so cheerless has been the road between Mantua and Verona, which, however, makes amends for all on our arrival. How beautiful the entrance is of this charming city, how grand the gate, how handsome the drive forward, may all be read here in a printed book called *Verona illustrata*: but my felicity in finding the amphitheatre so well preserved, can only be found in my own heart, which began sensibly to dilate at the seeing an old Roman coliseum kept so nicely, and repaired so well. It is said that the arena here is absolutely perfect; and if the galleries are a little deficient, there can be no dispute concerning the *podium*, or lower seats, which remain exactly as they were in old times: while I have heard that the building of the same kind now existing at Nismes, shews the manner of entering exceeding well; and the great one built by Vespasian has every thing else: so that an exact idea of the old Circus may be obtained among them all. That something should always be left to conjecture, is however not unpleasing; various opinions animate the arguments on both sides, and bring out fire by collision with the understanding of others engaged in the same researches.

A bull-feast given here to divert the Emperor as he passed through, must have excited many pleasing sensations, while the inhabitants sate on seats once occupied by the masters of the world; and what is more worth wonder, fate at the feet of a Transalpine Caesar, for so the sovereign of Germany is even now called by his Milanese subjects in common discourse; and when one looks upon the arms of Austria, a spread eagle, and recollects that when the Roman empire was divided, the old eagle was split, one face looking toward the East, the other toward the West, in token of shared possession, it affects one; and calls up classic imagery to the mind.

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The collection of antiquities belonging to the Philharmonic society is very respectable; they reminded me of the Arundel marbles at Oxford, and I said so. “*Oh!*” replied the man who shewed these, “*that collection was very valuable to be sure, but the bad air, and the smoke of coal fires in England, have ruined them long ago.*” I suspected that my gentleman talked by rote, and examining the book called *Verona illustrata*, found the remark there; but that is *malasede*, and a very ridiculous prejudice. I will confess however, if they please, that our original treaty between Mardonius and the Persian army, at the end of which the Greek general Aristides, although himself a Sabian, attested the fun as witness, in compliance with their religion who worshipped that luminary, at least held it in the highest veneration, as the residence of Oromasdes the good Principle, who was considered by the Magians as for ever clothed with light: I will consider *that*, I say, if they insist upon it, as a marble of less consequence than the last will and testament of an old inhabitant of Sparta which is shewn at Verona, and which *they say* disposes of the iron money used during the first of many years that the laws of Lycurgus lasted.

Here is a very fine palace belonging to the Bevi-l'acqua family, besides the Casa Verzi, as famous for its elegant Doric architecture, as the charming mistress of it for her Attic wit.

St. Zeno is the church which struck me most: the eternal and all-seeing eye placed over the door; Fortune's wheel too, composed of six figures curiously disposed, and not unlike our man alphabet, two mounting, two sitting, and two tumbling, over against it: on the outside of the wheel this distich,

En ego Fortuna moderor mortalibus usum,
Elevo, depono, bona cunctis vel mala dono[J]—

this other on the inside of the wheel, less plainly to be read:

Induo nudatos, denudo veste paratos,
In me confidit, si quis derisus abibit[K].

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote J:

Here I Madam Fortune my favours bestow,
Some good and some ill to the high and the low.

]

[Footnote K:

The naked I clothe, and the pompous I strip;

If in me you confide, I may give you the slip.

]

This is a town full of beauties, wits, and rarities: numberless persons of the first eminence have always adorned it, and the present inhabitants have no mind to degenerate; while the Nobleman that is immediately descended from that house which Giambattista della Torre made famous for his skill in astronomy, employs himself in a much more useful, if not a nobler study; and is completing for the press a new system of education. It was very petulantly, and very spitefully said by Voltaire, that Italy was now no more than *la boutique*[Footnote: The old clothes shop.], and the Italians, *les merchands*

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fripriers de l'Europe[Footnote: The slop-sellers of Europe]. The Greek remains here have still an air of youthful elegance about them, which strikes one very forcibly where so good opportunity offers of comparing them with the fabrics formed by their destructive successors, the Goths; who have left some fine old black-looking monuments (which look as if they had stood in our *coal smoke* for centuries) to the memory of the Scaligers; and surely the great critic of that name could not have taken a more certain method of proving his descent from these his barbarous ancestors, than that which his relationship to them naturally, I suppose, inspired him with—the avowed preference of birth to talents, of long-drawn genealogy to hardly-acquired literature. We will however grow less prejudiced ourselves; and since there are still whole nations of people existing, who consider the counting up many generations back as a felicity not to be exchanged for any other without manifest loss, we may possibly reconcile the opinion to common sense, by reflecting that one preconception of the sovereign good is, that it should certainly be *indeprivable* and except birth, what is there earthly after all that may not drop, or else be torn from its possessor by accident, folly, force, or malice?

James Harris says, that virtue answers to the character of indeprivability, but one is left only to wish that his position were true; the continuance of virtue depends on the continuance of reason, from which a blow on the head, a sudden fit of terror, or twenty other accidents may separate us in a moment. Nothing can make us not one's father's child however, and the advantages of *blood*, such as they are, may surely be deemed *indeprivable*.

Gothic and Grecian architecture resembles Gothic and Grecian manners, which naturally do give their colour to such arts as are naturally the result of them. Tyranny and gloomy suspicion are the characteristics of the one, openness and sociability strongly mark the other—when to the gay portico succeeded the sullen drawbridge, and to the lively corridor, a secret passage and a winding staircase.

It is difficult, if not impossible however, to withhold one's respect from those barbarians who could thus change the face of art, almost of nature; who could overwhelm courage and counteract learning; who not only devoured the works of wisdom and the labours of strength, but left behind them too a settled system of feudatorial life and aristocratic power, still undestroyed in Europe, though hourly attacked, battered by commerce, and sapped by civilization.

When Smeathman told us about twelve years ago, how an immense body of African ants, which appeared, as they moved forwards, like the whole earth in agitation—covered and suddenly arrested a solemn elephant, as he grazed unsuspectingly on the plain; he told us too that in eight hours time no trace was left either of the devasters or devastated, excepting the skeleton of the noble creature neatly picked; a standing proof of the power of numbers against single force.

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These northern emigrants the Goths, however, have done more; they have fixed a mode of carrying on human affairs, that I think will never be so far exterminated as to leave no vestiges behind: and even while one contemplates the mischief they have made—even while one's pen engraves one's indignation at their success; the old baron in his castle, preceded and surrounded by loyal dependants, who desired only to live under his protection and die in his defence, inspires a notion of dignity unattainable by those who, seeking the beautiful, are by so far removed from the sublime of life, and affords to the mind momentary images of surly magnificence, ill exchanged perhaps by *fancy*, though *truth* has happily substituted a succession of soft ideas and social comforts: knowledge, virtue, riches, happiness. Let it be remembered however, that if the theme is superior to the song, we always find those poets who live in the second class, celebrating the days past by those who had their existence in the first. These reflections are forced upon me by the view of Lombard manners, and the accounts I daily pick up concerning the Brescian and Bergamase nobility; who still exert the Gothic power of protecting murderers who profess themselves their vassals; and who still exercise those virtues and vices natural to man in his semi-barbarous state: fervent devotion, constant love, heroic friendship, on the one part; gross superstition, indulgence of brutal appetite, and diabolical revenge, on the other.

In all hot countries, however, flowers and weeds shoot up to enormous growth: in colder climes, where poison can scarce be feared, perfumes can seldom be boasted.

Verona is the gayest looking town I ever lived in; beautifully situated, the hills around it elegant, the mountains at a distance venerable: the silver Adige rolling through the Valley, while such a glow of blossoms now ornament the rising grounds, and such cheerfulness smiles in the sweet countenances of its inhabitants, that one is tempted to think it the birth-place of Euphrosyne, where

Zephyr with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a maying, &c.
Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blythe, and debonair—

as Milton says. Here are vines, mulberries, olives; of course, wine, silk, and oil: every thing that can seduce, every thing that ought to satisfy desiring man. Here then in consequence do actually delight to reside mirth and good-humour in their holiday dress. *A verona mezzì matti*[Footnote: The people at Verona are half out of their wits], say the Italians themselves of them, and I see nothing seemingly go forward here but Improvisatori, reciting stories or verses to entertain the populace; boys flying kites, cut square like a diamond on the cards, and called Stelle; men amusing themselves at a game called Pallamajo, something like our cricket, only that they throw the ball with a hollow stick, not with the hand, but it requires no small corporal strength; and I know not why our English people have such a notion of Italian effeminacy: games of very strong exertion are in use among them; and I have not yet felt one hot day since I left France.

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They shewed us an agreeable garden here belonging to some man of fashion, whose name I know not; it was cut in a rock, yet the grotto disappointed me: they had not taken such advantages of the situation as Lomellino would have done, and I recollected the tasteful creations in my own country, *Pains Hill* and *Stour Head*.

The Veronese nobleman shewed however the spirit of *his* country, if we let loose the genius of *ours*. The emperor had visited his improvements it seems, and on the spot where he kissed the children of the house, their father set up a stone to record the honour.

Our attendant related a tender story to *me* more interesting, which happened in this garden, of an English gentleman, who having hired the house, &c. one season, found his favourite servant ill there, and like to die: the poor creature expressed his concern at the intolerant cruelty of that fact which denies Christians of any other denomination but their own a place in consecrated ground, and lamented his distance from home with an anxious earnestness that hastened his end: when the humanity of his master sent him to the landlord, who kindly gave permission that he might lie undisturbed under his turf, as one places one's lap-dog in England; and *there*, as our Laquais de place observed, *he did no harm*, though *he was a heretic*; and the English gentleman wept over his grave.

I never saw cypress trees of such a growth as in this spot—but then there are no other trees; *inter viburna cypressi* came of course into one's head: and this noble plant, rich in foliage, and bright, not dusky in colour, looked from its manner of growing like a vast evergreen poplar.

Our equipages here are strangely inferior to those we left behind at Milan. Oil is burned in the conversation rooms too, and smells very offensively—but they *lament our suffocation in England, and black smoke*, while what proceeds from these lamps would ruin the finest furniture in the world before five weeks were expired; I saw no such used at Turin, Genoa, or Milan.

The horses here are not equal to those I have admired on the Corso at other great towns; but it is pleasing to observe the contrast between the high bred, airy, elegant English hunter, and the majestic, docile, and well-broken war horse of Lombardy. Shall we fancy there is Gothic and Grecian to be found even among the animals? or is not that *too fanciful*?

That every thing useful, and every thing ornamental, first revived in Italy, is well known; but I was never aware till now, though we talk of Italian book-keeping, that the little cant words employed in compting-houses, took their original from the Lombard language, unless perhaps that of Ditto, which every moment recurs, meaning Detto or Sudetto, as that which was already said before: but this place has afforded me an opportunity of discovering what the people meant, who called a large portion

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of ground in Southwark some years ago a *plant*, above all things. The ground was destined to the purposes of extensive commerce, but the appellation of a *plant* gave me much disturbance, from my inability to fathom the meaning of it. I have here found out, that the Lombards call many things a *plant*; and say of their cities, palaces, &c. in familiar discourse—*che la pianta e buona, la pianta e cattiva*[Footnote: The *plant* is a good or a bad one], &c.

Thus do words which carry a forcible expression in one language, appear ridiculous enough in another, till the true derivation is known. Another reflection too occurs as curious; that after the overthrow of all business, all knowledge, and all pleasure resulting from either, by the Goths, Italy should be the first to cherish and revive those money-getting occupations, which now thrive better in more Northern climates: but the chymists say justly, that fermentation acts with a sort of creative power, and that while the mass of matter is fermenting, no certain judgment can be made what spirit it will at last throw up: so perhaps we ought not to wonder at all, that the first idea of banking came originally from this now uncommercial country; that the very name of *bankrupt* was brought over from their money-changers, who sat in the market-place with a bench or *banca* before them, receiving and paying; till, unable sometimes to make the due returns, the enraged creditors broke their little board, which was called making *banca rotta*, a phrase but too well known in the purlieu, which because they first settled there in London was called *Lombard Street*, where the word is still in full force I believe.

—oh word of fear!
Unpleasing to commercial ear.

A visit to the collection of Signor Vincenzo Bozza best assisted me in changing, or at least turning the course of my ideas. Nothing in natural history appears more worthy the consideration of the learned world, than does this repository of petrefactions, so uncommon that scarcely any thing except the testimony of one's own eyes could convince one that flying fish, natives, and intending to remain inhabitants, of the Pacific Ocean, are daily dug out of the bowels of Monte Bolca near Verona, where they must doubtless have been driven by the deluge, as no less than omnipotent power and general concussion could have sufficed to seize and fix them for centuries in the hollow cavities of a rock at least seventy-two miles from the nearest sea. Their learned proprietor, however, who was obligingly desirous to shew me every attention, answering a hundred troublesome questions with much civility, told us, that few of his numerous visitants gave that plain account of the phenomenon, shewing greater disposition to conjure up more difficult causes, and attribute the whole to the world's eternity: a notion not less contrary to found philosophy and common sense, than it is repugnant to faith, and the doctrines of Revelation; which prophesied long ago, that in the last days should come *scoffers, walking after their own lusts*, and saying, *Where is now the promise of*

his coming? for since the time that our fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

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Well! these are unpleasant reflections: I would rather, before leaving the plains of Lombardy, give my country-women one reason for detaining them so long there: it cannot be an uninteresting reason to us, when we ref left that our first head-dresses were made by *Milaners*; that a court gown was early known in England by the name of a *mantua*, from *Manto*, the daughter of Teresias, who founded the city so called; and that some of the best materials for making these mantuas is still named from the town it is manufactured in—a *Padua* soy.

We are going thither immediately through Vicenza; where the works of Palladio's immortal hand appear in full perfection; and nothing sure can add to the elegancies of architecture displayed in its environs. I fatigued myself to death almost by walking three miles out of town, to see the famous villa from whence Merriworth Castle in Kent was modelled; and drew incessant censures on his taste who built at the bottom of a deep valley the imitation of a house calculated for a hill. Here I pleased my eyes by glancing them over an extensive prospect, bounded by mountains on the one side, on another by the sea, at so prodigious a distance however as to be wholly undiscoverable by the naked eye; nor could I, or any other unaccustomed spectator, have seen, as my Italian companions did, the effect produced by marine vapours upon the intermediate atmosphere, which they made me remark from the windows of the palace, inferior in every thing *but* situation to Merriworth, and with that patriotic consolation I leave Vincenza.

Padua la dotta afforded me much pleasure, from the politeness of the Countess Ferres, born a German; of the House of Starenberg: she thought proper to shew me a thousand civilities, in consequence of a kind letter which we carried her from Count Wiltseck, the Austrian minister at Milan; called the literati of the town about us, and gave me the pleasure of conversing with the Abate Cefarotti, who translated Offian; and the Professor Statico, whose attentions I ought never to forget. I was surprised at length to hear kind inquiries after English acquaintance made in my native language by the botanical professor, who spoke much of Doctor Johnson, and with great regard: he had, it seems, spent much time in our island about thirty years before. When we were shewn the physic garden, nicely kept and excellently furnished, the Countess took occasion to observe, that transplanted trees never throve, and strongly expressed her unfaded attachment to her native soil: though she had more good sense than to neglect every opportunity of cultivating that in which fortune had placed her.

The tomb of Antenor, supposed to be preserved in this town, has, I find, but slight evidence to boast with regard to its authenticity: whosever tomb it is, the antiquity of the monument, and dignity of the remains, are scarcely questionable; and I see not but it *may* be Antenor's.

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There is no place assigned for it but the open street, because it could not (say they) have contained a baptized body, as there are proofs innumerable of its being fabricated many and many years before the birth of Jesus Christ: yet I never pass by without being hurt that it should have no better situation assigned it, till I recollect that the old Romans always buried people by the highway, which made the *siste viator*[Footnote: Stop traveller] proper for their tomb-stones, as Mr. Addison somewhere remarks; which are foolishly enough engraven upon ours: and till I consider too that the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Patriarch of Antioch, where Christians were first called such, would lie no nearer a Christian Church than old Antenor does, were they unfortunate enough to die, and be put under ground at Padua.

The shrine of St. Antonio is however sufficiently venerated; and the riches of his church really amazed me: such silver lamps! such votive offerings! such glorious sculpture! the bas relievos, representing his life and miracles, are beyond any thing we have yet seen; one compartment particularly, the workmanship, I think, of Sansovino, where an old woman is represented to a degree of finished nicety and curiosity of perfection which I knew not that marble could express.

The hall of justice, which they oppose to our Westminster-hall, but between which there is no resemblance, is two hundred and fifty-six feet long, and eighty-six broad; the form, of it a *rhomboid*: the walls richly ornamented by Pietro d'Abano, who originally designed, and began to paint the figures round the sides: they have however been retouched by Giotto, who added the signs of the Zodiac to Peter's mysterious performances, which meant to explain the planetary influences, as he was a man deeply dipped in judicial astrology; and there is his own portrait among them, dressed like a Zoroastrian priest, with a planet in the corner. At the bottom of the hall hangs the famous crucifixion, for the purpose of doing which completely well, it is told that Giotto fastened up a real man, and justly incurred the Pope's displeasure, who coming one day unawares to see his painter work, caught the unhappy wretch struggling in the closet, and threatened immediately to sign the artist's death; who with Italian promptness ran to the picture, and daubed it over with his brush and colours;—by this method obliging his sovereign to delay execution till the work was repaired, which no one but himself could finish; mean time the man recovers of his wounds, and the tale ends, whether true or false, according to the hearer's wish.

The debtor's stone at the opposite end of the hall has likewise many entertaining stories annexed to it: the bankrupt is obliged to sit there in presence of his creditors and judges, in a very disgraceful state; and many accounts are told one, of the various effects such distresses have had on the mind: but suicide is a crime rarely committed out of England, and the Italians look with just horror on our people for being so easily incited to a sin, which takes from him that commits it all power and possibility of repentance.

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A Frenchman whom I sent for once at Bath to dress my hair, gave me an excellent trait of his own national character, speaking upon that subject, when he meant to satirise ours. “You have lived some years in England, friend, said I, do you like it?”—“Mais non, madame, pas parfaitement bien[L]”—“You have travelled much in Italy, do you like that better?”—“Ah, Dieu ne plaise, madame, je n’aime gueres messieurs les Italiens[M].” “What do they do to make you hate them so?”—“Mais c’est que les Italiens se tuent l’un l’autre (replied the fellow), et les Anglois se font un plaisir de se tuer eux memes: pardi je ne me sens rien moins qu’un vrai gout pour ces gentillesse la, et j’aimerois mieux me trouver a *Paris, pour rire un peu.*”[N]

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote L: Why no truly ma’am, not much.]

[Footnote M: Oh, God forbid—no, I cannot endure those Italians.]

[Footnote N: Why, really, the Italians have such a passion for murdering each other, ma’am, and the English such an odd delight in killing themselves, that I, who have acquired no taste for such agreeable amusements, grow somewhat impatient to return to Paris, and get a good laugh among my old acquaintance.]

The Lucrezia Padovana, who has a monument erected here in this justice hall to her memory, is the only instance of self-murder I have been told yet; and her’s was a very glorious one, and necessary to the preservation of her honour, which was endangered by the magistrate, who made that the barter for her husband’s life, in defence of which she was pleading; much like the story of Isabella, Angelo, and Claudio, in Shakespear’s Measure for Measure. This lady, whole family name I have forgotten, stabbed herself in presence of the monster who reduced her to such necessity, and by that means preserved her husband’s life, by suddenly converting the heart of her hateful lover, who from that dreadful day devoted himself to penitence and prayer.

The chastity of the Patavian ladies is celebrated by some old Latin poet, but I cannot recollect which. Lucrezia, however, was a Christian. I could not much regard the monument of Livy though, for looking at her’s, which attracted and detained my attention more particularly.

The University of Padua is a noble institution; and those who have excelled among the students, are recorded on tablets, for the most part brass, hung round the walls, made venerable by their arms and characters. It was pleasing to see so many British names among them—Scotchmen for the most part; though I enquired in vain for the admirable Crichton. Sir Richard Blackmore was there, but not one native of France. We were spiteful enough to fancy, that was the reason that Abbe Richard says nothing of the establishment.

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Besides the civilities shewn us here by Mr. Bonaldi and his agreeable lady, Signora Annetta, we were recommended by letters from the Venetian resident at Milan, to Abate Toaldo, professor of astronomy; who wished to do all in his power to oblige and entertain us. His observatory is a good one; but the learned amiable scholar, who resides in the first floor of it, complained to us that he was sickly, old, and poor; three bad qualifications, as he observed, for the amusement of travellers, who commonly arrive hungry for novelty, and thirsty for information. His quadrant was very fine, the planetarium or orrery quite out of repair; and his references of course were obliged to be made to a sort of map or chart of the heavenly bodies (a solar system at least with comets) that hung up in his room as a substitute. He had little reverence for the petrefactions of Monte Bolca I perceived, which he considered as mere *lufus naturae*. He shewed me poor Petrarch's tomb from his observatory, bid me look on Sir Isaac's full-length picture in the room, and said, the world would see no more such men. Of our Maskelyne, however, no man could speak with more esteem, or expressions of generous friendship. His sitting chamber was a pleasant one; and I should not have left it so soon, but in compassion to his health, which our company was more likely to injure than assist. He asked me, if I did not find *Padua la dotta* a very stinking nasty town? but added, that literature and dirt had long been intimately acquainted, and that this city was commonly called among the Italians, "*Porcil de Padua*," *Padua the pig-stye*.

Fire is supposed to be the greatest purifier, and Padua has gone through that operation twice completely, being burned the first time by Attila; after which, Narses the famous eunuch rebuilt and settled it in the year 558, if my information is good: but after her protector's death, the Longobards burned her again, and she lay in ashes till Charlemagne restored her to more than original beauty. Under Otho she, like many other cities of Italy, was governed by her own laws, and remained a republic till the year 1237, when she received the German yoke, afterwards broken by the Scaligers; nor was their treacherous assassination followed by less than the loss both of Verona and this city, which was found in possession of the Emperor Maximilian some years after: but when the State of Venice recovered their dominion over it in 1409, they fortified it so strongly that the confederate princes united in the league of Cambray assaulted it in vain.

Santa Giustina's church is the most beautiful place of worship I have ever yet seen; so regularly, so uniformly noble, uncrowded with figures too: the entrance strikes you with its simple grandeur, while the small chapels to the right and left hand are kept back behind a colonade of pillars, and do not distract attention and create confusion of ideas, as do the numerous cupolas of St. Anthony's more

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magnificent but less pleasing structure. The high altar here at Santa Giustina's church stands at the end, and greatly increases the effect on entering, which always suffers when the length is broken. Nothing, however, is to be perfect in this world, and Paul Veronese's fine view of the suffering martyr has not size enough for the place; and is beside crowded with small unsequential figures, which cannot be distinguished at a distance. Some carvings round the altar, representing, in wooden bas-reliefs, the history of the Old and New Testament, are admirable in their kind; and I am told that the organ on which Bertoni, a blind nephew of Ferdinand, our well-known composer, played to entertain us, is one of the first in Italy: but an ordinary instrument would have charmed us had he touched it.

I must not leave the Terra Firma, as they call it, without mentioning once more some of the animals it produces; among which the asses are so justly renowned for their size and beauty, that *come un afino di Padua* is proverbial when speaking of strength among the Italians: how should it be otherwise indeed, where every herb and every shrub breathes fragrance; and where the quantity as well as quality of their food naturally so increases their milk, that I should think some of them. might yield as much as an ordinary cow?

When I was at Genoa, I remember remarking something like this to Doctor Batt, an English physician settled there; and expressed my surprise that our consumptive country-folks, with whom the Italians never cease to reproach us, do not, when they come here for health, rely much on the beneficial produce of these asses for a cure; which, if it is hastened by their assistance in our island, must surely be performed much quicker in this. The answer would have been better recollected, I fancy, had it appeared to me more satisfactory; but he knew what he was talking of, and I did not; so conclude he despised me accordingly.

The Carinthian bulls too, that do all the heavy work in this rich and heavy land, how wonderfully handsome they are! Such symmetry and beauty have I never seen in any cattle, scarcely in those of Derbyshire, where so much attention has been bestowed upon their breeding. The colour here is so elegant; they are almost all blue roans, like Lord Grosvenor's horses in London, or those of the Duke of Cestos at Milan: the horns longer, and much more finely shaped, than those of our bulls, and white as polished ivory, tapering off to a point, with a bright black tip at the end, resembling an ermine's tail. As this creature is not a native, but only a neighbour of Italy, we will say no more about him.

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A transplanted Hollander, carried thither originally from China, seems to thrive particularly well in this part of the world; the little pug dog, or Dutch mastiff, which our English ladies were once so fond of, that poor Garrick thought it worth his while to ridicule them for it in the famous dramatic satire called *Lethe*, has quitted London for Padua, I perceive; where he is restored happily to his former honours, and every carriage I meet here has a *pug* in it. That breed of dogs is now so near extirpated among us, that I recoiled: only Lord Penryn who possesses such an animal; and I doubt not but many of the under-classes among brutes do in the same manner extinguish and revive by chance, caprice, or accident perpetually, through many tracts of the inhabited world, so as to remain out of sight in certain districts for centuries together.

This town, as Abbe Toaldo observed, is old, and dirty, and melancholy-looking, *in itself*; but Terence told us long ago, and truly, "that it was not the walls, but the company, made every place delightful:" and these inhabitants, though few in number, are so exceedingly cheerful, so charming, their language is so mellifluous, their manners so soothing, I can scarcely bear to leave them without tears.

Verona was the first place I felt reluctance to quit; but the Venetian state certainly possesses uncommon, and to me almost unaccountable, attractions. Be that as it will, we leave these sweet Paduans to-morrow; the coach is disposed of, and we are to set out upon our watry journey to their wonderfully-situated metropolis, or as they call it prettily, *La Bella Dominante*.

VENICE.

We went down the Brenta in a barge that brought us in eight hours to Venice, the first appearance of which revived all the ideas inspired by Canaletti, whose views of this town are most scrupulously exact; those especially which one sees at the Queen of England's house in St. James's Park; to such a degree indeed, that we knew all the famous towers, steeples, &c. before we reached them. It was wonderfully entertaining to find thus realized all the pleasures that excellent painter had given us so many times reason to expect; and I do believe that Venice, like other Italian beauties, will be observed to possess features so striking, so prominent, and so discriminated, that her portrait, like theirs, will not be found difficult to take, nor the impression she has once made easy to erase. British charms captivate less powerfully, less certainly, less suddenly: but being of a softer sort increase upon acquaintance; and after the connexion has continued for some years, will be relinquished with pain, perhaps even in exchange for warmer colouring and stronger expression.

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St. Mark's Place, after all I had read and all I had heard of it, exceeded expectation: such a cluster of excellence, such a constellation of artificial beauties, my mind had never ventured to excite the idea of within herself; though assisted with all the powers of doing so which painters can bestow, and with all the advantages derived from verbal and written description. It was half an hour before I could think of looking for the bronze horses, of which one has heard so much; and from which when one has once begun to look, there is no possibility of withdrawing one's attention. The general effect produced by such architecture, such painting, such pillars; illuminated as I saw them last night by the moon at full, rising out of the sea, produced an effect like enchantment; and indeed the more than magical sweetness of Venetian planners, dialect, and address, confirms one's notion, and realizes the scenes laid by Fenelon in their once tributary island of Cyprus. The pole set up as commemorative of their past dominion over it, grieves one the more, when every hour shews how congenial that place must have been to them, if every thing one reads of it has any foundation in truth.

The Ducal palace is so beautiful, it were worth while almost to cross the Alps to see that, and return home again: and St. Mark's church, whose Mosaic paintings on the outside are surpassed by no work of art, delights one no less on entering, with its numberless rarities; the flooring first, which is all paved with precious stones of the second rank, in small squares, not bigger than a playing card, and sometimes less. By the second rank in gems I mean, carnelion, agate, jasper, serpentine, and verd antique; on which you place your feet without remorse, but not without a very odd sensation, when you find the ground undulated beneath them, to represent the waves of the sea, and perpetuate marine ideas, which prevail in every thing at Venice. We were not shewn the treasury, and it was impossible to get a sight of the manuscript in St. Mark's own hand-writing, carefully preserved here, and justly esteemed even beyond the jewels given as votive offerings to his shrine, which are of immense value.

The pictures in the Doge's house are a magnificent collection; and the Noah's Ark by Bassano would doubtless afford an actual study for natural historians as well as painters, and is considered as a model of perfection from which succeeding artists may learn to draw animal life: scarcely a creature can be recollected which has not its proper place in the picture; but the pensive cat upon the fore-ground took most of my attention, and held it away from the meeting of the Pope and Doge by the other brother Bassano, who here proves that his pencil is not divested of dignity, as the connoisseurs sometimes tell us that he is. But it is not one picture, or two, or twenty, that seizes one's mind here; it is the accumulation of various objects, each worthy to detain it. Wonderful indeed, and sweetly-satisfying to the intellectual appetite, is the variety, the plenty of pleasures which serve to enchain the imagination, and fascinate the traveller's eye, keeping it ever on this *little spot*; for though I have heard some of the inhabitants talk of its vastness, it is scarcely bigger than our Portman Square, I think, not larger at the very most than Lincoln's-Inn-Fields.

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It is indeed observable that few people know how to commend a thing so as to make their praises enhance its value. One hears a pretty woman not unfrequently admired for her wit, a woman of talents wondered at for her beauty; while I can think on no reason for such perversion of language, unless it is that a small share of elegance will content those whose delight is to hear declamation; and that the most hackneyed sentiments will seem new, when uttered by a pair of rosy lips, and seconded by the expression of eyes from which every thing may be expected.

To return to St. Mark's Place, whence *we have never strayed*: I must mention those pictures which represent his miracles, and the carrying his body away from Alexandria: events attested so as to bring them credit from many wise men, and which have more authenticity of their truth, than many stories told one up and down here. So great is the devotion of the common people here to their tutelar saint, that when they cry out, as we do *Old England for ever!* they do not say, *Viva Venezia!* but *Viva San Marco!* And I doubt much if that was not once the way with *us*; in one of Shakespear's plays an expiring prince being near to give all up for gone, is animated by his son in these words, "*Courage father, cry St. George!*"

We had an opportunity of seeing *his* day celebrated with a very grand procession the other morning, April 23, when a live boy personated the hero of the show; but fate so still upon his painted courser, that it was long before I perceived him to breathe. The streets were vastly crowded with spectators, that in every place make the principal part of the *spectacle*.

It is odd that a custom which in contemplation seems so unlikely to please, should when put in practice appear highly necessary, and productive of an effect which can be obtained no other way. Were the houses in Parliament Street to hang damask curtains, worked carpets, pieces of various coloured silks, with fringe or lace round them, out of every window when the King of England goes to the House, with numberless well-dressed ladies leaning out to see him pass, it would give one an idea of the continental towns upon a gala day. But our people would be apt to cry out, *Monmouth Street!* and look ashamed if their neighbours saw the same deckerwork counterpane or crimson curtain produced at Easter, which made a figure at Christmas the December before; so that no end would be put to expence in our country, were such a fancy to take place. The rainy weather beside would spoil all our finery at once; and *here*, though it is still cold enough to be sure, and the women wear sattins, yet still one shivers over a bad fire only because there is no place to walk and warm one's self; for I have not seen a drop of rain. The truth is, this town cannot be a wholesome one, for there is scarcely a possibility of taking exercise; nor have I been once able to circulate my blood by

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motion since our arrival, except perhaps by climbing the beautiful tower which stands (as every thing else does) in St. Mark's Place. And you may drive a garden-chair up *that*, so easy is the ascent, so broad and luminous the way. From the top is presented to one's sight the most striking of all prospects, water bounded by land—not land by water.—The curious and elegant islets upon which, and into which, the piles of Venice are driven, exhibiting clusters of houses, churches, palaces, every thing—started up in the midst of the sea, so as to excite amazement.

But the horses have not been spoken of, though one pair drew Apollo's car at Delphos. The other, which we call modern, and laugh while we call them so, were made however before the days of Constantine the Great. They are of bright yellow brass, not black bronze, as I expected to find them, and grace the glorious church I am never weary of admiring; where I went one day on purpose to find out the red marble on which Pope Alexander III. sate, and placed his foot upon the neck of the Emperor: the stone has this inscription half legible round it, *Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis*[Footnote: Thou shalt tread on the asp and the basilisk]. How does this lovely Piazza di San Marco render a newly-arrived spectator breathless with delight! while not a span of it is unoccupied by actual beauty; though the whole appears uncrowded, as in the works of nature, not of art.

It was upon the day appointed for making a new chancellor, however, that one ought to have looked at this lovely city; when every shop, adorned with its own peculiar produce, was disposed to hail the passage of its favourite, in a manner so lively, so luxuriant, and at the same time so tasteful—there's no telling. Milliners crowned the new dignitary's picture with flowers, while columns of gauze, twisted round with ribband, in the most elegant style, supported the figure on each side, and made the prettiest appearance possible. The furrier formed his skins into representations of the animal they had once belonged to; so the lion was seen dandling the kid at one door, while the fox stood courting a badger out of his hole at the other. The poulterers and fruiterers were by many thought the most beautiful shops in town, from the variety of fancies displayed in the disposal of their goods; and I admired at the truly Italian ingenuity of a gunsmith, who had found the art of turning his instruments of terror into objects of delight, by his judicious manner of placing and arranging them. Every shop was illuminated with a large glass chandelier before it, besides the wax candles and coloured lamps interspersed among the ornaments within. The senators have much the appearance of our lawyers going robed to Westminster Hall, but the *gentiluomini*, as they are called, wear red dresses, and remind me of the Doctors of the ecclesiastical courts in Doctors Commons.

It is observable that all long robes denote peaceful occupations, and that the short cut coat is the emblem of a military profession, once the disgrace of humanity, now unfortunately become its false and cruel pride.

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When the enemies of King David meant to declare war against him, they cut the skirts of his ambassador's clothes off, to shew him he must prepare for battle; and the Orientals still consider short dresses as a disgraceful preparation for hostile proceedings; nor could any thing have reconciled Europe to the custom, except our horror of Turkish manners, and desire of being distinguished from the Saracens at the time of the Holy War.

I have said nothing yet about the gondolas, which every body knows are black, and give an air of melancholy at first sight, yet are nothing less than sorrowful; it is like painting the lively Mrs. Cholmondeley in the character of Milton's

Pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, stedfast, and demure—

As I once saw her drawn by a famous hand, to shew a Venetian lady in her gondola and zendaletto, which is black like the gondola, but wholly calculated like that for the purposes of refined gallantry. So is the nightly rendezvous, the coffee-house, and casino; for whilst Palladio's palaces serve to adorn the grand canal, and strike those who enter Venice with surprise at its magnificence; those snug retreats are intended for the relaxation of those who inhabit the more splendid apartments, and are fatigued with exertions of dignity, and necessity of no small expence. They breathe the true spirit of our luxurious Lady Mary, who probably learned it here, or of the still more dissolute Turks, our present neighbours; who would have thought not unworthy a Testa Veneziana, her famous stanza, beginning,

But when the long hours of public are past,
And we meet with champagne and a chicken at last;

Surely she had then present to her warm imagination a favourite Casino in the Piazza St. Marco. That her learned and highly-accomplished son imbibed her taste and talents for sensual delights, has been long known in England; it is not so perhaps that there is a showy monument erected to his memory at Padua, setting forth his variety and compass of knowledge in a long Latin inscription. The good old monk who shewed it me seemed generously and reasonably shocked, that such a man should at last expire with somewhat more firm persuasions of the truth of the Mahometan religion than any other; but that he doubted greatly of all, and had not for many years professed himself a Christian of any sect or denomination whatever.

So have I seen some youth set out,
Half Protestant, half Papist;
And wand'ring long the world about,
Some new religion to find out,
Turn Infidel or Atheist.

We have been told much of the suspicious temper of Venetian laws; and have heard often that every discourse is suffered, except such as tends to political conversation, in this city; and that whatever nobleman, native of Venice, is seen speaking familiarly with a foreign minister, runs a risque of punishments too terrible to be thought on.

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How far that manner of proceeding may be wise or just, I know not; certain it is that they have preserved their laws inviolate, their city unattempted, and their republic respectable, through all the concussions that have shaken the rest of Europe. Surrounded by envious powers, it becomes them to be vigilant; conscious of the value of their unconquered state, it is no wonder that they love her; and surely the true *Amor Patriae* never glowed more warmly in old Roman bosoms than in theirs, who draw, as many families here do, their pedigree from the consuls of the Commonwealth. Love without jealousy is seldom to be met with, especially in these warm climates—let us then permit them to be jealous of a constitution which all the other states of Italy look on with envy not unmixed with malice, and propagate strange stories to its disadvantage.

That suspicion should be concealed under the mask of gaiety is neither very new nor very strange: the reign of our Charles the Second was equally famous for plots, perjuries, and cruel chastisements, as for wanton levity and indecent frolics: but here at Venice there are no unpermitted frolics; her rulers love to see her gay and cheerful; they are the fathers of their country, and if they *indulge*, take care not to *spoil* her.

With regard to common chat, I have heard many a liberal and eloquent disquisition upon the state of Europe in general, and of Venice in particular, from several agreeable friends at their own Casino, who did not appear to have more fears upon them than myself, and I know not why they should. Chevalier Emo is deservedly a favourite with them, and we used to talk whole evenings of him and of General Elliott; the bombarding of Tunis, and defence of Gibraltar. The news-papers spoke of some fireworks exhibited in England in honour of their hero; they were “*vrayment feux de joye*” said an agreeable Venetian, they were not *feux d’artifice*.

The deep secrecy of their councils, however, and unrelenting steadiness of their resolutions, cannot be better explained than by telling a little story, which will illustrate the private virtue as well as the public authority of these extraordinary people; for though the tale is now in abler hands (intending as I am told, to form a tragedy upon its basis), the summary may serve to adorn my little work; as a landscape painter refuses not to throw the story of Phaeton’s petition for Apollo’s car into his picture, for the purpose of illuminating the back ground, though Ovid has written the story and Titian has painted it.

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Some years ago then, perhaps a hundred, one of the many spies who ply this town by night, ran to the state inquisitor, with information that such a nobleman (naming him) had connections with the French ambassador, and went privately to his house every night at a certain hour. The *messergrando*, as they call him, could not believe, nor would proceed, without better and stronger proof, against a man for whom he had an intimate personal friendship, and on whose virtue he counted with very particular reliance. Another spy was therefore set, and brought back the same intelligence, adding the description of his disguise; on which the worthy magistrate put on his mask and bauta, and went out himself; when his eyes confirming the report of his informants, and the reflection on his duty stifling all remorse, he sent publicly for *Foscarini* in the morning, whom the populace attended all weeping to his door.

Nothing but resolute denial of the crime alleged could however be forced from the firm-minded citizen, who, sensible of the discovery, prepared for that punishment he knew to be inevitable, and submitted to the fate his friend was obliged to inflict: no less than a dungeon for life, that dungeon so horrible that I have heard Mr. Howard was not permitted to see it.

The people lamented, but their lamentations were vain. The magistrate who condemned him never recovered the shock: but Foscarini was heard of no more, till an old lady died forty years after in Paris, whose last confession declared she was visited with amorous intentions by a nobleman of Venice whose name she never knew, while she resided there as companion to the ambadress. So was Foscarini lost! so died he a martyr to love, and tenderness for female reputation! Is it not therefore a story fit to be celebrated by that lady's pen, who has chosen it as the basis of her future tragedy? —But I will anticipate no further.

Well! this is the first place I have seen which has been capable in any degree of obliterating the idea of Genoa la superba, which has till now pursued me, nor could the gloomy dignity of the cathedral at Milan, or the striking view of the arena at Verona, nor the Sala de Giustizia at lettered Padua, banish her beautiful image from my mind: nor can I now acknowledge without shame, that I have ceased to regret the mountains, the chesnut groves, and slanting orange trees, which climbed my chamber window *there*, and at *this* time too! when

Young-ey'd Spring profusely throws
From her green lap the pink and rose.

But whoever sees St. Mark's Place lighted up of an evening, adorned with every excellence of human art, and pregnant with pleasure, expressed by intelligent countenances sparkling with every grace of nature; the sea washing its walls, the moonbeams dancing on its subjugated waves, sport and laughter resounding from the coffee-houses, girls with guitars skipping about the square, masks and merry-makers singing as they pass you, unless a barge with a band of music is heard at some distance upon

the water, and calls attention to sounds made sweeter by the element over which they are brought—whoever is led suddenly I say to this scene of seemingly perennial gaiety, will be apt to cry out of Venice, as Eve says to Adam in Milton,

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With thee conversing I *forget all time*,
All seasons, and their *change*—all please *alike*.

For it is sure there are in this town many astonishing privations of all that are used to make other places delightful: and as poor Omai the savage said, when about to return to Otaheite—*No horse there! no ass! no cow, no golden pippins, no dish of tea!—Ah, missey! I go without every thing—I always so content there though.*

It is really just so one lives at this lovely Venice: one has heard of a horse being exhibited for a show there, and yesterday I watched the poor people paying a penny a piece for the sight of a *stuffed one*, and am more than persuaded of the truth of what I am told here, That numberless inhabitants live and die in this great capital, nor ever find out or think of enquiring how the milk brought from Terra Firma is originally produced. When such fancies cross me I wish to exclaim, Ah, happy England! whence ignorance is banished by the diffusion of literature, and narrowness of notions is ridiculed even in the lowest class of life. Candour must however confess, that while the possessor of a Northern coal-mine riots in that variety of adulation which talents deserve and riches contrive to obtain, those who labour in it are often natives of the dismal region; where many have been known to be born, and work, and die, without having ever seen the sun, or other light than such as a candle can bestow. Let such dark recollections give place to more cheerful imagery.

We have just now been carried to see the so justly-renowned arsenal, and unluckily missed the ship-launch we went thither chiefly to see. It is no great matter though! one comes to Italy to look at buildings, statues, pictures, people! The ships and guns of England have been such as supported her greatness, established her dominion, and extended her commerce in such a manner as to excite the admiration and terror of Europe, whose kingdoms vainly as perfidiously combined with her own colonies against that power which *they* maintained, in spite of the united efforts of half the globe. I shall hardly see finer ships and guns till I go home again, though the keeping all together on one island so—that island walled in too completely with only a single door to come in and out at—is a construction of peculiar happiness and convenience; while dock, armoury, rope-walk, all is contained in this space, exactly two miles round I think.

What pleased me best, besides the *whole*, which is best worth being pleased with, was the small arms: there are so many Turkish instruments of destruction among them quite new to me, and the picture commemorating the cruel death of their noble gallant leader Bragadin, so inhumanly treated by the Saracens in 1571. With infinite gratitude to his amiable descendant, who shewed me unmerited civility, dining with us often, and inviting us to his house, &c. I leave this repository of the Republic's stores with one observation, That however suspicious the Venetians are said to be, I found it much more easy for Englishmen to look over *their* docks, than for a foreigner to find his way into ours.

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Another reflection occurs on examination of this spot; it is, that the renown attached to it in general conversation, is a proof that the world prefers convenience to splendour; for here are no superfluous ornaments, and I am apt to think many go away from it praising beauties by which they have been but little struck, and utilities they have but little understood.

From this show you are commonly carried to the glass manufactory at Murano; once the retreat of piety and freedom, when the Altinati fled the fury of the Huns: a beautiful spot it is, and delightfully as oddly situated; but these are *gems which inlay the bosom of the deep*, as Milton says—and this perhaps, the prettiest among them, is walked over by travellers with that curiosity which is naturally excited, in one person by the veneration of religious antiquity; in another, by the attention justly claimed by human industry and art. Here may be seen a valuable library of books, and here may be seen glasses of all colours, all sorts, and all prices, I believe: but whoever has looked much upon the London work in this way, will not be easily dazzled by the lustre of Venetian crystal; and whoever has seen the Paris mirrors, will not be astonished at any breadth into which glass can be spread.

We will return to Venice, the view of which from the Zueca, a word contracted from Giudecca, as I am told, would invite one never more to stray from it—farther at least than to St. George's church, on another little opposite island, whence the prospect is surely wonderful; and one sits longing for a pencil to repeat what has been so often exquisitely painted by Canaletti, just as foolishly as one snatches up a pen to tell what has been so much better told already by Doctor Moore. It was to this church I was sent, however, for the purpose of seeing a famous picture painted by Paul Veronese, of the marriage at Cana in Galilee—where our Saviour's first miracle was performed; in which immense work the artist is well known to have commemorated his own likeness, and that of many of his family, which adds value to the piece, when we consider it as a collection of portraits, besides the history it represents. When we arrived, the picture was kept in a refectory belonging to friars (of what order I have forgotten), and no woman could be admitted. My disappointment was so great that I was deprived even of the powers of solicitation by the extreme ill-humour it occasioned; and my few intreaties for admission were completely disregarded by the good old monk, who remained outside with me, while the gentlemen visited the convent without molestation. At my return to Venice I met little comfort, as every body told me it was my own fault, for I might put on men's clothes and see it whenever I pleased, as nobody then would stop, though perhaps all of them would know me.

If such slight gratifications however as seeing a favourite picture, can be purchased no cheaper than by violating truth in one's own person, and encouraging the violation of it in others, it were better surely die without having ever procured to one's self such frivolous enjoyments; and I hope always to reject the temptation of deceiving mistaken piety, or insulting harmless error.

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But it is almost time to talk of the Rialto, said to be the finest single arch in Europe, and I suppose it is so; very beautiful too when looked on from the water, but so dirtily kept, and deformed with mean shops, that passing over it, disgust gets the better of every other sensation. The truth is, our dear Venetians are nothing less than cleanly; St. Mark's Place is all covered over in a morning with chicken-coops, which stink one to death; as nobody I believe thinks of changing their baskets: and all about the Ducal palace is made so very offensive by the resort of human creatures for every purpose most unworthy of so charming a place, that all enjoyment of its beauties is rendered difficult to a person of any delicacy; and poisoned so provokingly, that I do never cease to wonder that so little police and proper regulation are established in a city so particularly lovely, to render her sweet and wholesome. It was at the Rialto that the first stone of this fair town was laid, upon the twenty-fifth of March, as I am told here, with ideal reference to the vernal equinox, the moment when philosophers have supposed that the sun first shone upon our earth, and when Christians believe that the redemption of it was first announced to *her* within whose womb it was conceived.

The name of *Venice* has been variously accounted for; but I believe our ordinary people in England are nearest to the right, who call it *Venus* in their common discourse; as that goddess was, like her best beloved seat of residence, born of the sea's light froth, according to old fables, and partook of her native element, the gay and gentle, not rough and boisterous qualities. It is said too, and I fear with too much truth, that there are in this town some permitted professors of the inveigling arts, who still continue to cry *Veni etiam*, as their ancestors did when flying from the Goths they sought these sands for refuge, and gave their lion wings. Till once well fixed, they kindly called their continental neighbours round to share their liberty, and to accept that happiness they were willing to bestow and to diffuse; and from this call—this *Veni etiam* it is, that the learned men among them derive the word *Venetia*.

I have asked several friends about the truth of what one has been always hearing of in England, that the Venetian gondoliers sing Tasso and Ariosto's verses in the streets at night; sometimes quarrelling with each other concerning the merit of their favourite poets; but what I have been told since I came here, of their attachment to their respective masters, and secrecy when trusted by them in love affairs, seems far more probable; as they are proud to excess when they serve a nobleman of high birth, and will tell you with an air of importance, that the house of Memmo, Monsenigo, or Gratterola, has been served by their ancestors for these eighty or perhaps a hundred years; transmitting family pride thus from generation to generation;

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even when that pride is but reflected only like the mock rainbow of a summer sky.—But hark! while I am writing this peevish reflection in my room, I hear some voices under my window answering each other upon the Grand Canal. It is, it *is* the gondolieri sure enough; they are at this moment singing to an odd sort of tune, but in no unmusical manner, the flight of Erminia from Tasso's Jerusalem. Oh, how pretty! how pleasing! This wonderful city realizes the most romantic ideas ever formed of it, and defies imagination to escape her various powers of enslaving it.

Apropos to singing;—we were this evening carried to a well-known conservatory called the Mendicanti; who performed an oratorio in the church with great, and I dare say deserved applause. It was difficult for me to persuade myself that all the performers were women, till, watching carefully, our eyes convinced us, as they were but slightly grated. The sight of girls, however, handling the double bass, and blowing into the bassoon, did not much please *me*; and the deep-toned voice of her who sung the part of Saul, seemed an odd unnatural thing enough. What I found most curious and pretty, was to hear Latin verses, of the old Leonine race broken into eight and six, and sung in rhyme by these women, as if they were airs of Metastasio; all in their dulcified pronunciation too, for the *patois* runs equally through every language when spoken by a Venetian.

Well! these pretty syrens were delighted to seize upon us, and pressed our visit to their parlour with a sweetness that I know not who would have resisted. We had no such intent; and amply did their performance repay my curiosity, for visiting Venetian beauties, so justly celebrated for their seducing manners and soft address. They accompanied their voices with the forte-piano, and sung a thousand buffo songs, with all that gay voluptuousness for which their country is renowned.

The school, however is running to ruin apace; and perhaps the conduct of the married women here may contribute to make such *conservatorios* useless and neglected.

When the Duchess of Montespan asked the famous Louison D'Arquien, by way of insult, as she pressed too near her, "*Comment alloit le metier*[O]?" "*Depuis que les dames sen melent*" (replied the courtesan with no improper spirit,) "*il ne vaut plus rien*[P]." It may be these syrens have suffered in the same cause; I thought the ardency of their manners an additional proof of their hunger for fresh prey.

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote O: How goes the profession?]



[Footnote P: Why since the *quality* has taken to it ma'am, it brings *us* in very little indeed.]

Will Naples, the original seat of Ulysses's seducers, shew us any thing stronger than this? I hardly expect or wish it. The state of music in Italy, if one may believe those who ought to know it best, is not what it was. The *manner of singing* is much changed, I am told; and some affectations have been suffered to encroach upon their natural graces. Among the persons who exhibited their talents at the Countess of Rosenberg's last week, our country-woman's performance was most applauded; but when I name Lady Clarges, no one will wonder.

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It is said that painting is now but little cultivated among them; Rome will however be the place for such enquiries. Angelica Kauffman being settled there, seems a proof of their taste for living merit; and if one thing more than another evinces Italian candour and true good-nature, it is perhaps their generous willingness to be ever happy in acknowledging foreign excellence, and their delight in bringing forward the eminent qualities of every other nation; never insolently vaunting or bragging of their own. Unlike to this is the national spirit and confined ideas of perfection inherent in a Gallic mind, whose sole politeness is an *aplique* stuck *upon* the coat, but never *embroidered into it*.

The observation made here last night by a Parisian lady, gave me a proof of this I little wanted. We met at the Casino of the Senator Angelo Quirini, where a sort of literary coterie assemble every evening, and form a society so instructive and amusing, so sure to be filled with the first company in Venice, and so hospitably open to all travellers of character, that nothing can *now* be to me a higher intellectual gratification than my admittance among them; as *in future* no place will ever be recollected with more pleasure, no hours with more gratitude, than those passed most delightfully by me in that most agreeable apartment.

I expressed to the French lady my admiration of St. Mark's Place. "*C'est que vous n'avez jamais vue la foire St. Ovide*," said she; "*je vous assure que cela surpasse beaucoup ces trifies palais qu'on vantetant*[Q]." And *this could* only have been arrogance, for she was a very sensible and a very accomplished woman; and when talked to about the literary merits of her own countrymen, spoke with great acuteness and judgment.

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote Q: You admire it, says she, only because you never saw the fair at St. Ovid's in Paris; I assure you there is no comparison between those gay illuminations and these dismal palaces the Venetians are so fond of.]

General knowledge, however, it must be confessed (meaning that general stock that every one recurs to for the common intercourse of conversation), will be found more frequently in France, than even in England; where, though all cultivate the arts of table eloquence and assembly-room rhetoric, few, from mere shyness, venture to gather in the profits of their plentiful harvest; but rather cloud their countenances with mock importance, while their hearts feel no hope beat higher in them, than the humble one of escaping without being ridiculed; or than in Italy, where nobody dreams of cultivating conversation at all—as *an art*; or studies for any other than the natural reason, of informing or diverting themselves, without the most distant idea of gaining admiration, or shining in company, by the quantity of science they have accumulated in solitude. *Here* no man lies awake in the night for vexation that he missed recollecting the last line of a Latin epigram till the moment of application was lost; nor any lady changes colour with

trepidation at the severity visible in her husband's countenance when the chickens are over-roasted, or the ice-creams melt with the room's excessive heat.

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Among the noble Senators of Venice, meantime, many good scholars, many Belles Lettres conversers, and what is more valuable, many thinking men, may be found, and found hourly, who employ their powers wholly in care for the state; and make their pleasure, like true patriots, out of *her felicity*. The ladies indeed appear to study but *one* science;

And where the lesson taught
Is but to please, can pleasure seem a fault?

Like all sensualists, however, they fail of the end proposed, from hurry to obtain it; and consume those charms which alone can procure them continuance or change of admirers; they injure their health too irreparably, and *that* in their earliest youth; for few remain unmarried till fifteen, and at thirty have a wan and faded look. *On ne goute pas ses plaisirs icy, on les avale*[Footnote: They do not taste their pleasures here, they swallow them whole.], said Madame la Presidente yesterday, very judiciously; yet it is only speaking popularly that one can be supposed to mean, what however no one much refuses to assert, that the Venetian ladies are amorously inclined: the truth is, no check being put upon inclination, each acts according to immediate impulse; and there are more devotees, perhaps, and more doating mothers at Venice than any where else, for the same reason as there are more females who practise gallantry, only because there are more women there who *do their own way*, and follow unrestrained where passion, appetite, or imagination lead them.

To try Venetian dames by English rules, would be worse than all the tyranny complained of when some East Indian was condemned upon the Coventry act for slitting his wife's nose; a common practice in *his* country, and perfectly agreeable to custom and the *usage du pays*. Here is no struggle for female education as with us, no resources in study, no duties of family-management; no bill of fare to be looked over in the morning, no account-book to be settled at noon; no necessity of reading, to supply without disgrace the evening's chat; no laughing at the card-table, or tittering in the corner if a *lapsus linguae* has produced a mistake, which malice never fails to record. A lady in Italy is *sure* of applause, so she takes little pains to obtain it. A Venetian lady has in particular so sweet a manner naturally, that she really charms without any settled intent to do so, merely from that irresistible good-humour and mellifluous tone of voice which seize the soul, and detain it in despite of Juno-like majesty, or Minerva-like wit. Nor ever was there prince or shepherd, Paris I think was both, who would not have bestowed his apple *here*.

Mean while my countryman Howel laments that the women at Venice are so little. But why so? the diminutive progeny of *Vulcan*, the *Cabirs*, mysteriously adored of old, were of a size below that of the least living woman, if we believe Herodotus; and they were worshipped with more constant as well as more fervent devotion, than the symmetrical goddess of Beauty herself.

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A custom which prevails here, of wearing little or no rouge, and increasing the native paleness of their skins, by scarce lightly wiping the very white powder from their faces, is a method no Frenchwoman of quality would like to adopt; yet surely the Venetians are not behind-hand in the art of gaining admirers; and they do not, like their painters, depend upon *colouring* to ensure it.

Nothing can be a greater proof of the little consequence which dress gives to a woman, than the reflection one must make on a Venetian lady's mode of appearance in her zendalet, without which nobody stirs out of their house in a morning. It consists of a full black silk petticoat, sloped just to train, a very little on the ground, and flounced with gauze of the same colour. A skeleton wire upon the head, such as we use to make up hats, throwing loosely over it a large piece of black mode or persian, so as to shade the face like a curtain, the front being trimmed with a very deep black lace, or souflet gauze infinitely becoming. The thin silk that remains to be disposed of, they roll back so as to discover the bosom; fasten it with a puff before at the top of their stomacher, and once more rolling it back from the shape, tie it gracefully behind, and let it hang in two long ends.

The evening ornament is a silk hat, shaped like a man's, and of the same colour, with a white or worked lining at most, and sometimes *one feather*; a great black silk cloak, lined with white, and perhaps a narrow border down before, with a vast heavy round handkerchief of black lace, which lies over neck and shoulders, and conceals shape and all completely. Here is surely little appearance of art, no craping or frizzing the hair, which is flat at the top, and all of one length, hanging in long curls about the back or sides as it happens. No brown powder, and no rouge at all. Thus without variety does a Venetian lady contrive to delight the eye, and without much instruction too to charm, the ear. A source of thought fairly cut off beside, in giving her no room to shew taste in dress, or invent new fancies and disposition of ornaments for to-morrow. The government takes all that trouble off her hands, knows every pin she wears, and where to find her at any moment of the day or night.

Mean time nothing conveys to a British observer a stronger notion of loose living and licentious dissoluteness, than the sight of one's servants, gondoliers, and other attendants, on the scenes and circles of pleasure, where you find them, though never drunk, dead with sleep upon the stairs, or in their boats, or in the open street, for that matter, like over-swilled voters at an election in England. One may trample on them if one will, they hardly *can* be awakened; and their companions, who have more life left, set the others literally on their feet, to make them capable of obeying their master or lady's call. With all this appearance of levity, however, there is an unremitted attention to the affairs of state; nor is any senator seen to come late or negligently to council next day, however he may have amused himself all night.

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The sight of the Bucentoro prepared for Gala, and the glories of Venice upon Ascension-day, must now put an end to other observations. We had the honour and comfort of seeing all from a galley belonging to a noble Venetian Bragadin, whose civilities to us were singularly kind as well as extremely polite. His attentions did not cease with the morning show, which we shared in common with numbers of fashionable people that filled his ship, and partook of his profuse elegant refreshments; but he followed us after dinner to the house of our English friends, and took six of us together in a gay bark, adorned with his arms, and rowed by eight gondoliers in superb liveries, made up for the occasion to match the boat, which was like them white, blue and silver, a flag of the same colours flying from the stern, till we arrived at the Corso; so they call the place of contention where the rowers exert their skill and ingenuity; and numberless oars dashing the waves at once, make the only agitation of which the sea seems capable; while ladies, now no longer dressed in black, but ornamented with all their jewels, flowers, &c. display their beauties unveiled upon the water; and covering the lagoons with gaiety and splendour, bring to one's mind the games in Virgil, and the galley of Cleopatra, by turns.

Never was locality so subservient to the purposes of pleasure as in this city; where pleasure has set up her airy standard, and which on this occasion looked like what one reads in poetry of Amphitrite's court; and I ventured to tell a nobleman who was kindly attentive in shewing us every possible politeness, that had Venus risen from the Adriatic sea, she would scarcely have been tempted to quit it for Olympus. I was upon the whole more struck with the evening's gaiety, than with the magnificence in which the morning began to shine. The truth is, we had been long prepared for seeing the Bucentoro; had heard and read every thing I fancy that could have been thought or said upon the subject, from the sullen Englishmen who rank it with a company's barge floating up the Thames upon my Lord Mayor's day, to the old writers who compare it with Theseus's ship; in imitation of which, it is said, this calls itself the very identical vessel wherein Pope Alexander performed the original ceremony in the year 1171; and though, perhaps, not a whole plank of that old galley can be now remaining in this, so often careened, repaired, and adorned since that time, I see nothing ridiculous in declaring that it is the same ship; any more than in saying the oak I planted an acorn thirty years ago, is the same tree I saw spring up then a little twig, which not even a moderate sceptic will deny; though he takes so much pains to persuade plain folks out of their own existence, by laughing us out of the dull notion that he who dies a withered old fellow at fourscore, should ever be considered as the same person whom his mother brought forth a pretty little plump baby eighty years before—when, says he cunningly, you are forced yourself to confess, that his mother, who died four months afterwards, would not know him again now; though while she lived, he was never out of her arms.

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Vain wisdom all! and false Philosophy,
Which finds no end, in wandering mazes lost.

And better is it to travel, as Dr. Johnson says Browne did, from one place where he saw little, to another where he saw no more—than write books to confound common sense, and make men raise up doubts of a Being to whom they must one day give an account.

We will return to the Bucentoro, which, as its name imports, holds two hundred people, and is heavy besides with statues, columns, &c. The top covered with crimson velvet, and the sides enlivened by twenty-one oars on each hand. Musical performers attend in another barge, while foreigners in gilded pajots increase the general show. Mean time, the vessel that contains the doge, &c. carries him slowly out to sea, where in presence of his senators he drops a plain gold ring into the water, with these words, *Desponfamur te mare, in figum veri perpetuique dominii*. [Footnote: We espouse thee, O sea! in sign of true and perpetual dominion.]

Our weather was favourable, and the people all seemed happy: when the ceremony is put off from day to day, it naturally damps their spirits, and produces superstitious presages of an unlucky year: nor is that strange, for the season of storms ought surely to be past in a climate so celebrated for mildness and equanimity. The praises of Italian weather, though wearisomely frequent among us, seem however much confined to this island for aught I see; who am often tired with hearing their complaints of their own sky, now that they are under it: always too cold or too hot, or a seiroc wind, or a rainy day, or a hard frost, *che gela fin ai pensieri* [Footnote: Which freezes even one's fancy.]; or something to murmur about, while their only great nuisances pass unnoticed, the heaps of dirt, and crowds of beggars, who infest the streets, and poison the pleasures of society. While ladies are eating ice at a coffee-house door, while decent people are hearing mass at the altar, while strangers are surveying the beauties of the place—no peace, no enjoyment can one obtain for the beggars; numerous beyond credibility, fancy and airy, and odd in their manners; and exhibiting such various lamenesses and horrible deformities in their figure, that I can sometimes hardly believe my eyes—but am willing to be told, what is not very improbable, that many of them come from a great distance to pass the season of ascension here at Venice. I never indeed saw any thing so gently endured, which it appeared so little difficult to remedy; but though I hope it would be hard to find a place where more alms are asked, or less are given, than in Venice; yet I never saw refusals so pleasingly softened, as by the manners of the high Italians towards the low. Ladies in particular are so soft-mouthed, so tender in replying to those who have their lot cast far below them, that one feels one's own harsher disposition corrected by their sweetness; and

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when they called my maid *sister*, in good time—pressing her hand with affectionate kindness, it melted me; though I feared from time to time there must be hypocrisy at bottom of such sugared words, till I caught a lady of condition yesterday turning to the window, and praying fervently for the girl's conversion to christianity, all from a tender and pious emotion of her gentle heart: as notwithstanding their caresses, no man is more firmly persuaded of a mathematical truth than they are of mine, and my maid's living in a state of certain and eternal reprobation—*ma fanno veramente vergogna a noi altri*[Footnote: But they really shame *even us.*], say they, quite in the spirit of the old Romans, who thought all nations *barbarous* except their own.

A woman of quality, near whom I sate at the fine ball Bragadin made two nights ago in honour of this gay season, enquired how I had passed the morning. I named several churches I had looked into, particularly that which they esteem beyond the rest as a favourite work of Palladio, and called the Redentore. “You do very right,” says she, “to look at our churches, as you have none in England, I know—but then you have so many other fine things—such charming *steel buttons* for example;” pressing my hand to shew that she meant no offence; for, added she, *chi pensa d'una maniera, chi pensa d'un'altra*[Footnote: One person is of one mind you know, another of another.].

Here are many theatres, the worst infinitely superior to ours; the best, as far below those of Milan and Turin: but then here are other diversions, and every one's dependance for pleasure is not placed upon the opera. They have now thrown up a sort of temporary wall of painted canvass, in an oval form, within St. Mark's Place, profusely illuminated round the new-formed walk, which is covered in at top, and adorned with shops round the right hand side, with pillars to support the canopy; the lamps, &c. on the left hand. This open Ranelagh, so suited to the climate, is exceedingly pleasing:—here is room to sit, to chat, to saunter up and down, from two o'clock in the morning, when the opera ends, till a hot sun sends us all home to rest—for late hours must be complied with at Venice, or you can have no diversion at all, as the earliest Casino belonging to your soberest friends has not a candle lighted in it till past midnight.

But I am called from my book to see the public library; not a large one I find, but ornamented with pieces of sculpture, whose eminence has not, I am sure, waited for my description: the Jupiter and Leda particularly, said to be the work of Phidias, whose Ganymede in the same collection they tell us is equally excellent. Having heard that Guarini's manuscript of the Pastor Fido, written in his own hand, was safely kept at this place, I asked for it, and was entertained to see his numberless corrections and variations from the original thought, like those of Pope's Homer

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preserved in the British Museum; some of which I copied over for Doctor Johnson to print, at the time he published his *Lives of the English Poets*. My curiosity led me to look in the *Pastor Fido* for the famous passage of *Legge humana, inhumana, _&c._* and it was observable enough that he had written it three different ways before he pitched on that peculiar expression which caused his book to be prohibited. Seeing the manuscript I took notice, however, of the beautiful penmanship with which it was written: our English hand-writing cotemporary to his was coarse, if I recollect, and very angular;—but *Italian hand* was the first to become elegant, and still retains some privileges amongst us. Once more, every thing small, and every thing great, revived after the dark ages—in Italy.

Looking at the Mint was an hour's time spent with less amusement. The depuration of gold may be performed many ways, and the proofs of its purity given by various methods: I was gratified well enough upon the whole however, in watching the neatness of their process, in weighing the gold, &c. and keeping it more free from alloy than any other coin of any other state:—a zecchine will bend between your fingers from the malleability of the metal—we may try in vain at a guinea, or louis d'or. The operation of separating silver ore from gold by the powers of aqua fortis, precipitating the first-named metal by suspension of a copper plate in the liquid, and called *quartation*; was I believe wholly unknown to the ancients, who got much earlier at the art of weighing gold in water, testified by the old story of *King Hiero's crown*.

Talking of kings, and crowns, and gold, reminds me of my regret for not seeing the treasure kept in St. Mark's church here, with the motto engraven on the chest which contains it:

Quando questo scrinio s'aprirà,
Tutto il mondo tremera[R].

[Footnote R:

When this scrutoire shall open'd be,
The world shall all with wonder flee.

]

Of this it was said in our Charles the First's time, that there was enough in it to pay six kings' ransoms: when Pacheco, the Spanish ambassador, hearing so much of it, asked in derision, If the chest had any *bottom*? and being answered in the affirmative, made reply, That *there* was the difference between his master's treasures and those of the Venetian Republic, for the mines of Mexico and Potosi had *no* bottom.—Strange! if all these precious stones, metals, &c. have been all spent since then, and nothing left except a few relics of no intrinsic value.

It is well enough known, that in the year 1450, one of the natives of the island of Candia, who have never been men of much character, made a sort of mine, or airshaft, or rather perhaps a burrow, like those constructed by rabbits, down which he went and got quite under the church, stealing out gems, money, &c. to a vast amount; but being discovered by the treachery of his companion, was caught and hanged between the two columns that face the sea on the Piazzetta.

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It strikes a person who has lived some months in other parts of Italy, to see so very few clergymen at Venice, and none hardly who have much the look or air of a man of fashion. Milan, though such heavy complaints are daily made there of encroachments on church power and depredations on church opulence, still swarms with ecclesiastics; and in an assembly of thirty people, there are never fewer than ten or twelve at the very least. But here it should seem as if the political cry of *fuori i preti*[Footnote: Out with the clergy.], which is said loudly in the council-chamber before any vote is suffered to pass into a law, were carried in the conversation rooms too, for a priest is here less frequent than a clergyman at London; and those one sees about, are almost all ordinary men, decent and humble in their appearance, of a bashful distant carriage, like the parson of the parish in North Wales, or *le cure du village* in the South of France; and seems no way related to an *Abate of Milan or Turin* still less to *Monsieur l' Abbe at Paris*.

Though this Republic has long maintained a sort of independency from the court of Rome, having shewn themselves weary of the Jesuits two hundred years before any other potentate dismissed them; while many of the Venetian populace followed them about, crying *Andate, andate, niente pigliate, emai ritornate*[Footnote: Begone, begone; nothing take, nor turn anon.]; and although there is a patriarch here who takes care of church matters, and is attentive to keep his clergy from ever meddling with or even mentioning affairs of state, as in such a case the Republic would not scruple punishing them as laymen; yet has Venice kept, as they call it, St. Peter's boat from sinking more than once, when she saw the Pope's territories endangered, or his sovereignty insulted: nor is there any city more eminent for the decency with which divine service is administered, or for the devout and decorous behaviour of individuals at the time any sacred office is performing. She has ever behaved like a true Christian potentate, keeping her faith firm, and her honour scrupulously clear, in all treaties and conventions with other states—fewer instances being given of Venetian falsehood or treachery towards neighbouring nations, than of any other European power, excepting only Britain, her truly-beloved ally; with whom she never had a difference, and whose cause was so warmly espoused last war by the inhabitants of this friendly state, that numbers of young nobility were willing to run a-volunteering in her defence, but that the laws of Venice forbid her nobles ranging from home without leave given from the state. It was therefore not an ill saying, though an old one perhaps, that the government of Venice was rich and consolatory like its treacle, being compounded nicely of all the other forms: a grain of monarchy, a scruple of democracy, a dram of oligarchy, and an ounce of aristocracy; as the *teriac* so much esteemed, is said to be a composition of the four principal drugs—but can never be got genuine except *here*, at the original *Dispensary*.

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Indeed the longevity of this incomparable commonwealth is a certain proof of its temperance, exercise, and cheerfulness, the great preservatives in every body, *politic* as well *natural*. Nor should the love of peace be left out of her eulogium, who has so often reconciled contending princes, that Thuanus gave her, some centuries ago, due praise for her pacific disposition, so necessary to the health of a commercial state, and called her city *civilis prudentiae officina*.

Another reason may be found for the long-continued prosperity of Venice, in her constant adherence to a precept, the neglect of which must at length shake, or rather loosen the foundations of every state; for it is a maxim here, handed down from generation to generation, that change breeds more mischief from its novelty, than advantage from its utility:—quoting the axiom in Latin, it runs thus: *Ipsa mutatio consuetudinis magis perturbat novitate, quam adjuvat utilitate*. And when Henry the Fourth of France solicited the abrogation of one of the Senate's decrees, her ambassador replied, That *li decreti di Venezia rassomigliavano poca i Gridi di Parigi*[Footnote: The decrees of Venice little resemble the *edicts* of Paris.], meaning the declaratory publications of the Grand Monarque,—proclaimed to-day perhaps, repealed to-morrow—"for Sire," added he, "our senate deliberates long before it decrees, but what is once decreed there is seldom or ever recalled."

The patriotism inherent in the breasts of individuals makes another strong cause of this state's exemption from decay: they say themselves, that the soul of old Rome has transmigrated to Venice, and that every galley which goes into action considers itself as charged with the fate of the commonwealth. *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, seems a sentence grown obsolete in other Italian states, but is still in full force here; and I doubt not but the high-born and high-fouled ladies of this day, would willingly, as did their generous ancestors in 1600, part with their rings, bracelets, every ornament, to make ropes for those ships which defend their dearer country.

The perpetual state of warfare maintained by this nation against the Turks, has never lessened nor cooled: yet have their Mahometan neighbours and natural enemies no perfidy to charge them with in the time of peace or of hostility: nor can Venice be charged with the mean vice of sheltering a desire of depredation, under the hypocritical cant of protecting that religion which teaches universal benevolence and charity to all mankind. Their vicinity to Turkey has, however, made them contract some similarity of manners; for what, except being imbued with Turkish notions, can account for the people's rage here, young and old, rich and poor, to pour down such quantities of coffee? I have already had seven cups to-day, and feel frightened lest we should some of us be killed with so strange an abuse of it. On the opposite shore, across the Adriatic, opium is taken to counteract its effects; but these dear Venetians have no notion of sleep being necessary to their existence I believe, as some or other of them seem constantly in motion; and there is really no hour of the four and twenty in which the town seems perfectly still and quiet; no moment in which it can be said, that

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Night! fable goddess! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty here stretches forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumb'ring world.

Accordingly I never did meet with any description of Night in the Venetian poets, so common with other authors; and I am persuaded if one were to live here (which could not be *long* I think) he should forget the use of sleep; for what with the market folks bringing up the boats from Terra Firma loaded with every produce of nature, neatly arranged in these flat-bottomed conveyances, the coming up of which begins about three o'clock in a morning and ends about six;—the Gondoliers rowing home their masters and ladies about that hour, and so on till eight;—the common business of the town, which it is then time to begin;—the state affairs and *pregai*, which often like our House of Commons sit late, and detain many gentlemen from the circles of morning amusements—that I find very entertaining;—particularly the street orators and mountebanks in Piazza St. Marco;—the shops and stalls where chickens, ducks, &c. are sold by auction, comically enough, to the highest bidder;—a flourishing fellow, with a hammer in his hand, shining away in character of auctioneer;—the crowds which fill the courts of judicature, when any cause of consequence is to be tried;—the clamorous voices, keen observations, poignant sarcasms, and acute contentions carried on by the advocates, who seem more awake, or in their own phrase *svelti* than all the rest:—all these things take up so much time, that twenty-four hours do not suffice for the business and diversions of Venice; where dinner must be eaten as in other places, though I can scarcely find a minute to spare for it, while such fish wait one's knife and fork as I most certainly did never see before, and as I suppose are not to be seen in any sea but this, in such perfection. Fresh sturgeon, *ton* as they call it, and fresh anchovies, large as herrings, and dressed like sprats in London, incomparable; turbot, like those of Torbay exactly, and plentiful as there, with enormous pipers, are what one principally eats here. The fried liver, without which an Italian can hardly go on from day to day, is so charmingly dressed at Milan, that I grew to like it as well as they; but at Venice it is sad stuff, and they call it *fegao*.

Well! the ladies, who never hardly dine at all, rise about seven in the evening, when the gentlemen are just got ready to attend them; and sit sipping their chocolate on a chair at the coffee-house door with great tranquillity, chatting over the common topics of the times: nor do they appear half so shy of each other as the Milanese ladies, who seldom seem to have any pleasure in the soft converse of a female friend. But though certainly no women can be more charming than these Venetian dames, they have forgotten the old mythological fable, *that the youngest of the Graces was married to Sleep*. By which it was intended we should consider that state as necessary to the reparation not only of beauty but of youth, and every power of pleasing.

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There are men here however who, because they are not quite in the gay world, keep themselves awake whole nights at study; and much has been told me, of a collection of books belonging to a private scholar, Pinelli, who goes very little out, as worthy attentive examination.

All literary topics are pleasingly discussed at Quirini's Casino, where every thing may be learned by the conversation of the company, as Doctor Johnson said of his literary Club; but more agreeably, because women are always half the number of persons admitted here.

One evening our society was amused by the entrance of a foreign nobleman, exactly what we should in London emphatically call a *Character*,—learned, loud, and overbearing; though of a carriage that impressed great esteem. I have not often listened to so well-furnished a talker; nor one more capable of giving great information. He had seen the Pyramids of Egypt, he told us; had climbed Mount Horeb, and visited Damascus; but possessed the art of detaining our attention more on himself, than on the things or places he harangued about; for conversation that can scarcely be called, where one man holds the company suspended on his account of matters pompously though instructively related. He staid here a very little while among us; is a native of France, a grandee of Spain, a man of uncommon talents, and a traveller. I should be sorry never to meet him more.

The Abate Arteaga, a Spanish ecclesiastic of the same agreeable coterie, seemed of a very different and far more pleasing character;—full of general knowledge, eminent in particular scholarship, elegant in his sentiments, and sound in his learning. I liked his company exceedingly, and respected his opinions.

Zingarelli, the great musical composer, was another occasional member of this charming society: his wit and repartie are famous, and his bons mots are repeated wherever one runs to. I cannot translate any of them, but will write one down, which will make such of my readers laugh as understand Italian.—The Emperor was at Milan, and asked Zingarelli his opinion of a favourite singer? "*Io penso maesta che non e cattivo suddito del principi*," replied the master, "*quantunque fara gran nemico di giove*." "How so?" enquired the King.—"*Maesta*," answered our lively Neapolitan, "*ella sa naturalmente che Giove tuona, ma questo stuona*." This we see at once was *humour* not *wit*; and sallies of humour are scarcely ever capable of translation.

An odd thing to which I was this morning witness, has called my thoughts away to a curious train of reflections upon the animal race; and how far they may be made companionable and intelligent. The famous Ferdinand Bertoni, so well known in London by his long residence among us, and from the undisputed merit of his compositions, now inhabits this his native city, and being fond of *dumb creatures*, as we call them, took to petting a pigeon, one of the few

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animals which can live at Venice, where, as I observed, scarcely any quadrupeds can be admitted, or would exist with any degree of comfort to themselves. This creature has, however, by keeping his master company, I trust, obtained so perfect an ear and taste for music, that no one who sees his behaviour, can doubt for a moment of the pleasure he takes in hearing Mr. Bertoni play and sing: for as soon as he sits down to the instrument, Columbo begins shaking his wings, perches on the piano-forte, and expresses the most indubitable emotions of delight. If however he or any one else strike a note false, or make any kind of discord upon the keys, the dove never fails to shew evident tokens of anger and distress; and if teized too long, grows quite enraged; pecking the offender's legs and fingers in such a manner, as to leave nothing less doubtful than the sincerity of his resentment. Signora Cecilia Giuliani, a scholar of Bertoni's, who has received some overtures from the London theatre lately, will, if she ever arrives there, bear testimony to the truth of an assertion very difficult to believe, and to which I should hardly myself give credit, were I not witness to it every morning that I chuse to call and confirm my own belief. A friend present protested he should feel afraid to touch the harpsichord before so nice a critic; and though we all laughed at the assertion, Bertoni declared he never knew the bird's judgment fail; and that he often kept him out of the room, for fear of his affronting or tormenting those who came to take musical instructions. With regard to other actions of life, I saw nothing particular in the pigeon, but his tameness, and strong attachment to his master: for though never winged, and only clipped a very little, he never seeks to range away from the house or quit his master's service, any more than the dove of Anacreon:

While his better lot bestows
Sweet repast and soft repose;
And when feast and frolic tire,
Drops asleep upon his lyre.

All the difficulty will be indeed for us *other* two-legged creatures to leave the sweet societies of charming Venice; but they begin to grow fatiguing now, as the weather increases in warmth.

I do think the Turkish sailor gave an admirable account of a carnival, when he told his Mahometan friends at his return, That those poor Christians were all disordered in their senses, and nearly in a state of actual madness, while he remained among them, till one day, on a sudden, they luckily found out a certain grey powder that cured such symptoms; and laying it on their heads one Wednesday morning, the wits of all the inhabitants were happily restored at a *stroke*: the people grew sober, quiet, and composed; and went about their business just like other folks. He meant the ashes strewed on the heads of all one meets in the streets through many a Catholic country; when all masquerading, money-making, &c. subside for forty days, and give, from the

force of the contrast, a greater appearance of devotion and decorous behaviour in Venice, than almost any where else during Lent.

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I do not for my own part think well of all that violence, that strong light and shadow in matters of religion; which requires rather an even tenour of good works, proceeding from sound faith, than any of these staring testimonials of repentance, as if it were a work to be done *once a year only*. But neither do I think any Christian has a right to condemn another for his opinions or practice; when St. Paul expressly says, that “*One man esteemeth one day above another, another man esteemeth every day alike; let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. But who art thou, that judgest another man’s servant*”[Footnote: *Romans, chap. xiv.*]?”

The Venetians, to confess the truth, are not quite so strenuously bent on the unattainable felicity of finding every man in the same mind, as others of the Italians are; and one great reason why they are more gay and less malignant, have fewer strong prejudices than others of their countrymen, is merely because they are happier. Most of the second rank, and I believe *all* of the first rank among them, have some share in governing the rest; it is therefore necessary to exclude ignorance, and natural to encourage social pleasures. Each individual feels his own importance, and scorns to contribute to the degradation of the whole, by indulging a gross depravity of manners, or at least of principles. Every person listed one degree from the lowest, finds it his interest as well as duty to love his country, and lend his little support to the general fabric of a state they all know how to respect; while the very vulgar willingly perform the condition exacted, and punctually pay obedience for protection. They have an unlimited confidence in their rulers, who live amongst them; and can desire only their utmost good. *How* they are governed, comes seldom into their heads to enquire; “*Che ne pensa lu*”[Footnote: Let *him* look to that.],” says a low Venetian, if you ask him, and humourously points at a Clarissimo passing by while you talk. They have indeed all the reason to be certain, that where the power is divided among such numbers, one will be sure to counteract another if mischief towards the whole be intended.

Of all aristocracies surely this is the most rationally and happily, as well as most respectably founded; for though one’s heart revolts against the names of Baron and Vassal, while the petty tyrants live scattered far from each other, as in Poland, Russia, and many parts of Germany, like lions in the desert, or eagles in the rock, secure in their distance from equals or superiors; yet *here* at Venice, where every nobleman is a baron, and all together inhabit one city, no subject can suffer from the tyranny of the rest, though all may benefit from the general protection: as each is separately in awe of his neighbour, and desires to secure his client’s tenderness by indulgence, instead of wishing to disgust him by oppression: unlike the state so powerfully delineated by our incomparable poet in his Paulina,

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Where dwelt in haughty wretchedness a lord,
Whose rage was justice, and whose law his word:
Who saw unmov'd the vassal perish near,
The widow's anguish, and the orphan's tear;
Insensible to pity—stern he stood,
Like some rude rock amid the Caspian flood,
Where shipwreck'd sailors unassisted lie,
And as they curse its barren bosom, die.

And it is, I trust, for no deeper reason that the subjects of this republic resident in the capital, are less savage and more happy than those who live upon the Terra Firma; where many outrages are still committed, disgraceful to the state, from the mere facility offenders find, either in escaping to the dominion of other princes, or of finding shelter at home from the madly-bestowed protection these old barons on the Continent cease not yet to give, to ruffians who profess their service, and acknowledge dependence upon *them*. In the *town*, however, little is known of these enormities, and less is talked on; and what information has come to my ears of the murders done at Brescia and Bergamo, was given me at *Milan*; where Blainville's accounts of that country, though written so long ago, did not fail to receive confirmation from the lips of those who knew perfectly well what they were talking about. And I am told that *Labbia*, Giovanni Labbia, the new Podesta sent to Brescia, has worked wonderful reformation among the inhabitants of that territory; where I am ashamed to relate the computation of subjects lost to the state, by being killed in cold blood during the years 1780 and 1781.

The following sonnet, addressed to the new Magistrate, by the elegant and learned Abbe Bettolini, will entertain such of my readers as understand Italian:

No, Brenne, il popol tuo non e spietato,
Colpa non e di clima, o fuol nemico:
Ma gli inulti delitti, e'l vezzo antico
D'impune andar coi ferro e fuoco a lato,

Ira noi finor nudriro un branco irato
D'Orsi e di lupi, il malaccorto amico
Ti svenava un fellon sgherro mendico,
E per cauto timor n'era onorato.

Al primiero spuntar d'un fausto lume
Tutto cangio: curvansi in falci i teh,
Mille Pluto perde vittime usate.

Viva l'Eroe, il comun padre, il nume
Gridan le gente a si bei di ferbate.
E sia che ardisca dir che siam crudele.

Imitation.

No, Brennus, no longer thy sons shall retain
Of their founder ferocious, th'original stain;
It cannot be natural cruelty sure,
The reproaches for which from all men we endure;
Nor climate nor soil shall henceforth bear the blame,
'Tis custom alone, and that custom our shame:
While arm'd at all points men were suffer'd to rove,
And brandish the steel in defence of their love;
What wonder that conduct or

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caution should fail,
And horrid Lycanthropy's terrors prevail?
Now justice resumes her insignia, we find
New light breaking in on each nebulous mind;
While commission'd from Heaven, a parent, a friend
Sees our swords at his nod into reaping-hooks bend,
And souls snatch'd from death round the hero attend.

From these verses, written by a native of Brescia, one may see how matters stood there very, very little while ago: but here at Venice the people are of a particularly sweet and gentle disposition, good-humoured with each other, and kind to strangers; little disposed to public affrays (which would indeed be punished and put a sudden end to in an instant), nor yet to any secret or hidden treachery. They watch the hour of a Regatta with impatience, to make some merit with the woman of their choice, and boast of their families who have won in the manly contest forty or fifty years ago, perhaps when honoured with the badge and livery of some noble house; for here almost every thing is hereditary, as in England almost every thing is elective; nor had I an idea how much state affairs influence the private life of individuals in a country, till I left trusting to books, and looked a little about me. The low Venetian, however, knows that he works for the commonwealth, and is happy; for things go round, says he, *Il Turco magna St. Marco; St. Marco magna mi, mi magna ti, e ti tu magna un'altro*[S].

[Footnote S: The Turk feeds on St. Mark, St. Mark devours me; I eat thee, neighbour, and thou subsistest on somebody else.]

Apropos to this custom of calling Venice (when they speak of it) San Marco; I heard so comical a story yesterday that I cannot refuse the pleasure of inserting it; and if my readers do not find it as pleasant as I did, they may certainly leave it out, without the smallest prejudice either to the book, the author, or themselves.

The procurator Tron was at Padua, it seems, and had a fancy to drive forward to Vicenza that afternoon, but being particularly fond of a favourite pair of horses which drew his chariot that day, would by no means venture if it happened to rain; and took the trouble to enquire of Abate Toaldo, "Whether he thought such a thing likely to happen, from the appearance of the sky?" The professor, not knowing why the question was asked, said, "he rather thought it would *not* rain for four hours at most." In consequence of this information our senator ordered his equipage directly, got into it, and bid the driver make haste to Vicenza: but before he was half-way on his journey, such torrents came down from a black cloud that burst directly over their heads, that his horses were drenched in wet, and their mortified master turned immediately back to Padua, that they might suffer no further inconvenience. To pass away the evening, which he did not

mean to have spent there, and to quiet his agitated spirits by thinking on something else, he walked under the

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Portico to a neighbouring coffee-house, where fate the Abate Toaldo in company of a few friends; wholly unconscious that he had been the cause of vexing the Procuratore; who, after a short pause, cried out, in a true Venetian spirit of anger and humour oddly blended together, "*Mi dica Signor Professore Toaldo, chi e il piu gran minchion di tutti i fanti in Paradiso?*" Pray tell me Doctor (we should say), who is the greatest blockhead among all the saints of Heaven? The Abbe looked astonished, but hearing the question repeated in a more peevish accent still, replied gravely, "*Ecceienza non fon fatto io per rispondere a tale dimande*"—My lord, I have no answer ready for such extraordinary questions. Why then, replies the Procuratore Tron, I will answer this question myself.—*St. Marco ved'ella*—"e'l vero minchion: mentre mantiene tanti professori per studiare (che so to mi) delle stelle; roba astronomica che non vale un fico; e loro non sanno dirli nemmeno s'ha da piovere o no."—"Why it is St. Mark, do you see, that is the true blockhead and dupe, in keeping so many professors to study the stars and stuff; when with all their astronomy they cannot tell him whether it will rain or no."

Well, *pax tibi, Marce!* I see that I have said more about Venice, where I have lived five weeks, than about Milan, where I stayed five months; but

Si placeat varios hominum cognoscere vultus,
Area longa patet, sancto contermina Marco,
Celsus ubi Adriacas, Venetus Leo despicit undas,
Hic circum gentes cunctis e partibus orbis,
AETHiopes, Turcos, Slavos, Arabesque, Syrosque,
Inveniesque Cypri, Cretae, Macedumque colonos,
Innumerosque alios varia regione profectos:
Saepe etiam nec visa prius, nec cognita cernes,
Quae si cuncta velim tenui describere versu,
Heic omnes citius nautas celeresque Phaselos,
Et simul Adriaci pisces numerabo profundi.

Imitated loosely.

If change of faces please your roving sight,
Or various characters your mind delight,
To gay St. Mark's with eagerness repair;
For curiosity may pasture there.
Venetia's lion bending o'er the waves,
There sees reflected—tyrants, freemen, slaves.
The swarthy Moor, the soft Circassian dame,
The British sailor not unknown to fame;
Innumerable nations crowd the lofty door,
Innumerable footsteps print the sandy shore;

While verse might easier name the scaly tribe, }
That in her seas their nourishment imbibe, }
Than Venice and her various charms describe. }

It is really pity ever to quit the sweet seducements of a place so pleasing; which attracts the inclination and flatters the vanity of one, who, like myself, has received the most polite attentions, and been diverted with every amusement that could be devised. Kind, friendly, lovely Venetians! who appear to feel real fondness for the inhabitants of Great Britain, while Cavalier Pindemonte writes such verses in its praise. Yet *must* the journey go forward, no staying to pick every flower upon the road.

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On Saturday next then am I to forsake—but I hope not for ever—this gay, this gallant city, so often described, so certainly admired; seen with rapture, quitted with regret: seat of enchantment! head-quarters of pleasure, farewell!

Leave us as we ought to be,
Leave the Britons rough and free.

It was on the twenty-first of May then that we returned up the Brenta in a barge to *Padua*, stopping from time to time to give refreshment to our conductors and their horse, which draws on the side, as one sees them at Richmond; where the banks are scarcely more beautifully adorned by art, than here by nature; though the Brenta is a much narrower river than the Thames at Richmond, and its villas, so justly celebrated, far less frequent. The sublimity of their architecture however, the magnificence of their orangeries, the happy construction of the cool arcades, and general air of festivity which breathes upon the banks of this truly *wizard stream*, planted with *dancing*, not *weeping* willows, to which on a bright evening the lads and lasses run for shelter from the sun beams,

Et fugit ad salices, et se cupit ante videri[T];

[Footnote T:

While tripping to the wood my wanton hies,
She wishes to be seen before she flies.

]

are I suppose peculiar to itself, and best described by Monsieur de Voltaire, whose Pococurante the Venetian senator in *Candide* that possesses all delights in his villa upon the banks of the Brenta, is a very lively portrait, and would be natural too; but that Voltaire, as a Frenchman, could not forbear making his character speak in a very unItalian manner, boasting of his felicity in a style they never use, for they are really no puffers, no vaunters of that which they possess; make no disgraceful comparisons between their own rarities and the want of them in other countries, nor offend you as the French do, with false pity and hateful consolations.

If any thing in England seem to excite their wonder and ill-placed compassion, it is our coal fires, which they persist in thinking strangely unwholesome—and a melancholy proof that we are grievously devoid of wood, before we can prevail upon ourselves to dig the bowels of old earth for fewel, at the hazard of our precious health, if not of its certain loss; nor could I convince the wisest man I tried at, that wood burned to chark is a real poison, while it would be difficult by any process of chemistry to force much evil out of coal. They are steadily of opinion, that consumptions are occasioned by these fires, and that all the subjects of Great Britain are consumptively disposed, merely because those who are so, go into Italy for change of air: though I never heard that the wood smoke helped their breath, or a brazierfull of ashes under the table their appetite.

Mean time, whoever seeks to convince instead of persuade an Italian, will find he has been employed in a Sisyphean labour; the stone may roll to the top, but is sure to return, and rest at his feet who had courage to try the experiment. Logic is a science they love not, and I think steadily refuse to cultivate; nor is argument a style of conversation they naturally affect—as Lady Macbeth says, “*Question enrageth him;*” and the dialogues of Socrates would to them be as disgusting as the violence of Xantippe.

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Well, here we are at Padua again! where I will run, and see once more the places I was before so pleased with. The beautiful church of Santa Giustina, the ancient church adorned by Cimabue, Giotto, &c. where you fancy yourself on a sudden transported to Dante's Paradiso, and with for Barry the painter, to point your admiration of its sublime and extraordinary merits; but not the shrine of St. Anthony, or the tomb of Antenor, one rich with gold, the other venerable with rust, can keep my attention fixed on *them*, while an Italian *May* offers to every sense, the sweets of nature in elegant perfection. One view of a smiling landscape, lively in verdure, enamelled with flowers, and exhilarating with the sound of music under every tree,

Where many a youth and many a maid
Dances in the chequer'd shade;
And young and old come forth to play,
On a sun-shine holiday;

drives Palladio and Sansovino from one's head; and leaves nothing very strongly impressed upon one's heart but the recollection of kindness received and esteem reciprocated. Those pleasures have indeed pursued me hither; the amiable Countess Ferris has not forgotten us; her attentions are numerous, tender, and polite. I went to the play with her, where I was unlucky enough to miss the representation of Romeo and Juliet, which was acted the night before with great applause, under the name of *Tragedia Veronese*. Monsieur de Voltaire was then premature in his declarations, that Shakespear was unknown, or known only to be censured, except in his native country. Count Kinigl at Milan took occasion to tell me that they acted Hamlet and Lear when he was last at Vienna; and I know not how it is, but to an English traveller each place presents ideas originally suggested by Shakespear, of whom nature and truth are the perpetual mirrors: other authors remind one of things which one has seen in life—but the scenes of life itself remind one of Shakespear. When I first looked on the Rialto, with what immediate images did it supply me? Oh, the old long-cherished images of the pensive merchant, the generous friend, the gay companion, and their final triumph over the practices of a cruel Jew. Anthonio, Gratiano, met me at every turn; and when I confessed some of these feelings before the professor of natural history here, who had spent some time in London; he observed, that no native of our island could sit three hours, and not speak of Shakespear: he added many kind expressions of partial liking to our nation, and our poets: and l'Abate Cesarotti good-humouredly confessed his little skill in the English language when he translated their so much-admired Ossian; but he had studied it pretty hard since, he said, and his version of Gray's Elegy is charming.

Gray and Young are the favourite writers among us, as far as I have yet heard them talked over upon the continent; the first has secured them by his residence at Florence, and his Latin verses I believe; the second, by his piety and brilliant thoughts. Even Romanists are disposed to think dear Dr. Young very *near* to Christianity—an idea which must either make one laugh or cry, while

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Sweet peace, and heavenly hope, and humble joy,
Divinely beam on *his* exalted soul.

But I must tell what I have been seeing at the theatre, and should tell it much better had not the charms of Countess Ferris's conversation engaged my mind, which would otherwise perhaps have been more seized on than it *was*, by the sight of an old pantomime, or wretched farce (for there was speaking in it, I remember), exploded long since from our very lowest places of diversion, and now exhibited here at Padua before a very polite and a very literary audience; and in a better theatre by far than our newly-adorned opera-house in the Hay-market. Its subject was no other than the birth of Harlequin; but the place and circumstances combined to make me look on it in a light which shewed it to uncommon advantage. The storm, for example, the thunder, darkness, &c. which is so solemnly made to precede an incantation, apparently not meant to be ridiculous, after which, a huge egg is somehow miraculously produced upon the stage, put me in mind of the very old mythologists, who thus desired to represent the chaotic state of things, when Night, Ocean, and Tartarus disputed in perpetual confusion; till *Love* and *Music* separated the elements, and as Dryden says,

Then hot and cold, and moist and dry,
In order to their stations leap,
And music's power obey.

For *Cupid*, advancing to a slow tune, steadies with his wand the rolling mass upon the stage, that then begins to teem with its *motley inhabitant*, and just representative of the *created world*, active, wicked, gay, amusing, which gains your heart, but never your esteem: tricking, shifting, and worthless as it is—but after all its *frisks*, all its *escapes*, is condemned at last to burn in *fire*, and *pass entirely away*. Such was, I trust, the idea of the person, whoever he was, that had the honour first to compose this curious exhibition, and model this mythological device into a pantomime! for the *mundane*, or as Proclus calls it, the *orphick* egg, is possibly the earliest of all methods taken to explain the rise, progress, and final conclusion of our earth and atmosphere; and was the original *theory* brought from Egypt into Greece by Orpheus. Nor has that prodigious genius, Dr. Thomas Burnet, scorned to adopt it seriously in his *Telluris Theoria sacra*, written less than a century ago, adapting it with wonderful ingenuity to the Christian system and Mosaical account of things; to which it certainly does accommodate itself the better, as the form of an egg well resembles that of our habitable globe; and the internal divisions, our four elements, leaving the central fire for the yolk. I therefore regarded our pantomime here at Padua with a degree of reverence I should have found difficult to excite in myself at Sadler's Wells; where ideas of antiquity would have been little likely to cross my fancy. Sure I am, however, that the original inventor of this old pantomime had his head very full at the time of some very ancient learning.

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Now then I must leave this lovely state of Venice, where if the paupers in every town of it did not crowd about one, tormenting passengers with unextinguishable clamour, and surrounding them with sights of horror unfit to be surveyed by any eyes except those of the surgeon, who should alleviate their anguish, or at least conceal their truly unspeakable distresses—one should break one's heart almost at the thoughts of quitting people who show such tenderness towards their friends, that less than ocular conviction would scarce persuade me to believe such wandering misery could remain disregarded among the most amiable and pleasing people in the world. His excellency Bragadin half promised me that some steps should be taken at Venice at least, to remove a nuisance so disgraceful; and said, that when I came again, I should walk about the town in white sattin slippers, and never see a beggar from one end of it to the other.

On the twenty-sixth of May then, with the senator Quirini's letters to Corilla, with the Countess of Starenberg's letters to some Tuscan friends of her's; and with the light of a full moon, if we should want it, we set out again in quest of new adventures, and mean to sleep this night under the pope's protection:—may God but grant us his!

FERRERA.

We have crossed the Po, which I expected to have found more magnificent, considering the respectable state I left it in at Cremona; but scarcely any thing answers that expectation which fancy has long been fermenting in one's mind.

I took a young woman once with me to the coast of Sussex, who, at twenty-seven years old and a native of England, had never seen the sea; nor any thing else indeed ten miles out of London:—And well, child! said I, are not you much surprised?—"It is a fine sight, to be sure," replied she coldly, "but,"—but what? you are not disappointed are you?—"No, not disappointed, but it is not quite what I expected when I saw the ocean." Tell me then, pray good girl, and tell me quickly, what did you expect to see? "*Why I expected,*" with a hesitating accent, "*I expected to see a great deal of water.*" This answer set me *then* into a fit of laughter, but I have *now* found out that I am not a whit wiser than Peggy: for what did I figure to myself that I should find the Po? only a great deal of water to be sure; and a very great deal of water it certainly is, and much more, God knows, than I ever saw before, except between the shores of Calais and Dover; yet I did feel something like disappointment too; when my imagination wandering over all that the poets had said about it, and finding earth too little to contain their fables, recollected that they had thought Eridanus worthy of a place among the constellations, I wished to see such a river as was worthy all these praises, and even then, says I,

O'er golden sands let rich Pactolus flow.
And trees weep amber on the banks of Po.

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But are we sure after all it was upon the *banks* these trees, not now existing, were ever to be found? they grew in the Electrides if I remember right, and even there Lucian laughingly said, that he spread his garments in vain to catch the valuable distillation which poetry had taught him to expect; and Strabo (worse news still!) said that there were no Electrides neither; so as we knew before—fiction is false: and had I not discovered it by any other means, I might have recollected a comical contest enough between a literary lady once, and Doctor Johnson, to which I was myself a witness;—when she, maintaining the happiness and purity of a country life and rural manners, with her best eloquence, and she had a great deal; added as corroborative and almost incontestable authority, that the *Poets* said so: “and didst thou not know then,” replied he, my darling dear, that the *Poets* *lye*?

When they tell us, however, that great rivers have horns, which twisted off become cornua copiae, dispensing pleasure and plenty, they entertain us it must be confessed; and never was allegory more nearly allied with truth, than in the lines of Virgil;

Gemina auratus taurino cornua vultu,
Eridanus, quo non alius per pinguia culta,
In mare purpureuin violentior influit amnis[U];

[Footnote U:

Whence bull-fac'd, so adorn'd with gilded horns,
Than whom no river through such level meads,
Down to the sea in swifter torrents speeds.

]

so accurately translated by Doctor Warton, who would not reject the epithet *bull-faced*, because he knew it was given in imitation of the Thessalian river Achelous, that fought for Dejanira; and Servius, who makes him father to the Syrens, says that many streams, in compliment to this original one, were represented with horns, because of their winding course. Whether Monsieur Varillas, or our immortal Addison, mention their being so perpetuated on medals now existing, I know not; but in this land of rarities we shall soon hear or see.

Mean time let us leave looking for these weeping Heliades, and enquire what became of the Swan, that poor Phaeton's friend and cousin turned into, for very grief and fear at seeing him tumble in the water. For my part I believe that not only now he

Eligit contraria flumina flammis,

but that the whole country is grown disagreeably hot to him, and the sight of the sun's chariot so near frightens him still; for he certainly lives more to his taste, and sings sweeter I believe on the banks of the Thames, than in Italy, where we have never yet seen but *one*; and that was kept in a small marble bason of water at the Durazzo palace

at Genoa, and seemed miserably out of condition. I enquired why they gave him no companion? and received for answer, "That it would be wholly useless, as they were creatures who never bred *out if their own country.*"

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But any reply serves any common Italian, who is little disposed to investigate matters; and if you tease him with too much ratiocination, is apt to cry out, “*Cosa serve sosistieare cosi? ci fara andare tutti matti*[V].” They have indeed so many external amusements in the mere face of the country, that one is better inclined to pardon *them*, than one would be to forgive inhabitants of less happy climates, should they suffer *their* intellectual powers to pine for want of exercise, not food: for here is enough to think upon, God knows, were they disposed so to employ their time; where one may justly affirm that,

[Footnote V: What signifies all this minuteness of inquiry?—it will drive us mad.]

On every thorn delightful wisdom grows,
And in each rill, some sweet instruction flows;
But some untaught o’erhear the murmuring rill,
In spite of sacred leisure—blockheads still.

The road from Padua hither is not a good one; but so adorned, one cares not much whether it is good or no: so sweetly are the mulberry-trees planted on each side, with vines richly festooning up and down them, as if for the decoration of a dance at the opera. One really expects the flower-girls with baskets, or garlands, and scarcely can persuade one’s self that all is real.

Never sure was any thing more rejoicing to the heart, than this lovely season in this lovely country. The city of Ferrara too is a fine one; Ferrara *la civile*, the Italians call it, but it seems rather to merit the epithet *solenne*; so stately are its buildings, so wide and uniform its streets. My pen was just upon the point of praising its cleanliness too, till I reflected there was nobody to dirty it. I looked half an hour before I could find one beggar, a bad account of poor Ferrara; but it brought to my mind how unreasonably my daughter and myself had laughed seven years ago, at reading in an extract from some of the foreign gazettes, how the famous Improvisatore Talassi, who was in England about the year 1770, and entertained with his justly-admired talents the literati at London; had published an account of his visit to Mr. Thrall, at a villa eight miles from Westminster-bridge, during that time, when he had the good fortune, he said, to meet many celebrated characters at his country-seat; and the mortification which nearly overbalanced it, to miss seeing the immortal Garrick then confined by illness. In all this, however, there was nothing ridiculous; but we fancied his description of Streatham village truly so; when we read that he called it *Luogo assai popolato ed ameno*[Footnote: A populous and delightful place.], an expression apparently pompous, and inadequate to the subject: but the jest disappeared when I got into *his* town; a place which perhaps may be said to possess every other excellence but that of being *popolato ed ameno*; and I sincerely believe that no Ferrara-man could have missed making

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the same or a like observation; as in this finely-constructed city, the grass literally grows in the street; nor do I hear that the state of the air and water is such as is likely to tempt new inhabitants. How much then, and how reasonably must he have wondered, and how easily must he have been led to express his wonder, at seeing a village no bigger than that of Streatham, contain a number of people equal, as I doubt not but it does, to all the dwellers in Ferrara!

Mr. Talassi is reckoned in his own country a man of great genius; in ours he was, as I recollect, received with much attention, as a person able and willing to give us demonstration that improvise verses might be made, and sung extemporaneously to some well-known tune, generally one which admits of and requires very long lines; that so alternate rhymes may not be improper, as they give more time to think forward, and gain a moment for composition. Of this power, many, till they saw it done, did not believe the existence; and many, after they had seen it done, persisted in *saying*, perhaps in *thinking*, that it could be done only in Italian. I cannot however believe that they possess any exclusive privileges or supernatural gifts; though it will be hard to find one who thinks better of them than I do: but Spaniards can sing *sequedillas* under their mistresses window well enough; and our Welch people can make the harper sit down in the church-yard after service is over, and placing themselves round him, command the instrument to go over some old song-tune: when having listened a while, one of the company forms a stanza of verses, which run to it in well-adapted measure; and as he ends, another begins: continuing the tale, or retorting the satire, according to the style in which the first began it. All this too in a language less perhaps than any other melodious to the ear, though Howell found out a resemblance between their prosody and that of the Italian writer in early days, when they held agnominations, or the inforcement of consonant words and syllables one upon the other, to be elegant in a more eminent degree than they do now. For example, in Welch, *Tewgris, todykris, ty'r derrin, gwillt*, &c. in Italian, *Donne, O danno che selo affronto affronta: in selva salvo a me*, with a thousand more. The whole secret of improvisation, however, seems to consist in this; that extempore verses are never written down, and one may easily conceive that much may go off well with a good voice in singing, which no one would read if they were once registered by the pen.

I have already asserted that the Italians are not a laughing nation: were ridicule to step in among them, many innocent pleasures would soon be lost; and this among the first. For who would risque the making impromptu poems at Paris? *pour s'attirer persiflage* in every *Coterie comme il faut*[Footnote: To draw upon one's self the ridicule of every polite assembly.]? Or in London, at the hazard

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of being *taken off, and held up for a laughing-stock at every print-seller's window?* A man must have good courage in England, before he ventures at diverting a little company by such devices: while one would yawn, and one would whisper, a third would walk gravely out of the room, and say to his friend upon the stairs, "Why sure we had better read our old poets at home, than be called together, like fools, to hear what comes uppermost in such-a-one's head, about his *Daphne*! In good time! Why I have been tired of *Daphne* since I was fourteen years old." But the best jest of all would be, to see an ordinary fellow, a strolling player for example, set seriously to make or repeat verses in our streets or squares concerning his sweetheart's *cruelty*; when he would be in more danger from that of the mob and the magistrates; who, if the first did not throw dirt at him, and drive him home quickly, would come themselves, and examine into his sanity, and if they found him not *statutably mad*, commit him for a vagrant.

Different amusements, like different sorts of food, suit different countries; and this is among the efforts of those who have learned to refine their *pleasures* without so refining their *ideas* as to be able no longer to hit on any pleasure subtle enough to escape their own power of ridiculing it.

This city of Ferrara has produced some curious and opposite characters in times past, however empty it may now be thought: one painter too, and one singer, both super-eminent in their professions, have dropped their own names, and are best known to fame by that of *Il* and *La Ferrarese*. Nor can I leave it without some reflections on the extraordinary life of Renee de France, daughter of Louis XII surnamed the Just, and Anne de Bretagne, his first wife. This lady having married the famous Hercules D'Este, one of the handsomest men in Europe, lived with him here in much apparent felicity as Duchess of Ferrara; but took such an aversion to the church and court of Rome, from the superstitions she saw practised in Italy, that though she resolved to dissemble her opinions during the life of her husband, whom she wished not to disgust, at the instant of his death she quitted all her dignities; and retiring to France, was protected by her father in the open profession of Calvinism, living a life of privacy and purity among the Huguenots in the southern provinces. This *Louis le Juste* was he who gave the French what little pretensions they have ever obtained on which to fix the foundations of future liberty: he first established a parliament at Rouen, another at Aix; but while thus gentle to his subjects, he was a scourge to Italy, made his public entry into Genoa as Sovereign, and tore the Milanese from the Sforza family, somewhat before the year 1550.

The well-known Franciscus Ferrariensis, whose name was Silvester, is a character very opposite to that of fair Renee: he wrote the best apology for the Romanists against Luther, and gained applause from both sides for his controversial powers; while the strictness of his life gave weight to his doctrine, and ornamented the sect which he delighted to defend.

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By a native of Ferrara too were first collected the books that were earliest placed in the Ambrosian library at Milan, Barnardine Ferrarius, whose deep erudition and simple manners gained him the favour of Frederick Borromeo, who sent him to Spain to pick up literary rarities, which he bestowed with pleasure on the place where he had received his education. His treatise on the rites of sepulture used by the ancients is in good estimation; and Sir Thomas Brown, in his *Urn Burial*, owes him much obligation.

The custom of wearing swords here seems to proceed from some connection they have had with the Spaniards; and Dr. Moore has given us an admirable account of why the Highland broad-sword is still called an *Andrew Ferrara*.

The Venetians, not often or easily intimidated by Papal power, having taken this city in the year 1303, were obliged to restore it, for fear of the consequences of Pope Boniface the Eighth's excommunications; his displeasure having before then produced dreadful effects in the conspiracy of Bajamonti Tiepulo; which was suppressed, and he killed, by a woman, out of a flaming zeal for the honour and tranquillity of her country: and so disinterested too was her spirit of patriotism, that the only reward she required for a service so essential, was that a constant memorial of it might be preserved in the dress of the Doge; who from that moment obliged himself to wear a woman's cap under the state diadem, and so his successors still continue to do.

But Ferrara has other distinctions.—Bonarelli here, at the academy of gl'Intrepidi, read his able defence of that pastoral comedy so much applauded and censured, called *Filli di Sciro*; and here the great Ariosto lived and died.

Nothing leads however to a less gloomy train of thought, than the tomb of a celebrated man; where virtue, wit, or valour triumph over death, and wait the consummation of all sublunary things, before the remembrance of such superiority shall be lost. Italy must be shaken from her deepest foundation, and England made a scene of general ruin, when Shakespear and Ariosto shall be forgotten, and their names confounded among deedless nobility, and worthless wasters of treasure, long ago passed from hand to hand, perhaps from the dwellers in one continent to the inhabitants of another. It has been equally the fate of these two heroes of modern literature, that they have pleased their countrymen more than foreigners; but is that any diminution of their merit? or should it serve as a reason for making disgraceful comparisons between Ariosto and Virgil, whom he scorned to imitate? A dead language is like common ground;—all have a right to pasture, and all a claim to give or to withhold admiration. Virgil is the old original trough at the corner of the road, where every passer-by pays, drinks, and goes on his journey well refreshed. But the clear spring in the meadow sure, though private property, and lately dug, deserves attention: and confers delight not only on the actual master of the ground, but on all his visitants who can climb the stile, and lift the silver cup to their lips which hangs by the fountain-side.

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I am glad, however, to be gone from a place where they are thinking less of all these worthies just at present, than of a circumstance which cannot redound to their honour, as it might have happened to any other town, and could do great good to none: no less than the happy arrival of Joseph, and Leopold, and Maximilian of Austria, on the thirtieth of May 1775; and this wonderful event have they recorded in a pompous inscription upon a stone set at the inn door. But princes can make poets, and scatter felicity with little exertion on their own parts.

At Tuillemont, an English gentleman once told me he had the misfortune to sleep one night where all the people's heads were full of the Emperor, who had dined there the day before; and some *wise* fellow of the place wrote these lines under his picture:

Ingreditur magnus magno de Caesare Caesar,
Thenas, sub signo Cervi, sua prandia sumit.

He immediately set down this distich under them:

Our poor little town has no little to brag,
The Emperor was here, and he dined at the Stag.

The people of the inn concluding that this must be a high-strained compliment, it produced him many thanks from all, and a better breakfast than he would otherwise have obtained at Tuillemont.

To-morrow we go forward to Bologna.

BOLOGNA

SEEMS at first sight a very sorrowful town, and has a general air of melancholy that surprises one, as it is very handsomely and regularly built; and set in a country so particularly beautiful, that it is not easy to express the nature of its beauty, and to express it so that those who inhabit other countries can understand me.

The territory belonging to Bologna la Grassa concentrates all its charms in a happy *embonpoint*, which leaves no wrinkle unfilled up, no bone to be discerned; like the fat figure of Gunhilda at Fonthill, painted by Chevalier Cafali, with a face full of woe, but with a sleekness of skin that denotes nothing less than affliction. From the top of the only eminence, one looks down here upon a country which to me has a new and singular appearance; the whole horizon appearing one thick carpet of the softest and most vivid green, from the vicinity of the broad-leaved mulberry trees, I trust, drawn still closer and closer together by their amicable and pacific companions the vines, which keep cluttering round, and connect them so intimately that no object can be separately or distinctly viewed, any more than the habitations formed by animals who live in moss, when a large portion of it is presented to the philosopher for speculation. One would not

therefore, on a flight and cursory inspection, suspect this of being a painter's country, where no prominence of features arrests the sight, no expression of latent meaning employs the mind, and no abruptness of transition tempts fancy to follow, or imagination to supply, the sudden loss of what it contemplated before.

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Here however the great Caraccis kept their school; here then was every idea of dignity and majestic beauty to be met with; and if I meet with nothing in nature near this place to excite such ideas, it is *my* fault, not Bologna's.

If vain the toil,
We ought to blame the culture,—not the soil.

Wonderful indeed! yet not at all distracting is the variety of excellence that one contemplates here; such matters! and such scholars! The sweetly playful pencil of Albano, I would compare to Waller among our English poets; Domenichino to Otway, and Guido Rheni to Rowe; if such liberties might be permitted on the old notion of *ut pictura poesis*. But there is an idea about the world, that one ought in delicacy to declare one's utter incapacity of understanding pictures, unless immediately of the profession.—And why so? No man protests, that he cannot read poetry, he can make no pleasure out of Milton or Shakespear, or shudder at the ingratitude of Lear's daughters on the stage. Why then should people pretend insensibility, when divine Guercino exerts his unrivalled powers of the pathetic in the fine picture at Zampieri palace, of Hagar's dismission into the desert with her son? While none else could have touched with such truth of expression the countenances of each; leaving him most to be pitied, perhaps, who issues the command against his will; accompanying it however with innumerable benedictions, and alleviating its severity with the softest tenderness.

He only among our poets could have planned such a picture, who penned the Eloisa, and knew the agonies of a soul struggling against unpermitted passions, and conquering from the noblest motives of faith and of obedience.

Glorious exertion of excellence! This is the first time my heart has been made really alive to the powers of this magical art. Candid Italians! let me again exclaim; they shewed us a Vandyke in the same palace, surrounded by the works of their own incomparable countrymen; and *there* say they, "*Quasi quasi si puo circondarla*[Footnote: You may almost run round her.]" You may almost run round it, was the expression. The picture was a very fine one; a single figure of the Madona, highly painted, and happily placed among those who knew, because they possessed his perfections who drew it. Were Homer alive, and acquainted with our language, he would admire that Shakespear whom Voltaire condemns. Twice in this town has Guido shewed those powers which critics have denied him: the power of grouping his figures with propriety, and distributing his light and shadow to advantage: as he has shewn it *but twice*, however, it is certain the connoisseurs are not very wrong, and even in those very performances one may read their justification: for Job, though surrounded by a crowd of people, has a strangely insulated look, and the sweet sufferer on the foreground of his Herodian cruelty seems wholly uninterested in the general distress, and occupies herself and every spectator completely and solely with her own particular grief.

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The boasted Raphael here does not in my eyes triumph over the wonders of this Caracci school. At Rome, I am told, his superiority is more visible. *Nous verrons*[Footnote: We shall see.].

The reserved picture of St. Peter and St. Paul, kept in the last chamber of the Zampieri palace, and covered with a silk curtain, is valued beyond any specimen of the painting art which can be moved from Italy to England. We are taught to hope it will soon come among us; and many say the sale cannot be now long delayed. Why Guido should never draw another picture like that, or at all in the same style, who can tell? it certainly does unite every perfection, and every possible excellence, except choice of subject, which cannot be happy I think, when the subject itself is left disputable.

I will mention only one other picture: it is in an obscure church, not an unfrequented one by these pious Bolognese, who are the most devout people I ever lived amongst, but I think not much visited by travellers. It is painted by Albano, and represents the Redeemer of mankind as a boy scarce thirteen years old: ingenuous modesty, and meek resignation, beaming from each intelligent feature of a face divinely beautiful, and throwing out luminous rays round his sacred head, while the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, placed on each side him, adore his goodness with transport not unmixed with wonder: the instruments of his future passion cast at his feet, directing us to consider him as in that awful moment voluntarily devoting himself for the sins of the whole world.

This picture, from the sublimity of the subject, the lively colouring, and clear expression, has few equals; the pyramidal group drops in as of itself, unsought for, from the raised ground on which our Saviour stands; and among numberless wild conceits and extravagant fancies of painters, not only permitted but encouraged in this country, to deviate into what we justly think profane representations of the deity:—this is the most pleasing and inoffensive device I have seen.

The august Creator too is likewise more wisely concealed by Albano than by other artists, who daringly presume to exhibit that of which no mortal man can give or receive a just idea. But we will have done for a while with connoisseurship.

This fat Bologna has a tristful look, from the numberless priests, friars, and women all dressed in black, who fill the streets, and stop on a sudden to pray, when I see nothing done to call forth immediate addresses to Heaven. Extremes do certainly meet however, and my Lord Peter in this place is so like his fanatical brother Jack, that I know not what is come to him. To-morrow is the day of *corpus domini*; why it should be preceded by such dismal ceremonies I know not; there is nothing melancholy in the idea, but we shall be sure of a magnificent procession.

So it was too, and wonderfully well attended: noblemen and ladies, with tapers in their hands, and their trains borne by well-dressed pages, had a fine effect. All still in black.

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Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem;
With sable stole of cypress lawn,
O'er their decent shoulders drawn.

I never saw a spectacle so stately, so solemn a show in my life before, and was much less tired of the long continued march, than were my Roman Catholic companions.

Our inn is not a good one; the Pellegrino is engaged for the King of Naples and his train: the place we are housed in, is full of bugs, and every odious vermin: no wonder, surely, where such oven-like porticoes catch and retain the heat as if constructed on set purpose so to do. The Montagnola at night was something of relief, but contrary to every other resort of company: the less it is frequented the gayer it appears; for Nature there has been lavish of her bounties, which seem disregarded by the Bolognese, who unluckily find out that there is a burying-ground within view, though at no small distance really; and planting themselves over against that, they stand or kneel for many minutes together in whole rows, praying, as I understand, for the souls which once animated the bodies of the people whom they believe to lie interred there; all this too even at the hours dedicated to amusement.

Cardinal Buon Compagni, the legate, sent from Rome here, is gone home; and the vice-legate officiated in his place, much to the consolation of the inhabitants, who observed with little delight or gratitude his endeavours to improve their trade, or his care to maintain their privileges; while his natural disinclination to hypocritical manners, or what we so emphatically call *cant*, gave them an aversion to his person and dislike of his government, which he might have prevented by formality of look, and very trifling compliances. But every thing helps to prove, that if you would please people, it must be done *their* way, not your own.

Here are some charming manufactures in this town, and I fear it requires much self-denial in an Englishwoman not to long at least for the fine crapes, tiffanies, &c. which might here be bought I know not how cheap, and would make one so happy in London or at Bath. But these Customhouse officers! these *rats de cave*, as the French comically call them, will not let a ribbon pass. Such is the restless jealousy of little states, and such their unremitted attention to keep the goods made in one place out of the gates of another. Few things upon a journey contribute to torment and disgust one more than the teasing enquiries at the door of every city, who one is, what one's name is? what one's rank in life or employment is; that so all may be written down and carried to the chief magistrate for his information, who immediately dispatches a proper person to examine whether you gave in a true report; where you lodge, why you came, how long you mean to stay; with twenty more inquisitive speeches, which to a subject of more liberal governments must necessarily appear impertinent as frivolous, and make all my hopes of bringing home the most trifling presents for a friend abortive. So there is an end of that felicity, and we must sit like the girl at the fair, described by Gay,

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Where the coy nymph knives, combs, and scissars spies,
And looks on thimbles with desiring eyes.

The Specola, so they call their museum here, of natural and artificial rarities, is very fine indeed; the inscription too denoting its universality, is sublimely generous: I thought of our Bath hospital in England; more usefully, if not more magnificently so; but durst not tell the professor, who shewed the place. At our going in he was apparently much out of humour, and unwilling to talk, but grew gradually kinder, and more communicative; and I had at last a thousand thanks to pay for an attention that rendered the sight of all more valuable. Nothing can surpass the neatness and precision with which this elegant repository is kept, and the curiosities contained in it have specimens very uncommon. The native gold shewed here is supposed to be the largest and most perfect lump in Europe; wonderfully beautiful it certainly is, and the coral here is such as can be seen nowhere else; they shewed me some which looked like an actual tree.

It might reasonably lower the spirits of philosophy, and tend to restraining the genius of remote enquiry, did we reflect that the very first substance given into our hand as an amusement, or subject of speculation, as soon as we arrive in this great world of wonders, never gets fully understood by those who study hardest, or live longest in it.

Coral is a substance, concerning which the natural historians have had many disputes, and settled nothing yet; knowing, as it should seem, but little more of its original, than they did when they sucked it first. Of gold we have found perhaps but too many uses; but when the professor told us here at Bologna, that silver in the mine was commonly found mixed with *arsenick*, a corroding poison, or *lead*, a narcotic one; who could help being led forward to a train of thought on the nature and use and abuse of money and minerals in general. *Suivez* (as Rousseau says), *la chaine de tout cela*[Footnote: Follow this clue, and see where it will lead you to.].

The astronomical apparatus at this place is a splendid one; but the models of architecture, fortifications, &c. are only more numerous; not so exact or elegant I think as those the King of England has for his own private use at the Queen's house in St. James's Park. The specimens of a human figure in wax are the work of a woman, whose picture is accordingly set up in the school: they are reckoned incomparable of their kind, and bring to one's fancy Milton's fine description of our first parents:

Two of far nobler kind—erect and tall.

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This University has been particularly civil to women; many very learned ladies of France and Germany have been and are still members of it;—and la Dottoressa Laura Bassi gave lectures not many years ago in this very spot, upon the mathematics and natural philosophy, till she grew very old and infirm; but her pupils always handed her very respectfully to and from the Doctor's chair, *Che brava donnetta ch'era!*[Footnote: Ah, what a fine woman was that!] says the gentleman who shewed me the academy, as we came out at the door; over which a marble tablet, with an inscription more pious than pompous, is placed to her memory; but turning away his eyes—while they filled with tears—*tutti muosono*[Footnote: All must die.], added he, and I followed; as nothing either of energy or pathos could be added to a reflection so just, so tender, and so true: we parted sadly therefore with our agreeable companion and instructor just where her cenotaph (for the body lies buried in a neighbouring church) was erected; and shall probably meet no more; for as he said and sighed—*tutti muosono*[Footnote: All must die.].

The great Cassini too, who though of an Italian family, was born at Nice I think, and died at Paris, drew his meridian line through the church of St. Petronius in this city, across the pavement, where it still remains a monument to his memory, who discovered the third and fifth satellites of Jupiter. Such was in his time the reputation of a mineral spring near Bologna, that Pope Alexander the Seventh set him to analyse the waters of it; and so satisfactory were his proofs of its very slight importance to health, that the same pope called him to Rome to examine the waters round that capital; but dying soon after his arrival, he had no time to recompence Cassini's labours, though a very elegantly-minded man, and a great encourager of learning in all its branches. The successor to this sovereign, Rospigliosi, had different employment found for *him*, in helping the Venetians to regain Candia from the Turks, his disappointment in not being able to accomplish which design broke his heart; and Cassini, returning to Bologna, found it less pleasing than it was before he left it, so went to Paris, and died there at ninety or ninety-one years old, as I remember, early in this present century, but not till after he had enjoyed the pleasure of hearing that Count Marsigli had founded an academy at the place where he had studied whilst his faculties were strong.

Another church, situated on the only hill one can observe for miles, is dedicated to the Madonna St. Luc, as it is called; and a very beautiful and curiously covered way is made to it up the hill, for three miles in length, and at a prodigious expence, to guard the figure from the rain as it is carried in procession. The ascent is so gentle that one hardly feels it. Pillars support the roof, which defends you from a sun-stroke, while the air and prospect are let in

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between them on the right hand as you go. The left side is closed up by a wall, adorned from time to time with fresco paintings, representing the birth and most distinguished passages in the life of the blessed Virgin. Round these paintings a little chapel is railed in, open, airy, and elegantly, not very pompously, adorned; there are either seven or twelve of them, I forget which, that serve to rest the procession as it passes, on days particularly dedicated to her service. When you arrive at the top, a church of a most beautiful construction recompenses your long but not tedious walk, and there are some admirable pictures in it, particularly one of St. William laying down his armour, and taking up the habit of a Carthusian, very fine—but the figure of the Madonna is the prize they value, and before this I did see some men kneel with a truly idolatrous devotion. That it was painted by St. Luke is believed by them all. But if it was painted by St. Luke, said I, what then? do you think *he*, or the still more excellent person it was done for, would approve of your worshipping any thing but God? To this no answer was made; and I thought one man looked as if he had grace enough to be ashamed of himself.

The girls, who sit in clusters at the chapel doors as one goes up, singing hymns in praise of the Virgin Mary, pleased me much, as it was a mode of veneration inoffensive to religion, and agreeable to the fancy; but seeing them bow down to that black figure, in open defiance of the Decalogue, shocked me. Why all the *very very* early pictures of the Virgin, and many of our blessed Saviour himself, done in the first ages of Christianity should be *black*, or at least tawny, is to me wholly incomprehensible, nor could I ever yet obtain an explanation of its cause from men of learning or from connoisseurs.

We have in England a black Madonna, very ancient of course, and of immense value, in the cathedral of Wells in Somersetshire; it is painted on glass, and stands in the middle pane of the upper window I think, is a profile face, and eminently handsome. My mind tells me that I have seen another somewhere in Great Britain, but cannot recollect the spot, unless it were Arundel Castle in Sussex, but I am not sure: none was ever painted so since the days of Pietro Perugino I believe, so their antiquity is unquestionable: he and his few contemporaries drew her white, as Sir Joshua Reynolds and Pompeo Battoni.

Whilst I perambulated the palaces of the Bolognese nobility, gloomy though spacious, and melancholy though splendid, I could not but admire at Richardson's judgment when he makes his beautiful Bigot, his interesting Clementina, an inhabitant of superstitious Bologna. The unconquerable attachment she shews to original prejudices, and the horror of what she has been taught to consider as heresy, could scarcely have been attributed so happily to the dweller in any town but this: where I hear nothing but the sound of people saying

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their rosaries, and see nothing in the street but people telling their beads. The Porretta palace is hourly presenting itself to my imagination, which delights in the assurance that genius cannot be confined by place. Dear Richardson at Salisbury Court Fleet Street, and Parson's Green Fulham, felt all within him that travelling can tell, or experience confirm: he had seen little, and Johnson has often told me that he had read little; but what he did read never forsook a memory that was not contented with retaining, but fermented all that fell into it, and made a new creation from the fertility of his own rich mind.—These are the men for whom monuments need not be erected.

They in our pleasure and astonishment,
Do build themselves a live long monument;

as Milton says of a much greater writer still.

But the King of Naples is arrived, and that attention which wits and scholars can retain for centuries, may not be unjustly paid to princes while they last.

Our Bolognese have hit upon an odd method of entertaining him however: no other than making a representation of Mount Vesuvius on the Montagnuola, or place of evening resort, hoping at least to treat him with something new I trow. Were the King of England to visit these *cari Bolognese*, surely they would shew him Westminster Bridge, with a view of the Archbishop's palace at Lambeth on one side the river, and Somerset-house on the other.

A pretty throne, or state-box, was soon got in order, *that it was*; and the motion excited by carrying the fire-works to have them prepared for the evening's show, gave life to the morning, which hung less heavily than usual; nor did the people recollect the church-yard at a distance, while the merry King of Naples was near them. His Majesty appeared perfectly contented and good-humoured, and happy with whatever was done for his amusement. I remember his behaviour at Milan though, too well to be surprised at his pleasantness of disposition, when my maid was delighted to see him dance among the girls at a Festa di Ballo, from whence I retired early myself, and sent her back to enjoy it all in my domino. He played at cards too when at Milan I recollect, in the common Ridotto Chamber at the Theatre, and played for common sums, so as to charm every one with his kindness and affability.

I am glad however that we shall now be soon released from this upon the whole disagreeable town, where there is the best possible food too for body and mind; but where the inhabitants seem to think only of the next world, and do little to amuse those who have not yet quite done with this. If they are sincere mean time, God will bless them with a long continuance of the appellation they so justly deserve; and those travellers who pass through will find some amends in the rich cream and incomparable

dinners every day, for the insects that devour them every night; and will, if they are wise, seek compensation from the company of the half animated pictures that crowd the palaces and churches, for the half dead inhabitants who kneel in the streets of Bologna.

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FLORENCE.

We slept no-where, except perhaps in the carriage, between our last residence at Bologna and this delightful city, to which we passed apparently through a new region of the earth, or even air; clambering up mountains covered with snow, and viewing with amazement the little vallies between, where, after quitting the summer season, all glowing with heat and spread into verdure, we found cherry-trees in blossom, oaks and walnuts scarcely beginning to bud. These mountains are however much below those of Savoy for dignity and beauty of appearance, though high enough to be troublesome, and barren enough to be desolate. These Appenines have been called by some the Back Bone of Italy, as Varenus and others style the Mountains of the Moon in Africa, Back Bone of the World; and these, as they do, run in a long chain down the middle of the Peninsula they are placed in; but being rounded at top are supposed to be aquatick, while the Alps, Andes, &c. are of late acknowledged by philosophers to be volcanic, as the most lofty of *them* terminate in points of granite, wholly devoid of horizontal strata, and without petrifications contained in them,

Here the tracts around display How impetuous ocean's sway Once with wasteful fury spread The wild waves o'er each mountain's head.

PARSONS.

But the offspring of fire somehow *should* be more striking than that of water, however violent might have been the concussion that produced them; and there is no comparison between the sensations felt in passing the Roche Melon, and these more neatly-moulded Appenines; upon whose tops I am told too no lakes have been formed, as on Mount Cenis, or even on Snowdon in North Wales, where a very beautiful lake adorns the summit of the rock; which affords trout precisely such as you eat before you go down to Novalesa, but not so large.

Sir William Hamilton, however, is the man to be referred to in all these matters; no man has examined the peculiar properties and general nature of mountains, those which vomit fire in particular, with half as much application, inspired by half as much genius, as he has done.

We arrived late at our inn, an English one they say it is; and many of the last miles were passed very pleasantly by my maid and myself, in anticipating the comforts we should receive by finding ourselves among our own country folks. In good time! and by once more eating, sleeping, &c. *all in the English way*, as her phrase is. Accordingly, here are small low beds again, soft and clean, and down pillows; here are currant tarts, which the Italians scorn to touch, but which we are happy and delighted to pay not ten but twenty times their value for, because a currant tart is so much *in the English way*: and here are beans and bacon in a climate where it is impossible that bacon should be

either wholesome or agreeable; and one eats infinitely worse than one did at Milan, Venice, or Bologna: and infinitely dearer too; but that makes it still more completely *in the English way*.

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Mean time here we are however in Arno's Vale; the full moon shining over Fiesole, which I see from my windows. Milton's verses every moment in one's mouth, and Galileo's house twenty yards from one's door,

Whence her bright orb the Tuscan artist view'd,
At evening from the top of Fesole;
Or in Val d'Arno to descry new lands,
Rivers or mountains on her spotty globe.

Our apartments here are better than we hoped for, situated most sweetly on the banks of this classical stream; a noble terrace underneath our window, broad as the south parade at Bath I think, and the fine Ponte della Santa Trinita within sight. Many people have asserted that this is the first among all bridges in the world; but architecture triumphs in the art of building bridges, and, though this is a most exquisitely beautiful fabric, I can scarcely venture to call it an unrivalled one: it shall, if the fine statues at the corners can assist its power over the fancy, and if cleanliness can compensate for stately magnificence, or for the fire of original and unassisted genius, it shall obliterate from my mind the Rialto at Venice, and the fine arch thrown over the Conway at Llanwrst in our North Wales.

I wrote to a lady at Venice this morning though, to say, however I might be charmed by the sweets of Arno's side, I could not forbear regretting the Grand Canal.

Count Manucci, a nobleman of this city, formerly intimate with Mr. Thrale in London and Mr. Piozzi at Paris, came early to our apartments, and politely introduced us to the desirable society of his sisters and his friends. We have in his company and that of Cavalier d'Elci, a learned and accomplished man, of high birth, deep erudition, and polished manners, seen much, and with every possible advantage.

This morning they shewed us La Capella St. Lorenzo, where I could but think how surprisingly Mr. Addison's prediction was verified, that these slow Florentines would not perhaps be able to finish the burial-place of their favourite family, before the family itself should be extinct. This reflection felt like one naturally suggested to me by the place; Doctor Moore however has the original merit of it, as I afterwards found it in his book: but it is the peculiar property of natural thoughts well expressed, to sink into one's mind and incorporate themselves with it, so as to make one forget they were not all one's own.

Poets, as well as jesters, do oft prove prophets: Prior's happy prediction for the female wits in one of his epilogues is come true already, when he says,

Your time, poor souls! we'll take your very money,
Female *third nights* shall come so thick upon ye, &c.

and every hour gives one reason to hope that Mr. Pope's glorious prophecy in favour of the Negroes will not now remain long unaccomplished, but that liberty will extend her happy influence over the world;

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Till the *freed Indians*, in their native groves,
Reap their own fruits, and woo their sable loves.

I will not extend myself in describing the heaps of splendid ruin in which the rich chapel of St. Lorenzo now lies: since the elegant Lord Corke's letters were written, little can be said about Florence not better said by him; who has been particularly copious in describing a city which every body wishes to see copiously described.

The libraries here are exceedingly magnificent; and we were called just now to that which goes under Magliabechi's name, to hear an eulogium finely pronounced upon our circumnavigator Captain Cook; whose character has attracted the attention, and extorted the esteem of every European nation: far less was the wonder that it forced my tears; they flowed from a thousand causes: my distance from England! my pleasure in hearing an Englishman thus lamented in a language with which he had no acquaintance!

By strangers honoured, and by strangers mourn'd!

Every thing contributed to soften my heart, though not to lower my spirits. For when a Florentine asked me, how I came to cry so? I answered, in the words of their divine Mestastasio:

“Che questo pianto mio
Tutto non e dolor;
E meraviglia, e amore,
E riverenza, e speme,
Son mille affetti assieme
Tutti raccolti al cor.”

'Tis not grief alone, or fear,
Swells the heart, or prompts the tear;
Reverence, wonder, hope, and joy,
Thousand thoughts my soul employ,
Struggling images, which less
Than falling tears can ne'er express.

Giannetti, who pronounced the panegyric, is the justly-celebrated improvisatore so famous for making Latin verses *impromptu*, as others do Italian ones: the speech has been translated into English by Mr. Merry, with whom I had the honour here first to make acquaintance, having met him at Mr. Greatheed's, who is our fellow-lodger, and with whom and his amiable family the time passes in reciprocations of confidential friendship and mutual esteem.

Lord and Lady Cowper too contribute to make the society at this place more pleasing than can be imagined; while English hospitality softens down the stateliness of Tuscan manners.

Sir Horace Mann is sick and old; but there are conversations at his house of a Saturday evening, and sometimes a dinner, to which we have been almost always asked.

The fruits in this place begin to astonish me; such cherries did I never yet see, or even hear tell of, as when I caught the Laquais de Place weighing two of them in a scale to see if they came to an ounce. These are, in the London street phrase, *cherries like plums*, in size at least, but in flavour they far exceed them, being exactly of the kind that we call bleeding-hearts, hard to the bite, and parting easily from the stone, which is proportionately small.

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Figs too are here in such perfection, that it is not easy for an English gardener to guess at their excellence; for it is not by superior size, but taste and colour, that *they* are distinguished; small, and green on the outside, a bright full crimson within, and we eat them with raw ham, and truly delicious is the dainty. By raw ham, I mean ham cured, not boiled or roasted. It is no wonder though that fruits should mature in such a sun as this is; which, to give a just notion of its penetrating fire, I will take leave to tell my countrywomen is so violent, that I use no other method of heating the pinching-irons to curl my hair, than that of poking them out at a south window, with the handles shut in, and the glasses darkened to keep us from being actually fired in his beams. Before I leave off speaking about the fruit, I must add, that both fig and cherry are produced by standards; that the strawberries here are small and high-flavoured, like our *woods*, and that there are no other. England affords greater variety in *that* kind of fruit than any nation; and as to peaches, nectarines, or green-gage plums, I have seen none yet. Lady Cowper has made us a present of a small pine-apple, but the Italians have no taste to it. Here is sun enough to ripen them without hot-houses I am sure, though they repeatedly told us at Milan and Venice, that *this* was the coolest place to pass the summer in, because of the Appenine mountains shading us from the heat, which they confessed to be intolerable with *them*.

Here however, they inform us, that it is madness to retire into the country as English people do during the hot season; for as there is no shade from high timber trees, one is bit to death by animals, gnats in particular, which here are excessively troublesome, even in the town, notwithstanding we scatter vinegar, and use all the arts in our power; but the ground-floor is coolest, and every body struggles to get themselves a *terreno* as they call it.

Florence is full just now, and Mr. Jean Figliuzzi, an intelligent gentleman who lives here, and is well acquainted with both nations, says, that all the genteel people come to take refuge *from* the country to Florence in July and August, as the subjects of Great Britain run *to* the country from the heats of London or Bath.

The flowers too! how rich they are in scent here! how brilliant in colour! how magnificent in size! Wall-flowers perfuming every street, and even every passage; while pinks and single carnations grow beside them, with no more soil than they require themselves; and from the tops of houses, where you least expect it, an aromatic flavour highly gratifying is diffused. The jessamine is large, broad-leaved, and beautiful as an orange-flower; but I have seen no roses equal to those at Lichfield, where on one tree I recollect counting eighty-four within my own reach; it grew against the house of Doctor Darwin. Such a profusion of sweets made me enquire yesterday morning for some scented pomatum, and they brought me accordingly one pot impelling strong of garden mint, the other of rue and tansy.

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Thus do the inhabitants of every place forfeit or fling away those pleasures, which the inhabitants of another place think *they* would use in a much wiser manner, had Providence bestowed the blessing upon *them*.

A young Milanese once, whom I met in London, saw me treat a hatter that lives in Pallmall with the respect due to his merit: when the man was gone, "Pray, madam," says the Italian, "is this a *gran riccone*[Footnote: *Heavy-pursed fellow*.]?" "He is perhaps," replied I, "worth twenty or thirty thousand pounds; I do not know what ideas you annex to a *gran riccone*" "*Oh santissima vergine!*" exclaims the youth, "*s'avessi io mai settanta mila zecchini! non so pur troppo cosa nesarei; ma questo e chiaro—non venderei mai cappelli*"—"Oh dear me! had I once seventy thousand sequins in my pocket, I would—dear—I cannot think myself *what* I should do with them all: but this at least is certain, I would not *sell hats*"

I have been carried to the Laurentian library, where the librarian Bandi shewed me all possible, and many unmerited civilities; which, for want of deeper erudition, I could not make the use I wished of. We asked however to see some famous manuscripts. The Virgil has had a *fac simile* made of it, and a printed copy besides; so that it cannot now escape being known all over Europe. The Bible in Chaldaic characters, spoken of by Langius as inestimable, and brought hither, with many other valuable treasures of the same nature, by Lascaris, after the death of Lorenzo de Medici, who had sent him for the second time to Constantinople for the purpose of collecting Greek and Oriental books, but died before his return, is in admirable preservation. The old geographical maps, made out in a very early age, afforded me much amusement; and the Latin letters of Petrarch, with the portrait of his Laura, were interesting to me perhaps more than many other things rated much higher by the learned, among those rarities which adorn a library so comprehensive.

Every great nation except ours, which was immersed in barbarism, and engaged in civil broils, seems to have courted the residence of Lascaris, but the university of Paris fixed his regard: and though Leo X. treated with favour, and even friendship, the man whom he had encouraged to intimacy when Cardinal John of Medicis; though he made him superintendant of a Greek college at Rome; it is said he always wished to die in France, whither he returned in the reign of Francis the First; and wrote his Latin epigrams, which I have heard Doctor Johnson prefer even to the Greek ones preserved in Anthologia; and of which our Queen Elizabeth, inspired by Roger Ascham, desired to see the author; but he was then upon a visit to Rome, where he died of the gout at ninety-three years old.

* * * * *

June 24, 1785.

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St. John the Baptist is the tutelary Saint of this city, and upon this day of course all possible rejoicings are made. After attending divine service in the morning, we were carried to a house whence we could conveniently see the procession pass by. It was not solemn and stately as that I saw at Bologna, neither was it gaudy and jocund like the show made at Venice upon St. George's day; but consisted chiefly in vast heavy pageants, or a sort of temporary building set on wheels, and drawn by oxen some, and some by horses; others carried upon things made not unlike a chairman's horse in London, and supported by men, while priests, in various coloured dresses, according to their several stations in the church, and to distinguish the parishes, &c. to which they belong, follow singing in praise of the saint.

Here is much emulation shewed too, I am told, in these countries, where religion makes the great and almost the sole amusement of men's lives, who shall make most figure on St. John the Baptist's day, produce most music, and go to most expence. For all these purposes subscriptions are set on foot, for ornamenting and venerating such a picture, statue, &c. which are then added to the procession by the managers, and called a Confraternity, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Angel Raphael, or who comes in their heads.

The lady of the house where we went to partake the diversion, was not wanting in her part; there could not be fewer than a hundred and fifty people assembled in her rooms, but not crowded as we should have been in England; for the apartments in Italy are all high and large, and run in suits like Wanstead house in Essex, or Devonshire house in London exactly, but larger still: and with immense balconies and windows, not sashes, which move all away, and give good room and air. The ices, refreshments, &c. were all excellent in their kinds, and liberally dispensed. The lady seemed to do the honours of her house with perfect good-humour; and every body being full-dressed, though so early in a morning, added much to the general effect of the whole.

Here I had the honour of being introduced to Cardinal Corsini, who put me a little out of countenance by saying suddenly, *"Well, madam! you never saw one of us red-legged partridges before I believe; but you are going to Rome I hear, where you will find such fellows as me no rarities"* The truth is, I had seen the amiable Prince d'Orini at Milan, who was a Cardinal; and who had taken delight in showing me prodigious civilities: nothing ever struck me more than his abrupt entrance one night at our house, when we had a little music, and every body stood up the moment he appeared: the Prince however walked forward to the harpsichord, and blessed my husband in a manner the most graceful and affecting: then sate the amusement out, and returned the next morning to breakfast with us, when he indulged us with two hours conversation at least; adding the kindest and most pressing invitations to his country-seat among the mountains of Brianza, when we should return from our tour of Italy in spring 1786. Florence therefore was not the first place that shewed me a Cardinal.

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In the afternoon we all looked out of our windows which faced the street,—not mine, as they happily command a view of the river, the Caseine woods, &c. and from them enjoyed a complete sight of an Italian horse-race. For after the coaches have paraded up and down some time to shew the equipages, liveries, &c. all have on a sudden notice to quit the scene of action; and all *do* quit it, in such a manner as is surprising. The street is now covered with sawdust, and made fast at both ends: the starting-post is adorned with elegant booths, lined with red velvet, for the court and first nobility: at the other end a piece of tapestry is hung, to prevent the creatures from dashing their brains out when they reach the goal. Thousands and ten thousands of people on foot fill the course, that it is standing wonder to me still that numbers are not killed. The prizes are now exhibited to view, quite in the old classical style; a piece of crimson damask for the winner perhaps; a small silver bason and ewer for the second; and so on, leaving no performer unrewarded. At last come out the *concurrenti* without riders, but with a narrow leathern strap hung across their backs, which has a lump of ivory fastened to the end of it, all set full of sharp spikes like a hedge-hog, and this goads them along while galloping, worse than any spurs could do; because the faster they run, the more this odd machine keeps jumping up and down, and pricking their sides ridiculously enough; and it makes one laugh to see that some of them are not provoked by it not to run at all, but set about plunging, in order to rid themselves of the inconvenience, instead of driving forward to divert the mob; who leap and shout and caper with delight, and lash the laggards along with great indignation indeed, and with the most comical gestures. I never saw horses in so droll a state of degradation before, for they are all striped or spotted, or painted of some colour to distinguish them each from other; and nine or ten often start at a time, to the great danger of lookers-on I think, but exceedingly to my entertainment, who have the comfort of Mrs. Greatheed's company, and the advantage of seeing all safely from her well-situated *terreno*, or ground-floor.

The chariot-race was more splendid, but less diverting: this was performed in the Piazza, or Square, an unpaved open place not bigger than Covent Garden I believe, and the ground strangely uneven. The cars were light and elegant; one driver and two horses to each: the first very much upon the principle of the antique chariots described by old poets, and the last trapped showily in various colours, adapted to the carriages, that people might make their betts accordingly upon the pink, the blue, the green, &c. I was exceedingly amused with seeing what so completely revived all classic images, and seemed so little altered from the classic times. Cavalier D'Elci, in reply to my expressions of delight, told me that the same

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spirit still subsisted exactly; but that in order to prevent accidents arising from the disputants' endeavours to overturn or circumvent each other, it was now sunk into a mere appearance of contest; for that all the chariots belonged to one man, who would doubtless be careful enough that his coachmen should not go to sparring at the hazard of their horses. The farce was carried on to the end however, and the winner spread his velvet in triumph, and drove round the course to enjoy the acclamations and caresses of the crowd.

That St. John the Baptist's birth-day should be celebrated by a horse or chariot race, appears to have little claim to the praise of propriety; but mankind seems agreed that there must be some excuse for merriment; and surely if any saint is to be venerated, he stands foremost whom Christ himself declared to be the greatest man ever born of a woman.

The old Romans had an institution in this month of games to Neptune Equester, as they called their Sea God, with no great appearance of good sense neither; but the horse he produced at the naming of Athens was the cause assigned—these games are perhaps half transmitted ones from those in the ancient mythology.

The evening concluded, and the night began with fire-works; the church, or duomo, as a cathedral is always called in Italy, was illuminated on the outside, and very beautiful, and very very magnificent was the appearance. The reflection of the cupola's lights in the river gave us back a faint image of what we had been admiring; and when I looked at them from my window, as we were retiring to rest; such, thought I, and fainter still are the images which can be given of a show in written or verbal description; yet my English friends shall not want an account of what I have seen; for Italy, at last, is only a fine well-known academy figure, from which we all sit down to make drawings according as the light falls; and our seat affords opportunity. Every man sees that, and indeed most things, with the eyes of his then present humour, and begins describing away so as to convey a dignified or despicable idea of the object in question, just as his disposition led him to interpret its appearance.

Readers now are grown wiser, however, than very much to mind us: they want no further telling that one traveller was in pain, and one in love when the tour of Italy was made by them; and so they pick out their intelligence accordingly, from various books, written like two letters in the Tatler, giving an account of a rejoicing night; one endeavouring to excite majestic ideas, the other ludicrous ones of the very same thing.

Well 'tis true enough, however, and has been often enough laughed at, that the Italian horses run without riders, and scamper down a long street with untrimmed heels, hundreds of people hooking them along, as naughty boys do a poor dog, that has a bone tied to his tail in England. This diversion was too good to end with the day.

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Dulness, dear Queen, repeats the jest again.

We had another, and another just such a race for three or four evenings together, and they got an English *cock-tailed nag*, and set *him* to the business, as they said *he was trained to it*; but I don't recollect his making a more brilliant figure than his painted and chalked neighbours of the Continent.

We will not be prejudiced, however; that the Florentines know how to manage horses is certain, if they would take the trouble. Last night's theatre exhibited a proof of skill, which might shame Astley and all his rivals. Count Pazzi having been prevailed on to lend his four beautiful chesnut favourites from his own carriage to draw a pageant upon the stage, I saw them yesterday evening harnessed all abreast, their own master in a dancer's habit I was told, guiding them himself, and personating the Cid, which was the name of the ballet, if I remember right, making his horses go clear round the stage, and turning at the lamps of the orchestra with such dexterity, docility, and grace, that they seemed rather to enjoy than feel disturbance at the deafening noise of instruments, the repeated bursts of applause, and hollow sound of their own hoofs upon the boards of a theatre. I had no notion of such discipline, and thought the praises, though very loud, not ill bestowed: as it is surely one of man's earliest privileges to replenish the earth with animal life, and to subdue it.

I have, for my own part, generally speaking, little delight in the obstreperous clamours of these heroic pantomimes;—their battles are so noisy, and the acclamations of the spectators so distressing to weak nerves, I dread an Italian theatre—it distracts me.—And always the same thing so, every and every night! how tedious it is!

This want of variety in the common pleasures of Italy though, and that surprising content with which a nation so sprightly looks on the same stuff, and laughs at the same joke for months and months together, is perhaps less despicable to a thinking mind, than the affectation of weariness and disgust, where probably it is not felt at all; and where a gay heart often lurks under a clouded countenance, put on to deceive spectators into a notion of his philosophy who wears it; and what is worse, who wears it chiefly as a mark of distinction cheaply obtained; for neither science, wit, nor courage are *now* found necessary to form a man of fashion, or the *ton*, to which may be said as justly as ever Mr. Pope affirmed it of silence,

That routed reason finds her sure retreat in thee.

Affectation is certainly that faint and sickly weed which is the curse of cultivated,—not naturally fertile and extensive countries; an insect that infests our forcing stoves and hot-house plants: and as the naturalists tell us all animals may be bred *down* to a state very different from that in which they were originally placed; that *carriers*, and *fantails*, and *croppers*, are produced by early caging, and minutely attending to the common blue pigeon, flights of which cover the ploughed fields in distant provinces of England, and

shew the rich and changeable plumage of their fine neck to the summer sun; so from the warm and generous Briton of ancient days may be produced, and happily bred *down*, the clay-cold coxcomb of St. James's-street.

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In Italy, so far at least as I have gone, there is no impertinent desire of appearing what one is *not*: no searching for talk, and torturing expression to vary its phrases with something new and something fine; or else sinking into silence from despair of diverting the company, and taking up the opposite method, contriving to impress them with an idea of bright intelligence, concealed by modest doubts of our own powers, and stifled by deep thought upon abstruse and difficult topics. To get quit of all these deep-laid systems of enjoyment, where

To take our breakfast we project a scheme,
Nor drink our tea without a stratagem,

like the lady in Doctor Young; the surest method is to drop into Italy; where a *conversazione* at Venice or Florence, after the society of London, or *les petit soupers de Paris*, where, in their own phrase, *un tableau n'attend pas l'autre*[Footnote: One picture don't wait for another.], is like taking a walk in Ham Gardens, or the Leasowes, after *les parterres de Versailles* ed *i Terrazzi di Genoa*. We are affected in the house, but natural in the gardens. Italians are natural in society, affected and constrained in the disposition of their grounds. No one, however, is good or bad, or wise or foolish without a reason why. Restraint is made for man, and where religious and political liberty is enjoyed to its full extent, as in Great Britain, the people will forge shackles for themselves, and lay the yoke heavy on society, to which, on the contrary, Italians give a loose, as compensation for their want of freedom in affairs of church or state.

It is, I think, observable of uncontradicted, homebred, and, as we say, spoiled children, that when a dozen of them get together for the purpose of passing a day in mutual amusement, they will make to themselves the strictest laws for their game, and rigidly punish whatever breach of rule has been made while the time allotted for diversion lasts: but in a school of girls, strictly kept, at *their* hours of permitted recreation no distinct sounds can be heard through the general clamour of joy and confusion; nor does any thing come less into their heads than the notion of imposing regulations on themselves, or making sport out of the harsh sounds of *rule and government*.

Ridicule too points her arrows only among highly-polished societies—*Paris* and *London*, in the first of which all wit is comprised in the power of ridiculing one's neighbours, and in the other every artifice is put in practice to escape it. In Italy no such terrors restrain conversation; no public censure pursues that fantastical behaviour which leads to no public offence; and as it is only fear which can beget falsehood, these people seek such behavior as naturally suits them; and in our theatrical phrase, they let the character come to them, they do not go to the character.

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Let us not fail to remember after all, that such severity as we use, quickens the desire of pleasing, and deadens the diffusion of immoral sentiments, or indelicate language, in England; where, I must add, for the honour of my country, that if such liberties were taken upon the stage as are frequent in the first ranks of Italian society, they would be hissed by those who paid only a shilling for their entrance: so that affectation and a forced refinement may be considered as the bad leaden statues still left in our delicately-neat and highly-ornamented gardens; of which elegance and science are the white and red roses: but to be possessed of their *sweets*, one must venture a little through the *thorns*.—*Thorns*, though figurative, remind one of the *cicala*, a creature which leaves nothing else untouched here. Surely their clamours and depredations have no equal. I used to walk in the Boboli Gardens, defying the heat, till they had eaten up the little shade some hedges there afforded me; and till, by their incessant noise, all thought is disturbed, and no line presented itself to my memory but

Sole sob ardenti resonant arbusta Cicadis[W];

[Footnote W:

While in the scorching sun I trace in vain
Thy flying footsteps o'er the burning plain,
The creaking locusts with my voice conspire,
They fried with heat, and I with fierce desire.

DRYDEN.

]

till Mr. Merry's sweet ode to summer here at Florence made one less discontented,

To hear the light cicala's ceaseless din,
That vibrates shrill; or the near-weeping brook
That feebly winds along,
And mourns his channel shrunk.

MERRY.

This animal has four wings, four eyes, and two membranes like parchment under the hard scales he is covered with; and these, it is said, create the uncommon noise he makes, by blowing them somewhat like bellows, to sharpen the sound; which, whatever it proceeds from, is louder than can be guessed at by those who have not heard it in Tuscany. He is of the locust kind, an inch and a half long, and wonderfully light in proportion; though no small feeder, I should imagine, by the total destruction his noisy tribe make amongst the leaves, which are now wholly stript by them of all their verdure, the fibres only being left; and I observed yesterday evening, as we returned from airing, another strange deprivation practised on the mulberry leaves round the city, which being all forcibly torn away for the use of the silk-worms, make an odd sort of artificial winter

near the town walls; and remind one of the wretched geese in Lincolnshire, plucked once a year for their feathers by their truly unfeeling proprietors. I am told indeed, that both revegetate, though I trust neither tree nor bird can fail to experience fatal effects one day or other in consequence of so unnatural an operation. Here is some ivy of uncommon

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growth, but I have seen larger both at Beaumaris castle in North Wales, and at the abbey of Glastonbury in Somersetshire: but the great pines in the Caseine woods have, I suppose, no rival nearer than the Castagno a Cento Cavalli, mentioned by Mr. Brydone. They afford little shade or shelter from heat however, as their umbrella-like covering is strangely small in proportion to their height and size; some of them being ten, and some twelve feet in diameter. These venerable, these glorious productions of nature are all now marked for destruction however; all going to be put in wicker baskets, and feed the Grand Duke's fires. I saw a fellow hewing one down to-day, and the rest are all to follow;—the feeble Florentines had much ado to master it;

Seemed the harmful hatchet to fear,
And to wound holy Eld would forbear,

as Spenser says: I did half hope they could not get it down; but the loyal Tuscans (evermore awed by the name *principe*) told us it was right to get rid of them, as one of the cones, of which they bore vast quantities, might chance to drop upon the head of a *Principettino*, or little Prince, as he passed along.

I was observing that restraint was necessary to man; I have now learned a notion that noise is necessary too. The clatter made here in the Piazza del Duomo, where you sit in your carriage at a coffee-house door, and chat with your friends according to Italian custom, while *one* eats ice, and *another* calls for lemonade, to while away the time after dinner, the noise made then and there, I say, is beyond endurance.

Our Florentines have nothing on earth to do; yet a dozen fellows crying *ciambelli*, little cakes, about the square, assisted by beggars, who lie upon the church steps, and pray or rather promise to pray as loud as their lungs will let them, for the *anime sante di purgatorio*[Footnote: Holy souls in purgatory.]; ballad-singers meantime endeavouring to drown these clamours in their own, and gentlemen's servants disputing at the doors, whose master shall be first served; ripping up the pedigrees of each to prove superior claims for a biscuit or macaroon; do make such an intolerable clatter among them, that one cannot, for one's life, hear one another speak: and I did say just now, that it were as good live at Brest or Portsmouth when the rival fleets were fitting out, as here; where real tranquillity subsists under a bustle merely imaginary. Our Grand Duke lives with little state for aught I can observe here; but where there is least pomp, there is commonly most power; for a man must have *something pour se de dommages*[Footnote: To make himself amends.], as the French express it; and this gentleman possessing the *solide* has no care for the *clinquant*, I trow. He tells his subjects when to go to bed, and who to dance with, till the hour he chuses they should retire to rest, with exactly that sort of old-fashioned

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paternal authority that fathers used to exercise over their families in England before commerce had run her levelling plough over all ranks, and annihilated even the name of subordination. If he hear of any person living long in Florence without being able to give a good account of his business there, the Duke warns him to go away; and if he loiter after such warning given, sends him out. Does any nobleman shine in pompous equipage or splendid table; the Grand Duke enquires soon into his pretensions, and scruples not to give personal advice, and add grave reproofs with regard to the management of each individual's private affairs, the establishment of their sons, marriage of their sisters, &c. When they appeared to complain of this behaviour to *me*, I know not, replied I, what to answer: one has always read and heard that the Sovereigns ought to behave in despotic governments like the *fathers of their family*: and the Archbishop of Cambray inculcates no other conduct than this, when advising his pupil, heir to the crown of France. "Yes, Madam," replied one of my auditors, with an acuteness truly Italian; "but this Prince is *our father-in-law*." The truth is, much of an English traveller's pleasure is taken off at Florence by the incessant complaints of a government he does not understand, and of oppressions he cannot remedy. 'Tis so dull to hear people lament the want of liberty, to which I question whether they have any pretensions; and without ever knowing whether it is the tyranny or the tyrant they complain of. Tedious however and most uninteresting are their accounts of grievances, which a subject of Great Britain has much ado to comprehend, and more to pity; as they are now all heart-broken, because they must say their prayers in their own language and not in Latin, which, how it can be construed into misfortune, a Tuscan alone can tell.

Lord Corke has given us many pleasing anecdotes of those who were formerly Princes in this land. Had they a sovereign of the old Medici family, they would go to bed when *he* bid them quietly enough I believe, and say their prayers in what language *he* would have them: 'tis in our parliamentary phrase, the *men*, not the *measures* that offend them; and while they pretend to whine as if despotism displeased them, they detest every republican state, feel envy towards Venice, and contempt for Lucca.

I would rather talk of their gallery than their government: and surely nothing made by man ever so completely answered a raised expectation, as the apparent contest between Titian's recumbent beauty, glowing with colour and animated by the warmest expression, and the Greek statue of symmetrical perfection and fineness of form inimitable, where sculpture supplies all that fancy can desire, and all that imagination can suggest. These two models of excellence seem placed near each other, at once to mock all human praise, and defy all future imitation. The listening slave appears

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disturbed by the blows of the wrestlers in the same room, and hearkens with an attentive impatience, such as one has often felt when unable to distinguish the words one wishes to repeat. You really then do not seem as if you were alone in this tribune, so animated is every figure, so full of life and soul: yet I commend not the representing of St Catharine with leering eyes, as she is here painted by Titian; that it is meant for a portrait, I find no excuse; some character more suited to the expression should have been chosen; and if it were only the picture of a saint, that expression was strangely out of character. An anachronism may be found in the Tobit over the door too, by acute observers, who will deem it ill-managed to paint the cross in the clouds, where it is an old testament story, and that story apocryphal beside; might I add, that Guido's meek Madonna, so divinely contrasted to the other women in the room, loses something of dignity by the affected position of the thumbs. I think I might leave the tribune without a word said of the St. John by Raphael, which no words are worthy to extol: 'tis all sublimity; and when I look on it I feel nothing but veneration pushed to astonishment. Unlike the elegant figure of the Baptist at Padua, covered with glass, and belonging to a convent of friars, who told me, and truly, That it had no equal; it is painted by Guido with every perfection of form and every grace of expression. I agree with them it has no equal; but in the tribune at Florence maybe found its superior.

We were next conducted to the Niobe, who has an apartment to herself: and now, thought I, dear Mrs. Siddons has never seen this figure: but those who can see it or her, without emotions equally impossible to contain or to suppress, deserve the fate of Niobe, and have already half-suffered it. Their hearts and eyes are stone.

Nothing is worth speaking of after this Niobe! Her beauty! her maternal anguish! her closely-clasped Chloris! her half-raised head, scarcely daring to deprecate that vengeance of which she already feels such dreadful effects! What can one do

But drop the shady curtain on the scene,

and run to see the portraits of those artists who have exalted one's ideas of human nature, and shewn what man can perform. Among these worthies a British eye soon distinguishes Sir Joshua Reynolds; a citizen of the world fastens his to Leonardo da Vinci.

I have been out to dinner in the country near Prato, and what a charming, what a delightful thing is a nobleman's seat near Florence! How cheerful the society! how splendid the climate! how wonderful the prospects in this glorious country! The Arno rolling before his house, the Appenines rising behind it! a sight of fertility enjoyed by its inhabitants, and a view of such defences to their property as nature alone can bestow.

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A peasantry so rich too, that the wives and daughters of the farmer go dressed in jewels; and those of no small value. A pair of one-drop ear-rings, a broadish necklace, with a long piece hanging down the bosom, and terminated with a cross, all of set garnets clear and perfect, is a common, a *very* common treasure to the females about this country; and on every Sunday or holiday, when they dress and mean to look pretty, their elegantly-disposed ornaments attract attention strongly; though I do not think them as handsome as the Lombard lasses, and our Venetian friends protest that the farmers at Crema in *their* state are still richer.

La Contadinella Toscana however, in a very rich white silk petticoat, exceedingly full and short, to shew her neat pink slipper and pretty ancle, her pink *corps de robe* and straps, with white silk lacing down the stomacher, puffed shirt sleeves, with heavy lace robbins ending at the elbow, and fastened at the shoulders with at least eight or nine bows of narrow pink ribbon, a lawn handkerchief trimmed with broad lace, put on somewhat coquettishly, and finishing in front with a nosegay, must make a lovely figure at any rate: though the hair is drawn away from the face in a way rather too tight to be becoming, under a red velvet cushion edged with gold, which helps to wear it off I think, but gives the small Leghorn hat, lined with green, a pretty perking air, which is infinitely nymphish and smart. A tolerably pretty girl so dressed may surely more than vie with a *fille d'opera* upon the Paris stage, even were she not set off as these are with a very rich suit of pearls or set garnets, that in France or England would not be purchased for less than forty or fifty pounds: and I am now speaking of the women perpetually under one's eye; not one or two picked from the crowd, like Mrs. Vanini, an inn-keeper's wife in Florence, who, when she was dressed for the masquerade two nights ago, submitted her finery to Mrs. Greatheed's inspection and my own; who agreed she could not be so adorned in England for less than a thousand pounds.

It is true the nobility are proud of letting you see how comfortably their dependants live in Tuscany; but can any pride be more rational or generous, or any desire more patriotick? Oh may they never look with less delight on the happiness of their inferiors! and then they will not murmur at their prince, whose protection of *this* rank among his subjects is eminently tender and attentive.

Returning home from our splendid dinner and agreeable day passed at Conte Mannucci's country-seat, while our noble friends amused me with various chat, I thought some unaccountable sparks of fire seemed to strike up and down the hedges as if in perpetual motion, but checked the fancy concluding it a trick of the imagination only; till the evening, which shuts in strangely quick here in Tuscany, grew dark, and exhibited an appearance wholly new to me; whose surprise

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that no flame followed these wandering fires was not small, when I recollected the state of desiccation that nature suffered, and had done for some months. My dislike of interrupting an agreeable conversation kept me long from enquiring into the cause of this appearance, which however I doubted not was electrick, till they told me it was the *lucciola*, or fire-fly; of which a very good account is given in twenty books, but I had forgotten them all. As the Florence Miscellany has never been published, I will copy out what is said of it *there*, because the Abate Fontana was consulted when that description was given.

“This insect then differs from every other of the luminous tribe, because its light is by no means continual, but emitted by flashes, suddenly striking out as it flies; when crushed it leaves a lustre on the spot for a considerable time, from whence one may conclude its nature is phosphorick.”

Oh vagrant insect, type of our short life,
'Tis thus we shine, and vanish from the view;
For the cold season comes,
And all our lustre's o'er.

MERRY's Ode to Summer.

It is said I think, that no animal affords an acid except ants, which are therefore most quickly destroyed by lime, pot-ash, &c. or any strong alkali of course; yet acid must the *lucciola* be proved, or she can never be phosphorick surely; as upon its analysis that strangest of all compositions appears to be a union of violent acid with inflammable matter, whence it may be termed an animal sulphur, and is actually found to burn successfully under a common glass-bell; and to afford flowers too, which, by attracting the humidity of the air, become a liquor like *oleum sulphuris per campanam*[Footnote: Oil of sulphur by the bell.].

The colour of the sky viewed, when one dares to look at it, through this pure atmosphere is particularly beautiful; of a much more brilliant and celestial blue I think, than it appeared from the tower of St. Mark's Place, Venice. Were I to affirm that the sea is of a more peculiar transparent brightness upon the coast of North Wales than elsewhere, it would seem prejudice perhaps, and yet is strictly true: I am not less persuaded that the sky appears of a finer tint in Tuscany than any other country I have visited:—Naples is however the vaunted climate, and that yet remains to be examined.

I have been shewed, at the horse-race, the theatre, &c. the unfortunate grandson of King James the Second. He goes much into publick still, though old and sickly; gives the English arms and livery, and wears the garter, which he has likewise bestowed upon his natural daughter. The Princess of Stoldberg, his consort, whom he always called

Queen, has left him to end a life of disappointment and sorrow by *himself*, with the sad reflection, that even conjugal attachment, and of course domestic comfort, was denied to *him*, and fled—in defiance of poetry and fiction—fled with the crown, to its powerful and triumphant possessors.

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The Duomo, or Cathedral, has engaged my attention all to-day: its prodigious size, perfect proportions, and exquisite taste, ought to have detained me longer. Though the outside does not please me as well as if it had been less rich and less magnificent. Superfluity always defeats its own purpose, of striking you with awe at its superior greatness; while simplicity looks on, and laughs at its vain attempts. This wonderful church, built of striped marbles, white, black, and red alternately, has scarcely the air of being so composed, but looks like painted ivory to *me*, who am obliged to think, and think again, before I can be sure it is of so ponderous and massy, as well as so inestimable a substance: nor can I, without more than equal difficulty, persuade myself to give its sudden view the decided preference over St. Paul's in London, which never, never misses its immediate effect on a spectator,

But stands sublime in simplest majesty.

The Battisterio is another structure close to the church, and of surprising beauty; Michael Angelo said the gates of it deserved to be those which open Paradise: and that speech was more the speech of a good workman, than of a man whose mind was exalted by his profession. The gates are of brass, divided into ninety-six compartments each, and carved with such variety of invention, such elaboration of art and ingenuity, that no praise except that which he gave them could have been too high. The font has not been used since the days when immersion in baptism was deemed necessary to salvation; a ceremony still considered by the Greek church as indispensable. Why the disputes concerning *this* sacrament were carried on with more decency and less lasting rancour among Christians, than those which related to the other great pledge of our pardon, the communicating with our Saviour Christ in his last Supper, I know not, nor can imagine. Every page of ecclesiastical history exhibits the tenaciousness with which the smallest attendant circumstance on this last-mentioned sacrament has been held fast by the Romanists, who dropped the immersion at baptism of themselves; and in so warm a climate too! it moves my wonder; when nothing is more obvious to the meanest understanding, than that if the first sacrament is not rightly and duly administered, we never shall arrive at receiving the other at all. I hope it is impossible for any one less than myself to wish the continuance or revival of contentions so disgraceful to humanity in general; so peculiarly repugnant to the true spirit of Christianity, which consists chiefly in charity, and that brotherly love we know to have been cemented by the blood of our blessed Lord: yet very strange it is to think, that while other innovations have been resisted even to death, scarcely any among the many sects we have divided into, retain the original form in that ceremony so emphatically called *christening*.

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These observations suggested by the sight of the old font at Florence shall now be succeeded by lighter subjects of reflection; among which the first that presents itself is the superior elegance of the language; for till we arrive *here*, all is dialect; though by this word I would not have any one mistake me, or understand it as meant in the limited sense of a provincial jargon, such as Yorkshire, Derbyshire, or Cornwall, present us with; where every sound is corruption, barbarism, and vulgarity.

The States of Italy being all under different rulers, are kept separate from each other, and speak a different dialect; that of Milan full of consonants and harsh to the ear, but abounding with classical expressions that rejoice one's heart, and fill one with the oddest but most pleasing sensations imaginable. I heard a lady there call a runaway nobleman *Profugo* mighty prettily; and added, that his conduct had put all the town into *orgasmo grande*. All this, however, the Tuscans may possibly have in common with them. My knowledge of the language must remain ever too imperfect for me to depend on my own skill in it; all I can assert is, that the Florentines *appear*, as far as I have been competent to observe, to depend more on their own copious and beautiful language for expression, than the Milanese do; who run to Spanish, Greek, or Latin for assistance, while half their tongue is avowedly borrowed from the French, whose pronunciation, in the letter *u*, they even profess to retain.

At Venice, the sweetness of the patois is irresistible; their lips, incapable of uttering any but the sweetest sounds, reject all consonants they can get quit of; and make their mouths drop honey more completely than it can be said by any eloquence less mellifluous than their own.

The Bolognese dialect is detested by the other Italians, as gross and disagreeable in its sounds: but every nation has the good word of its own inhabitants; and the language which Abbate Bianconi praises as nervous and expressive, I would advise no person, less learned than himself, to censure as disgusting, or condemn as dull. I staid very little at Bologna; saw nothing but their pictures, and heard nothing but their prayers: those were superior, I fancy, to all rivals. Language can be never spoken of by a foreigner to any effect of conviction. I have heard our countryman. Mr. Greatheed himself, who perhaps possesses more Italian than almost any Englishman, and studies it more closely, refuse to decide in critical disputations among his literary friends here, though the sonnets he writes in the Tuscan language are praised by the natives, who best understand it, and have been by some of them preferred to those written by Milton himself. Mean time this is acknowledged to be the prime city for purity of phrase and delicacy of expression, which, at last, is so disguised to me by the guttural manner in which many sounds are pronounced, that I feel half weary of running about from town to town so, and never arriving at any, where I can understand the conversation without putting all the attention possible to their discourse. I am now told that less efforts will be necessary at Rome.

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Nothing can be prettier, however, than the slow and tranquil manners of a Florentine; nothing more polished than his general address and behaviour: ever in the third person, though to a blackguard in the street, if he has not the honour of his particular acquaintance, while intimacy produces *voi* in those of the highest rank, who call one another Carlo and Angelo very sweetly; the ladies taking up the same notion, and saying Louisa, or Maddalena, without any addition at all.

The Don and Donna of Milan were offensive to me somehow, as they conveyed an idea of Spain, not Italy. Here Signora is the term, which better pleases one's ear, and Signora Contessa, Signora Principessa, if the person is of higher quality, resembles our manners more when we say my Lady Dutchess, &c. What strikes me as most observable, is the uniformity of style in all the great towns.

At Venice the men of literature and fashion speak with the same accent, and I believe the same quick turns of expression as their Gondolier; and the coachman at Milan talks no broader than the Countess; who, if she does not speak always in French to a foreigner, as she would willingly do, tries in vain to talk Italian; and having asked you thus, *alla capi?* which means *ha ella capita?* laughs at herself for trying to *toscaneggiare*, as she calls it, and gives the point up with *no cor altr.* that comes in at the end of every sentence, and means *non occorre altro*; there is no more occurs upon the subject.

The Laquais de Place who attended us at Bologna was one of the few persons I had met then, who spoke a language perfectly intelligible to me. "Are you a Florentine, pray friend, said I?" "No, madam, but the *combinations* of this world having led me to talk much with strangers, I contrive to *tuscanize* it all I can for *their* advantage, and doubt not but it will tend to my own at last."

Such a sentiment, so expressed by a footman, would set a plain man in London a laughing, and make a fanciful Lady imagine he was a nobleman disguised. Here nobody laughs, nor nobody stares, nor wonders that their valet speaks just as good language, or utters as well-turned sentences as themselves. Their cold answer to my amazement is as comical as the fellow's fine style—*e battizzato*[Footnote: He has been baptized.], say they, *come noi altri*[Footnote: As well as we.]. But we are called away to hear the fair Fantastici, a young woman who makes improvise verses, and sings them, as they tell me, with infinite learning and taste. She is successor to the celebrated Corilla, who no longer exhibits the power she once held without a rival: yet to *her* conversations every one still strives for admittance, though she is now ill, and old, and hoarse with repeated colds. She spares, however, now by no labour or fatigue to obtain and keep that superiority and admiration which one day perhaps gave her almost equal trouble to receive

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and to repay. But who can bear to lay their laurels by? Corilla is gay by nature, and witty, if I may say so, by habit; replete with fancy, and powerful to combine images apparently distant. Mankind is at last more just to people of talents than is universally allowed, I think. Corilla, without pretensions either to immaculate character (in the English sense), deep erudition, or high birth, which an Italian esteems above all earthly things, has so made her way in the world, that all the nobility of both sexes crowd to her house; that no Prince passes through Florence without waiting on Corilla; that the Capitol will long recollect her being crowned there, and that many sovereigns have not only sought her company, but have been obliged to put up with slights from her independent spirit, and from her airy, rather than haughty behaviour. She is, however, (I cannot guess why) not rich, and keeps no carriage; but enjoying all the effect of money, convenience, company, and general attention, is probably very happy; as she does not much suffer her thoughts of the next world to disturb her felicity in *this*, I believe, while willing to turn every thing into mirth, and make all admire *her wit*, even at the expence of *their own virtue*. The following Epigram, made by her, will explain my meaning, and give a specimen of her present powers of improvisation, undecayed by ill health; and I might add, *undismayed* by it. An old gentleman here, one Gaetano Testa Grossa had a young wife, whose name was Mary, and who brought him a son when he was more than seventy years old. Corilla led him gaily into the circle of company with these words:

“Miei Signori Io vi presento
Il buon Uomo Gaetano;
Che non sa che cosa sia
Il misterio sovr’umano
Del Figliuolo di Maria.”

Let not the infidels triumph however, or rank among them the truly-illustrious Corilla! 'Twas but the rage, I hope, of keeping at any rate the fame she has gained, when the sweet voice is gone, which once enchanted all who heard it—like the daughters of Pierius in Ovid.

And though I was exceedingly entertained by the present improvisatrice, the charming Fantastici, whose youth, beauty, erudition, and fidelity to her husband, give her every claim upon one's heart, and every just pretension to applause, I could not, in the midst of that delight, which classick learning and musical excellence combined to produce, forbear a grateful recollection of the civilities I had received from Corilla, and half-regretting that her rival should be so successful;

For tho' the treacherous tapster, Thomas,
Hangs a new angel ten doors from us,

We hold it both a shame and sin
To quit the true old Angel Inn.

Well! if some people have too little appearance of respect for religion, there are others who offend one by having too much, and so the balance is kept even.

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We were a walking last night in the gardens of Porto St. Gallo, and met two or three well-looking women of the second rank, with a baby, four or five years old at most, dressed in the habit of a Dominican Friar, bestowing the benediction as he walked along like an officiating Priest. I felt a shock given to all my nerves at once, and asked Cavalier D'Elci the meaning of so strange a device. His reply to me was, "*E divozione mal intesa, Signora*[Footnote: 'Tis ill-understood devotion, madam.];" and turning round to the other gentlemen, "Now this folly," said he, "a hundred years ago would have been the object of profound veneration and prodigious applause. Fifty years hence it would be censured as hypocritical; it is now passed by wholly unnoticed, except by this foreign Lady, who, I believe, thought it was done for a joke.

I have had a little fever since I came hither from the intense heat I trust; but my maid has a worse still. Doctor Bicchiere, with that liberality which ever is found to attend real learning, prescribed James's powders to *her*, and bid me attend to Buchan's Domestick Medicine, and I should do well enough he said.

Mr. Greatheed, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Biddulph, and Mr. Piozzi, have been together on a party of pleasure to see the renowned Vallombrosa, and came home contradicting Milton, who says the devils lay bestrewn

Thick as autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa:

Whereas, say they, the trees are all evergreen in those woods. Milton, it seems, was right notwithstanding: for the botanists tell me, that nothing makes more litter than the shedding of leaves, which, replace themselves by others, as on the plants stiled evergreen, which change like every tree, but only do not change all at once, and remain stript till spring. They spoke highly of their very kind and hospitable reception at the convent, where

Safe from pangs the worldling knows,
Here secure in calm repose,
Far from life's perplexing maze,
The pious fathers pass their days;
While the bell's shrill-tinkling sound
Regulates their constant round.

And

Here the traveller elate
Finds an ever-open gate:
All his wants find quick supply,
While welcome beams from every eye.

PARSONS.

This pious foundation of retired Benedictines, situated in the Appenines, about eighteen miles from Florence, owes its original to Giovanni Gualberto, a Tuscan nobleman, whose brother Hugo having been killed by a relation in the year 1015, he resolved to avenge his death; but happening to meet the assassin alone and in a solitary place, whither he appeared to have been driven by a sense of guilt, and seeing him suddenly drop down at his feet, and without uttering a word produce from his bosom a crucifix, holding it up in a supplicating gesture, with look submissively imploring, he felt the force of this silent rhetoric, and generously gave his enemy free pardon.

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On further reflection upon the striking scene, Gualberto felt still more affected; and from seeing the dangers and temptations which surround a bustling life, resolved to quit the too much mixed society of mankind, and settle in a state of perpetual retirement. For this purpose he chose Vallombrosa, and there founded the famous convent so justly admired by all who visit it.

Such stories lead one forward to the tombs of Michael Angelo and the great Galileo, which last I looked on to-day with reverence, pity, and wonder; to think that a change so surprising should be made in worldly affairs since his time; that the man who no longer ago than the year 1636, was by the torments and terrors of the Inquisition obliged formally to renounce, as heretical, accursed, and contrary to religion, the revived doctrines of Copernicus, should now have a monument erected to his memory, in the very city where he was born, whence he was cruelly torn away to answer at Rome for the supposed offence; to which he returned; and strange to tell, in which he lived on, by his own desire, with the wife who, by her discovery of his sentiments, and information given to the priests accordingly, had caused his ruin; and who, after his death, in a fit of mad mistaken zeal, flung into the fire, in company with her confessor, all the papers she could find in his study.

How wonderful are these events! and how sweet must the science of astronomy have been to that poor man, who suffered all but actual martyrdom in its cause! How odd too, that ever Galileo's son, by such a mother as we have just described, should apply himself to the same studies, and be the inventor of the simple pendulum so necessary to every kind of clock-work!

Religious prejudices however, and their effects—and thanks be to God their almost final conclusion too—may be found nearer home than Galileo's tomb; while Milton has a monument in the same cathedral with Dr. South, who perhaps would have given credit to no *human* information, which should have told him that event would take place.

We are now going soon to leave Florence, seat of the arts and residence of literature! I shall be sincerely sorry to quit a city where not a step can be taken without a new or a revived idea being added to our store;—where such statues as would in England have colleges founded, or palaces built for their reception, stand in the open street; the Centaur, the Sabine woman, and the Justice: Where the Madonna della Seggiola reigns triumphant over all pictures for brilliancy of colouring and vigour of pencil.

It was the portrait of Raphaëlle's favourite mistress, and his own child by her sate for the Bambino:—is it then wonderful that it should want that heavenly expression of dignity divine, and grace unutterable, which breathes through the school of Caracci? Connoisseurs will have all excellence united in one picture, and quarrel unkindly if merit of any kind be wanting: Surely the Madonna della Seggiola has nature to recommend it, and much more need not be desired. If the young and tender and playful innocence

of early infancy is what chiefly delights and detains one's attention, it may be found to its utmost possible perfection in a painter far inferior to Raphael, Carlo Marratt.

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If softness in the female character, and meek humility of countenance, be all that are wanted for the head of a Madonna, we must go to Elisabetta Sirani and Sassoferrata I think; but it is ever so. The Cordelia of Mrs. Cibber was beyond all comparison softer and sweeter than that of her powerful successor Siddons; yet who will say that the actresses were equal?

But I must bid adieu to beautiful Florence, where the streets are kept so clean one is afraid to dirty *them*, and not *one's self*, by walking in them: where the public walks are all nicely weeded, as in England, and the gardens have a homeish and Bath-like look, that is excessively cheering to an English eye:—where, when I dined at Prince Corsini's table, I heard the Cardinal say grace, and thought of the ceremonies at Queen's College, Oxford; where I had the honour of entertaining, at my own dinner on the 25th of July, many of the Tuscan, and many of the English nobility; and Nardini kindly played a solo in the evening at a concert we gave in Meghitt's great room:—where we have compiled the little book amongst us, known by the name of the Florence Miscellany; as a memorial of that friendship which does me so much honour, and which I earnestly hope may long subsist among us:—where in short we have lived exceeding comfortably, but where dear Mrs. Greatheed and myself have encouraged each other, in saying it would be particularly sad to *die*, not of the gnats, or more properly mosquitoes, for they do not sting one quite to death, though their venom has swelled my arm so as to oblige me to carry it for this last week in a sling; but of the *mal di petto*, which is endemial in this country, and much resembling our pleurisy in its effects.

Blindness too seems no uncommon misfortune at Florence, from the strong reverberation of the sun's rays on houses of the cleanest and most brilliant whiteness; kept so elegantly nice too, that I should despair of seeing more delicacy at Amsterdam.

Apoplexies are likewise frequent enough: I saw a man carried out stone dead from St. Pancrazio's church one morning about noon-day; but nobody seemed disturbed at the event I think, except myself. Though this is no good town to take one's last leave of life in neither; as the body one has been so long taking care of, would in twenty-four hours be hoisted up upon a common cart, with those of all the people who died the same day, and being fairly carried out of Porto San Gallo towards the dusk of evening, would be shot into a hole dug away from the city, properly enough, to protect Florence, and keep it clear of putrid disorders and disagreeable smells. All this with little ceremony to be sure, and less distinction; for the Grand Duke suffers the pride of birth to last no longer than life however, and demolishes every hope of the woman of quality lying in a separate grave from the distressed object who begged at her carriage door when she was last on an airing.

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Let me add, that his liberality of sentiment extends to virtue on the one hand, if hardness of heart may be complained of on the other. He suffers no difference of opinions to operate on his philosophy, and I believe we heretics here should sleep among the best of his Tuscan nobles. But there is no comfort in the possibility of being buried alive by the excessive haste with which people are caught up and hurried away, before it can be known almost whether all sparks of life are extinct or no. Such management, and the lamentations one hears made by the great, that they should thus be forced to keep *bad company* after death, remind me for ever of an old French epigram, the sentiment of which I perfectly recollect, but have forgotten the verses, of which however these lines are no unfaithful translation;

I dreamt that in my house of clay,
A beggar buried by me lay;
Rascal! go stink apart, I cry'd,
Nor thus disgrace my noble side.
Heyday! cries he, what's here to do?
I'm on my dunghill sure, as well as you.

Of elegant Florence then, so ornamented and so lovely, so neat that it is said she should be seen only on holidays; dedicated of old to Flora, and still the residence of sweetness, grace, and the fine arts particularly; of these kind friends too, so amiable, so hospitable, where I had the choice of four boxes every night at the theatre, and a certainty of charming society in each, we must at last unwillingly take leave; and on tomorrow, the twelfth day of September 1785, once more commit ourselves to our coach, which has hitherto met with no accident that could affect us, and in which, with God's protection, I fear not my journey through what is left of Italy; though such tremendous tales are told in many of our travelling books, of terrible roads and wicked postillions, and ladies labouring through the mire on foot, to arrive at bad inns where nothing eatable could be found. All which however is less despicable than Tournefort, the great French botanist; who, while his works swell with learning, and sparkle with general knowledge; while he enlarges *your* stock of ideas, and displays *his own*; laments pathetically that he could not get down the partridges caught for him in one of the Archipelagon islands, because they were not larded—*a la mode de Paris*.

LUCCA.

From the head-quarters of painting, sculpture, and architecture then, where art is at her acme, and from a people polished into brilliancy, perhaps a little into weakness, we drove through the celebrated vale of Arno; thick hedges on each side us, which in spring must have been covered with blossoms and fragrant with perfume; now loaded with uncultivated fruits; the wild grape, raspberry, and azaroli, inviting to every sense, and promising every joy. This beautiful and fertile, this highly-adorned and truly delicious

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country carried us forward to Lucca, where the panther sits at the gate, and liberty is written up on every wall and door. It is so long since I have seen the word, that even the letters of it rejoice my heart; but how the panther came to be its emblem, who can tell? Unless the philosophy we learn from old Lilly in our childhood were true, *nec vult panthera domari*[Footnote: That the panther will never be tamed.].

That this fairy commonwealth should so long have maintained its independency is strange; but Howel attributes her freedom to the active and industrious spirit of the inhabitants, who, he says, resemble a hive of bees, for order and for diligence. I never did see a place so populous for the size of it: one is actually thronged running up and down the streets of Lucca, though it is a little town enough for a capital city to be sure; larger than Salisbury though, and prettier than Nottingham, the beauties of both which places it unites with all the charms peculiar to itself.

The territory they claim, and of which no power dares attempt to dispossess them, is much about the size of *Rutlandshire* I fancy; surrounded and apparently fenced in on every side, by the Appenines as by a wall, that wall a hot one, on the southern side, and wholly planted over with vines, while the soft shadows which fall upon the declivity of the mountains make it inexpressibly pretty; and form, by the particular disposition of their light and shadow, a variety which no other prospect so confined can possibly enjoy.

This is the Ilam gardens of Europe; and whoever has seen that singular spot in Derbyshire belonging to Mr. Port, has seen little Lucca in a convex mirror. Some writer calls it a ring upon the finger of the Emperor, under whose protection it has been hitherto preserved safe from the Grand Duke of Tuscany till these days, in which the interests of those two sovereigns, united by intimacy as by blood and resemblance of character, are become almost exactly the same.

A Doge, whom they call the *Principe*, is elected every two months; and is assisted by ten senators in the administration of justice.

Their armoury is the prettiest plaything I ever yet saw, neatly kept, and capable of furnishing twenty-five thousand men with arms. Their revenues are about equal to the Duke of Bedford's I believe, eighty or eighty-five thousand pounds sterling a year; every spot of ground belonging to these people being cultivated to the highest pitch of perfection that agriculture, or rather gardening (for one cannot call these enclosures fields), will admit: and though it is holiday time just now, I see no neglect of necessary duty. They were watering away this morning at seven o'clock, just as we do in a nursery-ground about London, a hundred men at once, or more, before they came home to make themselves smart, and go to hear music in their best church, in honour of some saint, I have forgotten who; but he is the patron of Lucca, and cannot be accused of neglecting his charge, that is certain.

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This city seems really under admirable regulations; here are fewer beggars than even at Florence, where however one for fifty in the states of Genoa or Venice do not meet your eyes: And either the word liberty has bewitched me, or I see an air of plenty without insolence, and business without noise, that greatly delight me. Here is much cheerfulness too, and gay good-humour; but this is the season of devotion at Lucca, and in these countries the ideas of devotion and diversion are so blended, that all religious worship seems connected with, and to me now regularly implies, *a festive show*.

Well, as the Italians say, "*Il mondo e bello perche e variabile*" [Footnote: The world is pleasant because it is various.]. We English dress our clergymen in black, and go ourselves to the theatre in colours. Here matters are reversed, the church at noon looked like a flower-garden, so gaily adorned were the priests, confrairies, &c. while the Opera-house at night had more the air of a funeral, as every body was dressed in black: a circumstance I had forgotten the meaning of, till reminded that such was once the emulation of finery among the persons of fashion in this city, that it was found convenient to restrain the spirit of expence, by obliging them to wear constant mourning: a very rational and well-devised rule in a town so small, where every body is known to every body; and where, when this silly excitement to envy is wisely removed, I know not what should hinder the inhabitants from living like those one reads of in the Golden Age; which, above all others, this climate most resembles, where pleasure contributes to sooth life, commerce to quicken it, and faith extends its prospects to eternity. Such is, or such at least appears to me this lovely territory of Lucca: where cheap living, free government, and genteel society, may be enjoyed with a tranquillity unknown to larger states: where there are delicious and salutary baths a few miles out of town, for the nobility to make *villeggiatura* at; and where, if those nobility were at all disposed to cultivate and communicate learning, every opportunity for study is afforded.

Some drawbacks will however always be found from human felicity. I once mentioned this place with warm expectations of delight, to a Milanese lady of extensive knowledge, and every elegant accomplishment worthy her high birth, *the Contessa Melzi Resla*. "Why yes," said she, "if you would find out the place where common sense stagnates, and every topic of conversation dwindles and perishes away by too frequent or too unskilful touching and handling, you must go to Lucca. My ill-health sent me to their beautiful baths one summer; where all the faculties of my body were restored, thank God, but those of my soul were stupified to such a degree, that at last I was fit to keep no other company but *Dame Lucchesi* I think; and *our* talk was soon ended, heaven knows, for when they had once asked me of an evening, what I had for dinner? and told me how many pair of stockings their neighbours sent to the wash, we had done."

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This was a young, a charming, a lively lady of quality; full of curiosity to know the world, and of spirits to bustle through it; but had she been battered through the various societies of London and Paris for eighteen or twenty years together, she would have loved Lucca better, and despised it less. "We must not look for whales in the Euxine Sea," says an old writer; and we must not look for great men or great things in little nations to be sure, but let us respect the innocence of childhood, and regard with tenderness the territory of Lucca: where no man has been murdered during the life or memory of any of its peaceful inhabitants; where one robbery alone has been committed for sixteen years; and the thief hanged by a Florentine executioner borrowed for the purpose, no Lucchese being able or willing to undertake so horrible an office, with terrifying circumstances of penitence and public reprehension: where the governed are so few in proportion to the governors; all power being circulated among four hundred and fifty nobles, and the whole country producing scarcely ninety thousand souls. A great boarding-school in England is really an infinitely more licentious place; and grosser immoralities are every day connived at in it, than are known to pollute this delicate and curious commonwealth; which keeps a council always subsisting, called the *Discoli*, to examine the lives and conduct, professions, and even *health* of their subjects: and once o'year they sweep the town of vagabonds, which till then are caught up and detained in a house of correction, and made to work, if not disabled by lameness, till the hour of their release and dismissal. I wondered there were so few beggars about, but the reason is now apparent: these we see are neighbours, come hither only for the three days gala.

I was wonderfully solicitous to obtain some of their coin, which carries on it the image of no *earthly* prince; but his head only who came to redeem us from general slavery on the one side, *Jesus Christ*; on the other, the word *Libertas*.

Our peasant-girls here are in a new dress to me; no more jewels to be seen, no more pearls; the finery of which so dazzled me in Tuscany: these wenches are prohibited such ornaments it seems. A muslin handkerchief, folded in a most becoming manner, and starched exactly enough to make it wear clean four days, is the head-dress of Lucchese lasses; it is put on turban-wise, and they button their gowns close, with long sleeves *a la Savoyarde*; but it is made often of a stiff brocaded silk, and green lapels, with cuffs of the same colour; nor do they wear any hats at all, to defend them from a sun which does undoubtedly mature the fig and ripen the vine, but which, by the same excess of power, exalts the venom of the viper, and gives the scorpion means to keep me in perpetual torture for fear of his poison, of which, though they assure us death is seldom the consequence among *them*, I know his sting would finish me at once, because the gnats at Florence were sufficient to lame me for a considerable time.

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The dialect has lost much of the guttural sound that hurt one's ear at the last place of residence; but here is an odd squeaking accent, that distinguishes the Tuscan of Lucca.

The place appropriated for airing, showing fine equipages, &c. is beautiful beyond all telling; from the peculiar shadows on the mountains. They make the bastions of the town their Corso, but none except the nobles can go and drive upon one part of it. I know not how many yards of ground is thus let apart, sacred to sovereignty; but it makes one laugh.

Our inn here is an excellent one, as far as I am concerned; and the sallad-oil green, like Irish usquebaugh, nothing was ever so excellent. I asked the French valet who dresses our hair, "*Si ce n'était pas une republique mignonne?*"[X]"—"Ma foy, madame, je la trouve plus tot la republique des rats et des souris[Y];" replies the fellow, who had not slept all night, I afterwards understood, for the noise those troublesome animals made in his room.

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote X: If it were not a dear little pretty commonwealth—this?]

[Footnote Y: Faith, madam, I call it the republic of the rats and mice.]

PISA.

This town has been so often described that it is as well known in England as in Italy almost; where I, like others, have seen the magnificent cathedral; have examined the two pillars which support its entrance, and which once adorned Diana's temple at Ephesus, one of the seven wonders of the world. Their carving is indeed beyond all idea of workmanship; and the possession of them is inestimable. I have seen the old stones with inscriptions on them, bearing date the reign of Antoninus Pius, stuck casually, some with the letters reversed, some sloping, according to accident merely, as it appears to me, in the body of the great church: and I have seen the leaning tower that Lord Chesterfield so comically describes our English travellers eagerness to see. It is a beautiful building though after all, and a strange thing that it should lean so. The cylindrical form, and marble pillars that support each story, may rationally enough attract a stranger's notice, and one is sorry the lower stories have sunk from their foundations, originally defective ones I trust they were, though, God knows, if the Italians do not build towers well, it is not for want either of skill or of experience; for there is a tower to every town I think, and commonly fabricated with elaborate nicety and well-fixed bases. But as earthquakes and subterranean fires here are scarcely a wonder, one need not marvel much at seeing the ground retreat just *here*. It is nearer our hand, and quite as

well worth our while to enquire, why the tower at *Bridgnorth* in Shropshire leans exactly in the same direction, and is full as much out of the perpendicular as this at Pisa.

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The brazen gates here, carved by John of Bologna, at least begun by him, are a wonderful work; and the marbles in the baptistery beat those of Florence for value and for variety. A good lapidary might find perpetual amusement in adjusting the claims of superiority to these precious columns of jasper, granite, alabaster, &c. The different animals which support the font being equally admirable for their composition as for their workmanship.

The Campo Santo is an extraordinary place, and, for aught I know, unparalleled for its power over the mind in exciting serious contemplations upon the body's decay, and suggesting consolatory thoughts concerning the soul's immortality. Here in three days, owing to quick-lime mixed among the earth, vanishes every vestige, every trace of the human being carried thither seventy hours before, and here round the walls Giotto and Cimabue have exhausted their invention to impress the passers-by with deep and pensive melancholy.

The four stages of man's short life, infancy, childhood, maturity, and decrepit age, not ill represented by one of the ancient artists, shew the sad but not slow progress we make to this dark abode; while the last judgment, hell, and paradise inform us what events of the utmost consequence are to follow our journey. All this a modern traveller finds out to be *vastly ridiculous!* though Doctor Smollet (*whose book I think he has read*) confesses, that the spacious Corridor round the Campo Santo di Pisa would make the noblest walk in the world perhaps for a contemplative philosopher.

The tomb of Algarotti produces softer ideas when one looks at the sepulchre of a man who, having deserved and obtained such solid and extensive praise, modestly contented himself with desiring that his epitaph might be so worded, as to record, upon a simple but lasting monument, that he had the honour of being disciple to the immortal *Newton*.

The battle of the bridge here at Pisa drew a great many spectators this year, as it has not been performed for a considerable time before: the waiters at our inn here give a better account of it than one should have got perhaps from Cavalier or Dama, who would have felt less interested in the business, and seen it from a greater distance. The armies of Sant' Antonio, and I think San Giovanni Battista, but I will not be positive as to the last, disputed the possession of the bridge, and fought gallantly I fancy; but the first remained conqueror, as our very conversable *Camerieres* took care to inform us, as it was on that side it seems that they had exerted their valour.

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Calling theatres, and ships, and running horses, and mock fights, and almost every thing so by the names of Saints, whom we venerate in silence, and they themselves publicly worship, has a most profane and offensive sound with it to be sure; and shocks delicate ears very dreadfully: and I used to reprimand my maids at Milan for bringing up the blessed Virgin Mary's name on every trivial, almost on every ludicrous occasion, with a degree of sharpness they were not accustomed to, because it kept me in a constant shivering. Yet let us reflect a moment on our own conduct in England, and we shall be forced candidly to confess that the Puritans alone keep their lips unpolluted by breach of the third commandment, while the common exclamation of *good God!* scrupled by few people on the slightest occurrences, and apparently without any temptation in the world, is no less than gross irreverence of his sacred name, whom we acknowledge to be

Father of all, in every age
In every clime ador'd;
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.

Nor have the ladies at a London card-table Italian ignorance to plead in their excuse; as not instruction but docility is wanted among almost all ranks of people in Great Britain, where, if the Christian religion were practised as it is understood, little could be wished for its eternal, as little is left out among the blessings of its temporal welfare.

I have been this morning to look at the Grand Duke's camels, which he keeps in his park as we do deer in England. There were a hundred and sixteen of them, pretty creatures! and they breed very well here, and live quite at their ease, only housing them the winter months: they are perfectly docile and gentle the man told me, apparently less tender of their young than mares, but more approachable by human creatures than even such horses as have been long at grass. That dun hue one sees them of, is, it seems, not totally and invariably the same, though I doubt not but it is so in their native deserts. Let it once become a fashion for sovereigns and other great men to keep and to caress them, we shall see camels as variegated as cats, which in the woods are all of the uniformly-streaked tabby—the males inclining to the brown shade—the females to blue among them;—but being bred *down*, become tortoise-shell, and red, and every variety of colour, which domestication alone can bestow.

The misery of Tuscany is, that *all animals* thrive so happily under this productive sun; so that if you scorn the Zanzariere, you are half-devoured before morning, and so disfigured, that I defy one's nearest friends to recollect one's countenance; while the spiders sting as much as any of their insects; and one of them bit me this very day till the blood came.

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With all this not ill-founded complaint of these our active companions, my constant wonder is, that the grapes hang untouched this 20th of September, in vast heavy clusters covered with bloom; and unmolested by insects, which, with a quarter of this heat in England, are encouraged to destroy all our fruit in spite of the gardener's diligence to blow up nests, cover the walls with netting, and hang them about with bottles of syrup, to court the creatures in, who otherwise so damage every fig and grape and plum of ours, that nothing but the skins are left remaining *by now*. *Here* no such contrivances are either wanted or thought on; and while our islanders are sedulously bent to guard, and studious to invent new devices to protect their half dozen peaches from their half dozen wasps, the standard trees of Italy are loaded with high-flavoured and delicious fruits.

Here figs sky-dy'd a purple hue disclose,
Green looks the olive, the pomegranate glows;
Here dangling pears exalted scents unfold,
And yellow apples ripen into gold.

The roadside is indeed hedged with festoons of vines, crawling from olive to olive, which they plant in the ditches of Tuscany as we do willows in Britain: mulberry trees too by the thousand, and some pollarded poplars serve for support to the glorious grapes that will now soon be gathered. What least contributes to the beauty of the country however, is perhaps most subservient to its profits. I am ashamed to write down the returns of money gained by the oil alone in this territory and that of Lucca, where I was much struck with the colour as well as the excellence of this useful commodity. Nor can I tell why none of that green cast comes over to England, unless it is, that, like essential oil of chamomile, it loses the tint by exposure to the air.

An olive tree, however, is no elegantly-growing or happily-coloured plant: straggling and dusky, one is forced to think of its produce, before one can be pleased with its merits, as in a deformed and ugly friend or companion.

The fogs now begin to fall pretty heavily in a morning, and rising about the middle of the day, leave the sun at liberty to exert his violence very powerfully. At night come forth the inhabitants, like dor-beetles at sunset on the coast of Sussex; then is their season to walk and chat, and sing and make love, and run about the street with a girl and a guittar; to eat ice and drink lemonade; but never to be seen drunk or quarrelsome, or riotous. Though night is the true season of Italian felicity, they place not their happiness in brutal frolics, any more than in malicious titterings; they are idle and they are merry: it is, I think, the worst we can say of them; they are idle because there is little for them to do, and merry because they have little given them to think about. To the busy Englishman they might well apply these verses of his own Milton in the Masque of Comus:

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What have we with day to do?
Sons of Care! 'twas made for you.

LEGHORN.

Here we are by the sea-side once more, in a trading town too; and I should think myself in England almost, but for the difference of dresses that pass under my balcony: for here we were immediately addressed by a young English gentleman, who politely put us in possession of his apartments, the best situated in the town; and with him we talked of the dear coast of Devonshire, agreed upon the resemblance between that and these environs, but gave the preference to home, on account of its undulated shore, finely fringed with woodlands, which here are wanting: nor is this verdure equal to ours in vivid colouring, or variegated with so much taste as those lovely hills which are adorned by the antiquities of Powderham Castle, and the fine disposition of Lord Lisburne's park.

But here is an English consul at Leghorn. Yes indeed! an English chapel too; our own King's arms over the door, and in the desk and pulpit an English clergyman; high in character, eminent for learning, genteel in his address, and charitable in every sense of the word: as such, truly loved and honoured by those of his own persuasion, exceedingly respected by those of every other, which fill this extraordinary city: a place so populous, that Cheapside alone can surpass it.

It is not a large place however; one very long straight street, and one very large wide square, not less than Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, but I think bigger, form the whole of Leghorn; which I can compare to nothing but a *camera obscura*, or magic lanthron, exhibiting prodigious variety of different, and not uninteresting figures, that pass and re-pass to my incessant delight, and give that sort of empty amusement which is *a la portee de chacun*[Footnote: Within every one's reach.] so completely, that for the present it really serves to drive every thing else from my head, and makes me little desirous to quit for any other diversion the windows or balcony, whence I look down now upon a Levantine Jew, dressed in long robes, a sort of odd turban, and immense beard: now upon a Tuscan contadinella, with the little straw hat, nosegay and jewels, I have been so often struck with. Here an Armenian Christian, with long hair, long gown, long beard, all black as a raven; who calls upon an old grey Franciscan friar for a walk; while a Greek woman, obliged to cross the street on some occasion, throws a vast white veil all over her person, lest she should undergo the disgrace of being seen at all.

Sometimes a group goes by, composed of a broad Dutch sailor, a dry-starched puritan, and an old French officer; whose knowledge of the world and habitual politeness contrive to conceal the contempt he has of his companions.

The geometricians tell us that the figure which has most angles bears the nearest resemblance to that which has no angles at all; so here at Leghorn, where you can hardly find forty men of a mind, dispute and contention grow vain, a comfortable though temporary union takes place, while nature and opinion bend to interest and necessity.

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The *Contorni* of Leghorn are really very pretty; the Appenine mountains degenerate into hills as they run round the bay, but gain in beauty what in sublimity they lose.

To enjoy an open sea view, one must drive further; and it really affords a noble prospect from that rising ground where I understand that the rich Jews hold their summer habitations. They have a synagogue in the town, where I went one evening, and heard the Hebrew service, and thought of what Dr. Burney says of their singing.

It is however no credit to the Tuscans to tell, that of all the people gathered together here, they are the worst-looking—I speak of the *men*—but it is so. When compared with the German soldiery, the English sailors, the Venetian traders, the Neapolitan peasants, for I have seen some of *them* here, how feeble a fellow is a genuine Florentine! And when one recollects the cottagers of Lombardy, that handsome hardy race; bright in their expression, and muscular in their strength; it is still stranger, what can have weakened these too delicate Tuscans so. As they are very rich, and might be very happy under the protection of a prince who lets slip no opportunity of preferring his plebeian to his patrician subjects; yet here at Leghorn they have a tender frame and an unhealthy look, occasioned possibly by the stagnant waters, which tender the environs unwholesome enough I believe; and the millions of live creatures they produce are enough to distract a person not accustomed to such buzzing company.

We went out for air yesterday morning three or four miles beyond the town-walls, where I looked steadily at the sea, till I half thought myself at home. The ocean being peculiarly British property favoured the idea, and for a moment I felt as if on our southern coast; we walked forward towards the shore, and I stepped upon some rocks that broke the waves as they rolled in, and was wishing for a good bathing house that one might enjoy the benefit of salt-water so long withheld; till I saw our *laquais de place* crossing himself at the carriage door, and wondering, as I afterwards found out, at my matchless intrepidity. The mind however took another train of thought, and we returned to the coach, which when we arrived at I refused to enter; not without screaming I fear, as a vast hornet had taken possession in our absence, and the very notion of such a companion threw me into an agony. Our attendant's speech to the coachman however, made me more than amends: "*Ora si vede amico*" (says he), "*cos'è la Donna; del mare istesso non ha paura e pur va in convulsioni per via d'una mosca*[Z]." This truly Tuscan and highly contemptuous harangue, uttered with the utmost deliberation, and added to the absence of the hornet, sent me laughing into the carriage, with great esteem of our philosophical Rosso, for so the fellow was called, because he had red hair.

FOOTNOTES:

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[Footnote Z: Now, my friend, do but observe what a thing is a woman! she is not afraid even of the roaring ocean, and yet goes into fits almost at the sight of a fly.]

In a very clear day, it is said, one may see Corsica from hence, though not less than forty or fifty miles off: the pretty island Gorgona however, whence our best anchovies are brought to England, lies constantly in view,

Assurgit ponti medio circumflua Gorgon.

RUTELIUS's Itinerary.

How she came by that extraordinary name though, is not I believe well known; perhaps her likeness to one of the Cape Verd islands, the original Hesperides, might be the cause; for it was *there* the daughters of Phorcus fixed their habitation: or may be, as Medusa was called *Gorgon par eminence*, because she applied herself to the enriching of ground, this fertile islet owes its appellation from being particularly manured and fructified.

Here is an extraordinary good opera-house; admirable dancers, who performed a mighty pretty pantomime *Comedie larmoyante* without words; I liked it vastly. The famous Soprano singer Bedini was at Lucca; but here is our old London favourite Signora Giorgi, improved into a degree of perfection seldom found, and from her little expected.

Mr. Udney the British Consul is alone now; his lady has been obliged to leave him, and take her children home for health's sake; but we saw his fine collection of pictures, among which is a Danae that once belonged to Queen Christina of Sweden, and fell from her possession into that of some nobleman, who being tormented by scruples of morality upon his death-bed, resolved to part with all his undraped figures, but not liking to lose the face of this Danae, put the picture into a painter's hands to cut and clothe her: the man, instead of obeying orders he considered as barbarous, copied the whole, and dressed the copy decently, sending it to his sick friend, who never discerned the trick; and kept the original to dispose of, where fewer scruples impeded an advantageous sale. The gentleman who bought it then, died; when Mr. Udney purchased Danae, and highly values her; though some connoisseurs say she is too young and ungrown a female for the character. There is a Titian too in the same collection, of Cupid riding on a lion's back, to which some very remarkable story is annexed; but one's belief is so assailed by such various tales, told of all the striking pictures in Italy, that one grows more tenacious of it every day I think; so that at last the danger will be of believing too little, instead of too much perhaps. Happy for travellers would it be, were that disposition of mind confined to *painting* only: but if it should prove extended to more serious subjects, we can only hope that the violent excess of the temptation may prove some excuse, or at least in a slight degree extenuate the

offence: A wise man cannot believe half he hears in Italy to be sure, but a pious man will be cautious not to discredit it all.

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Our evening's walk was directed towards the burying-ground appointed here to receive the bodies of our countrymen, and consecrated according to the rites of the Anglican church: for *here*, under protection of a factory, we enjoy that which is vainly sought for under the auspices of a king's ambassador.—*Here* we have a churchyard of our own, and are not condemned as at other towns in Italy, to be stuffed into a hole like dogs, after having spent our money among them like princes. Prejudice however is not banished from Leghorn, though convenience keeps all in good-humour with each other. The Italians fail not to class the subjects of Great Britain among the Pagan inhabitants of the town, and to distinguish themselves, say, "*Noi altri Christiani*"[Footnote: We that are Christians.]: their aversion to a Protestant, conceal it as they may, is ever implacable; and the last day only will convince them that it is criminal.

Coelum non animum mutant[Footnote: One changes one's sky but not one's soul.], is an old observation; I passed this afternoon in confirming the truth of it among the English traders settled here: whose conversation, manners, ideas, and language, were so truly *Londonish*, so little changed by transmigration, that I thought some enchantment had suddenly operated, and carried me to drink tea in the regions of *Bucklersbury*.

Well! it is a great delight to see such a society subsisting in Italy after all; established where distress may run for refuge, and sickness retire to prepare for lasting repose; whence narrowness of mind is banished by principles of universal benevolence, and prejudice precluded by Christian charity: where the purse of the British merchant, ever open to the poor, is certain to succour and to soothe affliction; and where it is agreed that more alms are given by the natives of our island alone, than by all the rest of Leghorn, and the palaces of Pisa put together.

I have here finished that work which chiefly brought me hither; the Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson's Life. It is from this port they take their flight for England, while we retire for refreshment to the

BAGNI DI PISA.

But not only the waters here are admirable, every look from every window gives images unentertained before; sublimity happily wedded with elegance, and majestick greatness enlivened, yet softened by taste.

The haughty mountain St. Julianio lifting its brown head over our house on one side, the extensive plain stretched out before us on the other; a gravel walk neatly planted by the side of a peaceful river, which winds through a valley richly cultivated with olive yards and vines; and sprinkled, though rarely, with dwellings, either magnificent or pleasing: this lovely prospect, bounded only by the sea, makes a variety incessant as the changes of the sky; exhibiting early tranquillity, and evening splendour by turns.

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It was perhaps particularly delightful to me, to obtain once more a cottage in the country, after running so from one great city to another; and for the first week I did nothing but rejoice in a solitude so new, so salutiferous, so total. I therefore begged my husband not to hurry us to Rome, but take the house we lived in for a longer term, as I would now play the English housewife in Italy I said; and accordingly began calling the chickens and ducks under my window, tasted the new wine as it ran purple from the cask, caressed the meek oxen that drew it to our door; and felt sensations so unaffectedly pastoral, that nothing in romance ever exceeded my felicity.

The cold bath here is the most delicate imaginable; of a moderate degree of coldness though, not three degrees below Matlock surely; but omitting, simply enough, to carry a thermometer, one can measure the heat of nothing. Our hot water here seems about the temperature of the Queen's bath in Somersetshire; it is purgative, not corroborant, they tell me; and its taste resembles Cheltenham water exactly.

These springs are much frequented by the court I find, and here are very tolerable accommodations; but it is not the season now, and our solitude is perfect in a place which beggars all description, where the mountains are mountains of marble, and the bushes on them bushes of myrtle; large as our hawthorns, and white with blossoms, as *they* are at the same time of year in Devonshire; where the waters are salubrious, the herbage odoriferous, every trodden step breathing immediate fragrance from the crushed sweets of thyme, and marjoram, and winter savoury: while the birds and the butterflies frolick around, and flutter among the loaded lemon, and orange, and olive trees, till imagination is fatigued with following the charms that surround one.

I am come home this moment from a long but not tedious walk, among the crags of this glorious mountain; the base of which nearly reaches, within half a mile perhaps, to the territories of Lucca. Some country girls passed me with baskets of fruit, chickens, &c. on their heads. I addressed them as natives of the last-named place, saying I knew them to be such by their dress and air; one of them instantly replied, "*Oh si, siamo Lucchesi, noi altri; gia si puo vedere subito una Reppubblicana, e credo bene ch'ella fe n' e accorta benissimo che siamo del paese della liberta*[AA]."

[Footnote AA: Oh yes, we are Lucca people sure enough, and I am persuaded that you soon saw in our faces that we come from a land of liberty.]

I will add that these females wear no ornaments at all; are always proud and gay, and sometimes a little fancy too. The Tuscan damsels, loaded with gold and pearls, have a less assured look, and appear disconcerted when in company with their freer neighbours—Let them tell why.

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Mean time my fairy dream of fantastic delight seems fading away apace. Mr. Piozzi has been ill, and of a putrid complaint in his throat, which above all things I should dread in this hot climate. This accident, assisted by other concurring circumstances, has convinced me that we are not shut up in measureless content as Shakespeare calls it, even under St. Julian's Hill: for here was no help to be got in the first place, except the useless conversation of a medical gentleman whose accent and language might have pleased a disengaged mind, but had little chance to tranquilize an affrighted one. What is worse, here was no rest to be had, for the multitudes of vermin up stairs and below. When we first hired the house, I remember my maid jumping up on one of the kitchen chairs while a ragged lad cleared *that* apartment for her of scorpions to the number of seventeen. But now the biters and stingers drive me *quite wild*, because one must keep the windows open for air, and a sick man can enjoy none of that, being closed up in the Zanzariere, and obliged to respire the same breath over and over again; which, with a sore throat and fever, is most melancholy: but I keep it wet with vinegar, and defy the hornets how I can.

What is more surprising than all, however, is to hear that no lemons can be procured for less than two pence English a-piece; and now I am almost ready to join myself in the general cry against Italian imposition, and recollect the proverb which teaches us

Chi ha da far con Tosco,
Non bisogna esser losco[AB];

[Footnote AB:

Who has to do with Tuscan wight,
Of both his eyes will need the light.

]

as I am confident they cannot be worth even two pence a hundred here, where they hang like apples in our cyder countries; but the rogues know that my husband is sick, and upon poor me they have no mercy.

I have sent our folks out to gather fruit at a venture: and now this misery will soon be ended with his illness; driven away by deluges of lemonade, I think, made in defiance of wasps, flies, and a kind of volant beetle, wonderfully beautiful and very pertinacious in his attacks; and who makes dreadful depredations on my sugar and currant-jelly, so necessary on this occasion of illness, and so attractive to all these detestable inhabitants of a place so lovely.

My patient, however, complaining that although I kept these harpies at a distance, no sleep could yet be obtained;—I resolved when he was risen, and had changed his room, to examine into the true cause: and with my maid's assistance, unripped the mattress, which was without exaggeration or hyperbole *all alive* with creatures wholly unknown to me. Non-descripts in nastiness I believe they are, like maggots with horns

and tails; such a race as I never saw or heard of, and as would have disgusted Mr. Leeuenhoeck himself. My willingness to quit this place and its hundred-footed inhabitants was quickened three

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nights after by a thunder storm, such as no dweller in more northern latitudes can form an idea of; which, afflicted by some few slight shocks of an earthquake, frightened us all from our beds, sick and well, and gave me an opportunity of viewing such flashes of lightning as I had never contemplated till now, and such as it appeared impossible to escape from with life. The tremendous claps of thunder re-echoing among these Appenines, which double every sound, were truly dreadful. I really and sincerely thought St. Julian's mountain was rent by one violent stroke, accompanied with a rough concussion, and that the rock would fall upon our heads by morning; while the agonies of my English maid and the French valet, became equally insupportable to themselves and me; who could only repeat the same unheeded consolations, and protest our resolution of releasing them from this theatre of distraction the moment our departure should become practicable. Mean time the rain fell, and such a torrent came tumbling down the sides of St. Julian, as I am persuaded no female courage could have calmly looked on. I therefore waited its abatement in a darkened room, packed up our coach without waiting to copy over the verses my admiration of the place had prompted, and drove forward to Sienna, through Pisa again, where our friends told us of the damages done by the tempest; and shewed us a pretty little church just out of town, where the officiating priest at the altar was saved almost by miracle, as the lightning melted one of the chalices completely, and twisted the brazen-gilt crucifix quite round in a very astonishing manner.

Here, however, is the proper place, if any, to introduce the poem of seventy-three short lines, calling itself an Ode to Society written in a state of perfect solitude, secluded from all mortal tread, as was our habitation at the Bagni di Pisa.

ODE TO SOCIETY.

I.

SOCIETY! gregarious dame!
Who knows thy favour'd haunts to name?
Whether at Paris you prepare
The supper and the chat to share,
While fix'd in artificial row,
Laughter displays its teeth of snow:
Grimace with raillery rejoices,
And song of many mingled voices,
Till young coquetry's artful wile
Some foreign novice shall beguile,
Who home return'd, still prates of thee,
Light, flippant, French SOCIETY.



II.

Or whether, with your zone unbound,
You ramble gaudy Venice round,
Resolv'd the inviting sweets to prove,
Of friendship warm, and willing love;
Where softly roll th' obedient seas,
Sacred to luxury and ease,
In coffee-house or casino gay
Till the too quick return of day,
Th' enchanted votary who sighs
For sentiments without disguise,
Clear, unaffected, fond, and free,
In Venice finds SOCIETY.

III.



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Or if to wiser Britain led,
Your vagrant feet desire to tread
With measur'd step and anxious care,
The precincts pure of Portman square;
While wit with elegance combin'd,
And polish'd manners there you'll find;
The taste correct—and fertile mind:
Remember vigilance lurks near,
And silence with unnotic'd sneer,
Who watches but to tell again
Your foibles with to-morrow's pen;
Till titt'ring malice smiles to see
Your wonder—grave SOCIETY.

IV.

Far from your busy crowded court,
Tranquillity makes her report;
Where 'mid cold Staffa's columns rude,
Resides majestic solitude;
Or where in some sad Brachman's cell,
Meek innocence delights to dwell,
Weeping with unexperienc'd eye,
The death of a departed fly:
Or in *Hetruria's* heights sublime,
Where science self might fear to climb,
But that she seeks a smile from thee,
And wooes thy praise, SOCIETY.

V.

Thence let me view the plains below,
From rough St. Julian's rugged brow;
Hear the loud torrents swift descending,
Or mark the beauteous rainbow bending,
Till Heaven regains its favourite hue,
Æther divine! celestial blue!
Then bosom'd high in myrtle bower,
View letter'd Pisa's pendent tower;
The sea's wide scene, the port's loud throng,
Of rude and gentle, right and wrong;
A motley groupe which yet agree
To call themselves SOCIETY.



VI.

Oh! thou still sought by wealth and fame,
Dispenser of applause and blame:
While flatt'ry ever at thy side,
With slander can thy smiles divide;
Far from thy haunts, oh! let me stray,
But grant one friend to cheer my way,
Whose converse bland, whose music's art,
May cheer my soul, and heal my heart;
Let soft content our steps pursue,
And bliss eternal bound our view:
Pow'r I'll resign, and pomp, and glee,
Thy best-lov'd sweets—SOCIETY.

SIENNA.

20th October 1786.

We arrived here last night, having driven through the sweetest country in the world; and here are a few timber trees at last, such as I have not seen for a long time, the Tuscan spirit of mutilation being so great, that every thing till now has been pollarded that would have passed twenty feet in height: this is done to support the vines, and not suffer their rambling produce to run out of the way, and escape the gripe of the gatherers. I have eaten too many of these delicious grapes however, and it is now my turn to be sick—No wonder, I know few who would resist a like temptation, especially as the inn afforded but a sorry dinner, whilst every hedge provided so noble a dessert. *Paffera pur*

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la malattia[Footnote: The disorder will die away though.], as these soft-mouthed people tell me; the sooner perhaps, as we are not here annoyed by insects, which poison the pleasure of other places in Italy; here are only *lizards*, lovely creatures! who being of a beautiful light green colour upon the back and legs, reside in whole families at the foot of every tree, and turn their scarlet bosoms to the sun, as if to display the glories of colouring which his beams alone can bestow.

The pleasing tales told of this pretty animal's amical disposition towards man are strictly true, I hear; and it is no longer ago than yesterday I was told an odd anecdote of a young farmer, who, carrying a basket of figs to his mistress, lay down in the field as he crossed it, quite overcome with the weather, and fell fast asleep. A serpent, attracted by the scent, twined round the basket, and would have bit the fellow as well as robbed him, had not a friendly lizard waked, and given him warning of the danger.

Swift says, that in the course of life he meets many asses, but they have not *lucky names*. I have met many *vipers*, and so few *lizards*, it is surprising! but they will not live in London.

All the stories one has ever heard of sweetness in language and delicacy in pronunciation, fall short of Siennese converse. The girls who wait on us at the inn here, would be treasures in England, could one get them thither; and they need move nothing but their tongues to make their fortunes. I told Rosetta so, and said I would steal from them a poor girl of eight years old, whom they kept out of charity, and called Olympia, to be my language mistress, "*Battezata com' e, la lasceremo Christiana*[AC]," was the answer. It is impossible, without their manners, to express their elegance, their superior delicacy, graceful without diffusion, and terse without laconicism. You ask the way to the town of a peasant girl, and she replies, "*Passato'l Ponte, o pur barcato'l Fiume, eccola a Sienna*[AD]." And as we drove towards the city in the evening, our postillion sung improviso verses on his sweetheart, a widow who lived down at Pistoja, they told me. I was ashamed to think that no desk or study was likely to have produced better on so trite a subject. Candour must confess, however, that no thought was new, though the language made them for a moment seem so.

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote AC: Being baptized as she is, we will leave her a Christian.]

[Footnote AD: The bridge once passed, or the river crossed, Sienna lies before you.]

This town is neat and cleanly, and comfortable and airy. The prospect from the public walks wants no beauty but water; and here is a suppressed convent on the neighbouring hill, where we half-longed to build a pretty cottage, as the ground is now to

be disposed of vastly cheap; and half one's work is already done in the apartments once occupied by friars. With half a word's persuasion I should fix for life here. The air is so pure, the language so pleasing, the place so inviting;—*but we drive on.*

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There is, mean time, resident in the neighbourhood an English gentleman, his name Greenfield, who has formed to himself a mighty sweet habitation in the English taste, but not extensive, as his property don't reach far: he is however a sort of little oracle in the country I am told; gives money, and dispenses James's powders to the poor, is happy in the esteem of numberless people of fashion, and the comfort of his country people's lives beside; who, travelling to Sienna, as many do for the advantage of studying Italian to perfection, find a friend and companion where perhaps it is least expected.

The cathedral here at Sienna deserves a volume, and I shall scarcely give it a page. The pavement of it is the just pride of Italy, and may challenge the world to produce its equal. St. Mark's at Venice floored with precious stones dies away upon the comparison; this being all inlaid with dove-coloured and white marbles representing historical subjects not ill told. Were this operation performed in mosaic work, others of rival excellence might be found. The pavement of Sienna's dome is so disposed by an effort of art one never saw but here, that it produces an effect most resembling that of a very fine and beautiful damask table-cloth, where the large patterns are correctly drawn.

Rome however is to be our next stage, and many of our English gentlemen now here, are with ourselves impatiently waiting for the numberless pleasures it is expected to afford us. I will here close this chapter upon our various desires; one wishing to see St. Peters; one setting his heart upon entering the Capitol: to-morrow's sun will light us all upon our search.

ROME.

The first sleeping place between Sienna and this capital shall not escape mentioning; its name is Radicosani, its title an inn, and its situation the summit of an exhausted volcano. Such a place did I never see. The violence of the mountain, when living, has split it in a variety of places, and driven it to a breadth of base beyond credibility, its height being no longer formidable. Whichever way you turn your eyes, nothing but portions of this black rock appear therefore; so here is extent without sublimity, and here is terror mingled with disgust. The inside of the house is worthy of the prospect seen from its windows; wild, spacious, and scantily provided. Never had place so much the appearance of a haunted hall, where Sir Rowland or Sir Bertrand might feel proud of their courage when

The knight advancing strikes the fatal door,
And hollow chambers send a sullen roar.

MERRY



To this truly dismal reposing place is however kindly added a little chapel; and few persons can imagine what a comfortable feel it gave me on entering it in the morning after hearing the winds howl all night in the black mountain. Here too we first made acquaintance with Signor Giovanni Ricci, a mighty agreeable gentleman, who was kindly assistant to us in a hundred little difficulties, afterwards occasioned by horses, postillions, &c. which at last brought us through a bad country enough to Viterbo, where we slept.

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The melancholy appearance of the Campagna has been remarked and described by every traveller with displeasure, by all with truth. The ill look of the very few and very unhealthy inhabitants confirms their descriptions; and beside the pale and swelled faces which shock one's sight, here is a brassy scent in the air as of verdigris, which offends one's smell; the running water is of an odd colour too, like that in which copper has been steeped. These are sad desolated scenes indeed, though this is not the season for *mal' aria* neither, which, it is said, begins in May, and ends with September. The present sovereign is mending matters as fast as he can, we hear; and the road now cutting, will greatly facilitate access to his capital, but cannot be done without a prodigious expence. The first view of Rome is wonderfully striking.

Ye awful wrecks of ancient times!
Proud monuments of ages past
Now mould'ring in decay.

MERRY.

But mingled with every crowding, every classical idea, comes to one's recollection an old picture painted by R. Wilson about thirty years ago, which I am now sure must have been a very excellent representation.

Well, then! here we are, admirably lodged at Strofani's in the Piazza di Spagna, and have only to chuse what we will see and talk on first among this galaxy of rarities which dazzles, diverts, confounds, and nearly fatigues one. I will speak of the oldest things first, as I was earnest to see something of Rome in its very early days, if possible; for example the Sublician Bridge, defended by Cocles when the infant republic, like their favourite Hercules in his cradle, strangled the serpent despotism: and of this bridge some portion may yet be seen when the water is very low.

The prison is more ancient still however; it was built by the kings; and by the solidity of its walls, and depth of its dungeon, seems built for eternity. Was it not this place to which Juvenal alludes, when he says,

Felicia dicas
Tempora quae quondam sub regibus atque tribunis
Viderunt uno contentam carcere Romam.

And it is in this horrible spot they shew you the miraculous mark of St. Peter's head struck against the wall in going down, with the fountain which burst out of the ground for his refreshment. Antiquaries, however, assure us, that he could not have ever been confined there, as it was a place for state prisoners only, and those of the highest rank: they likewise tell us that Jugurtha passed seven months there, which is as difficult to believe as any miracle ever wrought; for the world was at least somewhat civilized in those days, and how it should be contented with looking quietly on whilst a Prince of



Jugurtha's consequence should be so kept, appears incredible at the distance of 1900 years. That Christians should be treated still worse, if worse could be found for them, is less strange, when every step one treads is upon the bones of martyrs; and who dares say that the surrounding campagna, so often drenched in innocent blood, may not have been cursed with pestilence and sterility to all succeeding ages? I have examined the place where Sylla massacred 8000 fellow-citizens at once, and find that it produces no herb but thistles, a weed almost unknown in any other part of Italy; and one of the first punishments bestowed on sinful man.

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Marcellus's Theatre, an old fountain erected by Camillus when Dictator, and the Tarpeian rock, attract attention powerfully: the last particularly,

Where brave Manlius stood,
And hurl'd indignant decads down,
And redden'd Tyber's flood.

GREATHEED.

People have never done contradicting Burnet, who says, in his travels, that a man might jump down it now and not do himself much harm: the truth is, its present appearance is not formidable; but I believe it is not less than forty feet high at this moment, though the ground is greatly raised.

Of all things at Rome the Cloaca is acknowledged most ancient; a very great and a very useful work it is, of Ancus Martius, fourth king of Rome. The just and zealous detestation of Christians towards Pontius Pilate, is here comically expressed by their placing his palace just at its exit into the Tyber; and one who pretended to doubt of its being his residence, would be thought the worse of among them.

I recollect nothing else built before the days of the Emperors, who, for the most part, were such disgracers of human nature and human reason, that one would almost wish their names expunged, and all their deeds obliterated from the face of the globe, which could ever tamely submit to such truly wretched rulers.

The Capitol, built by Tarquin, stood till the days of Marius and Sylla it seems; that last-named Dictator erected a new one, which was overthrown in the contests about Vitellius; Vespasian set it up again, but his performance was burned soon after its author's death; and this we contemplate now, is one of the works of Domitian, and celebrated by Martial of course. Adrian however added one room to it, dedicated to Egyptian deities alone: as a matter of mere taste I fancy, like our introducing Chinese temples into the garden; but many hold that it was very serious and superstitious regard, inspired by the victory Canopus won over the Persian divinity of fire, by the subtlety of the Egyptian priests, who, to defend their idol from that all-subduing element, wisely set upon his head a vessel filled with water, and having previously made the figure of Terra Cotta hollow, and full of water, with holes bored at the bottom stopped only by wax to keep it in, a seeming miracle extinguished the flames, as soon as approached by Canopus; whose triumph was of course proclaimed, and he respected accordingly. The figure was a monkey, whose sitting attitude favoured the imposture: our antiquaries tell us the story after *Suidas*.

As cruelty is more detestable than fraud, one feels greater disgust at the sight of captive monarchs without hands and arms, than even these idolatrous brutalities inspire; and no greater proof can be obtained of Roman barbarity, than the statues one is shewn here

of kings and generals over whom they triumphed; being made on purpose for them without hands and arms, of which they were deprived immediately on their arrival at Rome.

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Enormous heads and feet, to which the other parts are wanting, let one see, or at least guess; what colossal figures were once belonging to them; yet somehow these celebrated artists seem to me to have a little confounded the ideas of *big* and *great* like my countryman Fluellin in Shakespear's play: while the two famous demi-gods Castor and Pollux, each his horse in his hand, stand one on each side the stairs which lead to the Capitol, and are of a prodigious size—fifteen feet, as I remember. The knowing people tell us they are portraits, and bid us observe that one has pupils to his eyes, the other *not*; but our *laquais de place*, who was a very sensible fellow too, as he saw me stand looking at them, cried out, "Why now to be sure here are a vast many miracles in this holy city—that there are:" and I heard one of our own folks telling an Englishman the other day, how these two monstrous statues, horses and all I believe, *came out of an egg*: a very extraordinary thing certainly; but it is our business to believe, not to enquire. He saw my countenance express something he did not like, and continued, "*Eh basta! sara stato un uovo strepitoso, e cosi sinisce l'istoria*[AE]."

[Footnote AE: Well, well! it was a famous egg we'll say, and there's an end.]

In this repository of wonders, this glorious *campidoglio*, one is first shewn as the most valuable curiosity, the two pigeons mentioned by Pliny in old mosaic; and of prodigious nicety is the workmanship, though done at such a distant period: and here is the very wolf which bears the very mark of the lightning mentioned by Cicero:—and here is the beautiful Antinous again; *he* meets one at every turn, I think, and always hangs his head as if ashamed: here too is the dying gladiator; wonderfully fine! savage valour! mean extraction! horrible anguish! all marking, all strongly characteristical expressions—*all there*; yet all swallowed up, in that which does inevitably and certainly swallow up all things—approaching death.

The collection of pictures here would put any thing but these statues out of one's head: Guido's Fortune flying over the globe, scattering her gifts; of which she gave him *one*, the most precious, the most desirable. How elegantly gay and airy is this picture! But St. Sebastian stands opposite, to shew that he could likewise excel in the pathetic. Titian's famous Magdalen, of which the King of France boasts one copy, a noble family at Venice another, is protested by the Roman connoisseurs to reside here only; but why should not the artist be fond of repeating so fine an idea? Guercino's Sybil however, intelligently pensive, and sweetly sensible, is the single figure I should prefer to them all.

Before we quit the Capitol, it is pity not to name Marforio; broken, old, and now almost forgotten: though once companion, or rather respondent to Pasquin, and once, a thousand years before those days, a statue of the river *Nar*, as his recumbent posture testifies; not *Mars in the forum*, as has been by some supposed. The late Pope moved him from the street, and shut him up with his betters in the Capitol.

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Of Trajan and Antonine's Pillars what can one say? That St. Peter and St. Paul stand on the tops of each, setting forth that uncertainty of human affairs which they preached in their life-time, and shewing that *they*, who were once the objects of contempt and abhorrence, are now become literally *the head stones of the corner*; being but too profoundly venerated in that very city, which once cruelly persecuted, and unjustly put them to death. Let us then who look on them recollect their advice, and set our affections on a place of greater stability. The columns are of very unequal excellence, that of Trajan's confessedly the best; one grieves to think he never saw it himself, as few princes were less puffed up by well-deserved praise than he; but dying at Seleucia of a dysenteric fever, his ashes were brought home, and kept on the top of his own pillar in a gilt vase; which Sextus Quintus with more zeal than taste took down, I fear destroyed, and placed St. Peter there. Apollodorus was the architect of the elegant structure, on which, says Ammianus Marcellinus, the Gods themselves gazed with wonder, seeing that nothing but heaven itself was finer. "*Singularem sub omni caelo structuram etiam numinum ascensione mirabilem.*"

I know not whether this is the proper place to mention that the good Pope Gregory, who added to the possession of every cardinal virtue the exertion of every Christian one, having looked one day with peculiar stedfastness at this column, and being naturally led to reflect on his character to whose honour it was erected, felt just admiration of a mind so noble; and retiring to his devotions in a church not far off, began praying earnestly for Trajan's soul: till a preternatural voice, accompanied with rays of light round the altar he knelt at, commanded his forbearance of further solicitation; assuring him that Trajan's soul was secure in the care of his Creator. Strange! that those who record, and give credit to such a story, can yet continue as a duty their intercessions for the dead!

But I have seen the Coliseo, which would swallow that of pretty Verona; it is four times as large I am told, and would hold fourscore thousand spectators. After all the depredations of all the Goths, and afterwards of the Farnese family, the ruin is gloriously beautiful; possibly more beautiful than when it was quite whole; there is enough left now for Truth to repose upon, and a perch for Fancy beside, to fly out from, and fetch in more.

The orders of its architecture are easily discerned, though the height of the upper story is truly tremendous; I climbed it once, not to the top indeed, but till I was afraid to look down from the place I was in, and penetrated many of its recesses. The modern Italians have not lost their taste of a prodigious theatre; were they once more a single nation, they would rebuild *this* I fancy; for here are all the conveniencies in *grande*, as they call it,

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that amaze one even in *piccolo* at Milan and Turin: Here were supper-rooms, and taverns, and shops, and I believe baths; certainly long galleries big enough to drive a coach round, and places where slaves waited to receive the commands of masters and ladies, who perhaps if they did not wait to please them, would scarcely scruple to detain them in the cage of offenders, and keep them to make sport upon a future day.

The cruelties then exercised on servants at Rome were truly dreadful; and we all remember reading that in Augustus's time, when he did a private friend the honour to dine with him, one of the waiters broke a glass he was about to present full of liquor to the King; at which offence the master being enraged, suddenly caused him to be seized by the rest, and thrown instantly out of the window to feed his lampreys, which lived in a pond on which the apartment looked. Augustus said nothing at the moment; to punish the nobleman's inhumanity however, he sent his officers next morning to break every glass in the house: A curious chastisement enough, and worthy of a nation who, being powerful to erect, populous to fill, and elegantly-skilful to adorn such a fabric as this Coliseum which I have just been contemplating, were yet contented and even happy to view from its well-arranged seats, exhibitions capable of giving nothing but disgust and horror;—lions rending unarmed wretches in pieces; or, to the still deeper disgrace of poor Humanity, those wretches armed unwillingly against each other, and dying to divert a brutal populace.

These reflections upon Pagan days and classical cruelties do not disturb however the peace of an old hermit, who has chosen one of these close-concealed recesses for his habitation, and accordingly dwells, dismally enough, in a hole seldom visited by travellers, and certainly never enquired about by the natives. I stumbled on his strange apartment by mere chance, and asked him why he had chosen it? He had been led in early youth, he said, to reflect upon the miseries suffered by the original professors of Christianity; the tortures inflicted on them in this horrible amphitheatre, and the various vicissitudes of Rome since: that he had dedicated himself to these meditations: that he had left the world seventeen years, never stirring from his cell but to buy food, which he eat alone and sparingly, and to pay his devotions in the *Via Crucis*, for so the old Arena is now called; a simple plain wooden cross occupying the middle of it, and round the Circus twelve neat, not splendid chapels; a picture to each, representing the various stages of our Saviour's passion. Such are the meek triumphs of our meek religion! And that such substitutes should have replaced the African savages, tigers, hyaenas, &c. and Roman gladiators, not less ferocious than their four-legged antagonists, I am quite as willing to rejoice at as the hermit: They must be better antiquarians too than I am, who regret that a nunnery now covers the spot where ambitious Tullia drove over the bleeding body of her murdered parent,

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Pressit et inductis membra paterna rotis:

That nunnery, supported by the arch of Nerva, which is all that is now left standing of that Emperor's Forum.

I must not however quit the Coliseum, without repeating what passed between the King of Sweden and his Roman *laquais de place* when he was here; and the fellow, in the true cant of his Ciceroneship, exclaimed as they looked up, "*Ah Maesta!* what cursed Goths those were that tore away so many fine things here, and pulled down such magnificent pillars, &c." "Hold, hold friend," replies the King of Sweden; "I am one of those cursed Goths myself you know: but what were your Roman nobles a-doing, I would ask, when they laboured to destroy an edifice like this, and build their palaces with its materials?"

The baths of Livia are still elegantly designed round her small apartments; and one has copies sold of them upon fans; the curiosity of the original is to see how well the gilding stands; in many places it appears just finished. These baths are difficult of access somehow; I never could quite understand how we got in or out of them, but they did belong to the Imperial palace, which covered this whole Palatine hill, and here was Nero's golden house, by what I could gather, but of that I thank Heaven there is no trace left, except some little portion of the wall, which was 120 feet high, and some marbles in shades, like women's worsted work upon canvass, very curious, and very wonderful; as all are natural marbles, and no dye used: the expence must have surpassed credibility.

The Temple of Vesta, supposed to be the very temple to which Horace alludes in his second Ode, is a pretty rotunda, and has twenty pillars fluted of Parian marble: it is now a church, as are most of the heathen temples.

Such adaptations do not please one, but then it must be allowed and recollected that one is very hard to please: finding fault is so easy, and doing right so difficult!

The good Pope Gregory, who feared (by sacred inspiration one would think) all which should come to pass, broke many beautiful antique statues, "lest," said he, "induced by change of dress or name perhaps our Christians may be tempted to adore them:" and we say he was a blockhead, and burned Livy's decads, and so he did; but he refused all titles of earthly dignity; he censured the Oriental Patriarchs for substituting temporal splendours in the place of primitive simplicity; which he said ought *alone* to distinguish the followers of Jesus Christ. He required a strict attention to morality from all his inferior clergy; observed that those who strove to be first, would end in being last; and took himself the title of servant to the servants of God.

Well! Sabinian, his successor, once his favourite Nuncio, flung his books in the fire as soon as he was dead; so his injunctions were obeyed but while he lived to enforce them; and every day now shews us how necessary they were: when, even in these

enlightened times, there stands an old figure that every Abate in the town knows to have been originally made for the fabulous God of Physic, Esculapius, is prayed to by many old women and devotees of all ages indeed, just at the Via Sacra's entrance, and called St. Bartolomeo.

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A beautiful Diana too, with her trussed-up robes, the crescent alone wanting, stands on the high altar to receive homage in the character of St. Agnes, in a pretty church dedicated to her *fuor delle Porte*, where it is supposed she suffered martyrdom; and why? Why for not venerating that *very Goddess Diana*, and for refusing to walk in her procession at the *New Moon*, like a good Christian girl. "*Such contradictions put one from one's self*" as Shakespear says.

We are this moment returned home from Tivoli; have walked round Adrian's Villa, and viewed his Hippodrome, which would yet make an admirable open Manege. I have seen the Cascatelle, so sweetly elegant, so rural, so romantic; and I have looked with due respect on the places once inhabited, and ever justly celebrated by genius, wit, and learning; have shuddered at revisiting the spot I hastened down to examine, while curiosity was yet keen enough to make me venture a very dangerous and scarcely-trodden path to Neptune's Grotto; where, as you descend, the Cicerone shews you a wheel of some coarse carriage visibly stuck fast in the rock till it is become a part of it; distinguished from every other stone only by its shape, its projecting forward, and its shewing the hollow places in its fellies, where nails were originally driven. This truly-curious, though little venerable piece of antiquity, serves to assist the wise men in puzzling out the world's age, by computing how many centuries go to the petrifying a cart wheel. A violent roar of dashing waters at the bottom, and a fall of the river at this place from the height of 150 feet, were however by no means favourable to my arithmetical studies; and I returned perfectly disposed to think the world's age a less profitable, a less diverting contemplation, than its folly.

We looked at the temple of the old goddess that cured coughs, now a Christian church, dedicated to *la Madonna della Tosse*; it is exactly all it ever was, I believe; and we dined in the temple of Sibylla Tiburtina, a beautiful edifice, of which Mr. Jenkins has sent the model to London in cork, which gives a more exact representation after all than the best-chosen words in the world. I would rather make use of *them* to praise Mr. Jenkins's general kindness and hospitality to all his country-folks, who find a certain friend in him; and if they please, a very competent instructor.

In order however to understand the meaning of some spherical *pots* observed in the Circus of Caracalla, I chose above all men to consult Mr. Greatheed, whose correct taste, deep research, and knowledge of architecture, led me to prefer his account to every other, of their use and necessity: it shall be given in his own words, which I am proud of his permission to copy.

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"Of those *pots* you mention, there are not any remaining in the Circus Maximus, as the walls, seats and apodium of that have entirely disappeared. They are to be seen in the Circus of Caracalla, on the Appian way; of this, and of this alone, enough still exists to ascertain the form, structure, and parts of a Roman course. It was surrounded by two parallel walls which supported the seats of the spectators. The exterior wall rose to the summit of the gallery; the interior one was much lower, terminated with the lowest rows, and formed the apodium. This rough section may serve to elucidate my description. From wall to wall an arch was turned which formed a quadrant, and on this the seats immediately rested: but as the upper rows were considerably distant from the crown of the arch, it was necessary to fill the intermediate space with materials sufficiently strong to support the upper stone benches and the multitude. Had these been of solid substance, they would have pressed prodigious and disproportionate weight on the summit of the arch, a place least able to endure it from its horizontal position. To remedy this defect, the architect caused *spherical pots* to be baked; of these each formed of itself an arch sufficiently powerful to sustain its share of the incumbent weight, and the whole was rendered much less ponderous by the innumerable vacuities.

[Illustration]

"A similar expedient was likewise used to diminish the pressure of their domes, by employing the scoriae of lava brought for that purpose from the Lipari Islands. The numberless bubbles of this volcanic substance give it the appearance of a honeycomb, and answer the same purpose as the pots in Caracalla's Circus, so much so, that though very hard, it is of less specific gravity than wood, and consequently floats in water."

Before I quit the Circus of Caracalla, I must not forbear mentioning his bust, which so perfectly resembles Hogarth's idle 'Prentice; but why should they not be alike?

For black-guards are black-guards in every degree,

I suppose, and the people here who shew one thing, always take delight to souce an Englishman's hat upon his head, as if they thought so too.

This morning's ramble let us to see the old grotto, sacred to Numa's famous nymph, AEgeria, not far from Rome even now. I wonder that it should escape being built round when Rome was so extensive as to contain the crowds which we are told were lodged in it. That the city spread chiefly the other way, is scarce an answer. London spreads chiefly the Marybone way perhaps, yet is much nearer to Rumford than it was fifty or sixty years ago.

The same remark may be made of the Temple of Mars without the walls, near the Porta Capena: a rotunda it was on the road side *then*: it is on the road side *now*, and a very little way from the gate.

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Caius Cestius's sepulchre however, without the walls, on the other side, is one of the most perfect remains of antiquity we have here. Aurelian made use of that as a boundary we know: it stands at present half without and half within the limit that Emperor set to the city; and is a very beautiful pyramid a hundred and ten feet high, admirably represented in Piranesi's prints, with an inscription on the white marble of which it is composed, importing the name and office and condition of its wealthy proprietor: *C. Cestius, septem vir epulonum*. He must have lived therefore since Julius Caesar's time it is plain, as he first increased the number of epulones to seven, from three their original institution. It was probably a very lucrative office for a man to be Jupiter's caterer; who, as he never troubled himself with looking over the bills, they were such commonly, I doubt not, as made ample profits result to him who went to market; and Caius Cestius was one of the rich contractors of those days, who neglected no opportunity of acquiring wealth for himself, while he consulted the honour of Jupiter in providing for his master's table very plentiful and elegant banquets.

That such officers were in use too among the Persians during the time their monarchy lasted, is plain from the apocryphal story of Bel and the Dragon in our Bibles, where, to the joy of every child that reads it, Daniel detects the fraud of the priests by scattering ashes or saw-dust in the temple.

But I fear the critics will reprove me for saying that Julius Caesar only increased the number to seven, while many are of opinion he added three more, and made them a decemvirate: mean time Livy tells us the institution began in the year of Rome 553, during the consulate of Fulvius Purpurio and Marcellus, upon a motion of Romuleius if I remember. They had the privilege granted afterwards of edging the gown with purple like the pontiffs, when increased to seven in number; and they were always known by the name *Septemviratus*, or *Septemviri Epulonum*, to the latest hours of Paganism.

The tomb of Caius Cestius is supposed to have cost twelve thousand pounds sterling of our money in those days; and little did he dream that it should be made in the course of time a repository for the bones of *divisos orbe Britannos*: for such it is now appointed to be by government. All of us who die at Rome, sleep with this purveyor of the gods; and from his monument shall at the last day rise the re-animated body of our learned and incomparable Sir James Macdonald: whose numerous and splendid acquirements, though by the time he had reached twenty-four years old astonished all who knew him, never overwhelmed one little domestic virtue. His filial piety however; his hereditary courage, his extensive knowledge, his complicated excellencies, have now, I fear, no other register to record their worth, than a low stone near the stately pyramid of Jupiter's caterer.

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The tomb of Caecilia Metella, wife of the rich and famous Crassus, claims our next attention; it is a beautiful structure, and still called *Capo di Bove* by the Italians, on account of its being ornamented with the *oxhead and flowers* which now flourish over every door in the new-built streets of London; but the original of which, as Livy tells us, and I believe Plutarch too, was this. That Coratius, a Sabine farmer, who possessed a particularly fine cow, was advised by a soothsayer to sacrifice her to Diana upon the Aventine Hill; telling him, that the city where *she* now presided—*Diana*—should become mistress of the world, and he who presented her with that cow should become master over that city. The poor Sabine went away to wash in the Tyber, and purify himself for these approaching honours[AF]; but in the mean time, a boy having heard the discourse, and reported it to *Servius Tullius*, he hastened to the spot, killed Coratius's cow for him, sacrificed her to Diana, and hung her head with the horns on, and the garland just as she died, upon the temple door as an ornament. From that time, it seems, the ornament called *Caput Bovis* was in a manner consecrated to Diana, and her particular votaries used it on their tombs. Nor could one easily account for the decorations of many Roman sarcophagi, till one recollects that they were probably adapted to that divinity in whose temple they were to be placed, rather than to the particular person occupying the tomb, or than to our general ideas of death, time, and eternity. It is probably for this reason that the immense sarcophagus lately dug up from under the temple of Bacchus without the walls, cut out of one solid piece of red porphyry, has such gay ornaments round it, relative to the sacrifices of Bacchus, &c.; and I fancy these stone coffins, if we may call them so, were often made ready and sold to any person who wished to bury their friend, and who chose some story representing the triumph of whatever deity they devoted themselves to. Were the modern inhabitants of Rome who venerate St. Lorenzo, St. Sebastiano, &c. to place, not uncharacteristically at all—a gridiron, or an arrow on their tombstone, it might puzzle succeeding antiquarians, and yet be nothing out of the way in the least.

[Footnote AF: A circumstance alluded to and parodied by Ben Johnson in his *Alchemist*. See the conduct of Dapper, &c.]

Of the Egyptian obelisks at Rome I will not strive to give any account, or even any idea. They are too numerous, too wonderful, too learned for me to talk about; but I must not forbear to mention the broken thing which lies down somewhere in a heap of rubbish, and is said to be the greatest rarity in Rome, column, or *obelisk* and the greatest antiquity surely, if 1630 years before the birth of Christ be its date; as that was but two centuries after the invention of letters by *Memnon*, and just about the time that Joseph the favourite of Pharaoh died. There is a sphinx upon it, however, mighty clearly expressed; and some one said, how strange it was, if the world was no older than we think it, that they should, in so early a stage of existence, represent, or even imagine to themselves a compound animal[AG]: though the chimaera came in play when the world was pretty young too, and the Prophet Isaiah speaks of centaurs; but that was long after even Hesiod's time.

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[Footnote AG: The ornaments of the ark and tabernacle exhibit much improvement in the arts of engraving, carving, &c. Nor did it seem to cost Aaron any trouble to make a cast of Apis in the Wilderness for the Israelites' amusement, 1491 years before Christ; while the dog Anubis was probably another figure with which Moses was not unacquainted, and that was certainly composite: a cynocephalus I believe.]

A modern traveller has however, with much ingenuity of conjecture, given us an excellent reason why the Sphinx was peculiar to Egypt, as the Nile was observed to overflow when the sun was in those signs of the Zodiack:

The lion virgin Sphinx, which shows
What time the rich Nile overflows.

And sure I think, as people lived longer then than they do now; as Moses was contemporary with Cecrops, so that monarchy and a settled form of government had begun to obtain footing in Greece, and apparently migrated a little westward even then; that this column might have employed the artists of those days, without any such exceeding stretch of probability as our modern Aristotelians study to make out, from their zeal to establish his doctrine of the world's eternity. While, if conjecture were once as liberally permitted to believers as it is generously afforded to scepticks, I know not whether a hint concerning Sphinx's original might not be deduced from old Israel's last blessing to his sons; *The lion of Judah*, with the *head of a virgin*, in whose offspring that lion was one day to sink and be lost, except his hinder parts; might naturally enough grow into a favourite emblem among the inhabitants of a nation who owed their existence to one of the family; and who would be still more inclined to commemorate the mystical blessing, if they observed the fructifying inundation to happen regularly, as Mr. Savary says, when the Sun left Leo for Virgo.

The broken pillar has however carried me too far perhaps, though every day passed in the Pope's Musaeum confirms my belief, nay certainty, that they did mingle the veneration of Joseph with that of their own gods: The bushel or measure of corn on the Egyptian Jupiter's head is a proof of it, and the name *Serapis*, a further corroboration: the dream which he explained for Pharaoh relative to the event that fixed his favour in that country, was expressed by *cattle*; and *for apis*, the *ox's head*, was perfectly applicable to him for every reason.

But we will quit mythology for the Corso. This is the first town in Italy I have arrived at yet, where the ladies fairly drive up and down a long street by way of shewing their dress, equipages, &c. without even a pretence of taking fresh air. At Turin the view from the place destined to this amusement, would tempt one out merely for its own sake; and at Milan they drive along a planted walk, at least a stone's throw beyond the gates. Bologna calls its serious inhabitants to a little rising ground, whence the

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prospect is luxuriantly verdant and smiling. The Lucca bastions are beyond all in a peculiar style of miniature beauty; and even the Florentines, though lazy enough, creep out to Porto St. Gallo. But here at Roma la Santa, the street is all our Corso; a fine one doubtless, and called the *Strada del Popolo*, with infinite propriety, for except in that strada there is little populousness enough God knows. Twelve men to a woman even there, and as many ecclesiastics to a lay-man: all this however is fair, when celibacy is once enjoined as a duty in one profession, encouraged as a virtue in all. Where females are superfluous, and half prohibited, it were as foolish to complain of the decay of population, as it was comical in Omai the South American savage, when he lamented that no cattle bred upon their island; and one of our people replying, That they left some beasts on purpose to furnish them; he answered, "Yes, but the idol worshipped at Bola-bola, another of the islands, insisted on the males and females living separate: so they had sent *him* the cows, and kept only the bulls at home."

Au reste, as the French say, we must not be too sure that all who dress like Abates are such. Many gentlemen wear black as the court garb; many because it is not costly, and many for reasons of mere convenience and dislike of change.

I see not here the attractive beauty which caught my eye at Venice; but the women at Rome have a most Juno-like carriage, and fill up one's idea of Livia and Agrippina well enough. The men have rounder faces than one sees in other towns I think; bright, black, and somewhat prominent eyes, with the finest teeth in Europe. A story told me this morning struck my fancy much; of an herb-woman, who kept a stall here in the market, and who, when the people ran out flocking to see the Queen of Naples as she passed, began exclaiming to her neighbours—"Ah, *povera Roma! tempo fu quando passo qui prigioniera la regina Zenobia; altra cosa amica, robba tutta diversa di questa reginuccia*[AH]!"

[Footnote AH: "Ah, poor degraded Rome! time was, my dear, when the great Zenobia passed through these streets in chains; another guess figure from this little Queeney, in good time!"]

A characteristic speech enough; but in this town, unlike to every other, the *things* take my attention all away from the *people*; while, in every other, the people have had much more of my mind employed upon them, than the things.

The arch of Constantine, however, must be spoken of; the sooner, because there is a contrivance at the top of it to conceal musicians, which added, as it passed, to the noise and gaiety of the triumph. Lord Scarsdale's back front at Keddlestone exhibits an imitation of this structure; a motto, expressive of hospitality, filling up the part which, in the original, is adorned with the siege of Verona, that to me seems well done; but Michael Angelo carried

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off Trajan's head they tell us, which had before been carried thither from the arch of Trajan himself. The arch of Titus Vespasian struck me more than all the others we have named though; less for its being the first building in which the Composite order of architecture is made use of, among the numberless fabrics that surround one, than for the evident completion of the prophecies which it exhibits. Nothing can appear less injured by time than the bas-reliefs, on one side representing the ark, and golden candlesticks; on the other, Titus himself, delight of human kind, drawn by four horses, his look at once serene and sublime. The Jews cannot endure, I am told, to pass under this arch, so lively is the *annihilation* of their government, and utter *extinction* of their religion, carved upon it. When reflecting on the continued captivity they have suffered ever since this arch was erected here at Rome, and which they still suffer, being strictly confined to their own miserable Ghetto, which they dare not leave without a mark upon their hat to distinguish them, and are never permitted to stir without the walls, except in custody of some one whose business it is to bring them back; when reflecting, I say, on their sorrows and punishments, one's heart half inclines to pity their wretchedness; the dreadful recollection immediately crosses one, that these are the direct and lineal progeny of those very Jews who cried out aloud—"*Let his blood be upon us, and upon our children!*"—Unhappy race! how sweetly does St. Austin say of them—"*Librarii nostri facti sunt, quemadmodum solent libros post dominos ferre.*"

The *arca degli orefici* is a curious thing too, and worth observing: the goldsmiths set it up in honour of Caracalla and Geta; but one plainly discerns where poor Geta's head has been carried off in one place, his figure broken in another, apparently by Caracalla's order. The building is of itself of little consequence, but as a confirmation of historical truth.

The fountains of Rome should have been spoken of long ago; the number of them is known to all though, and of their magnificence words can give no idea. One print of the Trevi is worth all the words of all the describers together. Moses striking the rock, at another fountain, where water in torrents tumble forth at the touch of the rod, has a glorious effect, from the happiness of the thought, and an expression so suitable to the subject. When I was told the story of Queen Christina admiring the two prodigious fountains before St. Peter's church, and begging that they might leave off playing, because she thought them occasional, and in honour of her arrival, not constant and perpetual; who could help recollecting a similar tale told about the Prince of Monaco, who was said to have expressed his concern, when he saw the roads lighted up round London, that our king should put himself to so great an expence on his account—in good time!—thinking it a temporary illumination made to receive him with distinguished splendour. These anecdotes are very pretty now, if they are strictly true; because they shew the mind's petty but natural disposition, of reducing and attributing all *to self*: but if they are only inventions, to raise the reputation of London lamps, or Roman cascades, one scorns them;—I really do hope, and half believe, that they are true.

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But I have been to see the two Auroras of Guido and Guercino. Villa Ludovisi contains the last, of which I will speak first for forty reasons—the true one because I like it best. It is so sensible, so poetical, so beautiful. The light increases, and the figure advances to the fancy: one expects Night to be waked before one looks at her again, if ever one can be prevailed upon to take one's eyes away. The bat and owl are going soon to rest, and the lamp burns more faintly as when day begins to approach. The personification of Night is wonderfully hit off. But Guercino is *such* a painter! We were driving last night to look at the Colisseo by moon-light—there were a few clouds just to break the expanse of azure and shew the gilding. I thought how like a sky of Guercino's it was; other painters remind one of nature, but nature when most lovely makes one think of Guercino and his works. The Ruspigliosi palace boasts the Aurora of Guido—both are ceilings, but this is not rightly named sure. We should call it the Phoebus, for Aurora holds only the second place at best: the fun is driving over her almost; it is a more luminous, a more graceful, a more showy picture than the other, more universal too, exciting louder and oftener repeated praises; yet the other is so discriminated, so tasteful, so classical! We must go see what Domenichino has done with the same subject.

I forget the name of the palace where it is to be admired: but had we not seen the others, one should have said this was divine. It is a Phoebus again, *this* is; not a bit of an Aurora: and Truth is springing up from the arms of Time to rejoice in the sun's broad light. Her expression of transport at being set free from obscurity, is happy in an eminent degree; but there are faults in her form, and the Apollo has scarcely dignity enough in *his*. The horses are best in Guide's picture: Aurora at the Villa Ludovisi has but two; they are very spirited, but it is the spirit of three, not six o'clock in a summer morning. Surely Thomson had been living under these two roofs when he wrote such descriptions as seem to have been made on purpose for them; could any one give a more perfect account of Guercino's performance than these words afford?

The meek-ey'd morn appears, mother of dews,
At first faint-gleaming in the dappled East
Till far o'er aether spreads the widening glow,
And from before the lustre of her face
White break the clouds away: with quicken'd step
Brown Night retires, young Day pours in apace
And opens all the lawny prospect wide.

As for the Ruspigliosi palace I left these lines in the room, written by the same author, and think them more capable than any description I could make, of giving some idea of Guido's Phoebus.

While yonder comes the powerful King of Day
Rejoicing in the East; the lessening cloud,
The kindling azure, and the mountains brow

Illum'd with fluid gold, his near approach
Betoken glad; lo, now apparent all
He looks in boundless majesty abroad,
And sheds the shining day.

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So charming Thomson wrote from his lodgings at a milliner's in Bond-street, whence he seldom rose early enough to see the sun do more than glisten on the opposing windows of the street: but genius, like truth, cannot be kept down. So he wrote, and so they painted! *Ut pictura poesis*.

The music is not in a state so capital as we left it in the north of Italy; we regret Nardini of Florence, Alessandri of Venice, and Ronzi of Milan; and who that has heard Signior Marchesi sing, could ever hear a successor (for rival he has none), without feeling total indifference to all their best endeavours?

The conversations of Cardinal de Bernis and Madame de Boccapaduli are what my countrywomen talk most of; but the Roman ladies cannot endure perfumes, and faint away even at an artificial rose. I went but once among them, when Memmo the Venetian ambassador did me the honour to introduce me *somewhere*, but the conversation was soon over, not so my shame; when I perceived all the company shrink from me very oddly, and stop their noses with rue, which a servant brought to their assistance on open salvers. I was by this time more like to faint away than they—from confusion and distress; my kind protector informed me of the cause; said I had some grains of marechale powder in my hair perhaps, and led me out of the assembly; to which no intreaties could prevail on me ever to return, or make further attempts to associate with a delicacy so very susceptible of offence.

Mean time the weather is exceedingly bad, heavy, thick, and foggy as our own, for aught I see; but so it was at Milan too I well remember: one's eye would not reach many mornings across the Naviglio that ran directly under our windows. For fine bright Novembers we must go to Constantinople I fancy; certain it is that Rome will not supply them.

What however can make these Roman ladies fly from *odori* so, that a drop of lavenderwater in one's handkerchief, or a carnation in one's stomacher, is to throw them all into, convulsions thus? Sure this is the only instance in which they forbear to *fabbricare fu l'antico*[Footnote: Build upon the old foundations.], in their own phrase: the dames, of whom Juvenal delights to tell, liked perfumes well enough if I remember; and Horace and Martial cry "*Carpe rosas*" perpetually. Are the modern inhabitants still more refined than *they* in their researches after pleasure? and are the present race of ladies capable of increasing, beyond that of their ancestors, the keenness of any corporeal sense? I should think not. Here are however amusements enough at Rome without trying for their conversations.

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The Barberini palace, whither I carried a distracting tooth-ach, amused even that torture by the variety of its wonders. The sleeping faun, praised on from century to century, and never yet praised enough; so drunk, so fast asleep, so like a human body! Modesty reproving Vanity, by Leonardo da Vinci, so totally beyond my expectation or comprehension, great! wise! and fine! Raphael's Mistress, painted by himself, and copied by Julio Romano; this picture gives little satisfaction though except from curiosity gratified, the woman is too coarse. Guido's Magdalen up stairs, the famous Magdalen, effacing every beauty, of softness mingled with distress. A St. John too, by dear Guercino, transcendent! but such was my anguish the very rooms turned round: I must come again when less ill I believe.

Nothing can equal the nastiness at one's entrance to this magazine of perfection: but the Roman nobles are not disgusted with *all sorts* of scents it is plain; these are not what we should call perfumes indeed, but certainly *odori*: of the same nature as those one is obliged to wade through before Trajan's Pillar can be climbed.

That the general appearance of a city which contains such treasures should be mean and disgusting, while one literally often walks upon granite, and tramples red porphyry under one's feet, is one of the greatest wonders to me, in a town of which the wonders seem innumerable: that it should be nasty beyond all telling, all endurance, with such perennial streams of the purest water liberally dispersed, and triumphantly scattered all over it, is another unfathomable wonder: that so many poor should be suffered to beg in the streets, when not a hand can be got to work in the fields, and that those poor should be permitted to exhibit sights of deformity and degradations of our species to me unseen till now, at the most solemn moments, and in churches where silver and gold, and richly-arrayed priests, scarcely suffice to call off attention from their squalid miseries, I do not try to comprehend. That the palaces which taste and expence combine to decorate should look quietly on, while common passengers use their noble vestibules, nay flairs, for every nauseous purpose; that princes whose incomes equal those of our Dukes of Bedford and Marlborough, should suffer their servants to dress other men's dinners for hire, or lend out their equipages for a day's pleasuring, and hang wet rags out of their palace windows to dry, as at the mean habitation of a pauper; while looking in at those very windows, nothing is to be seen but proofs of opulence, and scenes of splendour, I will not undertake to explain; sure I am, that whoever knows Rome, will not condemn this *ebauche* of it.

When I spoke of their beggars, many not unlike Salvator Rosa's Job at the Santa Croce palace, I ought not to have omitted their eloquence, and various talents. We talked to a lame man one day at our own door, whose account of his illness would not have disgraced a medical professor; so judicious were his sentiments, so scientific was his discourse. The accent here too is perfectly pleasing, intelligible, and expressive; and I like their *cantilena* vastly.

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The excessive lenity of all Italian states makes it dangerous to live among them; a seeming paradox, yet certainly most true; and whatever is evil in this way at any other town, is worst at Rome; where those who deserve hanging, enjoy almost a moral certainty of never being hanged; so unwilling is everybody to detect the offender, and so numerous the churches to afford him protection if found out.

A man asked importunately in our antichamber this morning for the *padrone*, naming no names, and our servants turned him out. He went however only five doors, further, found a sick old gentleman sitting in his lodging attended by a feeble servant, whom he bound, stuck a knife in the master, rifled the apartments, and walked coolly out again at noon-day: nor should we have ever heard of *such a trifle*, but that it happened just by so; for here are no newspapers to tell who is murdered, and nobody's pity is excited, unless for the malefactor when they hear he is caught.

But the Palazzo Farnese is a more pleasing speculation; the Hercules faces us entering; Guglielmo della Porta made his legs I hear, and when the real ones were found, *his were better*: and Michael Angelo said, it was not worth risking the statue to try at restoring the old ones. There is another Hercules stands near, as a foil to Glycon's, I suppose; and the Italians tell you of our Mr. Sharp's acuteness in finding some fault till then undiscovered, a very slight one though, with some of the neck muscles: they tell it approvingly however, and make one admire their candour, even beyond their Flora, who carries that in her countenance which they possess in their hearts. Under a shed on the right hand you find the famous groupe called Toro Farnese. It has been touched and repaired, they tell you, till much of the spirit is lost; but I did not miss it. The Bull and the Brothers are greatness itself; but Dirce draws no compassion by her looks somehow, and the lady who comes to her relief, seems too cold a spectatress of the scene.

There were several broken statues in the place, and while my companions were examining the groupe after I had done, the wench's conversation who shewed it made my amusement: as we looked together at an Egyptian *Isis*, or, as many call her, *the Ephesian Diana*, with a hundred breasts, very hideous, and swathed about the legs like a mummy at Cairo, or a baby at Rome, I said to the girl, "*They worshipped these filthy things formerly before Jesus Christ came; but he taught us better,*" added I, "*and we are wiser now: how foolish was not it to pray to this ugly stone?*"—"The people were *wickeder* then, very likely;" replied my friend the wench, "but I do not see that it was *foolish at all.*"

Who says the modern Romans are degenerated? I swear I think them so like their ancestors, that it is my delight to contemplate the resemblance. A statue of a peasant carrying game at this very palace, is habited precisely in the modern dress, and shews how very little change has yet been made. The shoes of the low fellows too particularly attract my notice: they exactly resemble the ancient ones, and when Persius mentions his ploughman *peronatus arator*, one sees he would say so to-day.

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The Dorian palace calls however, and people must give way to things where the miraculous powers of Benvenuto Garofani are concerned; where Lodovico Caracci exhibits a *testa del redentore* beyond all praise, uniting every excellence, and expressing every perfection; where, in the deluge represented by Bonati, one sees the eagle drooping from a weight of rain, majestic in his distress, and looking up to the luminous part of the picture as if hoping to discover some ray of that sun he never shall see again. How characteristic! how tasteful is the expression! The famous Virgin and Child too, so often engraved and copied.

I will run away from this Doria; it is too full of beauty—it dazzles: and I will let them shew the pale green Gaspar Pouffins, so valuable, so curious, to whom they please, while Nature and Claude content my fancy and fill up every idea.

At the Colonna palace what have I remarked? That it possesses the gayest gallery belonging to any subject upon earth: one hundred and thirty-nine feet long, thirty-four broad, and seventy high: profusely ornamented with pillars, pictures, statues, to a degree of magnificence difficult to express. The Herodias here by Guido, is the perfection of dancing grace. No Frenchman enters the room that does not bear testimony to its peculiar excellence. But here's Guercino's sweet returning Prodigal, and here is a *Madonna disperata* bursting as from a cavern to embrace the body of her dead son and saviour.—Such a sky too! But it is treating too theatrically a subject which impresses one more at last in the simple *Pieta*[A] d'Annibale Caracci at Palazzo Doria.

[Footnote A: The Christ in his mother's lap, after crucifixion, is always called in Italy a *Pieta*.]

One wonderfully-imagined picture by Andrea Sacchi, of Cain flying from the sight of his murdered brother, shall alone detain me from mentioning here at Rome what certainly would never have been thought on by Englishmen had it remained at Windsor; no other than our old King Charles's cabinet, sold to the Colonna family by Cromwell, and set about in the old-fashioned way with gems, cameos, &c. one of which has been stolen.

And now to the Borghese, which I am told is for a time to finish my fatigues, as after three days more we go to Naples. News perfectly agreeable to me, who never have been well here for two hours together.

All the great churches remain yet unvisited: they are to be taken at our return in spring; mean while I will go see Mons Sacer in spite of connoisseurship, though the place it seems is nothing, and the prospect from it dull; but it produces thoughts, or what is next to thought,—recollection of books read, and events related in one's early youth, when names and stories make impression on a mind not yet hardened by age, or contracted by necessary duty, so as no longer to receive with equal relish the *tales of other times*. The lake too, with the floating

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islands, should be mentioned; the colour of which is even blue with venom, and left a brassy taste in my mouth for a whole day, after only observing how it boiled with rage on dropping in a stone, and incrusting a stick with its tartar in two minutes. One of our companions indeed leaped upon the little spots of ground which float in it, and deserved to feel some effect of his rashness; but it is sufficient to stand near, I think; one scarcely can escape contagion. The sudden and violent powers observable in this lake should at least check the computists from thinking they can gather the world's age from its petrefactions.

But we are called to the Vatican, where the Apollo, Laocoon, Antinous, and Meleager, with others of less distinguished merit, suffer one to think on nothing but themselves, and of the artists who framed such models of perfection. Laocoon's agonies torment one. I was forced to recollect the observation Dr. Moore says was first made by Mr. Locke, in order to harden my heart against him who appears to feel only for himself, when two such youths are expiring close beside him. But though painting can do much, and sculpture perhaps more, at least one learns to think so here at Rome, the comfort is, that poetry beats them both. Virgil knew, and Shakespeare would have known, how to heighten even this distress, by adding paternal anguish:—here is distress enough however.

Let us once more acknowledge the modesty and candour of Italians, when we repeat what has been so often recorded, that Michael Angelo refused adding the arm that was wanting to this chef d'oeuvre; and when Bernini undertook the task, he begged it might remain always a different colour, that he might not be suspected of hoping that his work could ever lie confounded with that of the Greek artist.

Such is not the spirit of the French: they have been always adding to Don Quixote! a personage whose adventures were little likely to cross one's fancy in the Vatican; but perfection is perfection.

Here stands the Apollo though, in whom alone no fault has yet been found. They tell you, he has just killed the serpent Python. "Let us beg of him," says one of the company, "just to turn round and demolish those cursed snakes which are devouring the poor old man and his boys yonder." This was like the speech of *Marchez donc* to the fine bronze horse under the heavenly statue of Marcus Aurelius at the Capitol, and made me hope that story might be true. It is the fashion for every body to go see Apollo by torch light: he looks like *Phoebus* then, the Sun's bright deity, and seems to say to his admirers, as that Divinity does to the presumptuous hero in Homer,

Oh son of Tydeus, cease! be wise, and see
How vast the difference 'twixt the gods and thee.

Indeed every body finds the remark obvious, that this statue is of beauty and dignity beyond what human nature now can boast; and the Meleager just at hand, with the Antinous, confirm it; for all elegance and all expression, unpossessed by the Apollo, *they have*, while none can miss the inferiority of their general appearance to his.

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The Musaeum Clementinum is altogether such though, that these singularly excellent productions of art are only proper and well-adapted ornaments of a gallery, so stately as, on the other hand, that noble edifice seems but the due repository of such inhabitants. Never were place and decorations so adapted: never perhaps was so refined a taste engaged on subjects so worthy its exertion. The statues are disposed with a propriety that charms one; the situation of the pillars so contrived, the colours of them so chosen to carry the eye forward—not fatigue it; the rooms so illuminated: Hagley park is not laid out with more judicious attention to diversify, and relieve with various objects a mind delighting in the contemplation of ornamented nature; than is the Pope's Musaeum calculated to enchain admiration, and fix it in those apartments where sublimity and beauty have established their residence; and those would be worse than Goths, who could think of moving even an old torso from the place where Pius Sextus has commanded it to remain.

The other parts of this prodigious structure would take up one's life almost to see completely, to remember distinctly, and to describe accurately. When the reader recollects that St. Peter's, with all its appurtenances, palace, library, musaeum, every thing that we include in the word *Vatican*, is said by the Romans to occupy an equal quantity of space, to that covered by the city of Turin: the assertion need not any longer be thought hyperbolical.

I will say no more about it till at our return from Naples we visit all the churches.

Vopiscus said, that the statues in his time at Rome out-numbered the people; and I trust the remark is now almost doubly true, as every day and hour digs up dead worthies, and the unwholesome weather must surely send many of the living ones to their ancestors: upon the whole, the men and women of Porphyry, &c. please me best, as they do not handle long knives to so good an effect as the others do, "*qui aime bien a s'egorger encore*[Footnote: *Who have still a taste to be cut-throats.*]," says a French gentleman of them the other day. There is however an air of cheerfulness in the streets at a night among the poor, who fry fish, and eat roots, sausages, &c. as they walk about gaily enough, and though they quarrel too often, never get drunk at least.

The two houses belonging to the Borghese family shall conclude my first journey to Rome, and with that the first volume of my observations and reflexions.

Their town palace is a suite of rooms constructed like those at Wanstead exactly; and where you turn at the end to come back by another suite, you find two alabaster fountains of superior beauty, and two glass lustres made in London, but never wiped since they left Fleet-street certainly. They do not however *want* cleaning as the fountains do; which, by the extraordinary use made of them, give the whole palace an offensive smell.

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Among the pictures here, the entombing our blessed Saviour by Rafaele is most praised: It is supposed indeed wholly inestimable, and I believe is so, while Venus, binding Cupid's eyes, by Titian, engraved by Strange, is possibly one of the pleasantest pictures in Rome. The Christ disputing with the Doctors is inimitable, one of the wonderful works of Leonardo da Vinci: but here is Domenichino's Diana among her nymphs, very laboured, and very learned. Why did it put me in mind of Hogarth's strolling actresses dressing in a barn?

Villa Borghese presents more to one's mind at once than it will bear, from the bas relief of Curtius over the door that faces you going in, to the last gate of the garden you drive out at;—large as the saloon is however, the figure of Curtius seems too near you; and the horse's hind quarters are heavy, and ill-suited to the forehand; but here are men and women enough, and odd things that are neither, at this house; so we may let the horse of Curtius alone.

Nothing can be gayer or more happily expressed in its way than the Centaur, which Dr. Moore, like Dr. Young, finds *not* fabulous; while the brute runs away with the man, and Cupid keeps urging him forward. The fawn nursing Bacchus when a baby, is another semi-human figure of just and high estimation; and that very famous composition for which Cavalier Bernini has executed a mattress infinitely softer to the eye than any real one I ever found in *his* country, has here an apartment appropriated to itself.

From monsters the eye turns of its own accord towards Nero, and here is an incomparable one of about ten years old, in whose face I vainly looked for the seeds of parricide, and murderous tyranny; but saw only a sturdy boy, who might have been made an honest man perhaps, had not the rod been spared by his old tutor, whose lenity is repaid by death here in the next room. It is a relief to look upon the smiling Zingara; her lively character is exquisitely touched, her face the only one perhaps where Bernini could not go beyond the proper idea of arch waggery and roguish cunning, adorned with beauty that must have rendered its possessor, while living, irresistible. His David is scarcely young enough for a ruddy shepherd swain; he seems too muscular, and confident of his own strength; *this* fellow could have worn Saul's armour well enough. Aeneas carrying his father, I understand, is by the other Bernini; but the famous groupe of Apollo and Daphne is the work of our Chevalier himself.

There is a Miss Hillisberg, a dancer on the stage, who reminds every body of this graceful statue, when theatrical distress drives her to force expression: I mean the stage in Germany, not Rome, whence females are excluded. But the vases in this Borghese villa! the tables! the walls! the cameos stuck in the walls! the frames of the doors, all agate, porphyry, onyx, or verd antique! the enormous riches contained in every chamber, actually takes away my breath and leaves

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me stunned. Nor are the gardens unbecoming or inadequate to the house, where on the outside appear such bas-reliefs as would be treasured up by the sovereigns of France or England, and shewn as valuable rarities. The rape of Europa first; it is a beautiful antique. Up stairs you see the rooms constantly inhabited; in the princess's apartment, her chimney-piece is one elegant but solid amethyst: over the prince's bed, which changes with the seasons, hangs a Ganymede painted by Titian, to which the connoisseurs tell you no rival has yet been found. The furniture is suitably magnificent in every part of the house, and our English friends assured me, that they met the lady of it last night, when one gentleman observing how pretty she was, another replied he could not see her face for the dazzling lustre of her innumerable diamonds, that actually by their sparkling confounded his sight, and surrounded her countenance so that he could not find it.

Among all the curiosities however belonging to this wealthy and illustrious family, the single one most prized is a well-known statue, called in Catalogues by the name of the Fighting Gladiator, but considered here at Rome as deserving of a higher appellation. They now dispute only what hero it can be, as every limb and feature is expressive of a loftier character than the ancients ever bestowed in sculpture upon those degraded mortals whom Pliny contemptuously calls *Hordiarij*, and says they were kept on barley bread, with ashes given in their drink to strengthen them. Indeed the statue of the expiring Gladiator at the Capitol, his rope about his neck, and his unpitied fate, marked strongly in his vulgar features, exhibits quite a separate class in the variety of human beings; and though Faustina's favourite found in the same collection was probably the showiest fellow then among them, we see no marks of intelligent beauty or heroic courage in his form or face, where an undaunted steadiness and rustic strength make up the little merit of the figure.

This charming statue of the prince Borghese is on the other hand the first in Rome perhaps, for the distinguished excellencies of animated grace and active manliness: his head raised, the body's attitude, not studied surely, but the apparent and seemingly sudden effect of patriotic daring. Such one's fancy forms young Isadas the Spartan; who, hearing the enemy's approach while at the baths, starts off unmindful of his own defenceless state, snatches a spear and shield from one he meets, flies at the foe, performs prodigies of valour, is looked on by both armies as a descended God, and returns home at last unhurt, to be fined by the Ephori for breach of discipline, at the same time that a statue was ordered to commemorate his exploits, and erected at the state's expence. Monsignor Ennio Visconti, who saw that the figure reminded me of this story, half persuaded himself for a moment that this was the very Isadas; and that Jason, for whom he had long thought it intended, was not young enough, and less likely to fight undefended by armour against bulls, of whose fury he had been well apprised. Mr. Jenkins recollected an antique ring which confirmed our new hypothesis, and I remained flattered, whether they were convinced or no.

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END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.