

SUMMER CRUISE
IN
THE MEDITERRANEAN
ON BOARD THE AMERICAN FRIGATE

BY
N. PARKER WILLIS

1853

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BY
N. PARKER WILLIS.

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PREFACE.

Of one of the most delicious episodes in a long period of foreign travel, this volume is the imperfect and hastily written transcript. Even at the time it was written, the author felt its experience to be a dream—so exempt was it from the interrupting and qualifying drawbacks of happiness in common and working life—but, now, after an interval of many years, it seems indeed like a dream, and one so full of unmingled pleasure, that its telling almost wants the contrast of a sadness. Of the noble ship, whose summer cruise is described, and her kind and hospitable officers, the recollection is as fresh and grateful now, as when, (twenty years ago,) the author bade them farewell in the port of Smyrna. Of the scenes he passed through, while their guest, he has a less perfect remembrance—relying indeed on these chance memoranda, for much that would else be forgotten. It is with a mingled sense of the real and the unreal, therefore, that the book is offered, in a new shape, to the Public, whose approbation has encouraged its long existence, and the author trusts that his thanks to the surviving officers of that ship may again reach them, and that the kind favour of the reading Public may be again extended to this his record of what he saw in the company of these officers, and by their generous hospitality.

HIGHLAND TERRACE,
October, 1852.

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SUMMER CRUISE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

LETTER I.

Cruise in the Frigate "United States"—Elba—Piombino—Porto Ferrajo—Appearance of the Bay—Naval Discipline—Visit to the Town Residence of Napoleon—His Employment during his Confinement on the Island—His sisters Eliza and Pauline—His Country House—Simplicity of the Inhabitants of Elba.

I had come from Florence to join the "United States," at the polite invitation of the officers of the ward-room, on a cruise up the Mediterranean. My cot was swung immediately on my arrival, but we lay three days longer than was expected in the harbour, riding out a gale of wind, which broke the chain cables of both ships, and drove several merchant vessels on the rocks. We got under way on the 3rd of June, and the next morning were off Elba, with Corsica on our quarter, and the little island of Capreja just ahead.

The firing of guns took me just now to the deck. Three Sardinian gun-boats had saluted the commodore's flag in passing, and it was returned with twelve guns. They were coming home from the affair at Tunis. It is a fresh, charming morning, and we are beating up against a light head-wind, all the officers on deck looking at the island with their glasses, and discussing the character of the great man to whom this little barren spot was a temporary empire. A bold fortification just appears on the point, with the Tuscan flag flying from the staff. The sides of the hills are dotted with desolate looking buildings, among which are one or two monasteries, and in rounding the side of the island, we have passed two or three small villages, perched below and above on the rocks. Off to the east, we can just distinguish Piombino, the nearest town of the Italian shore, and very beautiful it looks, rising from the edge of the water like Venice, with a range of cloudy hills relieving it in the rear.

Our anchor is dropped in the bay of Porto Ferrajo. As we ran lightly in upon the last tack, the walls of the fort appeared crowded with people, the whole town apparently assembled to see the unusual spectacle of two ships-of-war entering their now quiet waters. A small curving bay opened to us, and as we rounded directly under the walls of the fort, the tops of the houses in the town behind appeared crowded with women, whose features we could easily distinguish with a glass. By the constant exclamations of the midshipmen, who were gazing intently from the quarter-deck, there was among them a fair proportion of beauty, or what looked like it in the distance. Just below the summit of the fort, upon a terrace commanding a view of the sea, stood a handsome house, with low windows shut with Venetian blinds and shaded with acacias, which the pilot pointed out to us as the town residence of Napoleon. As the ship lost her way, we came in sight of a gentle amphitheatre of hills rising away from the cove, in a woody ravine of which stood a handsome building, with eight windows, built by the exile as a country-house. Twenty or thirty, as good or better, spot the hills around, ornamented with avenues and orchards of low olive-trees. It is altogether a rural scene, and disappoints us agreeably after the barren promise of the outer sides of the isle.

The "Constellation" came slowly in after us, with every sail set, and her tops crowded with men; and as she fell under the stern of the commodore's ship, the word was given, and her vast quantity of sail was furled with that wonderful alacrity which so astonishes a landsman. I have been continually surprised in the few days that I have been on board, with the wonders of sea

discipline; but for a spectacle, I have seen nothing more imposing than the entrance of these two beautiful frigates into the little port of Elba, and their magical management. The anchors were dropped, the yards came down by the run, the sails disappeared, the living swarm upon the rigging slid below, all in a moment, and then struck up the delightful band on our quarter-deck, and the sailors leaned on the guns, the officers on the quarter railing, and boats from the shore, filled with ladies, lay off at different distances, the whole scene as full of repose and enjoyment, as if we had lain idle for a month in these glassy waters. How beautiful are the results of order!

We had made every preparation for a pic-nic party to the country-house of Napoleon yesterday—but it rained. At sunset, however, the clouds crowded into vast masses, and the evening gave a glorious promise, which was fulfilled this morning in freshness and sunshine. The commodore's barge took off the ladies for an excursion on horseback to the iron mines, on the other side of the island—the midshipmen were set ashore in various directions for a ramble, and I, tempted with the beauty of the ravine which enclosed the villa of Napoleon, declined all invitations with an eye to a stroll thither.

We were first set ashore at the mole to see the town. A medley crowd of soldiers, citizens, boys, girls, and galley-slaves, received us at the landing, and followed us up to the town-square, gazing at the officers with undisguised curiosity. We met several gentlemen from the other ship at the café, and taking a cicerone together, started for the town-residence of the emperor. It is now occupied by the governor, and stands on the fine summit of the little fortified city. We mounted by clean, excellent pavements, getting a good-natured *buon giorno!* from very female head thrust from beneath the blinds of the houses. The governor's aide received us at the door, with his cap in his hand, and we commenced the tour of the rooms with all the household, male and female, following to gaze at us. Napoleon lived on the first floor. The rooms were as small as those of a private house, and painted in the pretty fresco common in Italy. The furniture was all changed, and the fire-places and two busts of the emperor's sisters (Eliza and Pauline) were all that remained as it was. The library is a pretty room, though very small, and opens on a terrace level with his favourite garden. The plants and lemon-trees were planted by himself, we were told, and the officers plucked souvenirs on all sides. The officer who accompanied us was an old soldier of Napoleon's and a native of Elba, and after a little of the reluctance common to the teller of an oft-told tale, he gave us some interesting particulars of the emperor's residence at the island. It appears that he employed himself, from the first day of his arrival, in the improvement of his little territory, making roads, &c., and behaved quite like a man who had made up his mind to relinquish ambition, and content himself with what was about him. Three assassins were discovered and captured in the course of the eleven months, the first two of whom he pardoned. The third made an attempt upon his life, in the disguise of a beggar, at a bridge leading to his country-house, and was condemned and executed. He was a native of the emperor's own birthplace in Corsica.

The second floor was occupied by his mother and Pauline. The furniture of the chamber of the renowned beauty is very much as she left it. The bed is small, and the mirror opposite its foot very large, and in a mahogany frame. Small mirrors were set also into the bureau, and in the back of a pretty cabinet of dark wood standing at the head of the bed. It is delightful to breathe the atmosphere of a room that has been the home of the lovely creature whose marble image by Canova thrills every beholder with love, and is fraught with such pleasing associations. Her sitting-room, though less interesting, made us linger and muse again. It looks out over the sea

to the west, and the prospect is beautiful. One forgets that her history could not be written without many a blot. How much we forgive to *beauty*! Of all the female branches of the Bonaparte family, Pauline bore the greatest resemblance to her brother Napoleon: but the grand and regular profile which was in him marked with the stern air of sovereignty and despotic rule, was in her tempered with an enchanting softness and fascinating smile. Her statue, after the *Vénus de' Medicis*, is the *chef d'œuvre* of modern sculpture.

We went from the governor's house to the walls of the town, loitering along and gazing at the sea; and then rambled through the narrow streets of the town, attracting, by the gay uniforms of the officers, the attention and courtesies of every smooched petticoat far and near. What the faces of the damsels of Elba might be, if washed, we could hardly form a conjecture.

The country-house of Napoleon is three miles from the town, a little distance from the shore, farther round into the bay. Captain Nicholson proposed to walk to it, and send his boat across—a warmer task for the mid-day of an Italian June than a man of less enterprise would choose for pleasure. We reached the stone steps of the imperial casino, after a melting and toilsome walk, hungry and thirsty, and were happy to fling ourselves upon broken chairs in the denuded drawing-room, and wait for an extempore dinner of twelve eggs and a bottle of wine as bitter as criticism. A farmer and his family live in the house, and a couple of bad busts and the fire-places, are all that remain of its old appearance. The situation and the view, however, are superb. A little lap of a valley opens right away from the door to the bosom of the bay, and in the midst of the glassy basin lies the bold peninsular promontory and fortification of Porto Ferrajo, like a castle in a loch, connected with the body of the island by a mere rib of sand. Off beyond sleeps the main-land of Italy, mountain and vale, like a smoothly-shaped bed of clouds; and for the foreground of the landscape, the valleys of Elba are just now green with fig-trees and vines, speckled here and there with fields of golden grain, and farm-houses shaded with all the trees of this genial climate.

We examined the place, after our frugal dinner, and found a natural path under the edge of the hill behind, stretching away back into the valley, and leading, after a short walk, to a small stream and a waterfall. Across it, just above the fall, lay the trunk of an old and vigorous fig-tree, full of green limbs, and laden with fruit half ripe. It made a natural bridge over the stream, and as its branches shaded the rocks below, we could easily imagine Napoleon, walking to and fro in the smooth path, and seating himself on the broadest stone in the heat of the summer evenings he passed on the spot. It was the only walk about the place, and a secluded and pleasant one. The groves of firs and brush above, and the locust and cherry-trees on the edges of the walk, are old enough to have shaded him. We sat and talked under the influence of the “genius of the spot,” till near sunset, and then, cutting each a walking-stick from the shoots of the old fig-tree, returned to the boats and reached the ship as the band struck up their exhilarating music for the evening on the quarter-deck.

We have passed two or three days at Elba most agreeably. The weather has been fine, and the ships have been thronged with company. The common people of the town come on board in boat-loads, men, women, and children, and are never satisfied with gazing and wondering. The inhabitants speak very pure Tuscan, and are mild and simple in their manners. They all take the ships to be bound upon a mere voyage of pleasure; and, with the officers in their gay dresses, and the sailors in their clean white and blue, the music morning and evening, and the general gaiety on board, the impression is not much to be wondered at.

Yesterday, after dinner, Captain Nicholson took us ashore in his gig, to pass an hour or two

in the shade. His steward followed, with a bottle or two of old wine, and landing near the fountain to which the boats are sent for water, we soon found a spreading fig-tree, and, with a family of the country people from a neighbouring cottage around us, we idled away the hours till the cool of the evening. The simplicity of the old man and his wife, and the wonder of himself and several labourers in his vineyard, to whom the captain gave a glass or two of his excellent wines, would have made a study for Wilkie. Sailors are merry companions for a party like this. We returned over the unruffled expanse of the bay, charmed with the beauty of the scene by sunset, and as happy as a life, literally *sans souci*, could make us. What is it, in this rambling absence from all to which we look forward to in love and hope, that so fascinates the imagination?

I went, in the commodore's suite, to call upon the governor this morning. He is a military, commanding-looking man, and received us in Napoleon's saloon, surrounded by his officers. He regretted that his commission did not permit him to leave the shore, even to visit a ship, but offered a visit on the part of his sister, and a company of the first ladies of the town. They came off this morning. She was a lady-like woman, not very pretty, of thirty years perhaps. As she spoke only Italian, she was handed over to me, and I waited on her through the ship, explaining a great many things of which I knew as much as herself. This visit over, we get under way to-morrow morning for Naples.

LETTER II.

Visit to Naples, Herculaneum, and Pompeii.

I have passed my first day in Naples in wandering about, without any definite object. I have walked around its famous bay, looked at the lazzaroni, watched the smoke of Vesuvius, traversed the square where the young Conradine was beheaded and Masaniello commenced his revolt, mounted to the castle of St. Elmo, and dined on macaroni in a trattoria, where the Italian I had learned in Tuscany was of little more use to me than Greek.

The bay surprised me most. It is a collection of beauties, which seems more a miracle than an accident of nature. It is a deep crescent of sixteen miles across, and a little more in length, between the points of which lies a chain of low mountains, called the island of Capri, looking, from the shore, like a vast heap of clouds brooding at sea. In the bosom of the crescent lies Naples. Its palaces and principal buildings cluster around the base of an abrupt hill crowned by the castle of St. Elmo, and its half million of inhabitants have stretched their dwellings over the plain towards Vesuvius, and back upon Posilipo, bordering the curve of the shore on the right and left, with a broad white band of city and village for twelve or fourteen miles. Back from this, on the southern side, a very gradual ascent brings your eye to the base of Vesuvius, which rises from the plain in a sharp cone, broken in at the top, its black and lava-streaked sides descending with the evenness of a sand-hill, on one side to the disinterred city of Pompeii, and on the other to the royal palace of Portici, built over the yet unexplored Herculaneum. In the centre of the crescent of the shore projecting into the sea by a bridge of two or three hundred feet in length, stands a small castle built upon a rock, on one side of which lies the mole with its

shipping. The other side is bordered, close to the beach, with the gardens of the royal villa, a magnificent promenade of a mile, ornamented with fancy temples and statuary, on the smooth alleys of which may be met, at certain hours, all that is brilliant and gay in Naples. Farther on, toward the northern horn of the bay, lies the mount of Posilipo, the ancient coast of Baiæ, Cape Mysene, and the mountain isles of Procida and Ischia, the last of which still preserves the costumes of Greece, from which it was colonised centuries ago. The bay itself is as blue as the sky, scarcely ruffled all day with the wind, and covered by countless boats fishing or creeping on with their picturesque lateen sails just filled: while the atmosphere over sea, city, and mountain, is of a clearness and brilliancy which is inconceivable in other countries. The superiority of the sky and climate of Italy is no fable in any part of this delicious land—but in Naples, if the day I have spent here is a fair specimen, it is matchless even for Italy. There is something like a fine blue veil of a most dazzling transparency over the mountains around, but above and between there seems nothing but viewless space—nothing like air that a bird could rise upon. The eye gets intoxicated almost with gazing on it.

We have just returned from our first excursion to Pompeii. It lies on the southern side of the bay, just below the volcano which overwhelmed it, about twelve miles from Naples. The road lay along the shore, and is lined with villages, which are only separated by name. The first is Portici, where the king has a summer palace, through the court of which the road passes. It is built over Herculaneum, and the danger of undermining it has stopped the excavations of unquestionably the richest city buried by Vésuvius. We stopped at a little gate in the midst of the village, and taking a guide and two torches, descended to the only part of it now visible, by near a hundred steps. We found ourselves at the back of an amphitheatre. We entered the narrow passage, and the guide pointed to several of the upper seats for the spectators which had been partially dug out. They were lined with marble, as the whole amphitheatre appears to have been. To realise the effect of these ruins, it is to be remembered that they are imbedded in solid lava, like rock, near a hundred feet deep, and that the city, which is itself ancient, is built above them. The carriage in which we came, stood high over our heads, in a time-worn street, and ages had passed and many generations of men had lived and died over a splendid city, whose very name had been forgotten! It was discovered in sinking a well, which struck the door of the amphitheatre. The guide took us through several other long passages, dug across and around it, showing us the orchestra, the stage, the numerous entrances, and the bases of several statues which are taken to the museum at Naples. This is the only part of the excavation that remains open, the others having again been filled with rubbish. The noise of the carriages overhead in the streets of Portici was like a deafening thunder.

In a hurry to get to Pompeii, which is much more interesting, we ascended to daylight, and drove on. Coasting along the curve of the bay, with only a succession of villas and gardens between us and the beach, we soon came to Torre del Greco, a small town which was overwhelmed by an eruption thirty-nine years ago. Vésuvius here rises gradually on the left, the crater being at a distance of five miles. The road crossed the bed of dry lava, which extends to the sea in a broad, black mass of cinders, giving the country the most desolate aspect. The town is rebuilt just beyond the ashes, and the streets are crowded with the thoughtless inhabitants, who buy and sell, and lounge in the sun, with no more remembrance or fear of the volcano, than the people of a city in America.

Another half-hour brought us to a long, high bank of earth and ashes, thrown out from the excavations; and passing on, we stopped at the gate of Pompeii. A guide met us, and we entered. We found ourselves in the ruins of a public square, surrounded with small low

columns of red marble. On the right were several small prisons, in one of which was found the skeleton of a man with its feet in iron stocks. The cell was very small, and the poor fellow must have been suffocated without even a hope of escape. The columns just in front were scratched with ancient names, possibly those of the guard stationed at the door of the prison. This square is surrounded with shops, in which were found the relics and riches of tradesmen, consisting of an immense variety. In one of the buildings was found the skeleton of a new-born child, and in one part of the square the skeletons of sixty men, supposed to be soldiers, who, in the severity of Roman discipline, dared not fly, and perished at their post. There were several advertisements of gladiators on the pillars, and it appears that at the time of the eruption, the inhabitants of Pompeii were principally assembled in the great amphitheatre, at a show.

We left the square, and visiting several small private houses near it, passed into a street with a slight ascent, the pavement of which was worn deep with carriage-wheels. It appeared to have led from the upper part of the city directly to the sea, and in rainy weather must have been quite a channel for water, as high stones at small distances were placed across the street, leaving open places between for the carriage-wheels. (I think there is a contrivance of the same kind in one of the streets of Baltimore.)

We mounted thence to higher ground, the part of the city not excavated. A peasant's hut and a large vineyard stand high above the ruins, and from the door the whole city and neighbourhood are seen to advantage. The effect of the scene is strange beyond description. Columns, painted walls, wheel-worn streets, amphitheatres, palaces, all as lonely and deserted as the grave, stand around you, and behind is a poor cottage and a vineyard of fresh earth just putting forth its buds, and beyond, the broad, blue, familiar bay, covered with steamboats and sails, and populous modern Naples in the distance—a scene as strangely mingled, perhaps, as any to be found in the world. We looked around for a while, and then walked on through the vineyard to the amphitheatre which lies beyond, near the other gate of the city. It is a gigantic ruin, completely excavated, and capable of containing twenty thousand spectators. The form is oval, and the architecture particularly fine. Besides the many vomitories or passages for ingress and egress, there are three smaller alleys, one used as the entrance for wild beasts, one for the gladiators, and the third as that by which the dead were taken away. The skeletons of eight lions and a man, supposed to be their keeper, were found in one of the dens beneath, and those of five other persons near the different doors. It is presumed that the greater proportion of the inhabitants of Pompeii must have escaped by sea, as the eruption occurred while they were nearly all assembled on this spot, and these few skeletons only have been found.^[1]

We returned through the vineyard, and stopping at the cottage, called for some of the wine of the last vintage (delicious, like all those in the neighbourhood of Vesuvius), and producing our basket of provisions, made a most agreeable dinner. Two parties of English passed while we were sitting at our out-of-doors table. Our attendant was an uncommonly pretty girl of sixteen, born on the spot, and famous just now as the object of a young English nobleman's particular admiration. She is a fine, dark-eyed creature, but certainly no prettier than every fifth peasant girl in Italy. Having finished our picturesque meal, we went down into the ancient streets once more, and arrived at the small temple of Isis, a building in excellent preservation. On the altar stood, when it was excavated, a small statue of Isis, of exquisite workmanship (now in the museum, to which all the curiosities of the place are carried), and behind this we were shown the secret *penetralia*, where the priests were concealed, who uttered the oracles supposed to be pronounced by the goddess. The access was by a small secret flight of stairs, communicating with the apartments of the priests in the rear. The largest of these apartments

was probably the refectory, and here was found a human skeleton near a table, upon which lay dinner utensils, chicken bones, bones of fishes, bread and wine, and a faded garland of flowers. In the kitchen, which we next visited, were found cooking utensils, remains of food, and the skeleton of a man leaning against the wall with an axe in his hand, and near him a considerable hole, which he had evidently cut to make his escape when the door was stopped by cinders. The skeleton of one of the priests was found prostrate, near the temple, and in his hand three hundred and sixty coins of silver, forty-two of bronze, and eight of gold, wrapped strongly in a cloth. He had probably stopped before his flight to load himself with the treasures of the temple, and was overtaken by the shower of cinders and suffocated. The skeletons of one or two were found upon beds, supposed to have been smothered while asleep or ill. The temple is beautifully paved with mosaic (as indeed are all the better private houses and public buildings of Pompeii), and the open inner court is bordered with a quadrilateral portico. The building is of the Roman Doric order. (I have neither time nor room to enumerate the curiosities found here and in the other parts of the city, and I only notice those which most impressed my memory. The enumeration by Madame Stark, will be found exceedingly interesting to those who have not read her laconic guide-book.)

We passed next across a small street to the tragic theatre, a large handsome building, where the seats for the vestals, consuls, and other places of honour, are well preserved, and thence up the hill to the temple of Hercules, which must have been a noble edifice, commanding a superb view of the sea.

The next object was the triangular forum, an open space surrounded with three porticoes, supported by a hundred Doric columns. Here were found several skeletons, one of which was that of a man who had loaded himself with plunder. Gold and silver coins, cups, rings, spoons, buckles, and other things, were found under him. Near here, under the ruins of a wall, were discovered skeletons of a man and a woman, and on the arms of the latter two beautiful bracelets of gold.

We entered from this a broad street, lined with shops, against the walls of which were paintings in fresco, and inscriptions in deep-red paint, representing the occupations and recording the names of the occupants. In one of them was found a piece of salt-fish, smelling strongly after seventeen centuries! In a small lane leading from this street, the guide led us to a shop, decorated with pictures of fish of various kinds, and furnished with a stove, marble dressers, and earthen jars, supposed to have belonged to a vender of fish and olives. A little further on was a baker's shop, with a well-used oven, in which was found a batch of bread burnt to a cinder. Near this was the house of a midwife. In it were found several instruments of a simple and excellent construction, unknown to the moderns, a forceps, remains of medicines in a wooden box, and various pestles and mortars. The walls were ornamented with frescoes of the Graces, Venus, and Adonis, and similar subjects.

The temple of the pantheon is a magnificent ruin, and must have been one of the choicest in Pompeii. Its walls are decorated with exquisite paintings in fresco, arabesques, mosaics, &c., and its court is one hundred and eighty feet long, and two hundred and thirty broad, and contains an altar, around which are twelve pedestals for statues of the twelve principal deities of the ancients. Gutters of marble are placed at the base of the triclinium, to carry away the blood of the victims. A thousand coins of bronze, and forty or fifty of silver, were found near the sanctuary.

We passed on to the *Curea*, a semi-circular building, for the discussion of matters of religion by the magistrates; a temple of Romulus; the remains of a temple of Janus; a splendid

building called the *chalcidicum*, constructed by the priestess Eumachea and her son, and dedicated as a temple of concord, and came at last, by a regular ascent, into a large and spacious square, called the *forum civile*. This part of the city of Pompeii must have been extremely imposing. Porticoes, supported by noble columns, encompassed its vast area; the pedestals of colossal statues, erected to distinguished citizens, are placed at the corners; at the northern extremity rose a stately temple of Jupiter: on the right was another temple to Venus; beyond, a large public edifice, the use of which is not known; across the narrow street which bounds it stood the Basilica, an immense building, which served as a court of justice and an exchange.

We passed out at the gate of the city and stopped at a sentry-box, in which was found a skeleton in full armour—a soldier who had died at his post! From hence formerly the road descended directly to the sea, and for some distance was lined on either side with the magnificent tombs of the Pompeians. Among them was that of the Vestal virgins, left unfinished when the city was destroyed; a very handsome tomb, in which was found the skeleton of a woman, with a lamp in one hand and jewels in the other (who had probably attempted to rob before her flight), and a very handsome square monument, with a beautiful *relievo* on one of the slabs, representing (as emblematic of death) a ship furling her sails on coming into port. Near one of the large family sepulchres stands a small semi-circular room, intended for the funeral feast after a burial; and here were found the remains of three men around a table, scattered with relics of a meal. They were overwhelmed ere their feast was concluded over the dead!

The principal inn of Pompeii was just inside the gate. We went over the ruins of it. The skeleton of an ass was found chained to a ring in the stable, and the tire of a wheel lay in the court-yard. Chequers are painted on the side of the door as a sign.

Below the tombs stands the “suburban villa of Diomed,” one of the most sumptuous edifices of Pompeii. Here was found everything that the age could furnish for the dwelling of a man of wealth. Statues, frescoes, jewels, wine, household utensils of every description, skeletons of servants and dogs, and every kind of elegant furniture. The family was large, and in the first moment of terror, they all retreated to a wine vault under the villa, where their skeletons (eighteen grown persons and two children) were found seventeen centuries after! There was really something startling in walking through the deserted rooms of this beautiful villa—more than one feels elsewhere in Pompeii, for it is more like the elegance and taste of our own day; and with the brightness of the preserved walls, and the certainty with which the use of each room is ascertained, it seems as if the living inhabitant would step from some corner and welcome you. The figures on the walls are as fresh as if done yesterday. The baths look as if they might scarce be dry from use. It seems incredible that the whole Christian age has elapsed since this was a human dwelling—occupied by its last family *while our Saviour was walking the world!*

It would be tedious to enumerate all the curious places to which the guide led us in this extraordinary city. On our return through the streets, among the objects of interest was the *house of Sallust, the historian*. I did not think, when reading his beautiful Latin at school, that I should ever sit down in his parlour! Sallust was rich, and his house is uncommonly handsome. Here is his chamber, his inner court, his kitchen, his garden, his dining-room, his guest-chamber, all perfectly distinguishable by the symbolical frescoes on the wall. In the court was a fountain of pretty construction, and opposite, in the rear, was a flower-garden, containing arrangements for dining in open air in summer. The skeleton of a female (supposed to be the wife of the

historian) and three servants, known by their different ornaments, were found near the door of the street.

We passed a druggist's shop and a cook-shop, and entered, treading on a beautiful mosaic floor, the "house of the dramatic poet," so named from the character of the paintings with which it is ornamented throughout. The frescoes found here are the finest ancient paintings in the world, and from some peculiarity in the rings upon the fingers of the female figures, they are supposed to be family portraits. With assistance like this, how easily the imagination repeoples these deserted dwellings.

A heavy shower drove us to the shelter of the wine-vaults of Diomed, as we were about stepping into our carriage to return to Naples. We spent the time in exploring, and found some thirty or forty earthen jars still half-buried in the ashes which drifted through the loop-holes of the cellar. In another half-hour the black cloud had passed away over Vésuvius, and the sun set behind Posilipo in a flood of splendour. We were at home soon after dark, having had our fill of astonishment for once. I have seen nothing in my life so remarkable as this disentombed city. I have passed over, in the description, many things which were well worth noting, but it would have grown into a mere catalogue else. You should come to Italy. It is a privilege to realise these things which could not be bought too dearly, and they cannot be realised but by the eye. Description conveys but a poor shadow of them to the fancy.

[1] "The number of skeletons hitherto disinterred in Pompeii and its suburbs is three hundred."—*Stark*.

LETTER III.

Account of Vesuvius—The Hermitage—The famous Lagrima Christi—Difficulties of the Path—Curious Appearance of the Old Crater—Odd Assemblage of Travellers—The New Crater—Splendid Prospect—Mr. Mathias, Author of the Pursuits of Literature—The Archbishop of Tarento.

Mounted upon asses much smaller than their riders, and with each a bare-legged driver behind, we commenced the ascent of Vésuvius. It was a troublesome path worn through the rough scoria of old eruptions, and after two hours' toiling, we were glad to dismount at "the hermitage." Here lives a capuchin friar on a prominent rib in the side of the volcano, the red-hot lava dividing above his dwelling every year or two, and coursing away to the valley in two rivers of fire on either side of him. He has been there twelve years, and supports himself, and probably half the brotherhood at the monastery, by selling *Lagrima Christi* to strangers. It is a small white building with a little grass and a few trees about it, and looks like an island in the black waste of cinders and lava.

A shout from the guide was answered by the opening of a small window above, and the shaven crown of the old friar was thrust forth with a welcome and a request that we would mount the stairs to the parlour. He received us at the top, and gave us chairs around a plain board table, upon which he set several bottles of the far-famed wine of Vésuvius. One drinks it, and blesses the volcano that warmed the roots of the grape. It is a ripe, rich, full-bodied liquor, which "ascends me into the brain" sooner than any continental wine I have tasted. I never

drank anything more delicious.

We remounted our asses and rode on, much more indifferent than before, to the roughness of the path. It strikes one like the road to the infernal regions. No grass, not a shrub, nothing but a wide mountain of cinders, black and rugged, diversified only by the deeper die of the newer streaks of lava. The eye wearied of gazing on it. We mounted thus for an hour or more, arriving at last at the base of a lofty cone whose sides were but slopes of deep ashes. We left our donkeys here in company with those of a large party that had preceded us, and made preparations to ascend on foot. The drivers unlaced their sashes, and passing them round the waists of the ladies, took the ends over their shoulders, and proceeded. Harder work could scarce be conceived. The feet had no hold, sinking knee-deep at every step, and we slipped back so much, that our progress was almost imperceptible. The ladies were soon tired out, although more than half dragged up by the guides. At every few steps there was a general cry for a halt, and we lay down in the warm ashes, quite breathless and discouraged.

In something more than an hour from the hermitage we reached the edge of the old crater. The scene here was very curious. A hollow, perhaps a mile round, composed entirely of scoria (like the cinders under a blacksmith's window) contained in its centre the sharp new cone of the last eruption. Around in various directions, sat some thirty groups of travellers, with each their six or seven Italian guides, refreshing themselves with a lunch after the fatigue of the ascent. There were English, Germans, French, Russians, and Italians, each speaking their own language, and the largest party, oddly enough, was from the United States. As I was myself travelling with foreigners, and found my countrymen on Vesuvius unexpectedly, the mixture of nations appeared still more extraordinary. The combined heat of the sun and the volcano beneath us, had compelled the Italians to throw off half their dress, and they sat or stood leaning on their long pikes, with their brown faces and dark eyes glowing with heat, as fine models of ruffians as ever startled a traveller in this land of bandits. Eight or ten of them were grouped around a crack in the crater, roasting apples and toasting bread. There were several of these cracks winding about in different directions, of which I could barely endure the heat, holding my hand at the top. A stick thrust in a foot or more, was burnt black in a moment.

With another bottle or two of "*lagrima Christi*" and a roasted apple, our courage was renewed, and we picked our way across the old crater, sometimes lost in the smoke which steamed up through the cracks, and here and there treading on beautiful beds of crystals of sulphur. The ascent of the new cone was shorter, but very difficult. The ashes were so new and light, that it was like a steep sand-bank, giving discouragingly at the least pressure, and sinking till the next step was taken. The steams of sulphur as we approached the summit, were all but intolerable. The ladies coughed, the guides sneezed and called on the Madonna, and I never was more relieved than in catching the first clear draught of wind on the top of the mountain.

Here we all stood at last—crowded together on the narrow edge of a crater formed within the year, and liable every moment to be overwhelmed with burning lava. There was scarce room to stand, and the hot ashes burnt our feet as they sunk into it. The females of each party sunk to the ground, and the common danger and toil breaking down the usual stiff barrier of silence between strangers, the conversation became general, and the hour on the crater's edge passed very agreeably.

A strong lad would just about throw a stone from one side to the other of the new crater. It was about forty feet deep, perhaps more, and one crust of sulphur lined the whole. It was half the time obscured in smoke, which poured in volumes from the broad cracks with which it was divided in every direction, and occasionally an eddy of wind was caught in the vast bowl, and

for a minute its bright yellow surface was perfectly clear. There had not been an eruption for four or five months, and the abyss, which is, for years together, a pit of fire and boiling lava, has had time to harden over, and were it not for the smoking steams, one would scarce suspect the existence of the tremendous volcano slumbering beneath.

After we had been on the summit a few minutes, an English clergyman of my acquaintance, to our surprise, emerged from the smoke. He had been to the bottom for specimens of sulphur for his cabinet. Contrary to the advice of the guide, I profited by his experience, and disappearing in the flying clouds, reached the lowest depths of the crater with some difficulties of foothold and breath. The cracks, which I crossed twice, were so brittle as to break like the upper ice of a twice frozen pond beneath my feet, and the stench of the exhaling gases was nauseating beyond all the sulphuretted hydrogen I have ever known. The sensation was painfully suffocating from the moment I entered the crater. I broke off as many bits of the bright golden crystals from the crust as my confusion and failing strength would allow, and then remounted, feeling my way up through the smoke to the summit.

I can compare standing on the top of Vesuvius and looking down upon the bay and city of Naples, to nothing but mounting a peak in the infernal regions overlooking paradise. The larger crater encircles you entirely for a mile, cutting off the view of the sides of the mountain, and from the elevation of the new cone, you look over the rising edge of this black field of smoke and cinders, and drop the eye at once upon Naples, lying asleep in the sun, with its lazy sails upon the water, and the green hills enclosing it clad in the indescribable beauty of an Italian atmosphere. Beyond all comparison, by the testimony of every writer and traveller, the most beautiful scene in the world, the loveliest water, and the brightest land, lay spread out before us. With the stench of hot sulphur in our nostrils, ankle deep in black ashes, and a waste of smouldering cinders in every direction around us, the enjoyment of the view certainly did not want for the heightening of contrast.

We made our descent by jumps through the sliding ashes, frequently tumbling over each other, and retracing in five minutes the toil of an hour. Our donkeys stood tethered together on the herbless field of cinders, and we were soon in the clumsy saddles, and with a call at the hermitage, and a parting draught of wine with the friar, we reached our carriages at the little village of Resina in safety. The feet of the whole troop were in a wretched condition. The ladies had worn shoes, or slight boots, which were cut to pieces of course, and one very fine-looking girl, the daughter of an elderly French gentleman, had, with the usual improvidence of her nation, started in satin slippers. She was probably lamed for a month, as she insisted on persevering, and wrapped her feet in handkerchiefs to return.

We rode along the curve of the bay, by one of these matchless sunsets of Italy, and arrived at Naples at dark.

I have had the pleasure lately of making the acquaintance of Mr. Mathias, the distinguished author of the "Pursuits of Literature," and the translator of Spenser and other English poets into Italian. About twenty years ago, this well-known scholar came to Italy on a desperate experiment of health. Finding himself better almost against hope, he has remained from year to year in Naples, in love with the climate and the language, until, at this day, he belongs less to the English than the Italian literature, having written various original poems in Italian, and translated into Italian verse, to the wonder and admiration of the scholars of the country. I found him this morning at his lodgings, in an old palace on the Pizzofalcone, buried in books as usual, and good-humoured enough to give an hour to a young man who had no claim on him

beyond the ordinary interest in a distinguished scholar. He talked a great deal of America naturally, and expressed a very strong friendship for Mr. Everett, whom he had met on his travels, requesting me at the same time to take to him a set of his works as a remembrance. Mr. Mathias is a small man, of perhaps sixty years, perfectly bald, and a little inclined to corpulency. His head is ample, and would make a fine picture of a scholar. His voice is hurried and modest, and from long residence in Italy, his English is full of Italian idioms. He spoke with rapture of Da Ponte, calling me back as I shut the door, to ask for him. It seemed to give him uncommon pleasure that we appreciated and valued him in America.

I have looked over, this evening, a small volume, which he was kind enough to give me. It is entitled "Lyric Poetry, by T. I. Mathias; a new edition, printed privately." It is dated 1832, and the poems were probably all written within the last two years. The shortest extract I can make is a "Sonnet to the Memory of Gray," which strikes me as very beautiful.

"Lord of the various lyre! devout we turn
Our pilgrim steps to thy supreme abode,
And tread with awe the solitary road
To grace with votive wreaths thy hallowed urn.
Yet, as we wander through this dark sojourn,
No more the strains we hear, that all abroad
Thy fancy wafted, as the inspiring God
Prompted 'the thoughts that breathe, the words that burn.'

"But hark! a voice in solemn accents clear
Bursts from heaven's vault that glows with temperate fire;
Cease, mortal, cease to drop the fruitless tear;
Mute though the raptures of his full-strung lyre,
E'en his own warblings, lessened on his ear,
Lost in seraphic harmony expire."

I have met also, at a dinner party lately, the celebrated antiquary, Sir William Gell. He, too, lives abroad. His work on Pompeii has become authority, and displays very great learning. He is a tall, large-featured man, and very commanding in his appearance, though lamed terribly with the gout.

A friend, whom I met at the same house, took me to see the archbishop of Tarento yesterday. This venerable man, it is well known, lost his gown for his participation in the cause of the Carbonari (the revolutionary conspirators of Italy). He has always played a conspicuous part in the politics of his time, and now, at the age of ninety, unlike the usual fate of meddlers in troubled waters, he is a healthy, happy, venerated old man, surrounded in his palace with all that luxury can give him. The lady who presented me took the privilege of intimate friendship to call at an unusual hour, and we found the old churchman in his slippers, over his breakfast, with two immense tortoise-shell cats, upon stools, watching his hand for bits of bread, and purring most affectionately. He looks like one of Titian's pictures. His face is a wreck of commanding features, and his eye seems less to have lost its fire, than to slumber in its deep socket. His hair is snowy white—his forehead of prodigious breadth and height—and his skin has that calm, settled, and yet healthy paleness, which carries with it the history of a whole life of temperance and thought.

The old man rose from his chair with a smile, and came forward with a stoop and a feeble step, and took my two hands, as my friend mentioned my name, and looked me in the face very earnestly. "Your country," said he, in Italian, "has sprung into existence like Minerva, full grown and armed. We look for the result." He went on with some comments upon the dangers of

republics, and then sent me to look at a portrait of Queen Giovanna, of Naples, by Leonardo da Vinci, while he sat down to talk with the lady who brought me. His secretary accompanied me as a cicerone. Five or six rooms, communicating with each other, were filled with choice pictures, every one a gift from some distinguished individual. The present king of France has sent him his portrait! Queen Adelaide has sent a splendid set of Sèvres china, with the portraits of her family; the Queen of Belgium had presented him with her miniature and that of Leopold; the King and Queen of Naples had half-furnished his house; and so the catalogue went on. It seemed as if the whole continent had united to honour the old man. While I was looking at a curious mosaic portrait of a cat, presented to him on the death of the original, by some prince whose name I have forgotten, he came to us, and said he had just learned that my pursuits were literary, and would present me with his own last work. He opened the drawer of a small bureau and produced a manuscript of some ten pages, written in a feeble hand. "This," said he, "is an enumeration from memory of what I have not seen for many years, the classic spots about our beautiful city of Naples, and their associations. I have written it in the last month to wile away the time, and call up again the pleasure I have received many times in my life in visiting them." I put the curious document in my bosom with many thanks, and we kissed the hand of the good old priest and left him. We found his carriage, with three or four servants in handsome livery, waiting for him in the court below. We had intruded a little on the hour for his morning ride.

I found his account of the environs merely a simple catalogue, with here and there a classic quotation from a Greek or Latin author, referring to them. I keep the MS. as a curious memento of one of the noblest relics I have seen of an age gone by.

LETTER IV.

The Fashionable World of Naples at the Races—Brilliant Show of Equipages—The King and his Brother—Rank and Character of the Jockeys—Description of the Races—The Public Burial Ground at Naples—Horrid and inhuman Spectacles—The Lazzaroni—The Museum at Naples—Ancient Relics from Pompeii—Forks not used by the Ancients—The Lamp lit at the time of our Saviour—The antique Chair of Sallust—The Villa of Cicero—The Balbi Family—Bacchus on the Shoulders of a Faun—Gallery of Dians, Cupids, Joves, Mercuries, and Apollos, Statue of Aristides, &c.

I have been all day at "the races." The King of Naples, who has a great admiration for everything English, has abandoned the Italian custom of running horses without riders through the crowded street, and has laid out a magnificent course on the summit of a broad hill overlooking the city on the east. Here he astonishes his subjects with *ridden* races, and it was to see one of the best of the season, that the whole fashionable world of Naples poured out to the campo this morning. The show of equipages was very brilliant, the dashing liveries of the various ambassadors, and the court and nobles of the kingdom, showing on the bright greensward to great effect. I never saw a more even piece of turf, and it was fresh in the just-born vegetation of spring. The carriages were drawn up in two lines, nearly half round the course, and for an hour or two before the races, the king and his brother, Prince Carlo, rode up and down between with the royal suite, splendidly mounted, the monarch himself upon a fiery grey blood-horse, of uncommon power and beauty. The director was an Aragonese nobleman, cousin to the king, and as perfect a specimen of the Spanish cavalier as ever figured in the pages of romance. He was mounted on a Turkish horse, snow-white, and the finest animal I ever

saw; and he carried all eyes with him, as he dashed up and down, like a meteor. I like to see a fine specimen of a man, as I do a fine picture, or an excellent horse, and I think I never saw a prettier spectacle of its kind, than this wild steed from the Balkan and his handsome rider.

The king is tall, very fat, but very erect, of a light complexion, and a good horseman, riding always in the English style, trotting and rising in his stirrup. (He is about twenty-three, and so surprisingly like a friend of mine in Albany, that the people would raise their hats to them indiscriminately I am sure.) Prince Charles is smaller and less kingly in his appearance, dresses carelessly and ill, and is surrounded always in public with half a dozen young Englishmen. He is said to have been refused lately by the niece of the wealthiest English nobleman in Italy, a very beautiful girl of eighteen, who was on the ground to-day in a chariot and four.

The horses were led up and down—a delicate, fine-limbed sorrel mare, and a dark chestnut horse, compact and wiry—both English. The bets were arranged, the riders weighed, and, at the beat of a bell, off they went like arrows. Oh what a beautiful sight! The course was about a mile round, and marked with red flags at short distances; and as the two flying creatures described the bright green circle, spread out like greyhounds, and running with an ease and grace that seemed entirely without effort, the king dashed across the field followed by the whole court; the Turkish steed of Don Giovanni restrained with difficulty in the rear, and leaping high in the air at every bound, his nostrils expanded, and his head thrown up with the peculiar action of his race, while his snow-white mane and tail flew with every hair free to the wind. I had, myself, a small bet upon the sorrel. It was nothing—a pair of gloves with a lady—but as the horses came round, the sorrel a whip's length ahead, and both shot by like the wind, scarce touching the earth apparently, and so even in their speed that the rider in blue might have kept his hand on the other's back, the excitement became breathless. Away they went again, past the starting-post, pattering, pattering on with their slender hoofs, the sorrel still keeping her ground, and a thousand bright lips wishing the graceful creature success. Half way round the blue jacket began to whip. The sorrel still held her way, and I felt my gloves to be beyond peril. The royal cortège within the ring spurred across at the top of their speed to the starting-post. The horses came on—their nostrils open and panting, bounding upon the way with the same measured leaps a little longer and more eager than before; the rider of the sorrel leaning over the neck of his horse with a loose rein, and his whip hanging untouched from his wrist. Twenty leaps more! With every one the rider of the chestnut gave the fine animal a blow. The sorrel sprang desperately on, every nerve strained to the jump, but at the instant that they passed the carriage in which I stood, the chestnut was developing his wiry frame in tremendous leaps, and had already gained on his opponent the length of his head. They were lost in the crowd that broke instantly into the course behind them, and in a moment after a small red flag was waved from the stand. My favourite had lost!

The next race was ridden by a young Scotch nobleman, and the son of the former French ambassador, upon the horses with which they came to the ground. It was a match made up on the spot. The Frenchman was so palpably better mounted, that there was a general laugh when the ground was cleared and the two gentlemen spurred up and down to show themselves as antagonists. The Parisian himself stuffed his white handkerchief in his bosom, and jammed down his hat upon his head with a confident laugh, and among the ladies there was scarce a bet upon the grave Scotchman, who borrowed a stout whip, and rode his bony animal between the lines with a hard rein and his feet set firmly in the stirrups. The Frenchman generously gave him every advantage, beginning with the inside of the ring. The bell struck, and the Scotchman drove his spurs into his horse's flanks and started away, laying on with his whip most

industriously. His opponent followed, riding very gracefully, but apparently quite sure that he could overtake him at any moment, and content for the first round with merely showing himself off to the best advantage. Round came Sawney, twenty leaps ahead, whipping unmercifully still; the blood of his hired hack completely up, and himself as red in the face as an alderman, and with his eye fixed only on the road. The long-tailed bay of the Frenchman came after, in handsome style, his rider sitting complacently upright, and gathering up his reins for the first time to put his horse to his speed. The Scotchman flogged on. The Frenchman had disdained to take a whip, but he drove his heels hard into his horse's sides soon after leaving the post, and leaned forward quite in earnest. The horses did remarkably well, both showing much more bottom than was expected. On they came, the latter gaining a little and working very hard. Sawney had lost his hat, and his red hair streamed back from his redder face; but flogging and spurring, with his teeth shut and his eyes steadily fixed on the road, he kept the most of his ground and rode away. They passed me a horse's length apart, and the Scotchman's whip flying to the last, disappeared beyond me. He won the race by a couple of good leaps at least. The king was very much amused, and rode off laughing heartily, and the discomfited Frenchman came back to his party with a very ill-concealed dissatisfaction.

A very amusing race followed between two midshipmen from an English corvette lying in the bay, and then the long lines of splendid equipages wheeled into train, and dashed off the ground. The road, after leaving the campo, runs along the edge of the range of hills, enclosing the city, and just below, within a high white wall, lies the *public burial-place of Naples*. I had read so many harrowing descriptions of this spot, that my curiosity rose as we drove along in sight of it, and requesting my friends to set me down, I joined an American of my acquaintance, and we started to visit it together.

An old man opened the iron door, and we entered a clean, spacious, and well-paved area, with long rows of iron rings in the heavy slabs of the pavement. Without asking a question, the old man walked across to the farther corner, where stood a moveable lever, and fastening the chain into the fixture, raised the massive stone cover of a pit. He requested us to stand back for a few minutes to give the effluvia time to escape, and then, sheltering our eyes with our hats, we looked in. You have read, of course, that there are three hundred and sixty-five pits in this place, one of which is opened every day for the dead of the city. They are thrown in without shroud or coffin, and the pit is sealed up at night for a year. They are thirty or forty feet deep, and each would contain perhaps two hundred bodies. Lime is thrown upon the daily heap, and it soon melts into a mass of garbage, and by the end of the year the bottom of the pit is covered with dry white bones.

It was some time before we could distinguish anything in the darkness of the abyss. Fixing my eyes on one spot, however, the outlines of a body became defined gradually, and in a few minutes, sheltering my eyes completely from the sun above, I could see all the horrors of the scene but too distinctly. Eight corpses, all of grown persons, lay in a confused heap together, as they had been thrown in one after another in the course of the day. The last was a powerfully made, gray old man, who had fallen flat on his back, with his right hand lying across and half covering the face of a woman. By his full limbs and chest, and the darker colour of his legs below the knee, he was probably one of the *lazzaroni*, and had met with a sudden death. His right heel lay on the forehead of a young man, emaciated to the last degree, his chest thrown up as he lay, and his ribs showing like a skeleton covered with skin. The close black curls of the latter, as his head rested on another body, were in such strong relief that I could have counted them. Off to the right, quite distinct from the heap, lay, in a beautiful attitude, a

girl, as well as I could judge, of not more than nineteen or twenty. She had fallen on the pile and rolled or slid away. Her hair was very long, and covered her left shoulder and bosom; her arm was across her body, and if her mother had laid her down to sleep, she could not have disposed her limbs more decently. The head had fallen a little away to the right, and the feet, which were small, even for a lady, were pressed one against the other, as if she were about turning on her side. The sexton said that a young man had come with the body, and was very ill for some time after it was thrown in. We asked him if respectable people were brought here. "Yes," he said, "many. None but the rich would go to the expense of a separate grave for their relations. People were often brought in handsome grave-clothes, but they were always stripped before they were left. The shroud, whenever there was one, was the perquisite of the undertakers." And thus are flung into this noisome pit, like beasts, the greater part of the population of this vast city—the young and the old, the vicious and the virtuous together, without the decency even of a rag to keep up the distinctions of life! Can human beings thus be thrown away?—men like ourselves—women, children, like our sisters and brothers? I never was so humiliated in my life as by this horrid spectacle. I did not think a man—a felon even, or a leper—what you will that is guilty or debased—I did not think anything that had been human could be so recklessly abandoned. Pah! It makes one sick at heart! God grant I may never die at Naples!

While we were recovering from our disgust, the old man lifted the stone from the pit destined to receive the dead on the following day. We looked in. The bottom was strewn with bones, already fleshless and dry. He wished us to see the dead of several previous days, but my stomach was already tried to its utmost. We paid our gratuity, and hurried away. A few steps from the gate, we met a man bearing a coffin on his head. Seeing that we came from the cemetery, he asked us if we wished to look into it. He set it down, and the lid opening with a hinge, we were horror-struck with the sight of *seven dead infants*! The youngest was at least three months old, the eldest perhaps a year; and they lay heaped together like so many puppies, one or two of them spotted with disease, and all wasted to baby-skeletons. While we were looking at them, six or seven noisy children ran out from a small house at the road-side and surrounded the coffin. One was a fine girl of twelve years of age, and instead of being at all shocked at the sight, she lifted the whitest of the dead things, and looked at its face very earnestly, loading it with all the tenderest diminutives of the language. The others were busy in pointing to those they thought had been prettiest, and none of them betrayed fear or disgust. In answer to a question of my friend about the marks of disease, the man rudely pulled out one by the foot that lay below the rest, and holding it up to show the marks upon it, tossed it again carelessly into the coffin. He had brought them from the hospital for infants, and they had died that morning. The coffin was worn with use. He shut down the lid, and lifting it again upon his head, went on to the cemetery, to empty it like so much offal upon the heap we had seen!

I have been struck repeatedly with the little value attached to human life in Italy. I have seen several of these houseless lazzaroni literally dying in the streets, and no one curious enough to look at them. The most dreadful sufferings, the most despairing cries, in the open squares, are passed as unnoticed as the howling of a dog. The day before yesterday, a woman fell in the Toledo, in a fit, frothing at the mouth, and livid with pain; and though the street was so crowded that one could make his way with difficulty, three or four ragged children were the only persons even looking at her.

I have devoted a week to the museum at Naples. It is a world! Anything like a full description of it would tire even an antiquary. It is one of those things (and there are many in

Europe) that fortunately *compel* travel. You must come abroad to get an idea of it.

The first day I buried myself among the curiosities found at Pompeii. After walking through the chambers and streets where they were found, I came to them naturally with an intense interest. I had visited a disentombed city, buried for seventeen centuries—had trodden in their wheel-tracks—had wandered through their dining-rooms, their chambers, their baths, their theatres, their market-places. And here were gathered in one place, their pictures, their statues, their cooking utensils, their ornaments, the very food as it was found on their tables! I am puzzled, in looking over my note-book, to know what to mention. The catalogue fills a printed volume.

A curious corner in one of the cases was that containing the articles found on the toilet of the wealthiest Pompeian's wife. Here were pots of rouge, ivory pins, necklaces, ear-rings, bracelets, small silver mirrors, combs, ear-pickers, &c. &c. In the next case were two loaves of bread, found in a baker's oven, and stamped with his name. Two large cases of precious gems, cameos and intaglios of all descriptions, stand in the centre of this room (among which, by the way, the most exquisitely done are two which one cannot look at without a blush). Another case is filled with eatables, found upon the tables—eggs, fish-bones, honey-comb, grain, fruits, &c. In the repository for ancient glass are several cinerary urns, in which the ashes of the dead are perfectly preserved; and numerous small glass lachrymatories, in which the tears of the survivors were deposited in the tombs.

The brazen furniture of Pompeii, the lamps particularly, are of the most curious and beautiful models. Trees, to which the lamps were suspended like fruit, vines, statues holding them in their hands, and numerous other contrivances, were among them, exceeding far in beauty any similar furniture of our time. It appears that the ancients did not know the use of the fork, as every other article of table service except this has been found here.

To conceive the interest attached to the thousand things in this museum, one must imagine a modern city, Boston for example, completely buried by an unexpected and terrific convulsion of nature. Its inhabitants mostly escape, but from various causes leave their city entombed, and in a hundred years the grass grows over it, and its very locality is forgotten. Near two thousand years elapse, and then a peasant, digging in the field, strikes upon some of its ruins, and it is unearthed just as it stands at this moment, with all its utensils, books, pictures, houses, and streets, in untouched preservation. What a subject for speculation! What food for curiosity! What a living and breathing chapter of history were this! Far more interesting is Pompeii. For the age in which it flourished and the characters who trod its streets, are among the most remarkable in history. This brazen lamp, shown to me to-day as a curiosity, was lit every evening in the time of Christ. The handsome chambers through which I wandered a day or two ago, and from which were brought this antique chair, were the home of Sallust, and doubtless had been honoured by the visits of Cicero (whose villa, half-excavated, is near by,) and by all the poets and scholars and statesmen of his time. One might speculate endlessly thus! And it is that which makes these lands of forgotten empires so delightful to the traveller. His mind is fed by the very air. He needs no amusements, no company, no books except the history of the place. The spot is peopled wherever he may stray, and the common necessities of life seem to pluck him from a far-reaching dream, in which he had summoned back receding ages, and was communing, face to face, with philosophers and poets and emperors, like a magician before his mirror. Pompeii and Herculaneum seem to me visions. I cannot shake myself and wake to their reality. My mind refuses to go back so far. Seventeen hundred years!

I followed the cicerone on, listening to his astonishing enumeration, and looking at

everything as he pointed to it, in a kind of stupor. One has but a certain capacity. We may be over-astonished. Still he went on in the same every-day tone, talking as indifferently of this and that surprising antiquity as a pedlar of his two-penny wares. We went from the bronzes to the hall of the papyri—thence to the hall of the frescoes, and beautiful they were. Their very number makes them indescribable. The next morning we devoted to the statuary—and of this, if I knew where to begin, I should like to say a word or two.

First of all comes the *Balbi family*—father, mother, sons, and daughters. He was pro-consul of Herculaneum, and by the excellence of the statues, which are life itself for nature, he and his family were worth the artist's best effort. He is a fine old Roman himself, and his wife is a tall, handsome woman, much better-looking than her daughters. The two Misses Balbi are modest-looking girls, and that is all. They were the high-born damsels of Herculaneum, however; and, if human nature has not changed in seventeen centuries, they did not want admirers who compared them to the Venuses who have descended with them to the "Museo Borbonico." The eldest son is on horseback in armour. It is one of the finest equestrian statues in the world. He is a noble youth, of grave and handsome features, and sits the superb animal with the freedom of an Arab and the dignity of a Roman. It is a beautiful thing. If one had visited these Balbis, warm and living, in the time of Augustus, he could scarcely feel more acquainted with them than after having seen their statues as they stand before him here.

Come a little farther on! Bacchus on the shoulders of a faun—a child delighted with a grown-up playfellow. I have given the same pleasure to just such another bright "picture in little" of human beauty. It moves one's heart to see it.

Pass now a whole gallery of Dians, Cupids, Joves, Mercuries, and Apollos, and come to the presence of Aristides—him whom the Athenians exiled because they were tired of hearing him called *The Just*. Canova has marked three spots upon the floor where the spectator should place himself to see to the best advantage this renowned statue. He stands wrapped in his toga, with his head a little inclined, as if in reflection, and in his face there is a mixture of firmness and goodness from which you read his character as clearly as if it were written across his forehead. It was found at Herculaneum, and is, perhaps, the simplest and most expressive statue in the world.

LETTER V.

Pæstum—Temple of Neptune—Departure from Elba—Ischia—Bay of Naples—The Toledo—The Young Queen
—Conspiracy against the King—Neapolitans Visiting the Frigates—Leave the Bay—Castellamare.

Salvator Rosa studied the scenery of La Cava—the country between Pompeii and Salerno, on the road to Pæstum. It is a series of natively abrupt glens, but gemmed with cottages and hanging gardens, through which the wildness of every feature is as apparent as those of a savage through his trinkets. I was going to Pæstum with an agreeable party, and we came out upon the bluffs overhanging Salerno and the sea, an hour before sunset.

We darted down upon the little city lying in the bend of the bay, like a bird's descent upon her nest. The road is cut through the side of the precipice, and runs to the bottom with a single sweep. We were to pass the night here, and go to Pæstum the next morning, see the ruins, and return here to sleep once more before returning to Naples.

We were five or six miles from Salerno before sunrise, and entering upon the dreary wastes of Calabria. The people we passed on the road were dressed in skins with the wool outside, and the country looked abandoned by nature itself, scarce a flourishing tree or a healthy plant within the range of the sight. We turned from the main road after a while, crossed a ruinous bridge, and tracked a broad, waste, gloomy plain, till my eyes ached with its barrenness. In an hour more, three stately temples began to rise in the distance, increasing in grandeur as we approached. A cluster of ruined tombs on the right—a grass-grown and broken city wall, through a rent of which passed the road—and we stood among them, in the desert, amid temples of inimitable beauty!

There seemed to be a general feeling in the party that silence and solitude were the spirits of the place. We separated and rambled about alone. The grand temple of Neptune stands in the centre. A temple in the midst of the sea could scarce seem more strangely placed. I stood on the high base of the altar within and looked out between the columns on every side. The Mediterranean slept in a broad sheet of silver on the west, and on every other side lay the bare, houseless desert, stretching away to the naked mountains on the south and east, with a barrenness that made the heart ache, while it filled the imagination with its singleness and grandeur. I descended to look at the columns. They were eaten through and through with snails and worms, and all of the same rich yellow so admirably represented in the cork models. But their size, and their noble proportion as they stand, cannot be represented. They seem the conception and the work of giant minds and hands. One's soul rises among them.

We walked round the ruins for hours. A little towards the sea, lie the traces of an amphitheatre, filled with fragments of statuary, and parts of immense friezes and columns. We all assembled at last in the great temple, and sat down on the immense steps towards the east in the shadow of the pediment, speculating on the wonderful fabric above us, till we were summoned to start on our return. To think that these very temples were visited as venerable antiquities in the time of Christ! What events have these worm-eaten columns outlived! What moths of an hour, in comparison, are we?

It is difficult to conceive how three such magnificent structures, so near the sea, the remains of a great city, should have been lost for ages. A landscape-painter, searching for the picturesque, came suddenly upon them fifty years ago, and astonished the world with his discovery! It adds to their interest now.

We turned our horses' heads towards Naples. What an extraordinary succession of objects were embraced in the fifty miles between—Pæstum, Pompeii, Væsvius, Herculaneum!—and, added to these, the thousand classic associations of the lovely coast along Sorrento! The value of life deepens incalculably with the privileges of travel.

WRITTEN ON BOARD THE FRIGATE "UNITED STATES."—We set sail from Elba on the 3rd of June. The inhabitants, all of whom, I presume, had been on board of the ships, were standing along the walls and looking from the embrasures of the fortress to see us off. It was a clear summer's morning, without much wind, and we crept slowly off from the point, gazing up at the windows of Napoleon's house as we passed under, and laying on our course for the shore of Italy. We soon got into the fresher breeze of the open sea, and the low white line of villages on the Tuscan coast appeared more distant, till, with a glass, we could see the people at the windows watching our progress. Fishing-boats were drawn up on shore, and the idle sailors were leaning in the half shadow which they afforded; but with the almost total absence of trees, and the glaring white of the walls, we were content to be out upon the cool sea, passing town after

town unvisited. Island after island was approached and left during the day; barren rocks with only a lighthouse to redeem their nakedness: and in the evening at sunset we were in sight at Ischia, the towering isle in the bosom of the bay of Naples. The band had been called as usual at seven, and were playing a delightful waltz upon the quarter-deck; the sea was even, and just crisped by the breeze from the Italian shore; the sailors were leaning on the guns listening; the officers clustered in their various places; and the murmur of the foam before the prow was just audible in the lighter passages of the music. Above and in the west glowed the eternal but untiring tints of the summer sky of the Mediterranean, a gradually fading gold from the edge of the sea to the zenith, and the early star soon twinkled through it, and the air dampened to a reviving freshness. I do not know that a mere scene like this, without incident, will interest a reader, but it was so delightful to myself, that I have described it for the mere pleasure of dwelling on it. The desert stillness and loneliness of the sea, the silent motion of the ship, and the delightful music swelling beyond the bulwarks and dying upon the wind, were such singularly combined circumstances! It was a moving paradise in the waste of the ocean.

Sail was shortened last night, and we lay-to under the shore of Ischia, to enter the bay of Naples by daylight. As the morning mist lifted a little, the peculiar shape of Vesuvius, the boldness of the island of Capri, the sweeping curves of Baiæ and Portici, and the small promontory which lifts Naples toward the sea, rose like the features of a familiar friend to my eye. It would be difficult to have seen Naples without having a memory steeped in its beauty. A fair wind set us straight into the bay, and one by one the towns on its shore, the streaks of lava on the sides of its volcano, and, soon after, the houses of friends on the street of the Chiaga became distinguishable to the eye. There had been a slight eruption since I was here; but now, as before, there was scarce a puff of smoke to be seen rising from Vesuvius. My little specimen of sulphur which I took from the just hardened bosom of the crater now destroyed, lies before me on the table as I write, more valued than ever, since its bed has been melted and blown into the air. The new and lighter-coloured streak on the right of the mountain, would have informed me of itself that the lava had issued since I was here. The sound of bells and the hum of the city reached our ears, and running in between the mole and the castle, the anchor was dropped, and the ship surrounded with boats from the shore.

The heat kept us on board till the evening, and with several of the officers I landed and walked up the Toledo as the lazzaroni were stirring from their sleep under the walls of the houses. With the exception of the absence of the English, who have mostly flitted to the baths, Naples was the same place as ever, busy, dirty, and gay. Her thousand beggars were still "dying of hunger," and telling it to the passenger in the same exhausted tone; her gay carriages and skeleton hacks were still flying up and down, and dashing at and over you for your custom; the cows and goats were driven about to be milked in the street; the lemonade-sellers stood in their stalls; the money changers at their tables in the open squares; puncinello squeaked and beat his mistress at every corner; the awnings of the caf  s covered hundreds of smokers and loungers; and this gay, miserable, homeless, out-of-doors people, seemed as degraded and thoughtless, and, it must be owned, as insensibly happy as before. You would think, to walk through the Toledo of Naples, that two-thirds of its crowd of wretches, and all its horses and dogs, were at their last extremity, and yet they go on, and, I was told by an Englishman resident here, who has been accustomed to meet always the same faces, seem never to change or disappear, suffering, and groaning, and dragging up and down, shocking the eye and sickening

the heart of the inexperienced stranger for years and years.

We passed the *prima sera*, the first part of the evening, as most men in Italy pass it, eating ices at the thronged café, and at nine we went to the splendid theatre of San Carlo to see *La Sonnambula*. The king and queen were present, with the dissolute old queen-mother and her gray-headed lover. I was instantly struck with the alteration in the appearance of the young queen. When I was here three months ago, she was just married, and appeared frequently in the public walks, and a fresher or brighter face I never had seen. She was acknowledged the most beautiful woman in Naples, and had, what is very much valued in this land of pale brunettes, a clear rosy cheek, and lips as bright as a child's. She is now thin and white, and looks to me like a person fading with a rapid consumption.

Several conspiracies have been detected within a month or two, the last of which was very nearly successful. The day before we arrived, two officers in the royal army, men of high rank, had shot themselves, each putting a pistol to the other's breast, believing discovery inevitable. One died instantly, and the other lingers to-day without any hope of recovery. The king was fired at on parade the day previous, which was supposed to have been the first step, but the plot had been checked by partial disclosure, hence the tragedy I have just related.

The ships have been thronged with visitors during the two or three days we have lain at Naples, among whom have been the prime minister and his family. Orders are given to admit every one on board that wishes to come, and the decks, morning and evening, present the most motley scene imaginable. Cameo and lava sellers expose their wares on the gun-carriages, surrounded by the midshipmen—Jews and fruit-sellers hail the sailors through the ports—boats full of chickens and pigs, all in loud outcry, are held up to view with a recommendation in broken English—contadini in their best dresses walk up and down, smiling on the officers, and wondering at the cleanliness of the decks, and the elegance of the captain's cabin—Punch plays his tricks under the gun-deck ports—bands of wandering musicians sing and hold out their hats, as they row around, and all is harmony and amusement. In the evening, it is pleasanter still, for the band is playing, and the better class of people come off from the shore, and boats filled with these pretty, dark-eyed Neapolitans, row round and round the ship, eying the officers as they lean over the bulwarks, and ready with but half a nod to make acquaintance and come up the gangway. I have had a private pride of my own in showing the frigate as American to many of my foreign friends. One's nationality becomes nervously sensitive abroad, and in the beauty and order of the ships, the manly elegance of the officers, and the general air of superiority and decision throughout, I have found food for some of the highest feelings of gratification of which I am capable.

We weighed anchor yesterday morning (the twentieth of June), and stood across the bay for Castellamare. Running close under Vesuvius, we passed Portici, Torre del Greco, and Pompeii, and rounded-to in the little harbour of this fashionable watering-place soon after noon. Castellamare is about fifteen miles from Naples, and in the summer months it is crowded with those of the fashionables who do not make a northern tour. The shore rises directly from the sea into a high mountain, on the side of which the king has a country-seat, and around it hang, on terraces, the houses of the English. Strong mineral springs abound on the slope.

We landed directly, and mounting the donkeys waiting on the pier, started to make the round of the village walks. English maids with their prettily dressed and rosy children, and English ladies and gentlemen, mounted, like ourselves on donkeys, met us at every turn as we wound up the shady and zigzag roads to the palace. The views became finer as we ascended, till we look down into Pompeii, which was but four miles off, and away toward Naples, following

the white road with the eye along the shore of the sea. The paths were in fine order, and as beautiful as green trees, and shade, and living fountains, crossing the road continually, could make them. In the neighbourhood of the royal casino, the ground was planted more like a park, and the walks were terminated with artificial fountains, throwing up their bright waters amid statuary and over grottoes, and here we met the idlers of the place of all nations, enjoying the sunset. I met an acquaintance or two, and felt the yearning unwillingness to go away which I have felt on every spot almost of this “delicious land.”

We set sail again with the night-breeze, and at this moment are passing between Ischia and Capri, running nearly on our course for Sicily. We shall probably be at Palermo to-morrow. The ship’s bell beats ten, and the lights are ordered out, and under this imperative government, I must say, “good night!”

LETTER VI.

Baiæ—Grotto of Posilipo—Tomb of Virgil—Pozzuoli—Ruins of the Temple of Jupiter Serapis—The Lucrine Lake—Lake of Avernus, the Tartarus of Virgil—Temple of Proserpine—Grotto of the Cumæan Sybil—Nero’s villa—Cape of Misenum—Roman villas—Ruins of the Temple of Venus—Cento Camerelle—The Stygian Lake—The Elysian Fields—Grotto del Cane—Villa of Lucullus.

We made the excursion to Baiæ on one of those premature days of March common to Italy. A south wind and a warm sun gave it the feeling of June. The heat was even oppressive as we drove through the city, and the long echoing grotto of Posilipo, always dim and cool, was peculiarly refreshing. Near the entrance to this curious passage under the mountain, we stopped to visit the tomb of Virgil. A ragged boy took us up a steep path to the gate of a vineyard, and winding in among the just budding vines, we came to a small ravine, in the mouth of which, right over the deep cut of the grotto, stands the half-ruined mausoleum which held the bones of the poet. An Englishman stood leaning against the entrance, reading from a pocket copy of the *Æneid*. He seemed ashamed to be caught with his classic, and put the book in his pocket as I came suddenly upon him, and walked off to the other side whistling an air from the *Pirata*, which is playing just now at San Carlo. We went in, counted the niches for the urns, stood a few minutes to indulge in what recollections we could summon, and then mounted to the top to hunt for the “myrtle.” Even its root was cut an inch or two below the ground. We found violets, however, and they answered as well. The pleasure of visiting such places, I think, is not found on the spot. The fatigue of the walk, the noise of a party, the difference between reality and imagination, and, worse than all, the caprice of mood—one or the other of these things disturbs and defeats for me the dearest promises of anticipation. It is the recollection that repays us. The picture recurs to the fancy till it becomes familiar; and as the disagreeable circumstances of the visit fade from the memory, the imagination warms it into a poetic feeling, and we dwell upon it with the delight we looked for in vain when present. A few steps up the ravine, almost buried in luxuriant grass, stands a small marble tomb, covering the remains of an English girl. She died at Naples. It is as lovely a place to lie in as the world could show. Forward a little toward the edge of the hill some person of taste has constructed a little arbour, laced over with vines, whence the city and bay of Naples is seen to the finest advantage. Paradise that it is!

It is odd to leave a city by a road piercing the base of a broad mountain, in at one side and out at the other, after a subterranean drive of near a mile! The grotto of Posilipo has been one of the wonders of the world these two thousand years, and it exceeds all expectation as a curiosity. Its length is stated at two thousand three hundred and sixteen feet, its breadth twenty-two, and its height eighty-nine. It is thronged with carts and beasts of burden of all descriptions, and the echoing cries of these noisy Italian drivers are almost deafening. Lamps, struggling with the distant daylight as you near the end, just make darkness visible, and standing in the centre and looking either way, the far distant arch of daylight glows like a fire through the cloud of dust. What with the impressiveness of the place, and the danger of driving in the dark amid so many obstructions, it is rather a stirring half-hour that is spent in its gloom! One emerges into the fresh open air and the bright light of day with a feeling of relief.

The drive hence to Pozzuoli, four or five miles, was extremely beautiful. The fields were covered with the new tender grain, and by the short passage through the grotto we had changed a busy and crowded city for scenes of as quiet rural loveliness as ever charmed the eye. We soon reached the lip of the bay, and then the road turned away to the right, along the beach, passing the small island of Nisida (where Brutus had a villa, and which is now a prison for the carbonari).

Pozzuoli soon appeared, and mounting a hill we descended into its busy square, and were instantly beset by near a hundred guides, boatmen, and beggars, all preferring their claims and services at the tops of their voices. I fixed my eye on the most intelligent face among them, a curly-headed fellow in a red lazzaroni cap, and succeeded, with some loss of temper, in getting him aside from the crowd and bargaining for our boats.

While the boatmen were forming themselves into a circle to cast lots for the bargain, we walked up to the famous ruins of the temple of Jupiter Serapis. This was one of the largest and richest of the temples of antiquity. It was a quadrangular building, near the edge of the sea, lined with marble, and sustained by columns of solid cipolino, three of which are still standing. It was buried by an earthquake and forgotten for a century or two, till in 1750 it was discovered by a peasant, who struck the top of one of the columns in digging. We stepped around over the prostrate fragments, building it up once more in fancy, and peopling the aisles with priests and worshippers. In the centre of the temple was the place of sacrifice, raised by flights of steps, and at the foot still remain two rings of Corinthian brass, to which the victims were fastened, and near them the receptacles for their blood and ashes. The whole scene has a stamp of grandeur. We obeyed the call of our red-bonnet guide, whose boat waited for us at the temple stairs, very unwillingly.

As we pushed off from the shore, we deviated a moment from our course to look at the ruins of the ancient mole. Here probably St. Paul set his foot, landing to pursue his way to Rome. The great apostle spent seven days at this place, which was then called Puteoli—a fact that attaches to it a deeper interest than it draws from all the antiquities of which it is the centre.

We kept on our way along the beautiful bend of the shore of Baiæ, and passing on the right a small mountain formed in thirty-six hours by a volcanic explosion, some three hundred years ago, we came to the Lucrine Lake, so famous in the classics for its oysters. The same explosion that made the Monte Nuovo, and sunk the little village of Tripergole, destroyed the oyster-beds of the poets.

A ten minutes' walk brought us to the shores of Lake Avernus—the “Tartarus” of Virgil. This was classic ground indeed, and we hoped to have found a thumbed copy of the *Æneid* in the pocket of the cicerone. He had not even heard of the poet. A ruin on the opposite shore,

reflected in the still dark water, is supposed to have been a temple dedicated to Proserpine. If she was allowed to be present at her own worship, she might have been consoled for her abduction. A spot of more secluded loveliness could scarce be found. The lake lay like a sheet of silver at the foot of the ruined temple, the water looking unfathomably deep through the clear reflection, and the fringes of low shrubbery leaning down on every side, were doubled in the bright mirror, the likeness even fairer than the reality.

Our unsentimental guide hurried us away as we were seating ourselves upon the banks, and we struck into a narrow footpath of wild shrubbery which circled the lake, and in a few minutes stood before the door of a grotto sunk in the side of the hill. Here dwelt the Cumæan sybil, and by this dark passage, the souls of the ancients passed from Tartarus to Elysium. The guide struck a light and kindled two large torches, and we followed him into the narrow cavern, walking downward at a rapid pace for ten or fifteen minutes. With a turn to the right, we stood before a low archway which the guide entered, up to his knees in water at the first step. It looked like the mouth of an abyss, and the ladies refused to go on. Six or seven stout fellows had followed us in, and the guide assured us we should be safe on their backs. I mounted first myself to carry the torch, and holding my head very low, we went plunging on, turning to the right and left through a crooked passage, dark as Erebus, till I was set down on a raised ledge called *the Sibyl's bed*. The lady behind me, I soon discovered by her screams, had not made so prosperous a voyage. She had insisted on being taken up something in the side-saddle fashion; and the man, not accustomed to hold so heavy a burden on his hip with one arm, had stumbled and let her slip up to her knees in water. He took her up immediately, in his own homely but safer fashion, and she was soon set beside me on the sibyl's stony couch, dripping with water, and quite out of temper with antiquities.

The rest of the party followed, and the guide lifted the torches to the dripping roof of the cavern, and showed us the remains of beautiful mosaic with which the place was once evidently encrusted. Whatever truth there may be in the existence of the sybil, these had been, doubtlessly, luxurious baths, and probably devoted by the Roman emperors to secret licentiousness. The guide pointed out to us a small perforation in the rear of the sybil's bed, whence, he said (by what authority I know not), Caligula used to watch the lavations of the nymph. It communicates with an outer chamber.

We reappeared, our nostrils edged with black from the smoke of the torches, and the ladies' dresses in a melancholy plight, between smoke and water. It would be a witch of a sybil that would tempt us to repeat our visit.

We retraced our steps, and embarked for Nero's villa. It was perhaps a half mile further down the bay. The only remains of it were some vapour baths, built over a boiling spring which extended under the sea. One of our boatmen waded first a few feet into the surf, and plunging under the cold sea-water, brought up a handful of warm gravel—the evidence of a submarine outlet from the springs beyond. We then mounted a high and ruined flight of steps, and entered a series of chambers dug out of the rock, where an old man was stripping off his shirt, to go through the usual process of taking eggs down to boil in the fountain. He took his bucket, drew a long breath of fresh air, and rushed away by a dark passage, whence he reappeared in three or four minutes, the eggs boiled, and the perspiration streaming from his body like rain. He set the bucket down, and rushed to the door, gasping as if from suffocation. The eggs were boiled hard, but the distress of the old man, and the danger of such sudden changes of atmosphere to his health, quite destroyed our pleasure at the phenomenon.

Hence to the cape of Misenum, the curve of the bay presents one continuation of Roman

villas. And certainly there was not probably in the world, a place more adapted to the luxury of which it was the scene. These natural baths, the many mineral waters, the balmy climate, the fertile soil, the lovely scenery, the matchless curve of the shore from Pozzuoli to the cape, and the vicinity, by that wonderful subterranean passage, to a populous capital on the other side of a range of mountains, rendered Baia a natural paradise to the emperors. It was improved as we see. Temples to Venus, Diana, and Mercury, the villas of Marius, of Hortensius, of Cæsar, of Lucullus, and others whose masters are disputed, follow each other in rival beauty of situation. The ruins are not much now, except the temple of Venus, which is one of the most picturesque fragments of antiquity I have ever seen. The long vines hang through the rent in its circular roof, and the bright flowers cling to the crevices in its still half-splendid walls with the very poetry of decay. Our guide here proposed a lunch. We sat down on the immense stone which has fallen from the ceiling, and in a few minutes the rough table was spread with a hundred open oysters from Fusaro (near Lake Avernus), bottles at will of *lagrima Christi* from Vesuvius, boiled crabs from the shore beneath the temple of Mercury, fish from the Lucrine lake, and bread from Pozzuoli. The meal was not less classic than refreshing. We drank to the goddess (the only one in mythology, by the way, whose worship has not fallen into contempt), and leaving twenty ragged descendants of ancient Baia to feast on the remains, mounted our donkeys and started over land for Elysium.

We passed the villa of Hortensius, to which Nero invited his mother, with the design of murdering her, visited the immense subterranean chambers in which water was kept for the Roman fleet, the horrid prisons called the Cento Camerelle of the emperors, and then rising the hill at the extremity of the cape, the Stygian lake lay off on the right, a broad and gloomy pool, and around its banks spread the Elysian fields, the very home and centre of classic fable. An overflowed marsh, and an adjacent corn-field will give you a perfect idea of it. The sun was setting while we swallowed our disappointment, and we turned our donkeys' heads toward Naples.

We left the city again this morning by the grotto of Posilipo to visit the celebrated Grotto del Cane. It is about three miles off, on the borders of a pretty lake, once the crater of a volcano. On the way there arose a violent debate in the party on the propriety of subjecting the poor dogs to the distress of the common experiment. We had not yet decided the point when we stopped before the door of the keeper's house. Two miserable-looking terriers had set up a howl, accompanied with a ferocious and half-complaining bark, from our first appearance around the turn of the road, and the appeal was effectual. We dismounted and walking toward the grotto, determined to refuse to see the phenomenon. Our scruples were unnecessary. The door was surrounded with another party less merciful, and as we approached, two dogs were dragged out by the heels, and thrown lifeless on the grass. We gathered round them, and while the old woman coolly locked the door of the grotto, the poor animals began to kick, and after a few convulsions, struggled to their feet and crept feebly away. Fresh dogs were offered to our party, but we contented ourselves with the more innocent experiments. The mephitic air of this cave rises to a foot above the surface of the ground, and a torch put into it was immediately extinguished. It has been described too often, however, to need a repetition. We took a long stroll around the lake, which was covered with wild-fowl, visited the remains of a villa of Lucullus on the opposite shore, and returned to Naples to dinner.

LETTER VII.

Island of Sicily—Palermo—Saracenic appearance of the town—Cathedral—The Marina—Viceroy Leopold—
Monastery of the Capuchins—Celebrated Catacombs—Fanciful Gardens.

FRIGATE UNITED STATES, *June 25*.—The mountain coast of Sicily lay piled up before us at the distance of ten or twelve miles, when I came on deck this morning. The quarter-master handed me the glass, and running my eye along the shore, I observed three or four low plains, extending between projecting spurs of the hills, studded thickly with country-houses, and bright with groves which I knew, by the deep glancing green, to be the orange. In a corner of the longest of these intervals, a sprinkling of white, looking in the distance like a bed of pearly shells on the edge of the sea, was pointed out as Palermo. With a steady glass its turrets and gardens became apparent, and its mole, bristling above the wall with masts; and, running in with a free wind, the character of our ship was soon recognised from the shore, and the flags of every vessel in the harbour ran up to the mast, the customary courtesy to a man-of-war entering port.

As the ship came to her anchorage, the view of the city was very captivating. The bend of the shore embraced our position, and the eastern half of the curve was a succession of gardens and palaces. A broad street extended along in front, crowded with people gazing at the frigates, and up one of the long avenues of the public gardens, we could distinguish the veiled women walking in groups, children playing, priests, soldiers, and all the motley frequenters of such places in this idle clime, enjoying the refreshing sea-breeze, upon whose wings we had come. I was impatient to get ashore, but between the health-officer and some other hindrances, it was evening before we set foot upon the pier.

With Captain Nicholson and the purser I walked up to the Toledo, as the still half-asleep tradesmen were opening their shops after the *siesta*. The oddity of the Palermitan style of building struck me forcibly. Of the two long streets, crossing each other at right angles and extending to the four gates of the city, the lower story of every house is a shop, of course. The second and third stories are ornamented with tricksy-looking iron balconies, in which the women sit at work universally, while from above projects, far over the street, a grated enclosure, like a long birdcage, from which look down girls and children (or, if it is a convent, the nuns), as if it were an airy prison to keep the household from the contact of the world. The whole air of Palermo is different from that of the towns upon the continent. The peculiarities are said to be Saracenic, and inscriptions in Arabic are still found upon the ancient buildings. The town is poetically called the *concha d'oro*, or “the golden shell.”

We walked on to the cathedral, followed by a troop of literally naked beggars, baked black in the sun, and more emaciated and diseased than any I have yet seen abroad. Their cries and gestures were painfully energetic. In the course of five minutes we had seen two or three hundred. They lay along the sidewalks, and upon the steps of the houses and churches, men, women, and children, nearly or quite naked, and as unnoticed by the inhabitants as the stones of the street.

Ten or twenty indolent-looking priests sat in the shade of the porch of the cathedral. The columns of the vestibule were curiously wrought, the capitals exceedingly rich with fretted leaf-work, and the ornaments of the front of the same wild-looking character as the buildings of the town. A hunchback scarce three feet high, came up and offered his services as a cicerone, and we entered the church. The antiquity of the interior was injured by the new white paint, covering every part except the more valuable decorations, but with its four splendid sarcophagi

standing like separate buildings in the aisles, and covering the ashes of Ruggiero and his kinsmen; the eighty columns of Egyptian granite in the nave; the *ciborio* of entire lapis-lazuli with its lovely blue, and the mosaics, frescoes, and relievos about the altar, it could scarce fail of producing an effect of great richness. The floor was occupied by here and there a kneeling beggar, praying in his rags, and undisturbed even by the tempting neighbourhood of strangers. I stood long by an old man, who seemed hardly to have the strength to hold himself upon his knees. His eyes were fixed upon a lovely picture of the virgin, and his trembling hands loosed bead after bead as his prayer proceeded. I slipped a small piece of silver between his palm and the cross of his rosary, and without removing his eyes from the face of the holy mother, he implored an audible blessing upon me in a tone of the most earnest feeling. I have scarce been so moved within my recollection.

The equipages were beginning to roll toward the “Marina,” and the sea-breeze was felt even through the streets. We took a carriage and followed to the corso, where we counted near two hundred gay, well-appointed equipages, in the course of an hour. What a contrast to the wretchedness we had left behind! Driving up and down this half mile in front of the palaces on the sea, seemed quite a sufficient amusement for the indolent nobility of Palermo. They were named to us by their imposing titles as they passed, and we looked in vain into their dull unanimated faces for the chivalrous character of the once renowned knights of Sicily. Ladies and gentlemen sat alike silent, leaning back in their carriages in the elegant attitudes studied to such effect on this side of the water, and gazing for acquaintances among those passing on the opposite line.

Toward the dusk of the evening, an *avant-courrier* on horseback announced the approach of the viceroy Leopold, the brother of the King of Naples. He drove himself in an English hunting-wagon with two seats, and looked like a dandy whip of the first water from Regent Street. He is about twenty and quite handsome. His horses, fine English bays, flew up and down the short corso, passing and repassing every other minute, till we were weary of touching our hats and stopping till he had gone by. He noticed the uniform of our officers, and raised his hat with particular politeness to them.

As it grew dark, the carriages came to a stand around a small open gallery raised in the broadest part of the Marina. Rows of lamps, suspended from the roof, were lit, and a band of forty or fifty musicians appeared in the area, and played parts of the popular operas. We were told they performed every night from nine till twelve. Chairs were set around for the people on foot, ices circulated, and some ten or twelve thousand people enjoyed the music in a delicious moonlight, keeping perfect silence from the first note to the last. These heavenly nights of Italy are thus begun, and at twelve the people separate and go to visit, or lounge at home till morning, when the windows are closed, the cool night air shut in, and they sleep till evening comes again, literally “keeping the hours the stars do.” It is very certain that it is the only way to enjoy life in this enervating climate. The sun is the worst enemy to health, and life and spirits sink under its intensity. The English, who are the only people abroad in an Italian noon, are constant victims to it.

We drove this morning to the monastery of the Capuchins. Three or four of the brothers in long grey beards, and the heavy brown sackcloth cowls of the order tied round the waist with ropes, received us cordially, and took us through the cells and chapels. We had come to see the famous catacombs of the convent. A door was opened on the side of the main cloister, and we descended a long flight of stairs into the centre of three lofty vaults, lighted each by a window

at the extremity of the ceiling. A more frightful scene never appalled the eye. The walls were lined with shallow niches, from which hung, leaning forward as if to fall upon the gazer, the dried bodies of monks in the full dress of their order. Their hands were crossed upon their breasts or hung at their sides, their faces were blackened and withered, and every one seemed to have preserved, in diabolical caricature, the very expression of life. The hair lay reddened and dry on the dusty skull, the teeth, perfect or imperfect, had grown brown in their open mouths, the nose had shrunk, the cheeks fallen in and cracked, and they looked more like living men cursed with some horrid plague, than the inanimate corpses they were. The name of each was pinned upon his cowl, with his age and the time of his death. Below in three or four tiers, lay long boxes painted fantastically, and containing, the monk told us, the remains of Sicilian nobles. Upon a long shelf above sat perhaps a hundred children of from one year to five, in little chairs worn with their use while in life, dressed in the gayest manner, with fanciful caps upon their little blackened heads, dolls in their hands, and in one or two instances, a stuffed dog or parrot lying in their laps. A more horribly ludicrous collection of little withered faces, shrunk into expression so entirely inconsistent with the gaiety of their dresses, could scarce be conceived. One of them had his arm tied up, holding a child's whip in the act of striking, while the poor thing's head had rotted and dropped upon its breast; and a leather cap fallen on one side, showed his bare skull, with the most comical expression of carelessness. We quite shocked the old monk with our laughter, but the scene was irresistible.

We went through several long galleries filled in the same manner, with the dead monks standing over the coffins of nobles, and children on the shelf above. There were three thousand bodies and upward in the place, monks and all. Some of them were very ancient. There was one, dated a century and a half back, whose tongue still hangs from his mouth. The friar took hold of it, and moved it up and down, rattling it against his teeth. It was like a piece of dried fish-skin, and as sharp and thin as a nail.

At the extremity of the last passage was a new vault appropriated to women. There were nine already lying on white pillows in the different recesses, who had died within the year, and among them a young girl, the daughter of a noble family of Palermo, stated in the inscription to have been a virgin of seventeen years. The monk said her twin-sister was the most beautiful woman of the city at this moment. She was laid upon her back, on a small shelf faced with a wire grating, dressed in white, with a large bouquet of artificial flowers on the centre of the body. Her hands and face were exposed, and the skin, which seemed to me scarcely dry, was covered with small black ants. I struck with my stick against the shelf, and startled by the concussion, the disgusting vermin poured from the mouth and nostrils in hundreds. How difficult it is to believe that the beauty we worship must come to this!

As we went toward the staircase, the friar showed us the deeper niches, in which the bodies were placed for the first six months. There were fortunately no fresh bodies in them at the time of our visit. The stench, for a week or two, he told us, was intolerable. They are suffered to get quite dry here, and then are disposed of according to their sex or profession. A rope passed round the middle, fastens the dead monk to his shallow niche, and there he stands till his bones rot from each other, sometimes for a century or more.

We hurried up the gloomy stairs, and giving the monk our gratuity, were passing out of the cloister to our carriage, when two of the brothers entered, bearing a sedan chair with the blinds closed. Our friend called us back, and opened the door. An old grey-headed woman sat bolt upright within, with a rope around her body and another around her neck, supporting her by two rings in the back of the sedan. She had died that morning, and was brought to be dried in

the capuchin catacombs. The effect of the newly deceased body in a handsome silk dress and plaited cap was horrible.

We drove from the monastery to the gardens of a Sicilian prince, near by. I was agreeably disappointed to find the grounds laid out in the English taste, winding into secluded walks shaded with unclipped trees, and opening into glades of greensward cooled by fountains. We strolled on from one sweet spot to another, coming constantly upon little Grecian temples, ruins, broken aqueducts, aviaries, bowers furnished with curious seats and tables, bridges over streams, and labyrinths of shrubbery, ending in hermitages built curiously of cane. So far, the garden, though lovely, was like many others. On our return, the person who accompanied us began to surprise us with singular contrivances, fortunately selecting the coachman who had driven us as the subject of his experiments. In the middle of a long green alley he requested him to step forward a few paces, and, in an instant, streams of water poured upon him from the bushes around in every direction. There were seats in the arbours, the least pressure of which sent up a stream beneath the unwary visitor; steps to an ascent, which you no sooner touched than you were showered from an invisible source; and one small hermitage, which sent a *jet d'eau* into the face of a person lifting the latch. Nearly in the centre of the garden stood a pretty building, with an ascending staircase. At the first step, a friar in white, represented to the life in wax, opened the door, and fixed his eyes on the comer. At the next step, the door was violently shut. At the third, it was half opened again, and as the foot pressed the platform above, both doors flew wide open, and the old friar made room for the visitor to enter. Life itself could not have been more natural. The garden was full of similar tricks. We were hurried away by an engagement before we had seen them all, and stopping for a moment to look at a magnificent Egyptian Ibis, walking around in an aviary like a temple, we drove into town to dinner.

LETTER VIII.

The Lunatic Asylum at Palermo.

PALERMO, *June 28*.—Two of the best conducted lunatic asylums in the world are in the kingdom of Naples—one at Aversa, near Capua, and the other at Palermo. The latter is managed by a whimsical Sicilian baron, who has devoted his time and fortune to it, and, with the assistance of the government, has carried it to great extent and perfection. The poor are received gratuitously, and those who can afford it enter as boarders, and are furnished with luxuries according to their means.

The hospital stands in an airy situation in the lovely neighbourhood of Palermo. We were received by a porter in a respectable livery, who introduced us immediately to the old baron—a kind-looking man, rather advanced beyond middle life, of manners singularly genteel and prepossessing. “*Je suis le premier fou*,” said he, throwing his arms out, as he bowed on our entrance. We stood in an open court, surrounded with porticoes lined with stone seats. On one of them lay a fat, indolent-looking man, in clean gray clothes, talking to himself with great apparent satisfaction. He smiled at the baron as he passed, without checking the motion of his lips, and three others standing in the doorway of a room marked as the kitchen, smiled also as he came up, and fell into his train, apparently as much interested as ourselves in the old man’s

explanations.

The kitchen was occupied by eight or ten people, all at work, and all, the baron assured us, *mad*. One man, of about forty, was broiling a steak with the gravest attention. Another, who had been furious till employment was given him, was chopping meat with violent industry in a large wooden bowl. Two or three girls were about, obeying the little orders of a middle-aged man, occupied with several messes cooking on a patent stove. I was rather incredulous about his insanity, till he took a small bucket and went to the jet of a fountain, and getting impatient from some cause or other, dashed the water upon the floor. The baron mildly called him by name, and mentioned to him, as a piece of information, that he had wet the floor. He nodded his head, and filling his bucket quietly, poured a little into one of the pans, and resumed his occupation.

We passed from the kitchen into an open court, curiously paved, and ornamented with Chinese grottoes, artificial rocks, trees, cottages, and fountains. Within the grottoes reclined figures of wax. Before the altar of one, fitted up as a Chinese chapel, a mandarin was prostrated in prayer. The walls on every side were painted in perspective scenery, and the whole had as little the air of a prison as the open valley itself. In one of the corners was an unfinished grotto, and a handsome young man was entirely absorbed in thatching the ceiling with strips of cane. The baron pointed to him, and said he had been incurable till he had found this employment for him. Everything about us, too, he assured us, was the work of his patients. They had paved the court, built the grottoes and cottages, and painted the walls, under his direction. The secret of his whole system, he said, was employment and constant kindness. He had usually about one hundred and fifty patients, and he dismissed upon an average two-thirds of them quite recovered.

We went into the apartments of the women. These, he said, were his worst subjects. In the first room sat eight or ten employed in spinning, while one infuriated creature, not more than thirty, but quite gray, was walking up and down the floor, talking and gesticulating with the greatest violence. A young girl of sixteen, an attendant, had entered into her humour, and with her arm put affectionately round her waist, assented to everything she said, and called her by every name of endearment while endeavouring to silence her. When the baron entered, the poor creature addressed herself to him, and seemed delighted that he had come. He made several mild attempts to check her, but she seized his hands, and with the veins of her throat swelling with passion, her eyes glaring terribly, and her tongue white and trembling, she continued to declaim more and more violently. The baron gave an order to a male attendant at the door, and beckoning us to follow, led her gently through a small court planted with trees, to a room containing a hammock. She checked her torrent of language as she observed the preparations going on, and seemed amused with the idea of swinging. The man took her up in his arms without resistance, and laced the hammock over her, confining everything but her head, and the female attendant, one of the most playful and prepossessing little creatures I ever saw, stood on a chair, and at every swing threw a little water on her face, as if in sport. Once or twice, the maniac attempted to resume the subject of her ravings, but the girl laughed in her face and diverted her from it, till at last she smiled, and dropping her head into the hammock, seemed disposed to sink into an easy sleep.

We left her swinging and went out into the court, where eight or ten women in the gray gowns of the establishment were walking up and down, or sitting under the trees, lost in thought. One, with a fine, intelligent face, came up to me and courtesied gracefully without speaking. The physician of the establishment joined me at the moment, and asked her what she wished. "To kiss his hand," said she, "but his looks forbade me." She coloured deeply, and

folded her arms across her breast and walked away. The baron called us, and in going out I passed her again, and taking her hand, kissed it, and bade her good-bye. "You had better kiss my lips," said she, "you'll never see me again." She laid her forehead against the iron bars of the gate, and with a face working with emotion, watched us till we turned out of sight. I asked the physician for her history. "It was a common case," he said. "She was the daughter of a Sicilian noble, who, too poor to marry her to one of her own rank, had sent her to a convent, where confinement had driven her mad. She is now a charity patient in the asylum."

The courts in which these poor creatures are confined open upon a large and lovely garden. We walked through it with the baron, and then returned to the apartments of the females. In passing a cell, a large majestic woman strided out with a theatrical air, and commenced an address to the Deity, in a strain, which showed her possessed of superiority both of birth and endowment. The baron took her by the hand with the deferential courtesy of the old school, and led her to one of the stone seats. She yielded to him politely, but resumed her harangue, upbraiding the Deity, as well as I could understand her, for her misfortunes. They succeeded in soothing her by the assistance of the same playful attendant who had accompanied the other to the hammock, and she sat still, with her lips white and her tongue trembling like an aspen. While the good old baron was endeavouring to draw her into a quiet conversation, the physician told me some curious circumstances respecting her. She was a Greek, and had been brought to Palermo when a girl. Her mind had been destroyed by an illness, and after seven years' madness, during which she had refused to rise from her bed, and had quite lost the use of her limbs, she was brought to this establishment by her friends. Experiments were tried in vain to induce her to move from her painful position. At last the baron determined upon addressing what he considered the master-passion in all female bosoms. He dressed himself in the gayest manner, and, in one of her gentle moments, entered her room with respectful ceremony, and offered himself to her in marriage! She refused him with scorn, and with seeming emotion he begged forgiveness and left her. The next morning, on his entrance, she smiled—the first time for years. He continued his attentions for a day or two, and after a little coquetry, she one morning announced to him that she had re-considered his proposal, and would be his bride. They raised her from her bed to prepare her for the ceremony, and she was carried in a chair to the garden, where the bridal feast was spread, nearly all the other patients of the hospital being present. The gaiety of the scene absorbed the attention of all; the utmost decorum prevailed: and when the ceremony was performed the bride was crowned, and carried back in state to her apartment. She recovered gradually the use of her limbs, her health is improved, and, excepting an occasional paroxysm, such as we happened to witness, she is quiet and contented. The other inmates of the asylum still call her the bride; and the baron, as her husband, has the greatest influence over her.

While the physician was telling me these circumstances, the baron had succeeded in calming her, and she sat with her arms folded, dignified and silent. He was still holding her hand, when the woman whom we had left swinging in the hammock, came stealing up behind the trees on tiptoe, and putting her hand suddenly over the baron's eyes, kissed him on both sides of his face, laughing heartily, and calling him by every name of affection. The contrast between this mood and the infuriated one in which we had found her, was the best comment on the good man's system. He gently disengaged himself, and apologised to his lady for allowing the liberty, and we followed him to another apartment.

It opened upon a pretty court, in which a fountain was playing, and against the columns of the portico sat some half dozen patients. A young man of eighteen, with a very pale, scholar-

like face, was reading Ariosto. Near him, under the direction of an attendant, a fair, delicate girl, with a sadness in her soft blue eyes that might have been a study for a *mater dolorosa*, was cutting paste upon a board laid across her lap. She seemed scarcely conscious of what she was about, and when I approached and spoke to her, she laid down the knife and rested her head upon her hand, and looked at me steadily, as if she was trying to recollect where she had known me. "I cannot remember," she said to herself, and went on with her occupation. I bowed to her as we took our leave, and she returned it gracefully but coldly. The young man looked up from his book and smiled, the old man lying on the stone seat in the outer court rose up and followed us to the door, and we were bowed out by the baron and his gentle madmen as politely and kindly as if we were concluding a visit with a company of friends.

An evening out of doors, in summer, is pleasant enough anywhere in Italy: but I have found no place where the people and their amusements were so concentrated at that hour, as upon the "Marina" of Palermo. A ramble with the officers up and down, renewing the acquaintances made with visitors to the ships, listening to the music and observing the various characters of the crowd, concludes every day agreeably. A terraced promenade twenty feet above the street, extends nearly the whole length of the Marina, and here, under the balconies of the viceroy's palace, with the crescent harbour spread out before the eye, trees above, and marble seats tempting the weary at every step, may be met pedestrians of every class, from the first cool hour when the sea-breeze sets in till midnight or morning. The intervals between the pieces performed by the royal band in the centre of the drive, is seized by the wandering *improvisatrice*, or the ludicrous *puncinello*, and even the beggars cease to importune in the general abandonment to pleasure. Every other moment the air is filled with a delightful perfume, and you are addressed by the bearer of a tall pole tied thickly with the odorous flowers of this voluptuous climate—a mode of selling these cheap luxuries which I believe is peculiar to Palermo. The gaiety they give a crowd, by the way, is singular. They move about among the gaudily-dressed contadini like a troop of banners—tulips, narcissus, moss-roses, branches of jasmine, geraniums, every flower that is rare and beautiful scenting the air from a hundred overladen poles, and the merest pittance will purchase the rarest and loveliest. It seems a clime of fruits and flowers; and if one could but shut his eyes to the dreadful contrasts of nakedness and starvation, he might believe himself in a Utopia.

We were standing on the balcony of the consul's residence (a charming situation overlooking the Marina), and remarking the gaiety of the scene on the first evening of our arrival. The conversation turned upon the condition of the people. The consul remarked that it was an every-day circumstance to find beggars starved to death in the streets; and that, in the small villages near Palermo, eight or ten were often taken up dead from the road-side in the morning. The difficulty of getting a subsistence is every day increasing, and in the midst of one of the most fertile spots of the earth, one half the population are driven to the last extremity for bread. The results appear in constant conspiracies against the government, detected and put down with more or less difficulty. The island is garrisoned with troops from Italy, and the viceroy has lately sent to his brother for a reinforcement, and is said to feel very insecure. A more lamentably misgoverned kingdom than that of the Sicilies, probably does not exist in the world.

LETTER IX.

Palermo—Fête given by Mr. Gardiner, the American Consul—Temple of Clitumnus—Cottage of Petrarch—
Messina—Lipari Islands—Scylla and Charybdis.

PALERMO, *June 28th*.—The curve of “The Golden Shell,” which bends to the east of Palermo, is a luxuriant plain of ten miles in length, terminated by a bluff which forms a headland corner of the bay. A broad neck of land between this bay and another indenting the coast less deeply on the other side, is occupied by a cluster of summer palaces belonging to several of the richer princes of Sicily. The breeze, whenever there is one on land or sea, sweeps freshly across this ridge, and a more desirable residence for combined coolness and beauty could scarce be imagined. The Palermitan princes, however, find every country more attractive than their own; and while you may find a dozen of them in any city of Europe, their once magnificent residences are deserted and falling to decay, almost without an exception.

The old walls of one of these palaces were enlivened yesterday, by a *fête* given to the officers of the squadron by the American consul, Mr. Gardiner. We left Palermo in a long cavalcade, followed by a large omnibus containing the ship’s band, early in the forenoon. The road was lined with prickly pear and oleander in the most luxuriant blossom. Exotics in our country, these plants are indigenous to Sicily, and form the only hedges to the large plantations of cane and the spreading vineyards and fields. A more brilliant show than these long lines of trees, laden with bright pink flowers, and varied by the gigantic and massive leaf of the pear, cannot easily be imagined.

We were to visit one or two places on our way. The carriage drew up about eight miles from town, at the gate of a ruinous building, and passing through a deserted court, we entered an old-fashioned garden, presenting one succession of trimmed walks, urns, statues, and fountains. The green mould of age and exposure upon the marbles, the broken seats, the once costly but now ruined and silent fountains, the tall weeds in the seldom-trodden walks, and the wild vegetation of fragrant jasmine and brier, burying everything with its luxuriance, all told the story of decay. I remembered the scenes of the Decameron; the many “tales of love,” laid in these very gardens; the gay romances of which Palermo was the favourite home; and the dames and knights of Sicily, the fairest and bravest themes, and I longed to let my merry companions pass on, and remain to realise more deeply the spells of poetry and story. The pleasure of travel is in the fancy. Men and manners are so nearly alike over the world, and the same annoyances disturb so certainly, wherever we are, the gratification of seeing and conversing with our living fellow-beings, that it is only by the mingled illusion of fancy and memory, by getting apart, and peopling the deserted palace or the sombre ruin from the pages of a book, that we ever realise the anticipated pleasure of standing on celebrated ground. The eye, the curiosity, are both disappointed, and the voice of a common companion reduces the most romantic ruin to a heap of stone. In some of the footsteps of Childe Harold himself, with his glorious thoughts upon my lips, and all that moved his imagination addressing my eye, with the additional grace which his poetry has left around them, I have found myself unable to overstep the vulgar circumstances of the hour—“the Temple of Clitumnus” was a ruined shed glaring in the sunshine, and the “Cottage of Petrarch” an apology for extortion and annoyance.

I heard a shout from the party, and followed them to a building at the foot of a garden. I passed the threshold and started back. A ghastly monk, with a broom in his hand, stood gazing at me, and at a door just beyond, a decrepit nun was see-sawing backward and forward, ringing a bell with the most impatient violence. I ventured to pass in, and a door opened at the right,

disclosing the self-denying cell of a hermit with his narrow bed and single chair, and at the table sat the rosy-gilled friar, filling his glass from an antiquated bottle, and nodding his head to his visitor in grinning welcome. A long cloister with six or eight cells extended beyond, and in each was a monk in some startling attitude, or a pale and saintly nun employed in work or prayer. The whole was as like a living monastery as wax could make it. The mingling of monks and nuns seemed an anachronism, but we were told that it represented a tale, the title of which I have forgotten. It was certainly an odd as well as an expensive fancy for a garden ornament, and shows by its uselessness the once princely condition of the possessors of the palace. An Englishman married not many years since an old princess, to whom the estates had descended, and with much unavailable property and the title of prince, he has entered the service of the king of the Sicilies for a support.

We drove on to another palace, still more curious in its ornaments. The extensive wall which enclosed it, the gates, the fountains in the courts and gardens, were studded with marble monsters of every conceivable deformity. The head of a man crowned the body of an eagle standing on the legs of a horse; the lovely face and bosom of a female crouched upon the body of a dog; alligators, serpents, lions, monkeys, birds, and reptiles, were mixed up with parts of the human body in the most revolting variety. So admirable was the work, too, and so beautiful the material, that even outraged taste would hesitate to destroy them. The wonder is that artists of so much merit could have been hired to commit such sins against decency, or that a man in his senses would waste upon them the fortune they must have cost.

We mounted a massive flight of steps, with a balustrade of gorgeously-carved marble, and entered a hall hung round with the family portraits, the eccentric founder at their head. He was a thin, quizzical-looking gentleman, in a laced coat and sword, and had precisely the face I imagined for him—that of a whimsical madman. You would select it from a thousand as the subject for a lunatic asylum.

We were led next to a long, narrow hall, famous for having dined the king and his courtiers an age or two ago. The ceiling was of plate mirror, reflecting us all, upside down, as we strolled through, and the walls were studded from the floor to the roof with the quartz diamond, (valueless but brilliant), bits of coloured glass, spangles, and everything that could reflect light. The effect, when the quaint old chandeliers were lit, and the table spread with silver and surrounded by a king and his nobles, in the costume of a court in the olden time, must have exceeded faëry.

Beyond, we were ushered into the state drawing-room, a saloon of grand proportions, roofed like the other with mirrors, but paved and lined throughout with the costliest marbles, Sicilian agates, paintings set in the wall and covered with glass, while on pedestals around, stood statues of the finest workmanship, representing the males of the family in the costume or armour of the times. A table of inlaid precious stones stood in the centre, cabinets of lapis-lazuli and side tables, occupied the spaces between the furniture, and the chairs and sofas were covered with the rich velvet stuffs now out of use, embroidered and fringed magnificently. I sat down upon a tripod stool, and with my eyes half closed, looked up at the mirrored reflections of the officers in the ceiling, and tried to imagine back the gay throngs that had moved across the floor they were treading so unceremoniously, the knightly and royal feet that had probably danced the stars down with the best beauty of Sicily beneath those silent mirrors; the joy, the jealousy, the love and hate, that had lived their hour and been repeated, as were our lighter feelings and faces now, outlived by the perishing mirrors that might still outlive ours as long. How much there is in an *atmosphere*! How full the air of these old palaces is of thought! How

one might enjoy them could he ramble here alone, or with one congenial and musing companion to answer to his moralising.

We drove on to our appointment. At the end of a handsome avenue stood a large palace, in rather more modern taste than those we had left. The crowd of carriages in the court, the gold-laced midshipmen scattered about the massive stairs and in the formal walks of the gardens, the gay dresses of the ship's band, playing on the terrace, and the troops of ladies and gentlemen in every direction, gave an air of bustle to the stately structure that might have reminded the marble nymphs of the days when they were first lifted to their pedestals.

The old hall was thrown open at two, and a table stretching from one end to the other, loaded with every luxury of the season, and capable of accommodating sixty or seventy persons, usurped the place of unsubstantial romance, and brought in the wildest straggler willingly from his ramble. No cost had been spared, and the hospitable consul (a Bostonian) did the honours of his table in a manner that stirred powerfully my pride of country and birthplace. All the English resident in Palermo were present; and it was the more agreeable to me that their countrymen are usually the only givers of generous entertainment in Europe. One feels ever so distant a reflection on his country abroad. The liberal and elegant hospitality of one of our countrymen at Florence, has served me as a better argument against the charge of hardness and selfishness urged upon our nation, than all which could be drawn from the acknowledgments of travellers.

When dinner was over, an hour was passed at coffee in a small saloon stained after the fashion of Pompeii, and we then assembled on a broad terrace facing the sea, and with the band in the gallery above, commenced dances which lasted till an hour or two into the moonlight. The sunset had the eternal but untiring glory of the Italian summer, and it never set on a gayer party. There were among the English one or two lovely girls, and with the four ladies belonging to the squadron (the commodore's family and Captain Reed's), the dancers were sufficient to include all the officers, and the scene in the soft light of the moon was like a description in an old tale. The broad sea on either side, broke by the headland in front, the distant crescent of lights glancing along the seaside at Palermo, the solemn old palaces seen from the eminence around us, and the noble pile through whose low windows we strolled out upon the terrace, the music and the excitement, all blended a scene that is drawn with bright and living lines in my memory. We parted unwillingly, and reaching Palermo about midnight, pulled off to the frigates, and were under-weight at daylight for Messina.

This is the poetry of sailing. The long, low frigate glides on through the water with no more motion than is felt in a dining-room on shore. The sea changes only from a glossy calm to a feathery ripple, the sky is always serene, the merchant sail appears and disappears on the horizon edge, the island rises on the bow, creeps along the quarter, is examined by the glasses of the idlers on deck and sinks gradually astern; the sun-fish whirls in the eddy of the wake, the tortoise plunges and breathes about us; and the delightful temperature of the sea, even and invigorating, keeps both mind and body in an undisturbed equilibrium of enjoyment. For me it is a paradise. I am glad to escape from the contact, the dust, the trials of temper, the noon-day sultriness, and the midnight chill, the fatigue, and privation, and vexation, which beset the traveller on shore. I shall return to it no doubt willingly after a while, but for the present, it is rest, it is relief, refreshment, to be at sea. There is no swell in the Mediterranean during the summer months, and this gliding about, sleeping or reading, as if at home, from one port to another, seems to me just now the Utopia of enjoyment.

We have been all day among the Lipari islands. It is pleasant to look up at the shaded and peaceful huts on their mountainous sides, as we creep along under them, or to watch the fisherman's children with a glass, as they run out from their huts on the seashore to gaze at the uncommon apparition of a ship-of-war. They seem seats of solitude and retirement. I have just dropped the glass, which I had raised to look at what I took to be a large ship in full sail rounding the point of Felicudi. It is a tall, pyramidal rock, rising right from the sea, and resembling exactly a ship with studding-sails set, coming down before the wind. The band is playing on the deck; and a fisherman's boat with twenty of the islanders resting on their oars and listening in wondering admiration, lies just under our quarter. It will form a tale for the evening meal, to which they were hastening home.

We run between Scylla and Charybdis, with a fresh wind and a strong current. The "dogs" were silent, and the "whirlpool" is a bubble to Hurl-gate. Scylla is quite a town, and the tall rock at the entrance of the strait is crowned with a large building, which seems part of a fortification. The passage through the Faro is lonely—quite like a river. Messina lies in a curve of the western shore, at the base of a hill; and, opposite, a graceful slope covered with vineyards, swells up to a broad table plain on the mountain, which looked like the home of peace and fertility.

We rounded-to, off the town, to send in for letters, and I went ashore in the boat. Two American friends, whom I had as little expectation of meeting as if I had dropped upon Jerusalem, hailed me from the grating of the health-office, before we reached the land, and having exhibited our bill of health, I had half an hour for a call upon an old friend, resident at Messina, and we were off again to the ship. The sails filled, and we shot away on a strong breeze down the straits. Rhegium lay on our left, a large cluster of old-looking houses on the edge of the sea. It was at this town of Calabria that St. Paul landed on his journey to Rome. We sped on without much time to look at it, even with a glass, and were soon rounding the toe of "the boot," the southern point of Italy. We are heading at this moment for the gulf of Tarento, and hope to be in Venice by the fourth of July.

LETTER X.

The Adriatic—Albania—Gay Costumes and Beauty of the Albanese—Capo d'Istria—Trieste resembles an American Town—Visit to the Austrian Authorities of the Province—Curiosity of the Inhabitants—Gentlemanly Reception by the Military Commandant—Visit to Vienna—Singular Notions of the Austrians respecting the Americans—Similarity of the Scenery to that of New England—Meeting with German Students—Frequent Sight of Soldiers and Military Preparation—Picturesque Scenery of Styria.

The Doge of Venice has a fair bride in the Adriatic. It is the fourth of July, and with the Italian Cape Colonna on our left and the long, low coast of Albania shading the horizon on the east, we are gazing upon her from the deck of the first American frigate that has floated upon her bosom. We head for Venice, and there is a stir of anticipation on board, felt even through the hilarity of our cherished anniversary. I am the only one in the ward-room to whom that wonderful city is familiar, and I feel as if I had forestalled my own happiness—the first impression of it is so enviable.

It is difficult to conceive the gay costumes and handsome features of the Albanese existing in these barren mountains that bind the Adriatic. It has been but a continued undulation of rock and sand, for three days past; and the closer we hug to the shore, the more we look at the broad canvass above us, and pray for wind. We make Capo d'Istria now, a small town nestled in a curve of the sea, and an hour or two more will bring us to Trieste, where we drop anchor, we hope for many an hour of novelty and pleasure.

Trieste lies sixty or eighty miles from Venice, across the head of the gulf. The shore between is piled up to the sky with the "blue Friuli mountains;" and from the town of Trieste, the low coast of Istria breaks away at a right angle to the south, forming the eastern bound of the Adriatic. As we ran into the harbour on our last tack, we passed close under the garden walls of the villa of the ex-queen of Naples, a lovely spot just in the suburbs. The palace of Jerome Bonaparte was also pointed out to us by the pilot, on the hill just above. They have both removed since to Florence, and their palaces are occupied by English. We dropped anchor within a half mile of the pier, and the flags of a dozen American vessels were soon distinguishable among the various colours of the shipping in the port.

I accompanied Commodore Patterson to-day on a visit of ceremony to the Austrian authorities of the province. We made our way with difficulty through the people, crowding in hundreds to the water-side, and following us with the rude freedom of a showman's audience. The vice-governor, a polite but Frenchified German count, received us with every profession of kindness. His Parisian gesture sat ill enough upon his national high cheekbones, lank hair, and heavy shoulders. We left him to call upon the military commandant, an Irishman, who occupies part of the palace of the ex-king of Westphalia. Our reception by him was gentlemanly, cordial, and dignified. I think the Irish are, after all, the best-mannered people in the world. They are found in every country, as adventurers for honour, and they change neither in character nor manner. They follow foreign fashions, and acquire a foreign language; but in the first they retain their heart, and in the latter their brogue. They are Irishmen always. Count Nugent is high in the favour of the Emperor, has the commission of a field-marshal, and is married to a Neapolitan princess, who is a most accomplished and lovely woman, and related to most of the royal houses of Europe. His reputation as a soldier is well known, and he seems to me to have no drawback to the enviableness of his life, except its expatriation.

Trieste is a busy, populous place, resembling extremely our new towns in America. We took a stroll through the principal streets after our visits were over, and I was surprised at the splendour of the shops, and the elegance of the costumes and equipages. It is said to contain thirty thousand inhabitants.

VIENNA.—The frigates were to lie three or four weeks at Trieste. One half of the officers had taken the steamboat for Venice on the second evening of our arrival, and the other half waited impatiently their turn of absence. Vienna was but some four hundred miles distant, and I might never be so near it again. On a rainy evening, at nine o'clock, I left Trieste in the *eil-wagon*, with a German courier, and commenced the ascent of the spur of the Friuli mountains that overhangs the bay.

My companions inside were a merchant from Gratz, a fantastical and poor Hungarian count, a Corfu shop-keeper, and an Italian ex-militaire and present apothecary, going to Vienna to marry a lady whom he had never seen. After a little bandying of compliments in German, of

which I understood nothing except that they were apologies for the incessant smoking of three disgusting pipes, the conversation, fortunately for me, settled into Italian. The mountain was steep and very high, and my friends soon grew conversable. The novelty of two American frigates in the harbour naturally decided the first topic. Our Gratz merchant was surprised at the light colour of the officers he had seen, and doubted if they were not Englishmen in the American service. He had always heard Americans were black. "They are so," said the soldier-apothecary; "I saw the real Americans yesterday in a boat, quite black." (One of the cutters of the "Constellation" has a negro crew, which he had probably seen at the pier.) The assertion seemed to satisfy the doubts of all parties. They had wondered how such beautiful ships could come from a savage country. It was now explained. "They were bought from the English, and officered by Englishmen." I was too much amused by their speculations to undeceive them; and with my head thrust half out of the window to avoid choking with the smoke of their pipes, I gazed back at the glittering lights of the town below, and indulged the never-palling sensation of a first entrance into a new country. The lantern at the peak of the "United States" was the last thing I saw as we rose the brow of the mountain, and started off on a rapid trot towards Vienna.

I awoke at daylight with the sudden stop of the carriage. We were at the low door of a German tavern, and a clear, rosy, good-humoured looking girl bade us good morning, as we alighted one by one. The phrase was so like English, that I asked for a basin of water in my mother tongue. The similarity served me again. She brought it without hesitation; but the question she asked me as she set it down was like nothing that had ever before entered my ears. The count smiled at my embarrassment, and explained that she wished to know if I wanted soap.

I was struck with the cleanliness of everything. The tables, chairs and floors, looked worn away with scrubbing. Breakfast was brought in immediately—eggs, rolls, and coffee, the latter in a glass bottle like a chemist's retort, corked up tightly, and wrapped in a snowy napkin. It was an excellent breakfast, served with cleanliness and good humour, and cost about fourteen cents each. Even from this single meal, it seemed to me that I had entered a country of simple manners and kind feelings. The conductor gravely kissed the cheek of the girl who had waited on us, my companions lit their pipes afresh, and the postillion, in cocked hat and feather, blew a stave of a waltz on his horn, and fell into a steady trot, which he kept up with phlegmatic perseverance to the end of his post.

As we get away from the sea, the land grows richer, and the farm-houses more frequent. We are in the duchy of Carniola, forty or fifty miles from Trieste. How very unlike Italy and France, and how very like New England it is! There are no ruined castles, nor old cathedrals. Every village has its small white church, with a tapering spire, large manufactories cluster on the water-courses, the small rivers are rapid and deep, the horses large and strong, the barns immense, the crops heavy, the people grave and hard at work, and not a pauper by the post together. We are very far north, too, and the climate is like New England. The wind, though it is midsummer, is bracing, and there is no travelling as in Italy, with one's hat off and breast open, dissolving at midnight in the luxury of the soft air. The houses, too, are ugly and comfortable, staring with paint and pierced in all directions with windows. The children are white-headed and serious. The hills are half-covered with woods, and clusters of elms are left here and there through the meadows, as if their owners could afford to let them grow for a shade to the mowers. I was perpetually exclaiming, "how like America!"

We dined at Laybach. My companions had found out by my passport that I was an

American, and their curiosity was most amusing. The report of the arrival of the two frigates had reached the capital of Illyria, and with the assistance of the information of my friends, I found myself an object of universal attention. The crowd around the door of the hotel looked into the windows while we were eating, and followed me round the house as if I had been a savage. One of the passengers told me they connected the arrival of the ships with some political object, and thought I might be the envoy. The landlord asked me if we had potatoes in our country.

I took a walk through the city after dinner with my mincing friend the count. The low, two-story wooden houses, the sidewalks enclosed with trees, the matter-of-fact looking people, the shut windows, and neat white churches remind me again strongly of America. It was like the more retired streets of Portland or Portsmouth. The Illyrian language spoken here, seemed to me the most inarticulate succession of sounds I had ever heard. In crossing the bridge in the centre of the town, we met a party of German students travelling on foot with their knapsacks. My friend spoke to them to gratify my curiosity. I wished to know where they were going. They all spoke French and Italian, and seemed in high heart, bold, cheerful, and intelligent. They were bound for Egypt, determined to seek their fortunes in the service of the present reforming and liberal pacha. Their enthusiasm, when they were told I was an American, quite thrilled me. They closed about me and looked into my eyes, as if they expected to read the spirit of freedom in them. I was taken by the arms at last, and almost forced into a beer-shop. The large tankards were filled, each touched mine and the others, and "America" was drank with a grave earnestness of manner that moved my heart within me. They shook me by the hand on parting, and gave me a blessing in German, which as the old count translated it, was the first word I have learned of their language. We had met constantly parties of them on the road. They all dress alike, in long travelling frocks of brown stuff, and small green caps with straight visors; but, coarsely as they are clothed, and humbly as they seem to be faring, their faces bear always a mark that can never be mistaken. They look like scholars.

The roads, by the way, are crowded with pedestrians. It seems to be the favourite mode of travelling in this country. We have scarce met a carriage, and I have seen, I am sure, in one day, two hundred passengers on foot. Among them is a class of people peculiar to Germany. I was astonished occasionally at being asked for charity by stout, well-dressed young men, to all appearance as respectable as any travellers on the road. Expressing my surprise, my companion informed me that they were *apprentices*, and that the custom or law of the country compelled them, after completing their indentures, to travel in some distant province, and depend upon charity and their own exertions for two or three years before becoming masters at their trade. It is a singular custom, and I should think, a useful lesson in hardship and self-reliance. They held out their hats with a confident independence of look that quite satisfied me they felt no degradation in it.

We soon entered the province of Styria, and brighter rivers, greener woods, richer and more graceful uplands and meadows, do not exist in the world. I had thought the scenery of Stockbridge, in my own State, unequalled till now. I could believe myself there, were not the women alone working in the fields, and the roads lined for miles together with military wagons and cavalry upon march. The conscript law of Austria compels every peasant to serve *fourteen* years! and the labours of agriculture fall, of course, almost exclusively upon females. Soldiers swarm like locusts through the country, but they seem as inoffensive and as much at home as the cattle in the farm-yards. It is a curious contrast, to my eye, to see parks of artillery glistening in the midst of a wheat-field, and soldiers sitting about under the low thatches of these

peaceful-looking cottages. I do not think, among the thousands that I have passed in three days' travel, I have seen a gesture or heard a syllable. If sitting, they smoke and sit still, and if travelling, they economise motion to a degree that is wearisome to the eye.

Words are limited, and the description of scenery becomes tiresome. It is a fault that the sense of beauty, freshening constantly on the traveller, compels him who makes a note of impressions to mark every other line with the same ever-recurring exclamations of pleasure. I saw a hundred miles of unrivalled scenery in Styria, and how can I describe it? I were keeping silence on a world of enjoyment to pass it over. We come to a charming descent into a valley. The town beneath, the river, the embracing mountains, the swell to the ear of its bells ringing some holiday, affect my imagination powerfully. I take out my tablets. What shall I say? How convey to your minds who have not seen it, the charm of a scene I can only describe as I have described a thousand others?

LETTER XI.

Gratz—Vienna.

We had followed stream after stream through a succession of delicious valleys for a hundred miles. Descending from a slight eminence, we came upon the broad and rapid Muhr, and soon after caught sight of a distant citadel upon a rock. As we approached, it struck me as one of the most singular freaks of nature I had ever seen. A pyramid, perhaps three hundred feet in height, and precipitous on every side, rose abruptly in the midst of a broad and level plain, and around it in a girdle of architecture, lay the capital of Styria. The fortress on the summit hung like an eagle's nest over the town, and from its towers, a pistol-shot would reach the outermost point of the wall.

Wearied with travelling near three hundred miles without sleep, I dropped upon a bed at the hotel, with an order to be called in two hours. It was noon, and we were to remain at Gratz till the next morning. My friend, the Hungarian, had promised, as he threw himself on the opposite bed, to wake and accompany me in a walk through the town, but the shake of a stout German chambermaid at the appointed time had no effect upon him, and I descended to my dinner alone. I had lost my interpreter. The *carte* was in German, of which I did not know even the letters. After appealing in vain in French and Italian to the persons eating near me, I fixed my finger at hazard upon a word, and the waiter disappeared. The result was a huge dish of cabbage cooked in some filthy oil and graced with a piece of beef. I was hesitating whether to dine on bread or make another attempt, when a gentlemanly man of some fifty years came in and took the vacant seat at my table. He addressed me immediately in French, and smiling at my difficulties, undertook to order a dinner for me something less national. We improved our acquaintance with a bottle of Johannesburg, and after dinner he kindly offered to accompany me in my walk through the city.

Gratz is about the size of Boston, a plain German city, with little or no pretensions to style. The military band was playing a difficult waltz very beautifully in the public square, but no one was listening except a group of young men dressed in the worst taste of dandyism. We mounted by a zigzag path to the fortress. On a shelf of the precipice, half way up, hangs a small

casino, used as a beer-shop. The view from the summit was a feast to the eye. The wide and lengthening valley of the Muhr lay asleep beneath its loads of grain, its villas and farm-houses, the picture of "waste and mellow fruitfulness," the rise to the mountains around the head of the valley was clustered with princely dwellings, thick forests with glades between them, and churches with white slender spires shooting from the bosom of elms, and right at our feet, circling around the precipitous rock for protection, lay the city enfolded in its rampart, and sending up to our ears the sound of every wheel that rolled through her streets. Among the striking buildings below, my friend pointed out to me a palace which he said had been lately purchased by Joseph Bonaparte, who was coming here to reside. The people were beginning to turn out for their evening walk upon the ramparts which are planted with trees and laid out for a promenade, and we descended to mingle in the crowd.

My old friend had a great many acquaintances. He presented me to several of the best dressed people we met, all of whom invited me to supper. I had been in Italy almost a year and a half, and such a thing had never happened to me. We walked about until six, and as I preferred going to the play, which opened at that early hour, we took tickets for "Der Schlimme Leisel," and were seated presently in one of the simplest and prettiest theatres I have ever seen.

"Der Schlimme Leisel" was an old maid who kept house for an old bachelor brother, proposing, at the time the play opens, to marry. Her dislike to the match, from the dread of losing her authority over his household, formed the humour of the piece, and was admirably represented. After various unsuccessful attempts to prevent the nuptials, the lady is brought to the house, and the old maid enters in a towering passion, throws down her keys, and flirts out of the room with a threat that she "*will go to America!*" Fortunately she is not driven to that extremity. The lady has been already married secretly to a poorer lover, and the old bachelor, after the first shock of the discovery, settles a fortune on them, and returns to his celibacy and his old maid sister, to the satisfaction of all parties. Certainly the German is the most unmusical language of Babel. If my good old friend had not translated it for me word for word, I should scarce have believed the play to be more than a gibbering pantomime. I shall think differently when I have learned it, no doubt, but a strange language strikes upon one's ear so oddly! I was quite too tired when the play was over (which, by the way, was at the sober hour of nine,) to accept any of the kind invitations of which my companion reminded me. We supped *tête-à-tête*, instead, at the hotel. I was delighted with my new acquaintance. He was an old citizen of the world. He had left Gratz at twenty, and after thirty years wandering from one part of the globe to the other, had returned to end his days in his birthplace. His relations were all dead, and speaking all the languages of Europe, he preferred living at a hotel for the society of strangers. With a great deal of wisdom he had preserved his good humour toward the world; and I think I have rarely seen a kinder, and never a happier man. I parted from him with regret, and the next morning at daylight, had resumed my seat at the *eil-wagon*.

Imagine the Hudson, at the highlands, reduced to a sparkling little river a bowshot across, and a rich valley thridded by a road accompanying the remaining space between the mountains, and you have the scenery for the first thirty miles beyond Gratz. There is one more difference. On the edge of one of the most towering precipices, clear up against the clouds, hang the ruins of a noble castle. The rents in the wall, and the embrasures in the projecting turrets, seem set into the sky. Trees and vines grow within and about it, and the lacings of the twisted roots seem all that keep it together. It is a perfect "castle in the air."

A long day's journey and another long night (during which we passed Neustadt, on the confines of Hungary) brought us within sight of Baden, but an hour or two from Vienna. It was

just sunrise, and market-carts and pedestrians and suburban vehicles of all descriptions notified us of our approach to a great capital. A few miles farther we were stopped in the midst of an extensive plain by a crowd of carriages. A criminal was about being guillotined. What was that to one who saw Vienna for the first time? A few steps farther the postillion was suddenly stopped. A gentleman alighted from a carriage in which were two ladies, and opened the door of the diligence. It was the bride of the soldier-apothecary come to meet him with her mother and brother. He was buried in dust, just waked out of sleep, a three days' beard upon his face, and, at the best, not a very lover-like person. He ran to the carriage door, jumped in, and there was an immediate cry for water. The bride had fainted! We left her in his arms and drove on. The courier had no bowels for love.

There is a small Gothic pillar before us, on the rise of a slight elevation. Thence we shall see Vienna. "Stop, thou tasteless postillion!" Was ever such a scene revealed to mortal sight! It is like Paris from the Barrière de l'Etoile—it seems to cover the world. Oh, beautiful Vienna! What is that broad water on which the rising sun glances so brightly? *The Danube!* What is that unparalleled Gothic structure piercing the sky? What columns are these? What spires? Beautiful, beautiful city!

VIENNA.—It must be a fine city that impresses one with its splendour before breakfast, after driving all night in a mail-coach. It was six o'clock in the morning when I left the post-office, in Vienna, to walk to a hotel. The shops were still shut, the milkwomen were beating at the gates, and the short, quick ring upon the church bells summoned all early risers to mass. A sudden turn brought me upon a square. In its centre stood the most beautiful fabric that has ever yet filled my eye. It looked like the structure of a giant, encrusted with fairies—a majestically proportioned mass, and a spire tapering to the clouds, but a surface so curiously beautiful, so traced and fretted, so full of exquisite ornament, that it seemed rather some curious cabinet gem, seen through a magnifier, than a building in the open air. In these foreign countries, the labourer goes in with his load to pray, and I did not hesitate to enter the splendid Church of St. Etienne, though a man followed me with a portmanteau on his back. What a wilderness of arches! Pulpits, chapels, altars, ciboriums, confessionals, choirs, all in the exquisite slenderness of Gothic tracery, and all of one venerable and time-worn dye, as if the incense of a myriad censers had steeped them in their spicy odours. The mass was chanting, and hundreds were on their knees about me, and not one without some trace that he had come in on his way to his daily toil. It was the hour of the *poor man's prayer*. The rich were asleep in their beds. The glorious roof over their heads, the costly and elaborated pillars against which they pressed their foreheads, the music and the priestly service, were, for that hour, theirs alone.

I seldom have felt the spirit of a place of worship so strong upon me.

The foundations of St. Etienne were laid seven hundred years ago. It has twice been partly burnt, and has been embellished in succession by nearly all the emperors of Germany. Among its many costly tombs, the most interesting is that of the hero Eugene of Savoy, erected by his niece, the Princess Therese, of Liechtenstein. There is also a vault in which it is said, in compliance with an old custom, the entrails of all the emperors are deposited.

Having marked thus much upon my tablets, I remembered the patient porter of my baggage, who had taken the opportunity to drop on his knees while I was gazing about, and having achieved his matins, was now waiting submissively till I was ready to proceed. A turn or two brought us to the hotel, where a bath and a breakfast soon restored me, and in an hour I was again on the way with a *valet de place*, to visit the tomb of the son of Napoleon.

He lies in the deep vaults of the capuchin convent, with eighty-four of the imperial family of Austria beside him. A monk answered our pull at the cloister-bell, and the valet translated my request into German. He opened the gate with a guttural "Yaw!" and lighting a wax candle at a lamp burning before the image of the Virgin, unlocked a massive brazen door at the end of the corridor, and led the way into the vault. The capuchin was as pale as marble, quite bald, though young, and with features which expressed, I thought, the subdued fierceness of a devil. He impatiently waved away the officious interpreter after a moment or two, and asked me if I understood Latin. Nothing could have been more striking than the whole scene. The immense bronze sarcophagi lay in long aisles behind railings and gates of iron, and as the long-robed monk strode on with his lamp through the darkness, pronouncing the name and title of each as he unlocked the door and struck it with his heavy key, he seemed to me, with his solemn pronunciation, like some mysterious being calling forth the imperial tenants to judgment. He appeared to have something of scorn in his manner as he looked on the splendid workmanship of the vast coffin, and pronounced the sounding titles of the ashes within. At that of the celebrated Empress Maria Theresa alone, he stopped to make a comment. It was a simple tribute to her virtues, and he uttered it slowly, as if he were merely musing to himself. He passed on to her husband, Francis the First, and then proceeded uninterruptedly till he came to a new copper coffin. It lay in a niche, beneath a tall, dim window, and the monk, merely pointing to the inscription, set down his lamp, and began to pace up and down the damp floor, with his head on his breast, as if it was a matter of course that here I was to be left awhile to my thoughts.

It was certainly the spot, if there is one in the world, to feel emotion. In the narrow enclosure on which my finger rested, lay the last hopes of Napoleon. The heart of the master-spirit of the world was bound up in these ashes. He was beautiful, accomplished, generous, brave. He was loved with a sort of idolatry by the nation with which he had passed his childhood. He had won all hearts. His death seemed impossible. There was a universal prayer that he might live, his inheritance of glory was so incalculable.

I read his epitaph. It was that of a private individual. It gave his name, and his father's and mother's; and then enumerated his virtues, with a commonplace regret for his early death. The monk took up his lamp and reascended to the cloister in silence. He shut the convent-door behind me, and the busy street seemed to me profane. How short a time does the most moving event interrupt the common current of life.

LETTER XII.

Vienna—Magnificence of the Emperor's Manège—The Young Queen of Hungary—The Palace—Hall of Curiosities, Jewelry, &c.—The Polytechnic School—Geometrical Figures described by the Vibrations of Musical Notes—Liberal Provision for the Public Institutions—Popularity of the Emperor.

I had quite forgotten, in packing up my little portmanteau to leave the ship, that I was coming so far north. Scarce a week ago, in the south of Italy, we were panting in linen jackets. I find myself shivering here, in a latitude five hundred miles north of Boston, with no remedy but exercise and an extra shirt, for a cold that would grace December.

It is amusing, sometimes, to abandon one's self to a *valet de place*. Compelled to resort to one from my ignorance of the German, I have fallen upon a dropsical fellow, with a Bardolph

nose, whose French is execrable, and whose selection of objects of curiosity is worthy of his appearance. His first point was the emperor's stables. We had walked a mile and a half to see them. Here were two or three hundred horses of all breeds, in a building that the emperor himself might live in, with a magnificent inner court for a *manège*, and a wilderness of grooms, dogs, and other appurtenances. I am as fond of a horse as most people, but with all Vienna before me, and little time to lose, I broke into the midst of the head-groom's pedigrees, and requested to be shown the way out. Monsieur Karl did not take the hint. We walked on a half mile, and stopped before another large building. "What is this?"—"The imperial carriage-house, Monseigneur." I was about turning on my heel and taking my liberty into my own hands, when the large door flew open, and the blaze of gilding from within turned me from my purpose. I thought I had seen the *ne plus ultra* of equipages at Rome. The imperial family of Austria ride in more style than his Holiness. The models are lighter and handsomer, while the gold and crimson is put on quite as resplendently. The most curious part of the show were ten or twelve state *traineaux* or sleighs. I can conceive nothing more brilliant than a turn-out of these magnificent structures upon the snow. They are built with aerial lightness, of gold and sable, with a seat fifteen or twenty feet from the ground, and are driven, with two or four horses, by the royal personage himself. The grace of their shape and the splendour of their gilded trappings are inconceivable to one who has never seen them.

Our way lay through the court of the imperial palace. A large crowd was collected round a carriage with four horses standing at the side-door. As we approached it, all hats flew off, and a beautiful woman, of perhaps twenty-eight, came down the steps, leading a handsome boy of two or three years. It was the young Queen of Hungary and her son. If I had seen such a face in a cottage *ornée* on the borders of an American lake, I should have thought it made for the spot.

We entered a door of the palace, at which stood a ferocious-looking Croat sentinel, near seven feet high. Three German travelling students had just been refused admittance. A little man appeared at the ring of the bell within, and after a preliminary explanation by my valet, probably a lie, he made a low bow, and invited me to enter. I waited a moment, and a permission was brought me to see the imperial treasury. Handing it to Karl, I requested him to get permission inserted for my three friends at the door. He accomplished it in the same incomprehensible manner in which he had obtained my own, and introducing them with the ill-disguised contempt of a valet for all men with dusty coats, we commenced the rounds of the curiosities together.

A large clock, facing us as we entered, was just striking. From either side of its base, like companies of gentlemen and ladies advancing to greet each other, appeared figures in the dress and semblance of the royal family of Austria, who remained a moment, and then retired, bowing themselves courteously out backward. It is a costly affair, presented by the landgrave of Hesse to Maria Theresa, in 1750.

After a succession of watches, snuff-boxes, necklaces, and jewels of every description, we came to the famous Florentine diamond, said to be the largest in the world. It was lost by a duke of Burgundy upon the battle-field of Granson, found by a soldier, who parted with it for five florins, sold again, and found its way at last to the royal treasury of Florence, whence it was brought to Vienna. Its weight is one hundred and thirty-nine and a half carats, and it is estimated at one million, forty-three thousand, three hundred and thirty-four florins. It looks like a lump of light. Enormous diamonds surround it, but it hangs among them like Hesperus among the stars.

The next side of the gallery is occupied by specimens of carved ivory. Many of them are

antique, and half of them are more beautiful than decent. There were two bas-reliefs among them by Raphael Donner, which were worth, to my eye, all the gems in the gallery. They were taken from Scripture, and represented the *Woman of Samaria at the well*, and *Hagar waiting for the death of her son*. No powers of elocution, no enhancement of poetry could bring those touching passages of the Bible so movingly to the heart. The latter particularly arrested me. The melancholy beauty of Hagar, sitting with her head bowed upon her knees, while her boy is lying a little way off, beneath a shrub of the desert, is a piece of unparalleled workmanship. It may well hang in the treasury of an emperor.

Miniatures of the royal family in their childhood, set in costly gems, massive plate curiously chased, services of gold, robes of diamonds, gem-hilted swords, dishes wrought of solid integral agates, and finally the crown and sceptre of Austria upon red velvet cushions, looking very much like their imitations on the stage, were among the world of splendours unfolded to our eyes. The Florentine diamond and the bas-reliefs by Raphael Donner were all I coveted. The beauty of the diamond was royal. It needed no imagination to feel its value. A savage would pick it up in the desert for a star dropped out of the sky. For the rest, the demand on my admiration fatigued me, and I was glad to escape with my dusty friends from the university, and exchange courtesies in the free air. One of them spoke English a little and called me "Mister Englishman," on bidding me adieu. I was afraid of a beer-shop scene in Vienna, and did not correct the mistake.

As we were going out of the court, four covered wagons, drawn each by four superb horses, dashed through the gate. I waited a moment to see what they contained. Thirty or forty servants in livery came out from the palace, and took from the wagons quantities of empty baskets carefully labelled with directions. They were from Schoenbrunn, where the emperor is at present residing with his court, and had come to market for the imperial kitchen. It should be a good dinner that requires sixteen such horses to carry to the cook.

It was the hungry hour of two, and I was still musing on the emperor's dinner, and admiring the anxious interest his servants took in their disposition of the baskets, when a blast of military music came to my ear. It was from the barracks of the imperial guard, and I stepped under the arch, and listened to them an hour. How gloriously they played! It was probably the finest band in Austria. I have heard much good music, but of its kind, this was like a new sensation to me. They stand, in playing, just under the window at which the emperor appears daily when in the city.

I have been indebted to Mr. Schwartz, the American consul at Vienna, for a very unusual degree of kindness. Among other polite attentions, he procured for me to-day an admission to the Polytechnic School—a favour granted with difficulty, except on the appointed days for public visits.

The Polytechnic School was established in 1816, by the present emperor. The building stands outside the rampart of the city, of elegant proportions, and about as large as all the buildings of Yale or Harvard College thrown into one. Its object is to promote instruction in the practical sciences, or, in other words, to give a practical education for the trades, commerce, or manufactures. It is divided into three departments. The first is preparatory, and the course occupies two years. The studies are religion and morals, elementary mathematics, natural history, geography, universal history, grammar, and "the German style," declamation, drawing, writing, and the French, Italian, and Bohemian languages. To enter this class, the boy must be thirteen years of age, and pays fifty cents per month.

The second course is commercial, and occupies one year. The studies are mercantile

correspondence, commercial law, mercantile arithmetic, the keeping of books, geography and history, as they relate to commerce, acquaintance with merchandise, &c. &c.

The third course lasts one year. The studies are chemistry as applicable to arts, and trades, the fermentation of woods, tannery, soap-making, dying, blanching, &c. &c.; also mechanism, practical geometry, civil architecture, hydraulics, and technology. The two last courses are given gratis.

The whole is under the direction of a principal, who has under him thirty professors and two or three guardians of apparatus.

We were taken first into a noble hall, lined with glass cases containing specimens of every article manufactured in the German dominions. From the finest silks, down to shoes, wigs, nails, and mechanics' tools, here were all the products of human labour. The variety was astonishing. Within the limits of a single room, the pupil is here made acquainted with every mechanic art known in his country.

The next hall was devoted to models. Here was every kind of bridge, fortification, lighthouse, dry dock, breakwater, canal-lock, &c. &c.; models of steamboats, of ships, and of churches, in every style of architecture. It was a little world.

We went thence to the chemical apartment. The servitor here, a man without education, has constructed all the apparatus. He is an old grey-headed man, of a keen German countenance, and great simplicity of manners. He takes great pride in having constructed the largest and most complete chemical apparatus—now in London. The one which he exhibited to us occupies the whole of an immense hall, and produces an electric discharge like the report of a pistol. The ordinary batteries in our universities are scarce a twentieth part as powerful.

After showing us a variety of experiments, the old man turned suddenly and asked us if we knew the geometrical figures described by the vibrations of musical notes. We confessed our ignorance, and he produced a pane of glass covered with black sand. He then took a fiddle bow, and holding the glass horizontally, drew it downward against the edge at a peculiar angle. The sand flew as if it had been bewitched, and took the shape of a perfect square. He asked us to name a figure. We named a circle. Another careful draw of the bow, and the sand flew into a circle, with scarce a particle out of its perfect curve. Twenty times he repeated the experiment, and with the most complicated figures drawn on paper. He had reduced it to an art. It would have hung him for a magician a century ago.

However one condemns the policy of Austria with respect to her subject provinces and the rest of Europe, it is impossible not to be struck with her liberal provision for her own immediate people. The public institutions of all kinds in Vienna are allowed to be the finest and most liberally endowed on the continent. Her hospitals, prisons, houses of industry, and schools, are on an imperial scale of munificence. The emperor himself is a father to his subjects, and every tongue blesses him. Napoleon envied him their affection, it is said, and certainly no monarch could be more universally beloved.

Among the institutions of Vienna are two which are peculiar. One is a *maison d'accouchement*, into which any female can enter veiled, remain till after the period of her labour, and depart unknown, leaving her child in the care of the institution, which rears it as a foundling. Its object is a benevolent prevention of infanticide.

The other is a private penitentiary, to which the fathers of respectable families can send for reformation children they are unable to govern. The name is kept a secret, and the culprits are returned to their families after a proper time, punished without disgrace. Pride of character is thus preserved, while the delinquent is firmly corrected.

LETTER XIII.

Vienna—Palaces and Gardens—Mosaic Copy of Da Vinci's "Last Supper"—Collection of Warlike Antiquities; Scanderburg's Sword, Montezuma's Tomahawk, Relics of the Crusaders, Warriors in Armour, the Farmer of Augsburg—Room of Portraits of Celebrated Individuals—Gold Busts of Jupiter and Juno—The Glacis, full of Gardens, the General Resort of the People—Universal Spirit of Enjoyment—Simplicity and Confidence in the Manners of the Viennese—Baden.

At the foot of a hill in one of the beautiful suburbs of Vienna, stands a noble palace, called the Lower Belvidere. On the summit of the hill stands another, equally magnificent, called the Upper Belvidere, and between the two extend broad and princely gardens, open to the public.

On the lower floor of the entrance-hall in the former palace, lies the copy, in mosaic, of Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper," done at Napoleon's order. Though supposed to be the finest piece of mosaic in the world, it is so large that they have never found a place for it. A temporary balcony has been erected on one side of the room, and the spectator mounts nearly to the ceiling to get a fair position for looking down upon it. That unrivalled picture, now going to decay in the convent at Milan, will probably depend upon this copy for its name with posterity. The expression in the faces of the apostles is as accurately preserved as in the admirable engraving of Morghen.

The remaining halls in the palace are occupied by a grand collection of antiquities, principally of a warlike character. When I read in my old worm-eaten Burton, of "Scanderburg's strength," I never thought to see his sword. It stands here against the wall, along straight weapon with a cross hilt, which few men could heave to their shoulders. The tomahawk of poor Montezuma hangs near it. It was presented to the emperor by the king of Spain. It is of a dark granite, and polished very beautifully. What a singular curiosity to find in Austria!

The windows are draped with flags dropping in pieces with age. This, so in tatters, was renowned in the crusades. It was carried to the Holy Land and brought back by the archduke Ferdinand.

A hundred warriors in bright armour stand around the hall. Their visors are down, their swords in their hands, their feet planted for a spring. One can scarce believe there are no men in them. The name of some renowned soldier is attached to each. This was the armour of the cruel Visconti of Milan—that of Duke Alba of Florence—both costly suits, beautifully inlaid with gold. In the centre of the room stands a gigantic fellow in full armour, with a sword on his thigh and a beam in his right hand. It is the shell of the famous farmer of Augsburg, who was in the service of one of the emperors. He was over eight feet in height, and limbed in proportion. How near such relics bring history! With what increased facility one pictures the warrior to his fancy, seeing his sword, and hearing the very rattle of his armour. Yet it puts one into Hamlet's vein to see a contemptible valet lay his hand with impunity on the armed shoulder, shaking the joints that once belted the soul of a Visconti! I turned, in leaving the room, to take a second look at the flag of the crusade. It had floated, perhaps, over the helmet of Cœur de Lion. Saladin may have had it in his eye, assaulting the Christian camp with his pagans.

In the next room hung fifty or sixty portraits of celebrated individuals, presented in their time to the emperors of Austria. There was one of Mary of Scotland. It is a face of superlative loveliness, taken with a careless and most bewitching half smile, and yet not without the look of royalty, which one traces in all the pictures of the unfortunate queen. One of the emperors of

Germany married Philippina, a farmer's daughter, and here is her portrait. It is done in the prim old style of the middle ages, but the face is full of character. Her husband's portrait hangs beside it, and she looks more born for an emperor than he.

Hall after hall followed, of costly curiosities. A volume would not describe them. Two gold busts of Jupiter and Juno, by Benvenuto Cellini, attracted my attention particularly. They were very beautiful, but I would copy them in bronze, and coin "the thunderer and his queen," were they mine.

Admiration is the most exhausting thing in the world. The servitor opened a gate leading into the gardens of the palace, that we might mount to the Upper Belvidere, which contains the imperial gallery of paintings. But I had no more strength. I could have dug in the field till dinner-time—but to be astonished more than three hours without respite is beyond me. I took a stroll in the garden. How delightfully the unmeaning beauty of a fountain refreshes one after this inward fatigue. I walked on, up one alley and down another, happy in finding nothing that surprised me, or worked upon my imagination, or bothered my historical recollections, or called upon my worn-out superlatives for expression. I fervently hoped not to have another new sensation till after dinner.

Vienna is an immense city (two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants), but its heart only is walled in. You may walk from gate to gate in twenty minutes. In leaving the walls you come upon a feature of the city which distinguishes it from every other in Europe. Its rampart is encircled by an open park (called the Glacis), a quarter of a mile in width and perhaps three miles in circuit, which is, in fact, in the centre of Vienna. The streets commence again on the other side of it, and on going from one part of the city to another, you constantly cross this lovely belt of verdure, which girds her heart like a cestus of health. The top of the rampart itself is planted with trees, and, commanding beautiful views in every direction, it is generally thronged with people. (It was a favourite walk of the Duke of Reichstadt.) Between this and the Glacis lies a deep trench, crossed by draw-bridges at every gate, the bottom of which is cultivated prettily as a flower garden. Altogether Vienna is a beautiful city. Paris may have single views about the Tuileries that are finer than anything of the same kind here, but this capital of western Europe, as a whole, is quite the most imposing city I have seen.

The Glacis is full of gardens. I requested my disagreeable necessity of a valet, this afternoon, to take me to two or three of the most general resorts of the people. We passed out by one of the city gates, five minutes' walk from the hotel, and entered immediately into a crowd of people, sauntering up and down under the alleys of the Glacis. A little farther on we found a fanciful building, buried in trees, and occupied as a summer café. In a little circular temple in front was stationed a band of music, and around it for a considerable distance were placed small tables filled just now with elegantly dressed people, eating ices, or drinking coffee. It was in every respect like a private *fête champêtre*. I wandered about for an hour, expecting involuntarily to meet some acquaintance—there was such a look of kindness and unreserve throughout. It is a desolate feeling to be alone in such a crowd.

We jumped into a carriage and drove round the Glacis for a mile, passing everywhere crowds of people idling leisurely along and evidently out for pleasure. We stopped before a superb façade, near one of the gates of the city. It was the entrance to the Volksgarten. We entered in front of a fountain, and turning up a path to the left, found our way almost impeded by another crowd. A semi circular building, with a range of columns in front encircling a stand for a band of music, was surrounded by perhaps two or three thousand people. Small tables and seats under trees, were spread in every direction within reach of the music. The band

played charmingly. Waiters in white jackets and aprons were running to and fro, receiving and obeying orders for refreshments, and here again all seemed abandoned to one spirit of enjoyment. I had thought we must have left all Vienna at the other garden. I wondered how so many people could be spared from their occupations and families. It was no holiday. "It is always as gay in fair weather," said Karl.

A little back into the garden stands a beautiful little structure, on the model of the temple of Theseus in Greece. It was built for Canova's group of "Theseus and the Centaur," bought by the emperor. I had seen copies of it in Rome, but was of course much more struck with the original. It is a noble piece of sculpture.

Still farther back, on the rise of a mount, stood another fanciful café, with another band of music—and another crowd! After we had walked around it, my man was hurrying me away. "You have not seen the Augarten," said he. It stands upon a little green island in the Danube, and is more extensive than either of the others. But I was content where I was; and dismissing my Asmodeus, I determined to spend the evening wandering about in the crowds alone. The sun went down, the lamps were lit, the alleys were illuminated, the crowd increased, and the emperor himself could not have given a gayer evening's entertainment.

Vienna has the reputation of being the most profligate capital in Europe. Perhaps it is so. There is certainly, even to a stranger, no lack of temptation to every species of pleasure. But there is, besides, a degree of simplicity and confidence in the manners of the Viennese which I had believed peculiar to America, and inconsistent with the state of society in Europe. In the most public resorts, and at all hours of the day and evening, modest and respectable young women of the middle classes walk alone perfectly secure from molestation. They sit under the trees in these public gardens, eat ices at the cafés, walk home unattended, and no one seems to dream of impropriety. Whole families, too, spend the afternoon upon a seat in a thronged place of resort, their children playing about them, the father reading, and the mother sewing or knitting, quite unconscious of observation. The lower and middle classes live all summer, I am told, out of doors. It is never oppressively warm in this latitude, and their houses are deserted after three or four o'clock in the afternoon, and the whole population pours out to the different gardens on the Glacis, where till midnight, they seem perfectly happy in the enjoyment of the innocent and unexpensive pleasures which a wise government has provided for them.

The nobles and richer class pass their summer in the circle of rural villages near the city. They are nested about on the hills, and crowded with small and lovely rural villas more like the neighbourhood of Boston than anything I have seen in Europe.

Baden, where the Emperor passes much of his time, is called "the miniature Switzerland." Its baths are excellent, its hills are cut into retired and charming walks, and from June till September it is one of the gayest of watering-places. It is about a two hours' drive from the city, and omnibuses at a very low rate, run between at all times of the day. The Austrians seldom travel, and the reason is evident. They have everything for which others travel, at home.

LETTER XIV.

The red-nosed German led on through the crowded Graben, jostling aside the Parisian-looking lady and her handsome Hungarian cavalier, the phlegmatic smoker and the bearded Turk, alike. We passed the imperial guard, the city gate, the lofty bridge over the trench (casting a look below at the flower-garden laid out in “the ditch” which encircles the wall), and entered upon the lovely Glacis—one step from the crowded street to the fresh greenness of a park.

Would you believe, as you walk up this shaded alley, that you are in the heart of the city still?

The Glacis is crossed, with its groups of fair children and shy maids, its creeping invalids, its solitude-seeking lovers, and its idling soldiers, and we again enter the crowded street. A half hour more, and the throng thins again, the country opens, and here you are, in front of the palace of Liechtenstein, the first noble of Austria. A modern building, of beautiful and light architecture, rises from its clustering trees: servants in handsome livery hang about the gates and lean against the pillars of the portico, and with an explanation from my lying valet, who evidently makes me out an ambassador at least, by the ceremony with which I am received, a grey servitor makes his appearance and opens the immense glass door leading from the side of the court.

One should step gingerly on the polished marble of this superb staircase! It opens at once into a lofty hall, the ceiling of which is painted in fresco by an Italian master. It is a room of noble proportions. Few churches in America are larger, and yet it seems in keeping with the style of the palace, the staircase—everything but the creature meant to inhabit it.

How different are the moods in which one sees pictures! To-day I am in the humour to give it to the painter’s delusion. The scene is real. Asmodeus is at my elbow, and I am witched from spot to spot, invisible myself, gazing on the varied scenes revealed only to the inspired vision of genius.

A landscape opens.^[2] It is one of the woody recesses of Lake Nervi, at the very edge of “Dian’s Mirror.” The huntress queen is bathing with her nymphs. The sandal is half laced over an ankle that seems fit for nothing else than to sustain a goddess, when casting her eye on the lovely troop emerging from the water, she sees the unfortunate Calista surrounded by her astonished sisters, and fainting with shame. Poor Calista! one’s heart pleads for her. But how expressive is the cold condemning look in the beautiful face of her mistress queen! Even the dogs have started from their reclining position on the grass, and stand gazing at the unfortunate, wondering at the silent astonishment of the virgin troop. Pardon her, imperial Dian!

Come to the baptism of a child! It is a vision of Guido Reni’s.^[3] A young mother, apparently scarce sixteen, has brought her first child to the altar. She kneels with it in her arms, looking earnestly into the face of the priest while he sprinkles the water on its pure forehead, and pronounces the words of consecration. It is a most lovely countenance, made lovelier by the holy feeling in her heart. Her eyes are moist, her throat swells with emotion—my own sight dims while I gaze upon her. We have intruded upon one of the most holy moments of nature. A band of girls, sisters by the resemblance, have accompanied the young mother, and stand, with love and wonder in their eyes, gazing on the face of the child. How strangely the mingled thoughts, crowding through their minds, are expressed in their excited features. It is a scene worthy of an audience of angels.

We have surprised Giorgione’s wife (the “Flora” of Titian, the “love in life” of Byron) looking at a sketch by her husband. It stands on his easel, outlined in crayons, and represents Lucretia the moment before she plunges the dagger into her bosom. She was passing through his studio, and you see by the half suspended foot, that she stopped but for a momentary

glance, and has forgotten herself in thoughts that have risen unaware. The head of Lucretia resembles her own, and she is wondering what Giorgione thought while he drew it. Did he resemble her to the Roman's wife in virtue as well as in feature? There is an embarrassment in the expression of her face, as if she doubted he had drawn it half in mischief. We will leave the lovely Venetian to her thoughts. When she sits again to Titian, it will be with a colder modesty.

Hoogstraeten, a Dutch painter, conjures up a scene for you. It is an old man, who has thrust his head through a prison gate, and is looking into the street with the listless patience and curiosity of one whom habit has reconciled to his situation. His beard is neglected, his hair is slightly grizzled, and on his head sits a shabby fur cap, that has evidently shared all his imprisonment, and is quite past any pride of appearance. What a vacant face! How perfectly he seems to look upon the street below, as upon something with which he has nothing more to do. There is no anxiety to get out, in its expression. He is past that. He looks at the playing children, and watches the zigzag trot of an idle dog with the quiet apathy of one who can find nothing better to help off the hour. It is a picture of stolid, contented, unthinking misery.

Look at this boy, standing impatiently on one foot at his mother's knee, while she pares an apple for him! With what an amused and playful love she listens to his hurrying entreaties, stealing a glance at him as he pleads, with a deeper feeling than he will be able to comprehend for years? It is one of the commonest scenes in life, yet how pregnant with speculation!

On—on—what an endless gallery! I have seen twelve rooms, with forty or fifty pictures in each, and there are thirteen halls more! The delusion begins to fade. These are *pictures* merely. Beautiful ones, however! If language could convey to your eye the impressions that this waste and wealth of beauty have conveyed to mine, I would write of every picture. There is not an indifferent one here. All Italy together has not so many works by the Flemish masters as are contained in this single gallery—certainly none so fine. A most princely fortune for many generations must have been devoted to its purchase.

I have seen seven or eight things in all Italy, by Corregio. They were the gems of the galleries in which they exist, but always small, and seemed to me to want a certain finish. Here is a Corregio, a large picture, and no miniature ever had so elaborate a beauty. It melts into the eye. It is a conception of female beauty so very extraordinary, that it seems to me it must become, in the mind of every one who sees it, the model and the standard of all loveliness. It is a nude Venus, sitting lost in thought, with Cupid asleep in her lap. She is in the sacred retirement of solitude, and the painter has thrown into her attitude and expression so speaking an unconsciousness of all presence, that you feel like a daring intruder while you gaze upon the picture. Surely such softness of colouring, such faultless proportions, such subdued and yet eloquent richness of tint in the skin, was never before attained by mortal pencil. I am here, some five thousand miles from America, yet would I have made the voyage but to raise my standard of beauty by this ravishing image of woman.

In the circle of Italian galleries, one finds less of female beauty, both in degree and in variety, than his anticipations had promised. Three or four heads at the most, of the many hundreds that he sees, are imprinted in his memory, and serve as standards in his future observations. Even when standing before the most celebrated pictures, one often returns to recollections of living beauty in his own country, by which the most glowing head of Titian or the Veronese suffer in comparison. In my own experience this has been often true, and it is perhaps the only thing in which my imagination of foreign wonders was too fervent. To this Venus of Corregio's, however, I unhesitatingly submit all knowledge, all conception even, of female loveliness. I have seen nothing in life, imagined nothing from the description of poets,

that is any way comparable to it. It is matchless.

In one of the last rooms the servitor unlocked two handsome cases, and showed me, with a great deal of circumstance, two heads by Denner. They were an old man and his wife—two hale, temperate, good old country gossips—but so curiously finished! Every pore was painted. You counted the stiff stumps of the good man's beard as you might those of a living person, till you were tired. Every wrinkle looked as if a month had been spent in elaborating it. The man said they were extremely valuable, and I certainly never saw anything more curiously and perhaps uselessly wrought.

Near them was a capital picture of a drunken fellow, sitting by himself, and laughing heartily at his own performance on the pipe. It was irresistible, and I joined in the laugh till the long suite of halls rung again.

Landscapes by Van Delen—such as I have seen engravings of in America, and sighed over as unreal—the skies, the temples, the water, the soft mountains, the distant ruins, seemed so like the beauty of a dream. Here, they recall to me even lovelier scenes in Italy—atmospheres richer than the painter's pallet can imitate, and ruins and temples whose ivy-grown and melancholy grandeur are but feebly copied at the best.

Come Karl! I am bewildered with these pictures. You have twenty such galleries in Vienna, you say! I have seen enough for to-day, however, and we will save the Belvidere till to-morrow. Here! pay the servitor, and the footman, and the porter, and let us get into the open air. How common look your Viennese after the celestial images we have left behind! And, truly, this is the curse of refinement. The faces we should have loved else, look dull! The forms that were graceful before, move somehow heavily. I have entered a gallery ere now, thinking well of a face that accompanied me, and I have learned indifference to it, by sheer comparison, before coming away.

We return through the Kohlmarket, one of the most fashionable streets of Vienna. It is like a fancy ball. Hungarians, Poles, Croats, Wallachians, Jews, Moldavians, Greeks, Turks, all dressed in their national and striking costumes, promenade up and down, smoking all, and none exciting the slightest observation. Every third window is a pipe shop, and they show, by their splendour and variety, the expensiveness of the passion. Some of them are marked “two hundred dollars.” The streets reek with tobacco smoke. You never catch a breath of untainted air within the Glacis. Your hotel, your café, your coach, your friend, are all redolent of the same disgusting odour.

[2] By Franceschini. He passed his life with the Prince Liechtenstein, and his pictures are found only in this collection. He is a delicious painter, full of poetry, with the one fault of too voluptuous a style.

[3] One of the loveliest pictures that divine painter ever drew.

LETTER XV.

The Palace of Schoenbrunn—Hietzing, the Summer Retreat of the Wealthy Viennese—Country-House of the American Consul—Specimen of Pure Domestic Happiness in a German Family—Splendid Village Ball—

Drove to Schoenbrunn. It is a princely palace, some three miles from the city, occupied at present by the emperor and his court. Napoleon resided here during his visit to Vienna, and here his son died—the two circumstances which alone make it worth much trouble to see. The afternoon was too cold to hope to meet the emperor in the grounds, and being quite satisfied with drapery and modern paintings, I contented myself with having driven through the court, and kept on to Hietzing.

This is a small village of country-seats within an hour's drive of the city—another Jamaica-Plains, or Dorchester in the neighbourhood of Boston. It is the summer retreat of most of the rank and fashion of Vienna. The American consul has here a charming country-house, buried in trees, where the few of our countrymen who travel to Austria find the most hospitable of welcomes. A bachelor friend of mine from New York is domesticated in the village with a German family. I was struck with the Americanism of their manners. The husband and wife, a female relative and an intimate friend of the family, were sitting in the garden, engaged in grave, quiet, sensible conversation. They had passed the afternoon together. Their manners were affectionate to each other, but serious and respectful. When I entered, they received me with kindness, and the conversation was politely changed to French, which they all spoke fluently. Topics were started, in which it was supposed I would be interested, and altogether the scene was one of the simplest and purest domestic happiness. This seems to you, I daresay, like the description of a very common thing, but I have not seen such a one before since I left my country. It is the first family I have found in two years' travel who lived in, and seemed sufficient for, themselves. It came over me with a kind of feeling of refreshment.

In the evening there was a ball at a public room in the village. It was built in the rear of a café, to which we paid about thirty cents for entrance. I was not prepared for the splendour with which it was got up. The hall was very large and of beautiful proportions, built like the interior of a temple, with columns on the four sides. A partition of glass divided it from a supper room equally large, in which were set out perhaps fifty tables, furnished with a *carte*, from which each person ordered his supper when he wished it, after the fashion of a restaurant. The best band in Vienna filled the orchestra, led by the celebrated Strauss, who has been honoured for his skill with presents from half the monarchs of Europe.

The ladies entered, dressed in perfect taste, *à la Parisienne*, but the gentlemen (hear it, Basil Hall and Mrs. Trollope!) came in frock coats and boots, and danced with their hats on! It was a public ball, and there was, of course, a great mixture of society; but I was assured that it was attended constantly by the most respectable people of the village, and was as respectable as anything of the kind in the middle classes. There were, certainly, many ladies in the company, of elegant manners and appearance, and among the gentlemen I recognised two *attachés* to the French embassy, whom I had known in Paris, and several Austrian gentlemen of rank were pointed out to me among the dancers. The galopade and the waltz were the only dances, and dirty boots and hats to the contrary notwithstanding, it was the best waltzing I ever saw. They danced with a *soul*.

The best part of it was the *supper*. They danced and eat—danced and eat, the evening through. It was quite the more important entertainment of the two. The most delicate ladies present returned three and four times to the supper, ordering fried chicken, salads, cold meats, and *beer*, again and again, as if every waltz created a fresh appetite. The bill was called for, the ladies assisted in making the change, the tankard was drained, and off they strolled to the ball-

room to engage with renewed spirit in the dance. And these, positively, were ladies who, in dress, manners, and modest demeanour, might pass uncriticised in any society in the world! Their husbands and brothers attended them, and no freedom was attempted, and I am sure it would not have been permitted even to speak to a lady without a formal introduction.

We left most of the company supping at a late hour, and I drove into the city, amused with the ball, and reconciled to any or all of the manners which travellers in America find so peculiarly entertaining.

These cold winds from the Danube have given me a rheumatism. I was almost reconciled to it this morning however, by a curtain-scene which I should have missed but for its annoyance. I had been driven out of my bed at daylight, and was walking my room between the door and the window, when a violent knocking in the street below arrested my attention. A respectable family occupies the house opposite, consisting of a father and mother and three daughters, the least attractive of whom has a lover. I cannot well avoid observing them whenever I am in my room, for every house in Vienna has a leaning cushion on the window for the elbows, and the ladies of all classes are upon them the greater part of the day. A handsome carriage, servants in livery, and other circumstances, leave no doubt in my mind that my neighbours are rather of the better class.

The lover stood at the street door with a cloak on his arm, and a man at his side with his portmanteau. He was going on a journey, and had come to take leave of his mistress. He was let in by a gaping servant, who looked rather astonished at the hour he had chosen for his visit, but the drawing-room windows were soon thrown open, and the lady made her appearance with her hair in papers, and other marks of a hasty toilet. My room is upon the same floor, and as I paced to and fro, the narrowness of the street in a manner forced them upon my observation. The scene was a very violent one, and the lady's tears flowed without restraint. After twenty partings at least, the lover scarce getting to the door before he returned to take another embrace, he finally made his exit, and the lady threw herself on a sofa and hid her face—for five minutes! I had begun to feel for her, although her swollen eyes added very unnecessarily to her usual plainness, when she rose and rang the bell. The servant appeared and disappeared, and in a few minutes returned with a *ham, a loaf of bread, and a mug of beer?* and down sets my sentimental miss and consoles the agony of parting with a meal that I would venture to substitute in quantity for any working man's lunch.

I went to bed and rose at nine, and she was sitting at breakfast with the rest of the family, playing as good a knife and fork as her sisters, though, I must admit, with an expression of sincere melancholy in her countenance.

The scene, I am told by my friend the consul, was perfectly German. They eat a great deal, he says, in affliction. The poet writes:—

“They are the *silent* griefs which cut the heart-strings.”

For *silent* read *hungry*.

The Upper Belvidere, a palace containing eighteen large rooms, filled with pictures. This is the imperial gallery and the first in Austria. How can I give you an idea of perhaps five hundred masterpieces you see here now, and by whom Italy has been stripped. They have bought up all Flanders, one would think, too. In one room here are twenty-eight superb Vandykes. Austria, in fact, has been growing rich while every other nation on the continent has been growing poor,

and she has purchased the treasures of half the world at a discount.^[4]

It is wearisome writing of pictures, one's language is so limited. I must mention one or two in this collection, however, and I will let you off entirely on the Esterhazy, which is nearly as fine.

"Cleopatra dying." She is represented younger than usual, and with a more fragile and less queenly style of beauty than is common. It is a fair slight creature of seventeen, who looks made to depend for her very breath upon affection, and is dying of a broken heart. It is painted with great feeling, and with a soft and delightful tone of colour which is peculiar to the artist. It is the third of Guido Cagnacci's pictures that I have seen. One was the gem of a gallery at Bologna, and was bought last summer by Mr. Cabot of Boston.

"The wife of Potiphar" is usually represented as a woman of middle age, with a full, voluptuous person. She is so drawn, I remember, in the famous picture in the Barberini Palace at Rome, said to be the most expressive thing of its kind in the world. Here is a painting less dangerously expressive of passion but full of beauty. She is eighteen at the most, fair, delicate, and struggles with the slender boy, who seems scarce older than herself, more like a sister from whom a mischievous brother has stolen something in sport. Her partly disclosed figure has all the incomplete slowness of a girl. The handsome features of Joseph express more embarrassment than anger. The habitual courtesy to his lovely mistress is still there, his glance is just averted from the snowy bosom toward which he is drawn, but in the firmly curved lip the sense of duty sits clearly defined, and evidently will triumph. I have forgotten the painter's name. His model must have been some innocent girl whose modest beauty led him away from his subject. Called by another name the picture were perfect.

A portrait of Count Wallenstein, by Vandyke. It looks a *man*, in the fullest sense of the word. The pendant to it is the Countess Turenne, and she is a woman he might well have loved—calm, lofty, and pure. They are pictures, I should think, would have an influence on the character of those who saw them habitually.

Here is a curious picture by Schnoer—"Mephistopheles tempting Faust." The scholar sits at his table, with a black letter volume open before him, and apparatus of all descriptions around. The devil has entered in the midst of his speculations, dressed in black like a professor, and stands waiting the decision of Faust, who gazes intently on the manuscript held in his hand. His fingers are clenched, his eyes start from his head, his feet are braced, and the devil eyes him with a side glance, in which malignity and satisfaction are admirably mingled. The features of Faust are emaciated, and show the agitation of his soul very powerfully. The points of his compasses, globes, and instruments emit electric sparks toward the infernal visitor; his lamp burns blue, and the picture altogether has the most diabolical effect. It is quite a large painting, and just below, by the same artist, hangs a small, simple, sweet Madonna. It is a singular contrast in subjects by the same hand.

A portrait of the Princess Esterhazy, by Angelica Kauffman—a beautiful woman, painted in the pure, touching style of that interesting artist.

Then comes a "Cleopatra dropping the pearl into the cup." How often, and how variously, and how admirably always, the Egyptian queen is painted! I never have seen an indifferent one. In this picture the painter seems to have lavished all he could conceive of female beauty upon his subject. She is a glorious creature. It reminds me of her own proud description of herself, when she is reproaching Antony to one of her maids, in "The False One" of Beaumont and Fletcher:—

“To prefer

The lustre of a little trash, Arsinoë,
Before the *life of love and soul of beauty!*”

I have marked a great many pictures in this collection I cannot describe without wearying you, yet I feel unwilling to let them go by. A female, representing Religion, feeding a dove from a cup, a most lovely thing by Guido; portraits of Gerard Douw and Rembrandt, by themselves; Rubens’ children, a boy and girl ten or twelve years of age, one of the most finished paintings I ever saw, and entirely free from the common dropsical style of colouring of this artist; another portrait of Giorgione’s wife, the fiftieth that I have seen, at least, yet a face of which one would never become weary; a glowing landscape by Fischer, the first by this celebrated artist I have met; and last (for this is mere catalogue-making), a large picture representing the “Sitting of the English Parliament” in the time of Pitt. It contains about a hundred portraits, among which those of Pitt and Fox are admirable. The great Prime-Minister stands speaking in the foreground, and Fox sits on the opposite side of the House listening attentively with half a smile on his features. It is a curious picture to find in Vienna.

One thing more, however—a Venus, by Lampi. It kept me a great while before it. She lies asleep on a rich couch, and, apparently in her dream, is pressing a rose to her bosom, while one delicate foot, carelessly thrown back, is half imbedded in a superb cushion supporting a crown and sceptre. It is a lie, by all experience. The moral is false, but the picture is delicious.

[4] Besides the three galleries of the Belvidere, Leichstenstein, and Esterhazy, which contain as many choice masters as Rome and Florence together, the guide-book refers the traveller to *sixty-four* private galleries of oil paintings, well worth his attention, and to *twenty-five* private collections of engravings and antiquities. We shall soon be obliged to go to Vienna, to study the arts, at this rate. They have only no sculpture.

LETTER XVI.

Departure from Vienna—The Eil-Wagon—Motley quality of the passengers—Thunderstorm in the Mountains of Styria—Trieste—Short beds of the Germans—Grotto of Adelsburgh—Curious Ball-Room in the Cavern—Nautical preparations for a Dance on board the “United States” swept away by the Bora—Its successful termination.

I left Vienna at daylight in a diligence nearly as capacious as a steamboat—inaptly called the *eil-wagon*. A Friuli count, with a pair of cavalry moustaches, his wife, a pretty Viennese of eighteen, scarce married a year, two fashionable-looking young Russians, an Austrian midshipman, a fat Gratz lawyer, a trader from the Danube, and a young Bavarian student, going to seek his fortune in Egypt, were my companions. The social habits of continental travellers had given me thus much information by the end of the first post.

We drove on with German regularity, three days and three nights, eating four meals a-day (and very good ones), and improving hourly in our acquaintance. The Russians spoke all our languages. The Friuliese and the Bavarian spoke everything but English, and the lady, the

trader, and the Gratz avocat, were confined to their vernacular. It was a pretty idea of Babel when the conversation became general.

We were coursing the bank of a river, in one of the romantic passes of the mountains of Styria, with a dark thunder-storm gathering on the summit of a crag overhanging us. I was pointing out to one of my companions a noble ruin of a castle seated very loftily on the edge of one of the precipices, when a streak of the most vivid lightning shot straight upon the northern-most turret, and the moment after several large masses rolled slowly down the mountain-side. It was so like the scenery in a play, that I looked at my companion with half a doubt that it was some optical delusion. It reminded me of some of Martin's engravings. The sublime is so well imitated in our day that one is less surprised than he would suppose when nature produces the reality.

The night was very beautiful when we reached the summit of the mountain above Trieste. The new moon silvered the little curved bay below like a polished shield, and right in the path of its beams lay the two frigates like a painting. I must confess that the comfortable cot swinging in the ward-room of the "United States" was the prominent thought in my mind as I gazed upon the scene. The fatigue of three days and nights' hard driving had dimmed my eye for the picturesque. Leaving my companions to the short beds^[5] and narrow coverlets of a German hotel, I jumped into the first boat at the pier, and in a few minutes was alongside the ship. How musical is the hail of a sentry in one's native tongue, after a short habitation to the jargon of foreign languages! "Boat ahoy!" It made my heart leap. The officers had just returned from Venice, some over land by the Friuli, and some by the steamer through the gulf, and were sitting round the table laughing with professional merriment over their various adventures. It was getting back to country and friends and home.

I accompanied the commodore's family yesterday in a visit to the Grotto of Adelsburgh. It is about thirty miles back into the Friuli mountains, near the province of Cariola. We arrived at the nearest tavern at three in the afternoon, and subscribing our names upon the magistrate's books, took four guides and the requisite number of torches, and started on foot. A half hour's walk brought us to a large rushing stream, which, after turning a mill, disappeared with violence into the mouth of a broad cavern, sunk in the base of a mountain. An iron gate opened on the nearest side, and lighting our torches, we received an addition of half a dozen men to our party of guides, and entered. We descended for ten or fifteen minutes, through a capacious gallery of rock, up to the ankles in mud, and feeling continually the drippings exuding from the roof, till by the echoing murmurs of dashing water we found ourselves approaching the bed of a subterraneous river. We soon emerged in a vast cavern, whose height, though we had twenty torches, was lost in the darkness. The river rushed dimly below us, at the depth of perhaps fifty feet, partially illuminated by a row of lamps, hung on a slight wooden bridge by which we were to cross to the opposite side.

We descended by a long flight of artificial stairs, and stood upon the bridge. The wildness of the scene is indescribable. A lamp or two glimmered faintly from the lofty parapet from which we had descended; the depth and breadth of the surrounding cave could only be measured by the distance of the echoes of the waters, and beneath us leaped and foamed a dark river, which sprang from its invisible channel, danced a moment in the faint light of our lamps, and was lost again instantly in darkness. It brought with it, from the green fields through which it had come, a current of soft warm air, peculiarly delightful after the chilliness of the other parts of the cavern; there was a smell of new-mown hay in it which seemed lost in the tartarean blackness

around.

Our guides led on, and we mounted a long staircase on the opposite side of the bridge. At the head of it stood a kind of monument, engraved with the name of the emperor of Austria, by whose munificence the staircase had been cut and the conveniences for strangers provided. We turned hence to the right, and entered a long succession of natural corridors, roofed with stalactites, with a floor of rock and mud, and so even and wide that the lady under my protection had seldom occasion to leave my arm. In the narrowest part of it, the stalactites formed a sort of reversed grove, with the roots in the roof. They were of a snowy white, and sparkled brilliantly in the light of the torches. One or two had reached the floor, and formed slender and beautiful sparry columns, upon which the names of hundreds of visitors were written in pencil.

The spars grew white as we proceeded, and we were constantly emerging into large halls of the size of handsome drawing-rooms, whose glittering roofs, and sides lined with fantastic columns, seemed like the brilliant frost-work of a crystallised cavern of ice. Some of the accidental formations of the stalagmites were very curious. One large area was filled with them, of the height of small plants. It was called by the guides the "English Garden." At the head of another saloon, stood a throne, with a stalactite canopy above it, so like the work of art, that it seemed as if the sculptor had but left the finishing undone.

We returned part of the way we had come, and took another branch of the grotto, a little more on the descent. A sign above informed us that it was the "road to the infernal regions." We walked on an hour at a quick pace, stopping here and there to observe the oddity of the formations. In one place, the stalactites had enclosed a room, leaving only small openings between the columns, precisely like the grating of a prison. In another, the ceiling lifted out of the reach of torch-light, and far above us we heard the deep-toned beat as upon a muffled bell. It was a thin circular sheet of spar, called "the bell," to which one of the guides had mounted, striking upon it with a billet of wood.

We came after a while to a deeper descent, which opened into a magnificent and spacious hall. It is called "the ball-room," and used as such once a year, on the occasion of a certain Illyrian festa. The floor has been cleared of stalagmites, the roof and sides are ornamented beyond all art with glittering spars, a natural gallery with a balustrade of stalactites contains the orchestra, and side-rooms are all around where supper might be laid, and dressing-rooms offered in the style of a palace. I can imagine nothing more magnificent than such a scene. A literal description of it even would read like a fairy tale.

A little farther on, we came to a perfect representation of a waterfall. The impregnated water had fallen on a declivity, and with a slightly ferruginous tinge of yellow, poured over in the most natural resemblance to a cascade after a rain. We proceeded for ten or fifteen minutes, and found a small room like a chapel, with a pulpit, in which stood one of the guides, who gave us, as we stood beneath, an Illyrian exhortation. There was a sounding-board above, and I have seen pulpits in old gothic churches that seemed at a first glance to have less method in their architecture. The last thing we reached was the most beautiful. From the cornice of a long gallery, hung a thin, translucent sheet of spar, in the graceful and waving folds of a curtain; with a lamp behind, the hand could be seen through any part of it. It was perhaps twenty feet in length, and hung five or six feet down from the roof of the cavern. The most singular part of it was the fringe. A ferruginous stain ran through it from one end to the other, with the exactness of a drawn line, and thence to the curving edge a most delicate rose-tint faded gradually down like the last flush of sunset through a silken curtain. Had it been a work of art, done in alabaster,

and stained with the pencil, it would have been thought admirable.

The guide wished us to proceed, but our feet were wet, and the air of the cavern was too chill. We were at least four miles, they told us, from the entrance, having walked briskly for upward of two hours. The grotto is said to extend ten miles under the mountains, and has never been thoroughly explored. Parties have started with provisions, and passed forty-eight hours in it without finding the extremity. It seems to me that any city I ever saw might be concealed in its caverns. I have often tried to conceive of the grottos of Antiparos, and the celebrated caverns of our own country, but I received here an entirely new idea of the possibility of space under ground. There is no conceiving it unseen. The river emerges on the other side of the mountain, seven or eight miles from its first entrance.

We supped and slept at the little albergo of the village, and returned the next day to an early dinner.

TRIESTE.—A ball on board the “United States.” The guns were run out of the ports; the main and mizen-masts were wound with red and white bunting; the capstan was railed with arms and wreathed with flowers; the wheel was tied with nosegays; the American eagle stood against the mainmast, with a star of midshipmen’s swords glittering above it; festoons of evergreens were laced through the rigging; the companion-way was arched with hoops of green leaves and roses; the decks were tastefully chalked: the commodore’s skylight was piled with cushions and covered with red damask for an ottoman; seats were laid along from one carronade to the other; and the whole was enclosed with a temporary tent lined throughout with showy flags, and studded all over with bouquets of all the flowers of Illyria. Chandeliers made of bayonets, battle-lanterns, and candles in any quantity, were disposed all over the hall. A splendid supper was set out on the gun-deck below, draped in with flags. Our own and the “Constellation’s” boats were to be at the pier at nine o’clock to bring off the ladies, and at noon everything promised of the brightest.

First, about four in the afternoon, came up a saucy-looking cloud from the westernmost peak of the Friuli. Then followed from every point towards the north, an extending edge of a broad solid black sheet which rose with the regularity of a curtain, and began to send down a wind upon us which made us look anxiously to our ball-room bowlines. The midshipmen were all forward, watching it from the forecastle. The lieutenants were in the gangway, watching it from the ladder. The commodore looked seriously out of the larboard cabin port. It was as grave a ship’s company as ever looked out for a shipwreck.

The country about Trieste is shaped like a bellows, and the city and harbour lie in the nose. They have a wind that comes down through the valley, called the “bora,” which several times in the year is strong enough to lift people from their feet. We could see, by the clouds of dust on the mountain roads, that it was coming. At six o’clock the shrouds began to creak; the white tops flew from the waves in showers of spray, and the roof of our sea-palace began to shiver in the wind. There was no more hope. We had waited even too long. All hands were called to take down the chandeliers, sword-stars, and ottomans, and before it was half done, the storm was upon us; the bunting was flying and flapping, the nicely-chalked decks were swashed with rain, and strewn with leaves of flowers, and the whole structure, the taste and labour of the ship’s company for two days, was a watery wreck.

Lieutenant C——, who had the direction of the whole, was the officer of the deck. He sent for his pea-jacket, and leaving him to pace out his watch among the ruins of his imagination, we went below to get early to bed, and forgot our disappointment in sleep.

The next morning the sun rose without a veil. The “blue Friuli” looked clear and fresh; the

south-west wind came over softly from the shore of Italy, and we commenced retrieving our disaster with elastic spirit. Nothing had suffered seriously except the flowers, and boats were despatched ashore for fresh supplies, while the awnings were lifted higher and wider than before, the bright-coloured flags replaced, the arms polished and arranged in improved order, and the decks re-chalked with new devices. At six in the evening everything was swept up, and the ball-room astonished even ourselves. It was the prettiest place for a dance in the world.

The ship has an admirable band of twenty Italians, collected from Naples and other ports, and a fanciful orchestra was raised for them on the larboard side of the mainmast. They struck up a march as the first boatful of ladies stepped upon the deck, and in the course of half an hour the waltzing commenced with at least two hundred couples, while the ottoman and seats under the hammock-cloths were filled with spectators. The frigate has a lofty poop, and there was room enough upon it for two quadrilles after it had served as a reception-room. It was edged with a temporary balustrade, wreathed with flowers, and studded with lights, and the cabin beneath (on a level with the main ball-room), was set out with card-tables. From the gangway entrance, the scene was like a brilliant theatrical ballet.

An amusing part of it was the sailors' imitation on the forward decks. They had taken the waste shrubbery and evergreens, of which there was a great quantity, and had formed a sort of grove, extending all round. It was arched with festoons of leaves, with quantities of fruit tied among them; and over the entrance was suspended a rough picture of a frigate with the inscription, "Free trade and sailors' rights." The forecastle was ornamented with cutlasses, and one or two nautical transparencies, with pistols and miniature ships interspersed, and the whole lit up handsomely. The men were dressed in their white duck trowsers and blue jackets, and sat round on the guns playing at draughts, or listening to the music, or gazing at the ladies constantly promenading fore and aft, and to me this was one of the most interesting parts of the spectacle. Five hundred weather-beaten and manly faces are a fine sight anywhere.

The dance went gaily on. The reigning belle was an American, but we had lovely women of all nations among our guests. There are several wealthy Jewish families in Trieste, and their dark-eyed daughters, we may say at this distance, are full of the thoughtful loveliness peculiar to the race. Then we had Illyrians and Germans, and—Terpsichore be our witness—how they danced! My travelling companion, the count of Friuli, was there; and his little Viennese wife, though she spoke no Christian language, danced as feately as a fairy. Of strangers passing through the Trieste, we had several of distinction. Among them was a fascinating Milanese marchioness, a relative of Manzoni's, the novelist (and as enthusiastic and eloquent a lover of her country as I ever listened to on the subject of oppressed Italy), and two handsome young men, the counts Neipperg, sons-in-law to Maria Louisa, who amused themselves as if they had seen nothing better in the little duchy of Parma.

We went below at midnight, to supper, and the ladies came up with renewed spirit to the dance. It was a brilliant scene indeed. The officers of both ships in full uniform, the gentlemen from shore, mostly military, in full dress, the gaiety of the bright red bunting, laced with white and blue, and studded, wherever they would stand, with flowers, and the really uncommon number of beautiful women, with the foreign features and complexions so rich and captivating to our eyes, produced altogether an effect unsurpassed by anything I have ever seen even at the court *fêtes* of Europe. The daylight gun fired at the close of a galopade, and the crowded boats pulled ashore with their lovely freight by the broad light of morning.

[5] A German bed is never over five feet in length, and proportionably narrow. The sheets, blankets, and coverlets, are cut exactly to the size of the bed's *surface*, so that there is no *tucking up*. The bed-clothes seem made for cradles. It is easy to imagine how a tall person sleeps in them.

LETTER XVII.

Trieste, its Extensive Commerce—Hospitality of Mr. Moore—Ruins of Pola—Immense amphitheatre—Village of Pola—Coast of Dalmatia, of Apulia and Calabria—Otranto—Sails for the Isles of Greece.

Trieste is certainly a most agreeable place. Its streets are beautifully paved and clean, its houses new and well built, and its shops as handsome and as well stocked with every variety of things as those of Paris. Its immense commerce brings all nations to its port, and it is quite the commercial centre of the continent. The Turk smokes cross-legged in the café, the English merchant has his box in the country and his snug establishment in town, the Italian has his opera, and his wife her cavalier, the Yankee captain his respectable boarding-house, and the German his four meals a day at a hotel dyed brown with tobacco. Every nation is at home in Trieste.

The society is beyond what is common in a European mercantile city. The English are numerous enough to support a church, and the circle of which our hospitable consul is the centre, is one of the most refined and agreeable it has been my happiness to meet. The friends of Mr. Moore have pressed every possible civility and kindness upon the commodore and his officers, and his own house has been literally our home on shore. It is the curse of this *volant* life, otherwise so attractive, that its frequent partings are bitter in proportion to its good fortune. We make friends but to lose them.

We got under way with a light breeze this morning, and stole gently out of the bay. The remembrance of a thousand kindnesses made our anchors lift heavily. We waved our handkerchiefs to the consul, whose balconies were filled with his charming family watching our departure, and with a freshening wind, disappeared around the point, and put up our helm for Pola.

The ruins of Pola, though among the first in the world, are seldom visited. They lie on the eastern shore of the Adriatic, at the head of a superb natural bay, far from any populous town, and are seen only by the chance trader who hugs the shore for the land-breeze, or the Albanian robber who looks down upon them with wonder from the mountains. What their age is I cannot say nearly. The country was conquered by the Romans about one hundred years before the time of our Saviour, and the amphitheatre and temples were probably erected soon after.

We ran into the bay, with the other frigate close astern, and anchored off a small green island which shuts in the inner harbour. There is deep water up to the ancient town on either side, and it seems as if nature had amused herself with constructing a harbour incapable of improvement. Pola lay about two miles from the sea.

It was just evening, and we deferred our visit to the ruins till morning. The majestic amphitheatre stood on a gentle ascent, a mile from the ship, goldenly bright in the flush of sunset; the pleasant smell of the shore stole over the decks, and the bands of the two frigates

played alternately the evening through. The receding mountains of Istria changed their light blue veils gradually to grey and sable, and with the pure stars of these enchanted seas, and the shell of a new moon bending over Italy in the west, it was such a night as one remembrances like a friend. The "Constellation" was to part from us here, leaving us to pursue our voyage to Greece. There were those on board who had brightened many of our "hours ashore," in these pleasant wanderings. We pulled back to our own ship, after a farewell visit, with regrets deepened by crowds of pleasant remembrances.

The next morning we pulled ashore to the ruins. The amphitheatre was close upon the sea, and to my surprise and pleasure, there was no *cicerone*. A contemplative donkey was grazing under the walls, but there was no other living creature near. We looked at its vast circular wall with astonishment. The Coliseum at Rome, a larger building of the same description, is, from the outside, much less imposing. The whole exterior wall, a circular pile one hundred feet high in front, and of immense blocks of marble and granite, is as perfect as when the Roman workman hewed the last stone. The interior has been nearly all removed. The well-hewn blocks of the many rows of seats were too tempting, like those of Rome, to the barbarians who were building near. The circle of the arena, in which the gladiators and wild beasts of these then new-conquered provinces fought, is still marked by the foundation of its barrier. It measures two hundred and twenty-three feet. Beneath it is a broad and deep canal, running toward the sea, filled with marble columns, still erect upon their pedestals, used probably for the introduction of water for the *naumachia*. The whole circumference of the amphitheatre is twelve hundred and fifty-six feet, and the thickness of the exterior wall seven feet six inches. Its shape is oblong, the length being four hundred and thirty-six feet, and the breadth three hundred and fifty. The measurements were taken by the captain's orders, and are doubtless critically correct.

We loitered about the ruins several hours, finding in every direction the remains of the dilapidated interior. The sculpture upon the fallen capitals and fragments of frieze was in the highest style of ornament. The arena is overgrown with rank grass, and the crevices in the walls are filled with flowers. A vineyard, with its large blue grape just within a week of ripeness, encircles the rear of the amphitheatre. The boat's crew were soon among them, much better amused than they could have been by all the antiquities in Istria.

We walked from the amphitheatre to the town; a miserable village built around two antique temples, one of which still stands alone, with its fine Corinthian columns, looking just ready to crumble. The other is incorporated barbarously with the guard-house of the place, and is a curious mixture of beautiful sculpture and dirty walls. The pediment, which is still perfect, in the rear of the building, is a piece of carving, worthy of the choicest cabinet of Europe. The thieveries from the amphitheatre are easily detected. There is scarcely a beggar's house in the village, that does not show a bit or two of sculptural marble upon its front.

At the end of the village stands a triumphal arch, recording the conquests of a Roman consul. Its front, toward the town, is of Parian marble, beautifully chiselled. One recognises the solid magnificence of that glorious nation, when he looks on these relics of their distant conquests, almost perfect after eighteen hundred years. It seems as if the foot-print of a Roman were eternal.

We stood out of the little bay, and with a fresh wind, ran down the coast of Dalmatia, and then crossing to the Italian side, kept down the ancient shore of Apulia and Calabria to the mouth of the Adriatic. I have been looking at the land with the glass, as we ran smoothly along, counting castle after castle built boldly on the sea, and behind them, on the green hills, the thickly built villages with their smoking chimneys and tall spires, pictures of fertility and peace.

It was upon these shores that the Barbary corsairs descended so often during the last century, carrying off for eastern harems, the lovely women of Italy. We are just off Otranto, and a noble old castle stands frowning from the extremity of the Cape. We could throw a shot into its embrasures as we pass. It might be the “Castle of Otranto,” for the romantic looks it has from the sea.

We have out-sailed the “Constellation,” or we should part from her here. Her destination is France: and we should be to-morrow amid the ^[6]Isles of Greece. The pleasure of realising the classic dreams of one’s boyhood, is not to be expressed in a line. I look forward to the succeeding month or two as to the “red-letter” chapter of my life. Whatever I may find the reality, my heart has glowed warmly and delightfully with the anticipation. Commodore Patterson is, fortunately for me, a scholar, and a judicious lover of the arts, and loses no opportunity, consistently with his duty, to give his officers the means of examining the curious and the beautiful in these interesting seas. The cruise, thus far, has been one of continually mingled pleasure and instruction, and the best of it, by every association of our early days, is to come.

^[6] It was to this point (the ancient Hydrantum) that Pyrrhus proposed to build a bridge from Greece—*only* sixty miles! He deserved to ride on an elephant.

LETTER XVIII.

The Ionian Isles—Lord and Lady Nugent—Corfu—Greek and English Soldiers—Cockneyism—The Gardens of Alcinous—English Officers—Albanians—Dionisio Salomos, the Greek Poet—Greek Ladies—Dinner with the Artillery Mess.

This is proper dream-land. The “Isle of Calypso,”^[7] folded in a drapery of blue air, lies behind, fading in the distance, “the Acroceraunian mountains of old name,” which caught Byron’s eye as he entered Greece, are piled up before us on the Albanian shore, and the Ionian sea is rippling under our bow, breathing, from every wave, of Homer, and Sappho, and “sad Penelope.” Once more upon Childe Harold’s footsteps. I closed the book at Rome, after following him for a summer through Italy, confessing, by many pleasant recollections, that

“Not in vain
He wore his sandal shoon, and scallop shell.”

I resume it here with the feeling of Thalaba when he caught sight of the green bird that led him through the desert. It lies open on my knee at the second canto, describing our position even to the hour:

“ ‘Twas on a Grecian autumn’s gentle eve
Childe Harold hailed Leucadia’s cape afar;
A spot he longed to see, nor cared to leave.”

We shall lie off-and-on to-night, and go in to Corfu in the morning. Two Turkish vessels-of-

war, with the crescent flag flying, lie in a small cove a mile off, on the Albanian shore, and by the discharge of musketry, our pilot presumes that they have accompanied the Sultan's tax-gatherer, who gets nothing from these wild people without fighting for it.

The entrance to Corfu is considered pretty, but the English flag flying over the forts, divested ancient Corcyra of its poetical associations. It looked to me a commonplace seaport, glaring in the sun. The "gardens of Alcinous" were here, but who could imagine them, with a red-coated sentry posted on every corner of the island.

The Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Isles, Lord Nugent, came off to the ship this morning in a kind of Corfiote boat, called a "scampavia," a greyhound-looking craft, carrying sail enough for a schooner. She cut the water like the wing of a swallow. His lordship was playing sailor, and was dressed like the mate of one of our coasters, and his manners were as bluff. He has a fine person, however, and is said to be a very elegant man when he chooses it. He is the author of the "Life and Times of John Hampden," and Whig, of course. Southey has lately reviewed him rather bitterly in the "Quarterly." Lady N. is literary, too, and they have written between them a book of tales called (I think) "Legends of the Lilies," of which her ladyship's half is said to be the better.

Went on shore for a walk. Greeks and English soldiers mix oddly together. The streets are narrow, and crowded with them in about equal proportions. John Bull retains his red face, and learns no Greek. We passed through the Bazaar, and bad English was the universal language. There is but one square in the town, and round its wooden fence, enclosing a dusty area, without a blade of grass, were riding the English officers, while the regimental band played in the centre. A more arid and cheerless spot never pained the eye. The appearance of the officers, retaining all their Bond-street elegance and mounted upon English hunters, was in singular contrast with the general shabbiness of the houses and people. I went into a shop at a corner to inquire for the residence of a gentleman to whom I had a letter. "It's werry 'ot, sir," said a little red-faced woman behind the counter, as I went out, "perhaps you'd like a glass of vater." It was odd to hear the Wapping dialect in the "isles of Greece." She sold green groceries, and wished me to recommend her to the hofferers. Mrs. Mary Flack's "grocery" in the gardens of Alcinous.

"The wild Albanian, kirtled to the knee," walks through the streets of Corfu, looking unlike and superior to everything about him. I met several in returning to the boat. Their gait is very lofty, and the snow-white *juktanilla*, or kirtle, with its thousand folds, sways from side to side, as they walk, with a most showy effect. Lord Byron was very much captivated with these people, whose capital (just across the strait from Corfu) he visited once or twice in his travels through Greece. Those I have seen are all very tall, and have their prominent features, with keen eyes and limbs of the most muscular proportions. The common English soldiers look like brutes beside them.

The placard of a theatre hung on the walls of a church. A rude picture of a battle between the Greeks and Turks hung above it, and beneath was written, in Italian, "Honour the representation of the immortal deeds of your hero Marco Bozzaris." It is singular that even a pack of slaves can find pleasure in a remembrance that reproaches every breath they draw.

Called on Lord Nugent with the commodore. The governor, sailor, author, antiquary, nobleman (for he is all these, and a jockey to boot), received us in a calico morning frock, with his breast and neck bare, in a large library lumbered with half-packed antiquities and strewn

with straw. Books, miniatures of his family (a lovely one of Lady Nugent among them), Whig pamphlets, riding-whips, spurs, minerals, hammer and nails, half-eaten cakes, plans of fortifications, printed invitations to his own balls and dinners, military reports, Turkish pistols, and, lastly, his own just printed answer to Mr. Southey's review of his book, occupied the table. He was reading his own production when we entered. His lordship mentioned, with great apparent satisfaction, a cruise he had taken some years ago with Commodore Chauncey. The conversation was rather monologue than dialogue; his excellency seeming to think, with Lord Bacon, that "the honorablest part of talk was to give the occasion, and then to moderate and pass to something else." He started a topic, exhausted and changed it with the same facility and rapidity with which he sailed his scampavia. An engagement with the artillery-mess prevented my acceptance of an invitation to dine with him to-morrow—a circumstance I rather regret, as he is said to be, at his own table, one of the most polished and agreeable men of his time.

Thank Heaven, revolutions do not affect the climate! The isle that gave a shelter to the storm-driven Ulysses is an English barrack, but the same balmy air that fanned the blind eyes of old Homer blows over it still. "The breezes," says Landor, beautifully, "are the children of eternity." I never had the hair lifted so pleasantly from my temples as to-night, driving into the interior of the island. The gardening of Alcinous seems to have been followed up by nature. The rhododendron, the tamarisk, the almond, cypress, olive, and fig, luxuriate in the sweetest beauty everywhere.

There was a small party in the evening at the house of the gentleman who had driven me out, and among other foreigners present were the Count Dionisio Salomos, of Zante, and the Cavaliere Andrea Mustoxidi, both men of whom I had often heard. The first is almost the only modern Greek poet, and his hymns, principally patriotic, are in the common dialect of the country, and said to be full of fire. He is an excessively handsome man, with large dark eyes, almost effeminate in their softness. His features are of the clearest Greek chiselling, as faultless as a statue, and are stamped with nature's most attractive marks of refinement and feeling. I can imagine Anacreon to have resembled him.

Mustoxidi has been a conspicuous man in the late chapter of Grecian history. He was much trusted by Capo d'Istria, and among other things had the whole charge of his school at Ægina. An Italian exile (a Modenese, and a very pleasant fellow), took me aside when I asked something of his history, and told me a story of him, which proves either that he was a dishonest man, or (no new truth) that conspicuous men are liable to be abused. A valuable donation of books was given by some one to the school library. They stood on the upper shelves, quite out of reach, and Mustoxidi was particular in forbidding all approach to them. Some time after his departure from the island, the library was committed to the charge of another person, and the treasures of the upper shelves were found to be—painted boards! His physiognomy would rather persuade me of the truth of the story. He is a small man, with a downcast look, and a sly, gray eye, almost hidden by his projecting eyebrows. His features are watched in vain for an open expression.

The ladies of the party were principally Greeks. None of them were beautiful, but they had the melancholy, retired expression of face which one looks for, knowing the history of their nation. They are unwise enough to abandon their picturesque national costume, and dress badly in the European style. The servant girls, with their hair braided into the folds of their turbans, and their open-laced bodices and sleeves, are much more attractive to the stranger's eye. The liveliest of the party, a little Zantiote girl of eighteen, with eyes and eye-lashes that contradicted the merry laugh on her lips, sang us an Albanian song to the guitar very sweetly.

Dined to-day with the artillery mess, in company with the commodore and some of his officers. In a place like this, the dinner is naturally the great circumstance of the day. The inhabitants do not take kindly to their masters, and there is next to no society for the English. They sit down to their soup after the evening drive, and seldom rise till midnight. It was a gay dinner, as dinners will always be where the whole remainder of what the “day may bring forth” is abandoned to them, and we parted from our hospitable entertainers, after four or five hours “measured with sands of gold.” We must do the English the justice of confessing the manners of their best bred men to be the best in the world. It is inevitable that one should bear the remainder of the nation little love. Neither the one class nor the other, doubtless, will ever seek it at our hands. But mutual hospitality may soften so much of our intercourse as happens in the traveller’s way, and without loving John Bull better, all in all, one soon finds out in Europe that the dog and the lion are not more unlike, than the race of bagmen and runners with which our country is overrun, and the cultivated gentlemen of England.

On my right sat a captain of the corps, who had spent the last summer at the Saratoga Springs. We found any number of mutual acquaintances, of course, and I was amused with the impressions which some of the fairest of my friends had made upon a man who had passed years in the most cultivated society of Europe. He liked America with reservations. He preferred our ladies to those of any other country except England, and he had found more dandies in one hour in Broadway than he should have met in a week in Regent-street. He gave me a racy scene or two from the City Hotel, in New York, but he doubted if the frequenters of a public table in any country in the world were, on the whole, so well-mannered. If Americans were peculiar for anything, he thought it was for confidence in themselves and tobacco-chewing.

[7] Fano, which disputes it with Gozo, near Malta.

LETTER XIX.

Corfu—Unpopularity of British Rule—Superstition of the Greeks—Accuracy of the Descriptions in the Odyssey
—Advantage of the Greek Costume—The Paxian Isles—Cape Leucas, or Sappho’s Leap—Bay of Navarino,
Ancient Pylos—Modon—Coran’s Bay—Cape St. Angelo—Isle of Cythera.

CORFU.—Called on one of the officers of the 10th this morning, and found lying on his table two books upon Corfu. They were from the circulating library of the town, much thumbed, and contained the most unqualified strictures on the English administration in the islands. In one of them, by a Count, or Colonel, Boig de St. Vincent, a Frenchman, the Corfiotes were taunted with their slavish submission, and called upon to shake off the yoke of British dominion in the most inflammatory language. Such books in Italy or France would be burnt by the hangman, and prohibited on penalty of death. Here, with a haughty consciousness of superiority, which must be galling enough to an Ionian who is capable of feeling, they circulate uncensored in two languages, and the officers of the abused government read them for their amusement, and return them coolly to go their rounds among the people. They have twenty-five hundred troops upon the island, and they trouble themselves little about what is thought of them. They

confess that their government is excessively unpopular, the officers are excluded from the native society, and the soldiers are scowled upon in the streets.

The body of St. Spiridion was carried through the streets of Corfu to-day, sitting bolt upright in a sedan chair, and accompanied by the whole population. He is the great saint of the Greek church, and such is his influence, that the English government thought proper, under Sir Frederick Adams's administration, to compel the officers to walk in the procession. The saint was dried at his death, and makes a neat, black mummy, sans eyes and nose, but otherwise quite perfect. He was carried to-day by four men in a very splendid sedan, shaking from side to side with the motion, preceded by one of the bands of music from the English regiments. Sick children were thrown under the feet of the bearers, half dead people brought to the doors as he passed, and every species of disgusting mummery practised. The show lasted about four hours, and was, on the whole, attended with more marks of superstition than anything I found in Italy. I was told that the better educated Christians of the Greek Church disbelieve the saint's miracles. The whole body of the Corfiote ecclesiastics were in the procession, however.

I passed the first watch in the hammock-nettings to-night, enjoying inexpressibly the phenomena of this brilliant climate. The stars seem burning like lamps in the absolute clearness of the atmosphere. Meteors shoot constantly with a slow liquid course over the sky. The air comes off from the land laden with the breath of the wild thyme, and the water around the ship is another deep blue heaven, motionless with its studded constellations. The frigate seems suspended between them.

We have little idea, while conning an irksome school-task, how strongly the "unwilling lore" is rooting itself in the imagination. The frigate lies perhaps a half mile from the most interesting scenes of the Odyssey. I have been recalling from the long neglected stores of memory, the beautiful descriptions of the court of King Alcinous, and of the meeting of his matchless daughter with Ulysses. The whole web of the poet's fable has gradually unwound, and the lamps ashore, and the outline of the hills, in the deceiving dimness of night, have entered into the delusion with the facility of a dream. Every scene in Homer may be traced to this day, the blind old poet's topography was so admirable. It was over the point of land sloping down to the right, that the Princess Nausicaa went with her handmaids to wash her bridal robes in the running streams. The description still guides the traveller to the spot where the damsels of the royal maid spread the linen on the grass, and commenced the sports that waked Ulysses from his slumbers in the bed of leaves.

Ashore with one of the officers this morning, amusing ourselves with trying on dresses in a Greek tailor's shop. It quite puts one out of conceit with these miserable European fashions. The easy and flowing juktanilla, the unembarrassed leggings, the open sleeve of the collarless jacket leaving the throat exposed, and the handsome close-binding girdle from it, seems to me the very dress dictated by reason and nature. The richest suit in the shop, a superb red velvet, wrought with gold, was priced at one hundred and forty dollars. The more sober colours were much cheaper. A dress lasts several years.

We made our farewell visits to the officers of the English regiments, who had overwhelmed us with hospitality during our stay, and went on board to get under way with the noon breeze. We were accompanied to the ship, not as the hero of Homer, when he left the same port, by three damsels of the royal train, bearing, "one a tunic, another a rich casket, and a third bread

and wine” for his voyage, but by Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Wilson, soldiers’ wives, and washerwomen, with baskets of hurriedly-dried linen, pinned, every bundle, with a neat bill in shillings and halfpence.

Ulysses slept all the way from Corcyra to Ithaca. He lost a great deal of fine scenery. The passage between Corfu and Albania is beautiful. We ran past the southern cape of the island with a free wind, and are now off the Paxian Isles, where, according to Plutarch, Emilianus, the rhetorician, voyaging by night, “heard a voice louder than human, announcing the death of Pan.” A “schoolboy midshipman” is breaking the same silence with “on deck, all hands! on deck, all of you!”

Off the mouth of the Alpheus. If he still chases Arethusa under the sea, and she makes straight for Sicily, her bed is beneath our keel. The moon is pouring her broad light over the ocean, the shadows of the rigging on the deck lie in clear and definite lines, the sailors of the watch sit around upon the guns in silence, and the ship, with her clouds of snowy sail spread aloft, is stealing through the water with the noiseless motion of a swan. Even the gallant man-of-war seems steeped in the spirit of the scene. The hour wants but an “Ionian Myrrha” to fill the last void of the heart.

Cape Leucas on the lee—the scene of Sappho’s leap. We have coursed down the long shore of ancient Leucadia, and the precipice to which lovers came from all parts of Greece for an oblivious plunge, is shining in the sun, scarce a mile from the ship. The beautiful Grecian here sung her last song, and broke her lyre and died. The leap was not always so tragical: there are two lovers, at least, on record (Maces of Buthrotum, and Cephalos, son of Deioneos), who survived the fall, and were cured effectually by salt water. It was a common resource in the days of Sappho, and Strabo says that they were accustomed to check their descent by tying birds and feathers to their arms. Females, he says, were generally killed by the rapidity of the fall, their frames being too slight to bear the shock; but the men seldom failed to come safe to shore. The sex has not lost its advantages since the days of Phaon.

We have caught a glimpse of Ithaca through the isles, the land

“Where sad Penelope o’erlooked the wave.”

and which Ulysses loved, *non quia larga, sed quia sua*—the most natural of reasons. We lose Childe Harold’s track here. He turned to the left into the gulf of Lepanto. We shall find him again at Athens. Missolonghi, where he died, lies about twenty or thirty miles on our lee, and it is one, of several places in the gulf, that I regret to pass so near, unvisited.

Entering the bay of Navarino. A picturesque and precipitous rock, filled with caves, nearly shuts the mouth of this ample harbour. We ran so close to it, that it might have been touched from the deck with a tandem whip. On a wild crag to the left, a small, white marble monument, with the earth still fresh about it, marks the grave of some victim of the late naval battle. The town and fortress, miserable heaps of dirty stone, lie in the curve of the southern shore. A French brig-of-war is at anchor in the port, and broad, barren hills, stretching far away on every side, complete the scene before us. We run up the harbour, and tack to stand out again, without going ashore. Not a soul is to be seen, and the bay seems the very sanctuary of silence. It is difficult to conceive, that but a year or two ago, the combined fleets of Europe, were thundering among these silent hills, and hundreds of human beings lying in their blood, whose bones are now whitening in the sea beneath. Our pilot was in the fight, on board an English frigate. He

has pointed out to us the position of the different fleets, and among other particulars, he tells me, that when the Turkish ships were boarded, Greek sailors were found chained to the guns, who had been compelled, at the muzzle of the pistol, to fight against the cause of their country. Many of them must thus have perished in the vessels that were sunk.

Navarino was the scene of a great deal of fighting, during the late Greek revolution. It was invested, while in possession of the Turks, by two thousand Peloponnesians and a band of Ionians, and the garrison were reduced to such a state of starvation, as to eat their slippers. They surrendered at last, under promise that their lives should be spared; but the news of the massacre of the Greek patriarchs and clergy, at Adrianople, was received at the moment, and the exasperated troops put their prisoners to death, without mercy.

The peaceful aspect of the place is better suited to its poetical associations. Navarino was the ancient Pylos, and it is here that Homer brings Telemachus in search of his father. He finds old Nestor and his sons sacrificing on the seashore to Neptune, with nine altars, and at each five hundred men. I should think the modern town contained scarce a twentieth of this number.

Rounding the little fortified town of Modon, under full sail. It seems to be built on the level of the water, and nothing but its high wall and its towers are seen from the sea. This, too, has been a much-contested place, and remained in possession of the Turks till after the formation of the provisional government under Mavrocordato. It forms the south-western point of the Morea, and is a town of great antiquity. King Philip gained his first battle over the Athenians here, some thousands of years ago; and the brave old Mialis beat the Egyptian fleet in the same bay, without doubt in a manner quite as deserving of as long a remembrance. It is like a city of the dead—we cannot even see a sentinel on the wall.

Passed an hour in the mizen-chains with “the Corsair” in my hand, and “Coran’s Bay” opening on the lee. With what exquisite pleasure one reads, when he can look off from the page, and study the scene of the poet’s fiction—

“In Coran’s bay floats many a galley light,
Through Coran’s lattices the lamps burn bright,
For Seyd, the Pacha, makes a feast to-night.”

It is a small, deep bay, with a fortified town, on the western shore, crowned on the very edge of the sea, with a single, tall tower. A small aperture near the top, helps to realise the Corsair’s imprisonment, and his beautiful interview with Gulnare:—

“In the high chamber of his highest tower,
Sate Conrad fettered in the Pacha’s power,” &c.

The Pirate’s Isle is said to have been Poros, and the original of the Corsair himself, a certain Hugh Crevelier, who filled the Ægæan with terror, not many years ago.

Made the Cape St. Angelo, the southern point of the Peloponnesus, and soon after the island of Cythera, near which Venus rose from the foam of the sea. We are now running northerly, along the coast of ancient Sparta. It is a mountainous country, bare and rocky, and looks as rude and hardy as the character of its ancient sons. I have been passing the glass in vain along the coast to find a tree. A small hermitage stands on the desolate extremity of the Cape, and a Greek monk, the pilot tells me, has lived there many years, who comes from his cell,

and stands on the rock with his arms outspread to bless the passing ship. I looked for him in vain.

A French man-of-war bore down upon us a few minutes ago, and saluted the commodore. He ran so close, that we could see the features of his officers on the poop. It is a noble sight at sea, a fine ship passing, with all her canvass spread, with the added rapidity of your own course and hers. The peal of the guns in the midst of the solitary ocean, had a singular effect. The echo came back from the naked shores of Sparta, with a warlike sound, that might have stirred old Leonidas in his grave. The smoke rolled away on the wind, and the noble ship hoisted her royals once more, and went on her way. We are making for Napoli di Romania, with a summer breeze, and hope to drop anchor beneath its fortress, at sunset.

LETTER XX.

The Harbour of Napoli—Tricoupi and Mavrocordato, Otho's Cabinet Councillors—Colonel Gordon—King Otho
—The Misses Armanspergs—Prince of Saxe—Miaulis, the Greek Admiral—Excursion to Argos, the Ancient
Ternythus.

NAPOLI DI ROMANIA.—Anchored in the harbour of Napoli after dark. An English frigate lies a little in, a French and Russian brig-of-war astern, and two Greek steamboats, King Otho's yacht, and a quantity of caïques, fill the inner port. The fort stands a hundred feet over our heads on a bold promontory, and the rocky Palamidi soars a hundred feet still higher, on a crag that thrusts its head sharply into the clouds, as if it would lift the little fortress out of eyesight. The town lies at the base of the mountain, an irregular looking heap of new houses; and here, at present, resides the boy-king of Greece, Otho the first. His predecessors were Agamemnon and Perseus, who, some three thousand years ago (more or less, I am not certain of my chronology), reigned at Argos and Mycenæ, within sight of his present capital.

Went ashore with the commodore, to call on Tricoupi and Mavrocordato, the king's cabinet councillors. We found the former in a new stone house, slenderly furnished, and badly painted, but with an entry full of servants, in handsome Greek costumes. He received the commodore with the greatest friendliness. He had dined on board the "Constitution" six years before, when his prospects were less promising than now. He is a short, stout man, of dark complexion, and very bright black eyes, and looks very honest and very vulgar. He speaks English perfectly. He shrugged his shoulders when the commodore alluded to having left him fighting for a republic, and said anything was better than anarchy. He spoke in the highest terms of my friend, Dr. Howe (who was at Napoli with the American provisions, when Grivas held the Palamidi). Greece, he said, had never a better friend. Madame Tricoupi (the sister of Prince Mavrocordato) came in presently with two very pretty children. She spoke French fluently, and seemed an accomplished woman. Her family had long furnished the Prince Hospodars of Wallachia, and though not a beautiful woman, she has every mark of the gentle blood of the east. Colonel Gordon, the famous Philhellene, entered, while we were there. He was an intimate friend of Lord Byron's, and has expended the best part of a large fortune in the Greek cause. He is a plain man, of perhaps fifty, with red hair and freckled face, and features and accent very Scotch. I liked his manners. He had lately written a book upon Greece, which is well spoken of in some review that

has fallen in my way.

Went thence to Prince Mavrocordato's. He occupies the third story of a very indifferent house, furnished with the mere necessities of life. A shabby sofa, a table, two chairs, and a broken tumbler, holding ink and two pens, is the inventory of his drawing-room. He received us with elegance and courtesy, and presented us to his wife, a pretty and lively little Constantinopolitan, who chattered French like a magpie. She gave the uncertainty of their residence until the seat of government was decided on, as the apology for their lodgings, and seemed immediately to forget that she was not in a palace. Mavrocordato is a strikingly handsome man, with long, curling, black hair, and most luxuriant moustaches. His mouth is bland, and his teeth uncommonly beautiful; but without being able to say where it lies, there is an expression of guile in his face, that shut my heart to him. He is getting fat, and there is a shade of red in the clear olive of his cheek, which is very uncommon in this country. The commodore remarked that he was very thin when he was here six years before. The settlement of affairs in Greece has probably relieved him from a great deal of care.

Presented, with the commodore, to King Otho. Tricoupi officiated as chamberlain, dressed in a court suit of light blue, wrought with silver. The royal residence is a comfortable house, built by Capo d'Istria, in the principal street of Napoli. The king's aide, a son of Marco Bozzaris, a very fine, resolute-looking young man of eighteen, received us in the antechamber, and in a few minutes the door of the inner room was thrown open. His majesty stood at the foot of the throne (a gorgeous red velvet arm-chair, raised on a platform, and covered with a splendid canopy of velvet), and with a low bow to each of us as we entered, he addressed his conversation immediately, and without embarrassment, to the commodore. I had leisure to observe him closely for a few minutes. He appears about eighteen. He was dressed in an exceedingly well cut, swallow-tailed coat, of very light blue, with a red standing collar, wrought with silver. The same work upon a red ground, was set between the buttons of the waist, and upon the edges of the skirts. White pantaloons, and the ordinary straight court-sword completed his dress. He is rather tall, and his figure is extremely light and elegant. A very flat nose, and high cheekbones, are the most marked features of his face; his hair is straight, and of a light brown, and with no claim to beauty; the expression of his countenance is manly, open, and prepossessing. He spoke French fluently, though with a German accent, and went through the usual topics of a royal presentation (very much the same all over the world) with grace and ease. In the few remarks which he addressed to me, he said that he promised himself great pleasure in the search for antiquities in Greece. He bowed us out after an audience of about ten minutes, no doubt extremely happy to exchange his court-coat and our company for a riding-frock and saddle. His horse and a guard of twelve lancers were in waiting at the door.

The king usually passes his evenings with the Misses Armanpergs, the daughters of the president of the regency. They accompanied him from Munich, and are the only ladies in his realm with whom he is acquainted. They keep a carriage, which is a kind of wonder at Napoli; ride on horseback in the English style, very much to the amusement of the Greeks; and give *soirées* once or twice a week, which are particularly dull. One of the three is a beautiful girl, and if policy does not interfere, is likely to be Queen of Greece. The Count Armanperg is a small, shrewd-looking man, with a thin German countenance, and agreeable manners. He is, of course, the real king of Greece.

The most agreeable man I found in Napoli, was the king's uncle, the prince of Saxæ, at present in command of his army. He is a tall and uncommonly handsome soldier, of perhaps thirty-six years, and, with all the air of a man of high birth, has the open and frank manners of

the camp. He has been twice on board the ship, and seemed to consider his acquaintance with the commodore's family as a respite from exile. The Bavarian officers in his suite spoke nothing but the native German, and looked like mere beef-eaters. The prince returns in two years, and when the king is of age, his Bavarian troops leave him, and he commits himself to the country.

Hired the only two public vehicles in Napoli, and set off with the commodore's family, on an excursion to the ancient cities in the neighbourhood. We left the gate built by the Venetians, and still adorned with a bas-relief of a winged lion, at nine o'clock of a clear Grecian summer's day. Auguries were against us. Pyrrhus did the same thing with his elephants and his army, one morning about two thousand years ago, and was killed before noon; and our driver stopped his horses a half mile out of the gate, and told us very gravely that *the evil eye* was upon him. He had dreamed that he had *found* a dollar the night before—a certain sign by the laws of witchcraft in Greece, that he should *lose* one. He concluded by adding another dollar to the price of each carriage.

We passed the house of old Miaulis, the Greek admiral, a pretty cottage a mile from the city, and immediately after came the ruins of the ancient Terynthus, the city of Hercules. The walls, built of the largest hewn stones in the world, still stand, and will till time ends. It would puzzle modern mechanics to carry them away. We drove along the same road upon which Autolycus taught the young hero to drive a chariot, and passing ruins and fragments of columns strewn over the whole length of the plain of Argos, stopped under a spreading aspen tree, the only shade within reach of the eye. A dirty khan stood a few yards off, and our horses were to remain here while we ascended the hills to Mycenæ.

It was a hot walk. The appearance of ladies, as we passed through a small Greek village on our way, drew out all the inhabitants, and we were accompanied by about fifty men, women, and children, resembling very much in complexion and dress, the Indians of our country. A mile from our carriages we arrived at a subterranean structure, built in the side of the hill, with a door toward the east, surmounted by the hewn stone so famous for its size among the antiquities of Greece. It shuts the tomb of old Agamemnon. The interior is a hollow cone, with a small chamber at the side, and would make "very eligible lodgings for a single gentleman," as the papers say.

We kept on up the hill, wondering that the "king of many islands and of all Argos," as Homer calls him, should have built his city so high in this hot climate. We sat down at last, quite fagged, at the gate of a city built *only* eighteen hundred years before Christ. A descendant of Perseus brought us some water in a wooden piggin, and somewhat refreshed, we went on with our examination of the ruins. The mere weight of the walls has kept them together three thousand six hundred years. You can judge how immoveable they must be. The antiquarians call them the "cyclopean walls of Mycenæ;" and nothing less than a giant, I should suppose, would dream of heaving such enormous masses one upon the other. "The gate of the Lions," probably the principal entrance to the city, is still perfect. The bas-relief from which it takes its name, is the oldest sculptured stone in Europe. It is of green basalt, representing two lions rampant, very finely executed, and was brought from Egypt. An angle of the city wall is just below, and the ruins of a noble aqueduct are still visible, following the curve of the opposite hill, and descending to Mycenæ on the northern side. I might bore you now with a long chapter on antiquities (for, however dry in the abstract, they are exceedingly interesting on the spot), but I let you off. Those who like them will find Spohn and Wheeler, Dodwell, Leake, and Gell, diffuse enough for the most classic enthusiasm.

We descended by a rocky ravine, in the bosom of which lay a well with six large fig-trees growing at its brink. A woman, burnt black with the sun, was drawing water in a goat-skin, and we were too happy to get into the shade, and in the name of Pan, sink delicately, and ask for a drink of water. I have seen the time when nectar in a cup of gold would have been less refreshing.

We arrived at the aspen about two o'clock, and made preparations for our dinner. The sea-breeze had sprung up, and came freshly over the plain of Argos. We put our claret in a goat-skin of water hung at one of the wheels, the basket was produced, the ladies sat in the interior of the carriage, and the commodore, and his son, and myself made tables of the foot-boards; and thus we achieved a meal which, if meals are measured by content, old King Danaus and his fifty daughters might have risen from their graves to envy us.

A very handsome Greek woman had brought us water, and stood near while we were eating, and making over to her the remnants of the ham, and its condiments, and the empty bottles, with which she seemed made happy for a day, we went on our way to Argos.

"Rivers die," it is said, "as well as men and cities." We drove through the bed of "Father Inachus," which was a respectable river in the time of Homer, but which, in our day, would be puzzled to drown a much less thing than a king. Men achieve immortality in a variety of ways. King Inachus might have been forgotten as the first Argive; but by drowning himself in the river which afterwards took his name, every knowledge-hunter that travels is compelled to look up his history. So St. Nepomuc became the guardian of bridges by breaking his neck over one.

The modern Argos occupies the site of the ancient. It is tolerably populous, but it is a town of most wretched hovels. We drove through several long streets of mud houses with thatched roofs, completely open in front, and the whole family huddled together on the clay floor, with no furniture but a flock bed in the corner. The first settlement by Deucalion and Pyrrha, on the sediment of the deluge, must have looked like it. Mud, stones, and beggars, were all we saw. Old Pyrrhus was killed here, after all his battles, by a tile from a house-top; but modern Argos has scarce a roof high enough to overtop his helmet.

We left our carriages in the street, and walked to the ruins of the amphitheatre. The brazen Thalamus in which Danae was confined when Jupiter visited her in a shower of gold, was near this spot, the supposed site of most of the thirty temples once famous in Argos.

Some solid brick walls, the seats of the amphitheatre cut into the solid rock of the hill, the rocky Acropolis above, and twenty or thirty horses tied together, and treading out grain on a thrashing-floor in the open field, were all we found of ancient or picturesque in the capital of the Argives. A hot, sultry afternoon, was no time to weave romance from such materials.

We returned to our carriages, and while the Greek was getting his horses into their harness, we entered a most unpromising café for shade and water. A billiard-table stood in the centre; and the high, broad bench on which the Turks seat themselves, with their legs crooked under them, stretched around the wall. The proprietor was a Venetian woman, who sighed, as she might well, for a gondola. The kingdom of Agamemnon was not to her taste.

After waiting awhile here for the sun to get behind the hills of Sparta, we received a message from our coachman, announcing that he was arrested. The "evil eye" had not glanced upon him in vain. There was no returning without him, and I walked over with the commodore to see what could be done. A fine-looking man sat cross-legged on a bench, in the upper room of a building adjoining a prison, and a man with a pen in his hand was reading the indictment. The driver had struck a child who was climbing on his wheel. I pleaded his case in "choice Italian," and after half an hour's delay, they dismissed him, exacting a dollar as a security for

reappearance. It was a curious verification of his morning's omen.

We drove on over the plain, met the king, five camels, and the Misses Amansperg, and were on board soon after sunset.

LETTER XXI.

Visit from King Otho and Miaulis—Visit an English and Russian frigate—Beauty of the Greek Men—Lake Lerna
—The Hermionicus Sinus—Hydra—Ægina.

NAPOLI DI ROMANIA.—Went ashore with one of the officers, to look for the fountain of Canathus. Its waters had the property (vide Pausanias) of renewing the infant purity of the women who bathed in them. Juno used it once a year. We found but one natural spring in all Napoli. It stands in a narrow street, filled with tailors, and is adorned with a marble font bearing a Turkish inscription. Two girls were drawing water in skins. We drank a little of it, but found nothing peculiar in the taste. Its virtues are confined probably to the other sex.

The king visited the ship. As his barge left the pier, the vessels of war in the harbour manned their yards and fired the royal salute. He was accompanied by young Bozzaris and the prince, his uncle, and dressed in the same uniform in which he received us at our presentation. As he stepped on the deck, and was received by Commodore Patterson, I thought I had never seen a more elegant and well-proportioned man. The frigate was in her usual admirable order, and the king expressed his surprise and gratification at every turn. His questions were put with uncommon judgment for a landsman. We had heard, indeed, on board the English frigate which brought him from Trieste, that he lost no opportunity of learning the duties and management of the ship, keeping watch with the midshipmen, and running from one deck to the other at all hours. After going thoroughly through all the ship, the commodore presented him to his family. He seemed very much pleased with the ease and frankness with which he was received, and seating himself with our fair country-women in the after-cabin, prolonged his visit to a very unceremonious length, conversing with the most unreserved gaiety. The yards were manned again, the salutes fired once more, and the king of Greece tossed his oars for a moment under the stern, and pulled ashore.

Had the pleasure and honour of showing Miaulis through the ship. The old man came on board very modestly, without even announcing himself, and as he addressed one of the officers in Italian, I was struck with his noble appearance, and offered my services as interpreter. He was dressed in the Hydriote costume, the full blue trousers gathered at the knee, a short open jacket, worked with black braid, and a red skull-cap. His lieutenant dressed in the same costume, a tall, superb-looking Greek, was his only attendant. He was quite at home on board, comparing the "United States" continually to the "Hellas," the American built frigate which he commanded. Every one on board was struck with the noble simplicity and dignity of his address. I have seldom seen a man who impressed me more. He requested me to express his pleasure at his visit, and his friendly feelings to the commodore, and invited us to his country-house, which he pointed out from the deck, just without the city. Every officer in the ship uncovered as he passed. The gratification at seeing him was universal. He looks worthy to be

one of the “three” that Byron demanded, in his impassioned verse,

“To make a new Thermopylæ.”

Returned visits of ceremony with the commodore, to the English and Russian vessels of war. The British frigate “Madagascar” is about the size of the “United States,” but not in nearly so fine a condition. The superior cleanliness and neatness of arrangement on board our own ship are indisputable. The cabin of Captain Lyon (who is said to be one of the best officers in the English service) was furnished in almost oriental luxury, and what I should esteem more, crowded with the choicest books. He informed us that of his twenty-four midshipmen, nine were sons of noblemen, and possessed the best family influence on both father’s and mother’s side, and several of the remainder had high claims for preferment. There is small chance there, one would think, for commoners.

Captain Lyon spoke in the highest terms of his late passenger, King Otho, both as to disposition and talent. Somewhere in the Ægean, one of his Bavarian servants fell overboard, and the boatswain jumped after him, and sustained him till the boat was lowered to his relief. On his reaching the deck, the king drew a valuable repeater from his pocket, and presented it to him in the presence of the crew. He certainly has caught the “trick of royalty” in its perfection.

The guard presented, the boatswain “piped us over the side,” and we pulled alongside the Russian. The file of marines drawn up in honour of the commodore on her quarter deck, looked like so many standing bears. Features and limbs so brutally coarse I never saw. The officers, however, were very gentlemanly, and the vessel was in beautiful condition. In inquiring after the health of the ladies on board our ship, the captain and his lieutenant rose from their seats and made a low bow—a degree of chivalrous courtesy very uncommon, I fancy, since the days of Sir Piercie Shafton. I left his imperial majesty’s ship with an improved impression of him.

They are a gallant looking people the Greeks. Byron says of them, all “are beautiful, very much resembling the busts of Alcibiades.” We walked beyond the walls of the city this evening, on the plain of Argos. The whole population were out in their Sunday costumes, and no theatrical ballet was ever more showy than the scene. They are a very affectionate people, and walk usually hand in hand, or sit upon the rocks at the road-side, with their arms over each other’s shoulders; and their picturesque attitudes and lofty gait, combined with the flowing beauty of their dress, give them all the appearance of heroes on the stage. I saw literally no handsome women, but the men were magnificent, almost without exception. Among others, a young man passed us with whose personal beauty the whole party were struck. As he went by he laid his hand on his breast and bowed to the ladies, raising his red cap, with its flowing blue tassel, at the same time with perfect grace. It was a young man to whom I had been introduced the day previous, a brother of Mavromichalis, the assassin of Capo d’Istrias. He is about seventeen, tall and straight as an arrow, and has the eye of a falcon. His family is one of the first in Greece; and his brother, who was a fellow of superb beauty, is said to have died in the true heroic style, believing that he had rid his country of a tyrant.

The view of Napoli and the Palamidi from the plain, with its back ground of the Spartan mountains, and the blue line of the Argolic gulf between, is very fine. The home of the Nemean lion, the lofty hill rising above Argos, was enveloped in a black cloud as the sun set on our walk, the short twilight of Greece thickened upon us, and the white, swaying juktanillas of the Greeks striding past, had the effect of spirits gliding by in the dark.

The king, with his guard of lancers on a hard trot, passed us near the gate, followed close by the Misses Armansperg, mounted on fine Hungarian horses. His majesty rides beautifully, and the effect of the short high-borne flag on the tips of the lances, and the tall Polish caps with their cord and tassels, is highly picturesque.

Made an excursion with the commodore across the gulf, to Lake Lerna, the home of the hydra. We saw nothing save the half dozen small marshy lakes, whose overflow devastated the country, until they were dammed by Hercules, who is thus poetically said to have killed a many-headed monster. We visited, near by, "the mills," which were the scene of one of the most famous battles of the late struggle. The mill is supplied by a lovely stream, issuing from beneath a rock, and running a short course of twenty or thirty rods to the sea. It is difficult to believe that human blood has ever stained its pure waters.

Left Napoli with the daylight breeze, and are now entering the Hermionicus Sinus. A more barren land never rose upon the eye. The ancients considered this part of Greece so near to hell, that they omitted to put the usual obolon into the hands of those who died here, to pay their passage across the Styx.

Off the town of Hydra. This is the birthplace of Miaulis, and its neighbour island, Spesia, that of the sailor heroine, Bobolina. It is a heap of square stone houses set on the side of a hill, without the slightest reference to order. I see with the glass, an old Greek smoking on his balcony, with his feet over the railing, and half a dozen bare-legged women getting a boat into the water on the beach. The whole island has a desolate and sterile aspect. Across the strait, directly opposite the town, lies a lovely green valley, with olive groves and pastures between, and hundreds of gray cattle feeding in all the peace of Arcadia. I have seen such pictures so seldom of late, that it is like a medicine to my sight. "The sea and the sky," after a while, "lie like a load on the weary eye."

In passing two small islands just now, we caught a glimpse between them of the "John Adams," sloop-of-war, under full sail in the opposite direction. Five minutes sooner or later we should have missed her. She has been cruising in the Archipelago a month or two, waiting the commodore's arrival, and has on board despatches and letters, which makes the meeting a very exciting one to the officers. There is a general stir of expectation on board, in which my only share is that of sympathy. She brings her news from Smyrna, to which port, though my course has been errant enough, you will scarce have thought of directing a letter for me.

Anchored off the Island of Ægina, a mile from the town. The rocks which King Æacus (since Judge Æacus of the infernal regions) raised in the harbour to keep off the pirates, prevent our nearer approach. A beautiful garden of oranges and figs close to our anchorage, promises to reconcile us to our position. The little bay is completely shut in by mountainous islands, and the sun pours down upon us, unabated by the "wooing Ægæan wind."

ISLAND OF ÆGINA.—The “Maid of Athens,” in the very teeth of poetry, has become *Mrs. Black of Ægina*! The beautiful Teresa Makri, of whom Byron asked back his heart, of whom Moore and Hobhouse, and the poet himself, have written so much and so passionately, has forgotten the sweet burthen of the sweetest of love songs, and taken the unromantic name, and followed the unromantic fortunes, of a Scotchman!

The commodore proposed that we should call upon her on our way to the temple of Jupiter, this morning. We pulled up to the town in the barge, and landed on the handsome pier built by Dr. Howe (who expended thus, most judiciously, a part of the provisions sent from our country in his charge), and, finding a Greek in the crowd, who understood a little Italian, we were soon on our way to Mrs. Black's. Our guide was a fine, grave-looking man of forty, with a small cockade on his red cap, which indicated that he was some way in the service of the government. He laid his hand on his heart, when I asked him if he had known any Americans in Ægina. “They built this,” said he, pointing to the pier, the handsome granite posts of which we were passing at the moment. “They gave us bread, and meat, and clothing, when we should otherwise have perished.” It was said with a look and tone that thrilled me. I felt as if the whole debt of sympathy which Greece owes our country, were repaid by this one energetic expression of gratitude.

We stopped opposite a small gate, and the Greek went in without cards. It was a small stone house of a story and a half, with a rickety flight of wooden steps at the side, and not a blade of grass or sign of a flower in court or window. If there had been but a geranium in the porch, or a rose-tree by the gate, for description's sake.

Mr. Black was *out*—Mrs. Black was *in*. We walked up the creaking steps, with a Scotch terrier barking and snapping at our heels, and were met at the door by, really, a very pretty woman. She smiled as I apologised for our intrusion, and a sadder or a sweeter smile I never saw. She said her welcome in a few, simple words of Italian, and I thought there were few sweeter voices in the world. I asked her if she had not learned English yet. She coloured, and said, “No, signore!” and the deep spot in her cheek faded gradually down, in tints a painter would remember. Her husband, she said, had wished to learn her language, and would never let her speak English. I began to feel a prejudice against him. Presently, a boy of perhaps three years came into the room—an ugly, white-headed, Scotch-looking little ruffian, thin-lipped and freckled, and my aversion for Mr. Black became quite decided. “Did you not regret leaving Athens?” I asked. “Very much, signore,” she answered with half a sigh; “but my husband dislikes Athens.” Horrid Mr. Black! thought I.

I wished to ask her of Lord Byron, but I had heard that the poet's admiration had occasioned the usual scandal attendant on every kind of pre-eminence, and her modest and timid manners, while they assured me of her purity of heart, made me afraid to venture where there was even a possibility of wounding her. She sat in a drooping attitude on the coarsely-covered divan, which occupied three sides of the little room, and it was difficult to believe that any eye but her husband's had ever looked upon her, or that the “wells of her heart” had ever been drawn upon for anything deeper than the simple duties of a wife and mother.

She offered us some sweetmeats, the usual Greek compliment to visitors, as we rose to go, and laying her hand upon her heart, in the beautiful custom of the country, requested me to express her thanks to the commodore for the honour he had done her in calling, and to wish him

and his family every happiness. A servant-girl, very shabbily dressed, stood at the side door, and we offered her some money, which she might have taken unnoticed. She drew herself up very coldly, and refused it, as if she thought we had quite mistaken her. In a country where gifts of the kind are so universal, it spoke well for the pride of the family, at least.

I turned after we had taken leave, and made an apology to speak to her again; for in the interest of the general impression she had made upon me, I had forgotten to notice her dress, and I was not sure that I could remember a single feature of her face. We had called unexpectedly of course, and her dress was very plain. A red cloth cap bound about the temples, with a coloured shawl, whose folds were mingled with large braids of dark-brown hair, and decked with a tassel of blue silk, which fell to her left shoulder, formed her head-dress. In other respects she was dressed like a European. She is a little above the middle height, slightly and well-formed, and walks weakly, like most Greek women, as if her feet were too small for her weight. Her skin is dark and clear, and she has a colour in her cheek and lips that looks to me consumptive. Her teeth are white and regular, her face oval, and her forehead and nose form the straight line of the Grecian model—one of the few instances I have ever seen of it. Her eyes are large, and of a soft, liquid hazel, and this is her chief beauty. There is that “looking out of the soul through them,” which Byron always described as constituting the loveliness that most moved him. I made up my mind, as we walked away, that she would be a lovely woman anywhere. Her horrid name, and the unprepossessing circumstances in which we found her, had uncharmed, I thought, all poetical delusion that would naturally surround her as the “Maid of Athens.” We met her as simple Mrs. Black, whose Scotch husband’s terrier had worried us at the door, and we left her, feeling that the poetry which she had called forth from the heart of Byron, was her due by every law of loveliness.

From the house of the maid of Athens we walked to the school of Capo d’Istrias. It is a spacious stone quadrangle, enclosing a court handsomely railed and gravelled, and furnished with gymnastic apparatus. School was out, and perhaps a hundred and fifty boys were playing in the area. An intelligent-looking man accompanied us through the museum of antiquities, where we saw nothing very much worth noticing, after the collections of Rome, and to the library, where there was a superb bust of Capo d’Istrias, done by a Roman artist. It is a noble head, resembling Washington.

We bought a large basket of grapes for a few cents in returning to the boat, and offered money to one or two common men who had been of assistance to us, but *no one would receive it*. I italicise the remark, because the Greeks are so often stigmatised as utterly mercenary.

We pulled along the shore, passing round the point on which stands a single fluted column, the only remains of a magnificent temple of Venus, and, getting the wind, hoisted a sail, and ran down the northern side of the island five or six miles, till we arrived opposite the mountain on which stands the temple of Jupiter Panhellenios. The view of it from the sea was like that of a temple drawn on the sky. It occupies the very peak of the mountain, and is seen many miles on either side by the mariner of the Ægæan.

A couple of wild-looking, handsome fellows, bareheaded and bare-legged, with shirts and trousers reaching to the knee, lay in a small caïque under the shore; and, as we landed, the taller of the two laid his hand on his breast, and offered to conduct us to the temple. The ascent was about a mile.

We toiled over ploughed fields, with here and there a cluster of fig-trees, wild patches of rock and brier, and an occasional wall, and arrived breathless at the top, where a cool wind met us from the other side of the sea with delicious refreshment.

We sat down among the ruins of the oldest temple of Greece after that of Corinth. Twenty-three noble columns still lifted their heads over us, after braving the tempests of more than two thousand years. The ground about was piled up with magnificent fragments of marble, preserving, even in their fall, the sharp edges of the admirable sculpture of Greece. The Doric capital, the simple frieze, the well-fitted frusta, might almost be restored in the perfection with which they were left by the last touch of the chisel.

The view hence comprised a classic world. There was Athens! The broad mountain over the intensely blue gulf at our feet was Hymettus, and a bright white summit as of a mound between it and the sea, glittering brightly in the sun, was the venerable pile of temples in the Acropolis. To the left, Corinth was distinguishable over its low isthmus, and Megara and Salamis, and following down the wavy line of the mountains of Attica, the promontory of Sunium, modern Cape Colonna, dropped the horizon upon the sea. One might sit out his life amid these loftily-placed ruins, and scarce exhaust in thought the human history that has unrolled within the scope of his eye.

We passed two or three hours wandering about among the broken columns, and gazing away to the main and the distant isles, confessing the surpassing beauty of Greece. Yet have its mountains scarce a green spot, and its vales are treeless and uninhabited, and all that constitutes desolation is there, and strange as it may seem, you neither miss the verdure, nor the people, nor find it desolate. The outline of Greece, in the first place, is the finest in the world. The mountains lean down into the valleys, and the plains swell up to the mountains, and the islands rise from the sea, with a mixture of boldness and grace altogether peculiar. In the most lonely parts of the Ægæan, where you can see no trace of a human foot, it strikes you like a foreign land. Then the atmosphere is its own, and it exceeds that of Italy, far. It gives it the look of a landscape seen through a faintly-teinted glass. Soft blue mists of the most rarefied and changing shapes envelop the mountains on the clearest day, and without obscuring the most distant points perceptibly, give hill and vale a beauty that surpasses that of verdure. I never saw such *air* as I see in Greece. It has the same effect on the herbless and rocky scenery about us, as a veil over the face of a woman.

The islander who had accompanied us to the temple, stood on a fragment of a column, still as a statue, looking down upon the sea towards Athens. His figure for athletic grace of mould, and his head and features, for the expression of manly beauty and character, might have been models to Phidias. The beautiful and poetical land, of which he inherited his share of unparalleled glory, lay around him. I asked myself why it should have become, as it seems to be, the despair of the philanthropist. Why should its people, who, in the opinion of Childe Harold, are "nature's favourites still," be branded and abandoned as irreclaimable rogues, and the source to which we owe, even to this day, our highest models of taste, be neglected and forgotten? The nine days' enthusiasm for Greece has died away, and she has received a king from a family of despots. But there seems to me in her very beauty, and in the still superior qualities of her children, wherever they have room for competition, a promise of resuscitation. The convulsions of Europe may leave her soon to herself, and the slipper of the Turk, and the hand of the Christian, once lifted fairly from her neck, she will rise, and stand up amid these imperishable temples, once more free!

LETTER XXIII.

Athens—Ruins of the Parthenon—The Acropolis—Temple of Theseus—The Oldest of Athenian Antiquities—
Burial-Place of the Son of Miaulis—Reflections on Standing where Plato taught, and Demosthenes harangued
—Bavarian Sentinel—Turkish Mosque, erected within the Sanctuary of the Parthenon—Wretched
Habitations of the Modern Athenians.

ÆGÆAN SEA.—We got under way this morning, and stood towards Athens, followed by the sloop-of-war, “John Adams,” which had come to anchor under our stern the evening of our arrival at Ægina. The day is like every day of the Grecian summer, heavenly. The stillness and beauty of a new world lie about us. The ships steal on with their clouds of canvass just filling in the light breeze of the Ægæan, and withdrawing the eye from the lofty temple crowning the mountain on our lee, whose shining columns shift slowly as we pass; we could believe ourselves asleep on the sea. I have been repeating to myself the beautiful reflection of Servius Sulpitius, which occurs in his letter of condolence to Cicero, on the death of his daughter, written on this very spot, ^[8]“On my return from Asia,” he says, “as I was sailing from Ægina toward Megara, I began to contemplate the prospect of the countries around me. Ægina was behind, Megara before me; Piræus on the right, Corinth on the left; all which towns, once famous and flourishing, now lie overturned and buried in their ruins; upon this sight, I could not but presently think within myself, ‘Alas! how do we poor mortals fret and vex ourselves if any of our friends happen to die or be killed, whose life is yet so short, when the carcasses of so many cities lie here exposed before me in one view.’”

The columns of the Parthenon are easily distinguishable with the glass, and to the right of the Acropolis, in the plain, I see a group of tall ruins, which by the position must be near the banks of the Ilissus. I turn the glass upon the sides of the mount Hymettus, whose beds of thyme, “the long, long summer gilds,” and I can scarce believe that the murmur of the bees is not stealing over the water to my ear. Can this be Athens? Are these the same isles and mountains Alcibiades saw, returning with his victorious galleys from the Hellespont; the same that faded on the long gaze of the conqueror of Salamis, leaving his ungrateful country for exile; the same that to have seen, for a Roman, was to be complete as a man; the same whose proud dames wore the golden grasshopper in their hair, as a boasting token that they had sprung from the soil; the same where Pericles nursed the arts, and Socrates and Plato taught “humanity,” and Epicurus walked with his disciples, looking for truth? What an offset are these thrilling thoughts, with the nearing view in my sight, to a whole calendar of common misfortune!

Dropped anchor in the Piræus, the port of Athens. The city is five miles in the interior, and the “arms of Athens,” as the extending walls were called, stretched in the times of the republic from the Acropolis to the sea. The Piræus, now nearly a deserted port, with a few wretched houses, was then a large city. It wants an hour to sunset, and I am about starting with one of the officers to walk to Athens.

Five miles more sacred in history than those between the Piræus and the Acropolis do not exist in the world. We walked them in about two hours, with a golden sunset at our backs, and the excitement inseparable from an approach to “the eye of Greece,” giving elasticity to our steps. Near the Parthenon, which had been glowing in a flood of saffron light before us, the road separated, and taking the right, we entered the city by its southern gate. A tall Greek, who was returning from the plains with a gun on his shoulder, led us through the narrow streets of

the modern town to an hotel, where a comfortable supper, of which the most attractive circumstance to me was some honey from Hymettus, brought us to bed-time.

We were standing under the colonnades of the temple of Theseus, the oldest, and the best preserved of the antiquities of Athens, at an early hour. We walked around it in wonder. The sun that threw inward the shadows of its beautiful columns, had risen on that eastern porch for more than two thousand years, and it is still the transcendent model of the world. The Parthenon was a copy of it. The now venerable and ruined temples of Rome, were built in its proportions when it was already an antiquity. The modern edifices of every civilised nation are considered faulty only as they depart from it. How little dreamed the admirable Grecian, when its proportions rose gradually to his patient thought, that the child of his teeming imagination would be so immortal!

The situation of the Theseion has done much to preserve it. It stands free of the city, while the Parthenon and the other temples of the Acropolis, being within the citadel, have been battered by every assailant, from the Venetian to the iconoclast and the Turk. It looks at a little distance like a modern structure, its parts are so nearly perfect. It is only on coming close to the columns that you see the stains in the marble to be the corrosion of the long-feeding tooth of ages. A young Englishman is buried within the nave of the temple, and the son of Miaulis, said to have been a young man worthy of the best days of Greece, lies in the eastern porch, with the weeds growing rank over his grave.

We passed a handsome portico, standing alone amid a heap of ruins. It was the entrance to the ancient Agora. Here assembled the people of Athens, the constituents and supporters of Pericles, the first possessors of these godlike temples. Here were sown, in the ears of the Athenians, the first seeds of glory and sedition, by patriots and demagogues, in the stirring days of Plataea and Marathon. Here was it first whispered that Aristides had been too long called "the just," and that Socrates corrupted the youth of Athens. And, for a lighter thought, it was here that the wronged wife of Alcibiades, compelled to come forth publicly and sign her divorce, was snatched up in the arms of her brilliant, but dissolute husband, and carried forcibly home, forgiving him, woman-like, with but half a repentance. The feeling with which I read the story when a boy, is strangely fresh in my memory.

We hurried on to the Acropolis. The ascent is winding and difficult, and, near the gates, encumbered with marble rubbish. Volumes have been written on the antiquities which exist still within the walls. The greater part of four unrivalled temples are still lifted to the sun by this tall rock in the centre of Athens, the majestic Parthenon, visible over half Greece, towering above all. A Bavarian soldier received our passport at the gate. He was resting the butt of his musket on a superb bas-relief, a fragment from the ruins. How must the blood of a Greek boil to see a barbarian thus set to guard the very sanctuary of his glory.

We stood under the portico of the Parthenon, and looked down on Greece. Right through a broad gap in the mountains, as if they had been swept away that Athens might be seen, stood the shining Acropolis of Corinth. I strained my eyes to see Diogenes lying under the walls, and Alexander standing in his sunshine. "Sea-born Salamis" was beneath me, but the "ships by thousands" were not there, and the king had vanished from his "rocky throne" with his "men and nations." Ægina lay far down the gulf, folded in its blue mist, and I strained my sight to see Aristides wandering in exile on its shore. "Mars Hill" was within the sound of my voice, but its Areopagus was deserted of its judges, and the intrepid apostle was gone. The rostrum of Demosthenes, and the academy of Plato, and the banks of the Ilissus, where Socrates and Zeno

taught, were all around me, but the wily orator, and the philosopher, “on whose infant lips the bees shed honey as he slept,” and he whose death and doctrine have been compared to those of Christ, and the self-denying stoic, were alike departed. Silence and rain brood over all!

I walked through the nave of the Parthenon, passing a small Turkish mosque (built sacrilegiously by the former Disdar of Athens, within its very sanctuary), and mounted the south-eastern rampart of the Acropolis. Through the plain beneath ran the classic Ilissus, and on its banks stood the ruins of the temple of Jupiter Olympus, which I had distinguished with the glass in coming up the Ægæan. The Ilissus was nearly dry, but a small island covered with verdure divided its waters a short distance above the temple, and near it were distinguishable the foundations of the Lyceum. Aristotle and his Peripatetics ramble there no more. A herd of small Turkish horses were feeding up toward Hymettus, the only trace of life in a valley that was once alive with the brightest of the tides of human existence.

The sun poured into the Acropolis with an intensity I have seldom felt. The morning breeze had died away, and the glare from the bright marble ruins was almost intolerable to the eye. I climbed around over the heaps of fragmented columns, and maimed and fallen statues, to the north-western corner of the citadel, and sat down in the shade of one of the embrasures to look over toward Plato’s academy. The part of the city below this corner of the wall was the ancient Pelasgicum. It was from the spot where I sat that Parrhesiades, the fisherman, is represented in Lucian to have angled for philosophers, with a hook baited with gold and figs.

The academy (to me the most interesting spot of Athens) is still shaded with olive groves, as in the time of Plato. The Cephissus, whose gentle flow has mingled its murmur with so much sweet philosophy, was hidden from my sight by the numberless trees. I looked toward the spot with inexpressible interest. I had not yet been near enough to dispel the illusion. To me the academy was still beneath those silvery olives in all its poetic glory. The “Altar of Love” still stood before the entrance; the temple of Prometheus, the sanctuary of the Muses, the statues of Plato and of the Graces, the sacred olive, the tank in the cool gardens, and the tower of the railing Timon, were all there. I could almost have waited till evening to see Epicurus and Leontium, Socrates and Aspasia, returning to Athens.

We passed the Tower of the Winds, the ancient Klepsydra or water-clock of Athens, in returning to the hotel. The Eight Winds sculptured on the octagonal sides, are dressed according to their temperatures, six of them being more or less draped, and the remaining two nude. It is a small marble building, more curious than beautiful.

Our way lay through the sultry streets of modern Athens. I can give you an idea of it in a single sentence. It is a large village, of originally mean houses, pulled down to the very cellars, and lying choked in its rubbish. A large square in ruins after a fire in one of our cities, looks like it. It has been destroyed so often by Turks and Greeks alternately, that scarce one stone is left upon the other. The inhabitants thatch over one corner of these wretched and dusty holes with maize stalks and straw, and live there like beasts. The fineness of the climate makes a roof almost unnecessary for eight months in the year. The consuls and authorities of the place, and the missionaries, have tolerable houses, but the paths to them are next to impracticable for the rubbish. Nothing but a Turkish horse, which could be ridden up a precipice, would ever pick his way through the streets.

[8] “*Ex Asia rediens*,” &c.—I have given the Translation from Middleton’s Cicero.

LETTER XXIV.

The "Lantern of Demosthenes"—Byron's Residence in Athens—Temple of Jupiter Olympus, Seven Hundred Years in Building—Superstitious Fancy of the Athenians respecting its Ruins—Hermitage of a Greek Monk—Petarches, the Antiquary and Poet, and his Wife, Sister to the "Maid of Athens"—Mutilation of a Basso Rilievo by an English Officer—The Elgin Marbles—The Caryatides—Lord Byron's Autograph—Attachment of the Greeks to Dr. Howe—The Sliding Stone—A Scene in the Rostrum of Demosthenes.

Took a walk by sunset to the Ilissus. I passed, on the way, the "Lantern of Demosthenes," a small octagonal building of marble, adorned with splendid columns, and a beautifully sculptured frieze, in which it is said the orator used to shut himself for a month, with his head half shaved, to practice his orations. The Franciscan convent, Byron's residence while in Athens, was built adjoining it. It is now demolished. The poet's name is written with his own hand on a marble slab of the wall.

I left the city by the gate of Hadrian, and walked on to the temple of Jupiter Olympus. It crowns a small elevation on the northern bank of the Ilissus. It was once beyond all comparison the largest and most costly building in the world. During seven hundred years it employed the attention of the rulers of Greece, from Pisistratus to Hadrian, and was never quite completed. As a ruin it is the most beautiful object I ever saw. Thirteen columns of Pentelic marble, partly connected by a frieze, are all that remain. They are of the flowery Corinthian order, and sixty feet in height, exclusive of base or capital.

Three perfect columns stand separate from the rest, and lift from the midst of that solitary plain with an effect that, to my mind, is one of the highest sublimity. The sky might rest on them. They seem made to sustain it. As I lay on the parched grass and gazed on them in the glory of a Grecian sunset, they seemed to me proportioned for a continent. The mountains I saw between them were not designed with more amplitude, nor corresponded more nobly to the sky above.

The people of Athens have a superstitious reverence for these ruins. Dodwell says, "The single column toward the western extremity was thrown down, many years ago, by a Turkish voivode, for the sake of the materials, which were employed in constructing the great mosque of the bazaar. The Athenians relate that, after it was thrown down, the three others nearest it were heard to lament the loss of their sister! and these nocturnal lamentations did not cease till the sacrilegious voivode was destroyed by poison.

Two of the columns, connected by one immense slab, are surmounted by a small building, now in ruins, but once the hermitage of a Greek monk. Here he passed his life, seventy feet in the air, sustained by two of the most graceful columns of Greece. A basket, lowered by a line, was filled by the pious every morning, but the romantic eremite was never seen. With the lofty Acropolis crowned with temples just beyond him, the murmuring Ilissus below, the thyme-covered sides of Hymettus to the south, and the blue Ægæan stretching away to the west, his eye, at least, could never tire. There are times when I could envy him his lift above the world.

I descended to the Fountain of Callirhoe, which gushes from beneath a rock in the bed of the Ilissus, just below the temple. It is the scene of the death of the lovely nymph-mother of Ganymede. The twilight air was laden with the fragrant thyme, and the songs of the Greek labourers returning from the fields came faintly over the plains. Life seems too short, when every breath is a pleasure. I loitered about the clear and rocky lip of the fountain, till the pool

below reflected the stars in its trembling bosom. The lamps began to twinkle in Athens, Hesperus rose over Mount Pentelicus like a blazing lamp, the sky over Salamis faded down to the sober tint of night, and the columns of the Parthenon mingled into a single mass of shade. And so, I thought, as I strolled back to the city, concludes a day in Athens—one, at least, in my life, for which it is worth the trouble to have lived.

I was again in the Acropolis the following morning. Mr. Hill had kindly given me a note to Petarches, the king's antiquary, a young Athenian, who married the sister of the "Maid of Athens."^[9] We went together through the ruins. They have lately made new excavations, and some superb bassi-rilievi are among the discoveries. One of them represented a procession leading victims to the sacrifice, and was quite the finest thing I ever saw. The leading figure was a superb female, from the head of which the nose had lately been barbarously broken. The face of the enthusiastic antiquary flushed while I was lamenting it. It was done, he told me, but a week before, by an officer of the English squadron then lying at the Piræus. Petarches detected it immediately, and sent word to the admiral, who discovered the heartless goth in a nephew of an English duke, a midshipman of his own ship. I should not have taken the trouble to mention so revolting a circumstance if I had not seen, in a splendid copy of the "illustrations of Byron's Travels in Greece," a most virulent attack on the officers of the "Constellation," and Americans generally, for the same thing. Who but Englishmen have robbed Athens, and Ægina, and all Greece? Who but Englishmen are watched like thieves in their visits to every place of curiosity in the world? Where is the superb caryatid of the Erechtheion? stolen, with such barbarous carelessness, too, that the remaining statues and the superb portico they sustained are tumbling to the ground! The insolence of England's laying such sins at the door of another nation is insufferable.

For my own part, I cannot conceive the motive for carrying away a fragment of a statue or a column. I should as soon think of drawing a tooth as a specimen of some beautiful woman I had seen in my travels. And how one dare show such a theft to any person of taste, is quite as singular. Even when a whole column or statue is carried away, its main charm is gone with the association of the place. I venture to presume, that no person of classic feeling ever saw Lord Elgin's marbles without execrating the folly that could bring them from their bright, native sky, to the vulgar atmosphere of London. For the love of taste, let us discountenance such barbarisms in America.

The Erechtheion and the adjoining temple are gems of architecture. The small portico of the caryatides (female figures, in the place of columns, with their hands on their hips) must have been one of the most exquisite things in Greece. One of them (fallen in consequence of Lord Elgin's removal of the sister statue), lies headless on the ground, and the remaining ones are badly mutilated, but they are very, very beautiful. I remember two in the Villa Albani, at Rome, brought from some other temple in Greece, and considered the choicest gems of the gallery.

We climbed up the sanctuary of the Erechtheion, in which stood the altars to the two elements to which the temples were dedicated. The sculpture around the cornices is still so sharp, that it might have been finished yesterday. The young antiquary alluded to Byron's anathema against Lord Elgin, in "Childe Harold," and showed me, on the inside of the capital of one of the columns, the place where the poet had written his name. It was, as he always wrote it, simply "Byron," in small letters, and would not be noticed by an ordinary observer.

If the lover, as the poet sings, was jealous of the star his mistress gazed upon, the sister of the "Maid of Athens" may well be jealous of the Parthenon. Petarches looks at it and talks of it with a fever in his eyes. I could not help smiling at his enthusiasm. He is about twenty-five, of a

slender person, with downcast, melancholy eyes, and looks the poet according to the most received standard. His reserved manners melted toward me on discovering that I knew our countryman, Dr. Howe, who, he tells me, was his groomsman (or the corresponding assistant at a Greek wedding), and to whom he seems, in common with all his countrymen, warmly attached. To a man of his taste, I can conceive nothing more gratifying than his appointment to the care of the Acropolis. He spends his day there with his book, attending the few travellers who come, and when the temples are deserted, he sits down in the shadow of a column, and reads amid the silence of the ruins he almost worships. There are few vocations in this envious world so separated from the jarring passions of our nature.

Passed the morning on horseback, visiting the antiquities without the city. Turning by the temple of Theseus, we crossed Mars Hill, the seat of the Areopagus, and passing a small valley, ascended the Pnyx. On the right of the path we observed the rock of the hill worn to the polish of enamel by friction. It was an almost perpendicular descent of six or seven feet, and steps were cut at the sides to mount to the top. It is the famous sliding stone, believed by the Athenians to possess the power of determining the sex of unborn children. The preference of sons, if the polish of the stone is to be trusted, is universal in Greece.

The rostrum of Demosthenes was above us on the side of the hill facing from the sea. A small platform is cut into the rock, and on either side a seat is hewn out, probably for the distinguished men of the state. The audience stood on the side-hill, and the orator and his listeners were in the open air. An older rostrum is cut into the summit of the hill, facing the sea. It is said that when the maritime commerce of Greece began to enrich the lower classes, the thirty tyrants turned the rostrum toward the land, lest their orators should point to the ships of the Piræus, and remind the people of their power.

Scene after scene swept through my fancy as I stood on the spot. I saw Demosthenes, after his first unsuccessful oration, descending with a dejected air toward the temple of Theseus, followed by old Eunomus;^[10] abandoning himself to despair, and repressing the fiery consciousness within him as a hopeless ambition. I saw him again, with the last glowing period of a Philippic on his lips, standing on this rocky eminence, his arm stretched toward Macedon; his eye flashing with success, and his ear catching the low murmur of the crowd below, which told him he had moved his country as with the heave of an earthquake. I saw the calm Aristides rise, with his mantle folded majestically about him; and the handsome Alcibiades waiting with a smile on his lips to speak; and Socrates, gazing on his wild but winning disciple with affection and fear. How easily is this bare rock, whereon the eagle now alights unaffrighted, repopled with the crowding shadows of the past.

[9] You will recollect what Byron says of these three girls in one of his letters to Dr. Drury: "I had almost forgot to tell you, that I am dying for love of three Greek girls, at Athens, sisters. I lived in the same house. Teresa, Marcama, and Katinka, are the names of these divinities—all under fifteen."

[10] "However, in his first address to the people, he was laughed at and interrupted by their clamours; for the violence of his manner threw him into a confusion of periods, and a distortion of his argument. At last, upon his quitting the Assembly, Eunomus, the Thriasian, a man now extremely old,

found him wandering in a dejected condition in the Piræus, and took upon him to set him right.”—*Plutarch’s Life of Demosthenes*.

LETTER XXV.

The Prison of Socrates—Turkish Stirrups and Saddles—Plato’s Academy—The American Missionary School at Athens—The Son of Petarches and Nephew of “Mrs. Black of Ægina.”

ATHENS.—We dismounted at the door of Socrates’ prison. A hill between the Areopagus and the sea, is crowned with the remains of a showy monument to a Roman pro-consul. Just beneath it the hill forms a low precipice, and in the face of it you see three low entrances to caverns hewn in the solid rock. The farthest to the right was the room of the Athenian guard, and within it is a chamber with a round ceiling, which the sage occupied during the thirty days of his imprisonment. There are marks of an iron door which separated it from the guard-room, and through the bars of this he refused the assistance of his friends to escape, and held those conversations with Crito, Plato, and others which have made his name immortal. On the day upon which he was doomed to die, he was removed to the chamber nearest the Acropolis, and here the hemlock was presented to him. A shallower excavation between, held an altar to the gods; and after his death, his body was here given to his friends.

Nothing, except some of the touching narrations of Scripture ever seemed to me so affecting as the history of the death of Socrates. It has been likened (I think, not profanely), to the death of Christ. His virtuous life, his belief in the immortality of the soul and a future state of reward and punishment, his forgiveness of his enemies and his godlike death, certainly prove him, in the absence of revealed light, to have walked the “darkling path of human reason” with an almost inspired rectitude. I stood in the chamber which had received his last breath, not without emotion. The rocky walls about me had witnessed his composure as he received the cup from his weeping jailer; the roughly-hewn floor beneath my feet had sustained him, as he walked to and fro, till the poison had chilled his limbs; his last sigh, as he covered his head with his mantle and expired, passed forth by that low portal. It is not easy to be indifferent on spots like these. The spirit of the place is felt. We cannot turn back and touch the brighter links of that “fleshly chain,” in which all human beings since the creation have been bound alike without feeling, even through the rusty coil of ages, the electric sympathy. Socrates died here! The great human leap into eternity, the inevitable calamity of our race, was here taken more nobly than elsewhere. Whether the effect be to “fright us from the shore,” or, to nerve us by the example, to look more steadily before us, a serious thought, almost, of course, a salutary one, lurks in the very air.

We descended the hill and galloped our small Turkish horses at a stirring pace over the plain. The short stirrup and high-peaked saddle of the country, are (at least to men of my length and limb) uncomfortable contrivances. With the knees almost up to the chin, one is compelled, of course, to lean far over the horse’s head, and it requires all the fulness of Turkish trousers to conceal the awkwardness of the position. We drew rein at the entrance of the “olive-grove.” Our horses walked leisurely along the shaded path between the trees, and we arrived in a few minutes at the site of Plato’s Academy. The more ethereal portion of my pleasure in seeing it must be in the recollection. The Cephissus was dry, the noon-day sun was hot, and we were

glad to stop, with throbbing temples, under a cluster of fig-trees, and eat the delicious fruit, forgetting all the philosophers incontinently. We sat in our saddles, and a Greek woman, of great natural beauty, though dressed in rags, bent down the boughs to our reach. The honey from the over-ripe figs, dropped upon us as the wind shook the branches. Our dark-eyed and bright-lipped Pomona served us with a grace and cheerfulness that would draw me often to the neighbourhood of the Academy if I lived in Athens. I venture to believe that Phryne herself, in so mean a dress, would scarce have been more attractive. We kissed our hand to her as our spirited horses leaped the hollow with which the trees were encircled, and passing the mound sacred to the Furies, where *Œdipus* was swallowed up, dashed over the sultry plain once more, and were soon in Athens.

I have passed most of my leisure hours here in a scene I certainly did not reckon in anticipation, among the pleasures of a visit to Athens—the American Missionary School. We have all been delighted with it, from the commodore to the youngest midshipman. Mr. and Mrs. Hill have been here some four or five years, and have attained their present degree of success in the face of every difficulty. Their whole number of scholars from the commencement, has been upwards of three hundred; at present they have a hundred and thirty, mostly girls.

We found the school in a new and spacious stone building on the site of the ancient “market,” where Paul, on his visit to Athens, “disputed daily with those that met with him.” A large court-yard, shaded partly with a pomegranate tree, separates it from the marble portico of the Agora, which is one of the finest remains of antiquity. Mrs. Hill was in the midst of the little Athenians. Two or three serious-looking Greek girls were assisting her in regulating their movements, and the new and admirable system of combined instruction and amusement was going on swimmingly. There were, perhaps, a hundred children in the benches, mostly from three to six or eight years of age: dark-eyed, cheerful little creatures, who looked as if their “birthright of the golden grasshopper” had made them nature’s favourites as certainly as in the days when their ancestor-mothers settled questions of philosophy. They marched and recited, and clapped their sun-burnt hands, and sung hymns, and I thought I never had seen a more gratifying spectacle. I looked around in vain for one who seemed discontented or weary. Mrs. Hill’s manner to them was most affectionate. She governs, literally with a smile.

I selected several little favourites. One was a fine fellow of two to three years, whose name I inquired immediately. He was Plato Petarches, the nephew of the “Maid of Athens,” and the son of the second of the three girls so admired by Lord Byron. Another was a girl of six or seven, with a face, surpassing, for expressive beauty, that of any child I ever saw. She was a Hydriote by birth, and dressed in the costume of the islands. Her little feet were in Greek slippers; her figure was prettily set off with an open jacket, laced with buttons from the shoulder to the waist, and her head was enveloped in a figured handkerchief, folded gracefully in the style of a turban, and brought under her chin, so as to show suspended a rich metallic fringe. Her face was full, but marked with childish dimples, and her mouth and eyes, as beautiful as ever those expressive features were made, had a retiring seriousness in them, indescribably sweet. She looked as if she had been born in some scene of Turkish devastation, and had brought her mother’s heart-ache into the world.

At noon, at the sound of a bell, they marched out, clapping their hands in time to the instructor’s voice, and seated themselves in order upon the portico, in front of the school. Here their baskets were given them, and each one produced her dinner and eat it with the utmost propriety. It was really a beautiful scene.

It is to be remembered that here are educated a class of human beings who were else deprived of instruction by the universal custom of their country. The females of Greece are suffered to grow up in ignorance. One who can read and write is rarely found. The school has commenced fortunately at the most favourable moment. The government was in process of change, and an innovation was unnoticed in the confusion that at a later period might have been opposed by the prejudices of custom. The King and the President of the Regency, Count Armanberg, visited the school frequently during their stay in Athens, and expressed their thanks to Mrs. Hill warmly. The Countess Armanberg called repeatedly to have the pleasure of sitting in the school-room for an hour. His Majesty, indeed, could hardly find a more useful subject in his realm. Mrs. Hill, with her own personal efforts, has taught *more than one hundred children to read the Bible!* How few of us can write against our names an equal offset to the claims of human duty?

Circumstances made me acquainted with one or two wealthy persons residing in Athens, and I received from them a strong impression of Mr. Hill's usefulness and high standing. His house is the hospitable resort of every stranger of intelligence and respectability.

Mr. King and Mr. Robinson, missionaries of the Foreign Board, are absent at Psera. Their families are here.

I passed my last evening among the magnificent ruins on the banks of the Ilissus. The next day was occupied in returning visits to the families who had been polite to us, and, with a farewell of unusual regret to our estimable missionary friends, we started on horseback to return by a gloomy sunset to the Piræus. I am looking more for the amusing than the useful in my rambles about the world, and I confess I should not have gone far out of my way to visit a missionary station anywhere. But chance has thrown this of Athens across my path, and I record it as a moral spectacle to which no thinking person could be indifferent. I freely say I never have met with an equal number of my fellow-creatures, who seemed to me so indisputably and purely useful. The most cavilling mind must applaud their devoted sense of duty, bearing up against exile from country and friends, privations, trial of patience, and the many, many ills inevitable to such an errand in a foreign land, while even the coldest politician would find in their efforts the best promise for an enlightened renovation of Greece.

Long after the twilight thickened immediately about us, the lofty Acropolis stood up, bathed in a glow of light from the lingering sunset. I turned back to gaze upon it with an enthusiasm I had thought laid on the shelf with my half-forgotten classics. The intrinsic beauty of the ruins of Greece, the loneliness of their situation, and the divine climate in which, to use Byron's expression, they are "buried," invest them with an interest which surrounds no other antiquities in the world, I rode on, repeating to myself Milton's beautiful description:—

"Look! on the Ægæan a city stands
Built nobly; pure the air and light the soil:
Athens—the eye of Greece, mother of arts
And eloquence; native to famous wits,
Or hospitable, in her sweet recess
City or suburban, studious walks or shades.
See, there the olive groves of Academe,
Plato's retirement, where the attic bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long.
There, flowery hill, Hymettus, with the sound
Of bees' industrious murmurs, off invites
To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
His whispering stream; within the walls there view
The schools of ancient sages, his who bred

LETTER XXVI.

The Piræus—The Sacra Via—Ruins of Eleusis—Gigantic Medallion—Costume of the Athenian Women—The Tomb of Themistocles—The Temple of Minerva—Autographs.

PIRÆUS.—With a basket of ham and claret in the stern-sheets, a cool awning over our heads, and twelve men at the oars, such as the coxswain of Themistocles' galley might have sighed for, we pulled away from the ship at an early hour, for Eleusis. The conqueror of Salamis delayed the battle for the ten o'clock breeze, and as nature (which should be called *he* instead of *she*, for her constancy) still ruffles the Ægæan at the same hour, we had a calm sea through the strait, where once lay the "ships by thousands."

We soon rounded the point, and shot along under the

"Rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis."

It is a bare, bold precipice, a little back from the sea, and commands an entire view of the strait. Here sat Xerxes, "on his throne of gold,"^[1] with many secretaries about him to write down the particulars of the action." The Athenians owed their victory to the wisdom of Themistocles, who managed to draw the Persians into the strait (scarce a cannon shot across just here), where only a small part of their immense fleet could act at one time. The wind, as the wily Greek had foreseen, rose at the same time, and rendered the lofty-built Persian ships unmanageable; while the Athenian galleys, cut low to the water, were easily brought into action in the most advantageous position. It is impossible to look upon this beautiful and lovely spot and imagine the stirring picture it presented. The wild sea-bird knows no lonelier place. Yet on that rock once sat the son of Darius, with his royal purple floating to the wind, and, below him, within these rocky limits, lay "one thousand two hundred ships-of-war, and two thousand transports," while behind him on the shores of the Piræus, were encamped "seven hundred thousand foot, and four hundred thousand horse,"—"amounting," says Potter, in his notes, "with the retinue of women and servants that attended the Asiatic princes in their military expeditions, to more than five millions." How like a king must the royal Persian have felt, when

"He counted them at break of day!"

With an hour or two of fast pulling, we opened into the broad bay of Eleusis. The first Sabbath after the creation could not have been more absolutely silent. Megara was away on the left, Eleusis before us at the distance of four or five miles, and the broad plains where agriculture was first taught by Triptolemus, the poetical home of Ceres, lay an utter desert in the sunshine. Behind us, between the mountains, descended the *Sacra Via*, by which the procession came to Athens to celebrate the "Eleusinian mysteries"—a road of five or six miles, lined, in the time of Pericles; with temples and tombs. I could half fancy the scene, as it was presented to the eyes of the invading Macedonians—when the procession of priests and virgins, accompanied by the whole population of Athens, wound down into the plain, guarded

by the shining spears of the army of Alcibiades. It is still doubtful, I believe, whether these imposing ceremonies were the pure observances of a lofty and sincere superstition, or the orgies of licentious saturnalia.

We landed at Eleusis, and were immediately surrounded by a crowd of people, as simple and curious in their manners, and resembling somewhat in their dress and complexion, the Indians of our country. The ruins of a great city lay about us, and their huts were built promiscuously among them. Magnificent fragments of columns and blocks of marble interrupted the path through the village, and between two of the houses lay, half buried, a gigantic medallion of Pentelic marble, representing, in alto-rilievo, the body and head of a warrior in full armour. A hundred men would move it with difficulty. Commodore Patterson attempted it six years ago, in the "Constitution," but his launch was found unequal to its weight.

The people here gathered more closely round the ladies of our party, examining their dress with childish curiosity. They were doubtless the first females ever seen at Eleusis in European costume. One of the ladies happening to pull off her glove, there was a general cry of astonishment. The brown kid had clearly been taken as the colour of the hand. Some curiosity was then shown to see their faces, which were covered with thick green veils, as a protection against the sun. The sight of their complexion (in any country remarkable for a dazzling whiteness) completed the astonishment of these children of Ceres.

We, on our part, were scarcely less amused by their costumes in turn. Over the petticoat was worn a loose jacket of white cloth reaching to the knee, and open in front—its edges and sleeves wrought very tastefully with red cord. The head-dress was composed entirely of *money*. A fillet of gold sequins was first put, *à la feronière*, around the forehead, and a close cap, with a throat-piece like the gorget of a helmet, fitted the skull exactly, stitched with coins of all values, folded over each other according to their sizes, like scales. The hair was then braided and fell down the back, loaded also with money. Of the fifty or sixty women we saw, I should think one half had money on her head to the amount of from one to two hundred dollars. They suffered us to examine them with perfect good-humour. The greater proportion of pieces were *paras*, a small and thin Turkish coin of very small value. Among the larger pieces were dollars of all nations, five-franc pieces, Sicilian piastres, Tuscan colonati, Venetian swansicas, &c. &c. I doubted much whether they were not the collection of some piratical caïque. There is no possibility of either spending or getting money within many miles of Eleusis, and it seemed to be looked upon as an ornament which they had come too lightly by to know its use.

We walked over the foundations of several large temples with the remains of their splendour lying unvalued about them, and at a mile from the village came to the "well of Proserpine," whence, say the poets, the ravished daughter of Ceres emerged from the infernal regions on her visit to her mother. The modern Eleusinians know it only as a well of the purest water.

On our return, we stopped at the southern point of the Piræus, to see the tomb of Themistocles. We were directed to it by thirteen or fourteen frusta of enormous columns, which once formed the monument to his memory. They buried him close to the edge of the sea, opposite Salamis. The continual beat of the waves for so many hundred years has worn away the promontory, and his sarcophagus, which was laid in a grave cut in the solid rock, is now filled by every swell from the Ægæan. The old hero was brought back from his exile to be gloriously buried. He could not lie better for the repose of his spirit (if it returned with his bones from Argos). The sea on which he beat the haughty Persians with his handful of galleys, sends

every wave to his feet. The hollows in the rock around his grave are full of snowy salt left by the evaporation. You might scrape up a bushel within six feet of him. It seems a natural tribute to his memory.^[12]

On a high and lonely rock, stretching out into the midst of the sea, stands a solitary temple. As far as the eye can reach, along the coast of Attica and to the distant isles, there is no sign of human habitation. There it stands, lifted into the blue sky of Greece, like the unreal “fabric of a vision.”

Cape Colonna and its “temple of Minerva,” were familiar to my memory, but my imagination had pictured nothing half so beautiful. As we approached it from the sea, it seemed so strangely out of place, even for a ruin, so far removed from what had ever been the haunt of man, that I scarce credited my eyes. We could soon count them—thirteen columns of sparkling marble, glittering in the sun. The sea-air keeps them spotlessly white, and, till you approach them nearly, they have the appearance of a structure, from its freshness, still in the sculptor’s hands.

The boat was lowered, and the ship lay off-and-on while we landed near the rocks where Falconer was shipwrecked, and mounted to the Temple. The summit of the promontory is strewn with the remains of the fallen columns, and their smooth surfaces are thickly inscribed with the names of travellers. Among others, I noticed Byron’s and Hobhouse’s, and that of the agreeable author of “A Year in Spain.” Byron, by the way, mentions having narrowly escaped robbery here, by a band of Mainote pirates. He was surprised swimming off the point, by an English vessel containing some ladies of his acquaintance. He concludes the “Isles of Greece” beautifully with an allusion to it by its ancient name:—

“Place me on Sunium’s marble steep,” &c.

The view from the summit is one of the finest in all Greece. The isle where Plato was sold as a slave, and where Aristides and Demosthenes passed their days in exile, stretches along the west; the wide Ægæan, sprinkled with here and there a solitary rock, herbless, but beautiful in its veil of mist, spreads away from its feet to the southern line of the horizon, and crossing each other almost imperceptibly on the light winds of this summer sea, the red-sailed caïque of Greece, the merchantmen from the Dardanelles, and the heavy men-of-war of England and France, cruising wherever the wind blows fairest, are seen like broad-winged and solitary birds, lying low with spread pinions upon the waters. The place touched me. I shall remember it with an affection.

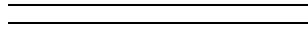
There is a small island close to Sunium, which was fortified by one of the heroes of the Iliad on his return from Troy—why, heaven only knows. It was here, too, that Phrontes, the pilot of Menelaus, died and was buried.

We returned on board after an absence of two hours from the ship, and are steering now straight for the Dardanelles. The plains of Marathon are but a few hours north of our course, and I pass them unwillingly; but what is there one would not see? Greece lies behind, and I have realised one of my dearest dreams in rambling over its ruins. Travel is an appetite that “grows by what it feeds on.”

[11] So says Phanodemus, quoted by Plutarch. The commentators upon the tragedy of Æschylus on this subject, say it was a “silver chair,” and that it

“was afterwards placed in the Temple of Minerva, at Athens, with the golden-hilted cimeter of Mardonius.”

[12] Langhorne says in his note on Plutarch, “There is the genuine *attic salt* in most of the retorts and observations of themselves. His wit seems to have been equal to his military and political capacity.”



LETTER XXVII.

Mytilene—The Tomb of Achilles—Turkish Burying Ground—Lost Reputation of the Scamander—Asiatic Sunsets—Visit to a Turkish Bey—The Castles of the Dardanelles—Turkish Bath and its consequences.

Lesbos to windward. A caique, crowded with people, is running across our bow, all hands singing a wild chorus (perhaps the “Lesboum Carmen,”) most merrily. The island is now called Mytilene, said to be the greenest and most fertile of the Mediterranean. The Lesbian wine is still good, but they have had no poetesses since Sappho. Cause and effect have quarrelled, one would think.

Tenedos on the lee. The tomb of Achilles is distinguishable with the glass on the coast of Asia. The column which Alexander “crowned and anointed and danced around naked,” in honour of the hero’s ghost, stands above it no longer. The Macedonian wept over Achilles, says the school-book, and envied him the blind bard who had sung his deeds. He would have dried his tears if he had known that his *pas seul* would be remembered as long.

Tenedos seems a pretty island as we near it. It was here that the Greeks hid, to persuade the Trojans that they had abandoned the siege, while the wooden horse was wheeled into Troy. The site of the city of Priam is visible as we get nearer the coast of Asia. Mount Ida and the marshy valley of the Scamander are appearing beyond Cape Sigæum, and we shall anchor in an hour between Europe and Asia, in the mouth of the rapid Dardanelles. The wind is not strong enough to stem the current that sets down like a mill-race from the Sea of Marmora.

Went ashore on the Asian side for a ramble. We landed at the strong Turkish castle that, with another on the European side, defends the Strait, and passing under their bristling batteries, entered the small Turkish town in the rear. Our appearance excited a great deal of curiosity. The Turks, who were sitting cross-legged on the broad benches extending like a tailor’s board, in front of the cafés, stopped smoking as we passed, and the women, wrapping up their own faces more closely, approached the ladies of our party, and lifted their veils to look at them with the freedom of our friends at Eleusis. We came unaware upon two squalid wretches of women in turning a corner, who pulled their ragged shawls over their heads with looks of the greatest resentment at having exposed their faces to us.

A few minutes’ walk brought us outside of the town. An extensive Turkish grave-yard lay on the left. Between fig-trees and blackberry bushes it was a green spot, and the low tombstones of the men, crowned each with a turban carved in marble of the shape befitting the sleepers rank, peered above the grass like a congregation sitting in a uniform head-dress at a field-preaching. Had it not been for the female graves, which were marked with a slab like ours, and here and there the tombstone of a Greek, carved after the antique, in the shape of a beautiful shell, the effect of an assemblage *sur l’herbe* would have been ludicrously perfect.

We walked on to the Scamander. A rickety bridge gave us a passage, toll free, to the other side, where we sat round the rim of a marble well, and ate delicious grapes, stolen for us by a Turkish boy from a near vineyard. Six or seven camels were feeding on the unclosed plain, picking a mouthful and then lifting their long, snaky necks into the air to swallow; a stray horseman, with the head of his bridle decked with red tassels and his knees up to his chin, scoured the bridle path to the mountains; and three devilish looking buffaloes scratched their hides and rolled up their fiendish green eyes under a bramble-hedge near the river. *Voila!* a scene in Asia.

The poets lie, or the Scamander is as treacherous as Macassar. Venus bathed in its waters before contending for the prize of beauty adjudged to her on this very Mount Ida that I see covered with brown grass in the distance. Her hair became "flowing gold" in the lavation. My friends compliment me upon no change after a similar experiment. My long locks (run riot with a four months' cruise) are as dingy and untractable as ever, and, except in the increased brownness of a Mediterranean complexion, the cracked glass in the state-room of my friend the lieutenant gave me no encouragement of a change. It is soft water, and runs over fine white sand; but the fountain of Callirhoe, at Athens (she was the daughter of the Scamander, and like most daughters, is much more attractive than her papa), is softer and clearer. Perhaps the loss of the Scamander's virtues is attributable to the cessation of the tribute paid to the god in Helen's time.

The twilights in this part of the world are unparalleled—but I have described twilights and sunsets in Greece and Italy till I am ashamed to write the words. Each one comes as if there never had been and never were to be another, and the adventures of the day, however stirring, are half forgotten in its glory, and seem in comparison, unworthy of description; but one look at the terms that might describe it, written on paper, uncharms even the remembrance. You must come to Asia and *feel* sunsets. You cannot get them by paying postage.

At anchor, waiting for a wind. Called to day on the Bey Effendi, commander of the two castles, "Europe" and "Asia," between which we lie. A pokerish-looking dwarf, with ragged beard and high turban, and a tall Turk, who I am sure never smiled since he was born, kicked off their slippers at the threshold, and ushered us into a chamber on the second story. It was a luxurious little room, lined completely with cushions, the muslin-covered pillows of down leaving only a place for the door. The divan was as broad as a bed, and, save the difficulty of rising from it, it was perfect as a lounge. A ceiling of inlaid woods, embrowned with smoke, windows of small panes fantastically set, and a place lower than the floor for the attendant to stand and leave their slippers, were all that was peculiar else.

The Bey entered in a few minutes, with a pipe-bearer, an interpreter, and three or four attendants. He was a young man, about twenty, and excessively handsome. A clear, olive complexion, a moustache of silky black, a thin, aquiline nose, with almost transparent nostrils, cheeks and chin rounded into a perfect oval, and mouth and eyes expressive of the most resolute firmness, and at the same time, girlishly beautiful, completed the picture of the finest-looking fellow I have seen within my recollection. His person was very slight, and his feet and hands small, and particularly well shaped. Like most of his countrymen of later years, his dress was half European, and much less becoming, of course, than the turban and trowser. Pantaloon, rather loose, a light fawn-coloured short jacket, a red cap, with a blue tassel, and stockings, without shoes, were enough to give him the appearance of a dandy half through his

toilet. He entered with an indolent step, bowed, without smiling, and throwing one of his feet under him, sunk down upon the divan, and beckoned for his pipe. The Turk in attendance kicked off his slippers, and gave him the long tube with its amber mouth-piece, setting the bowl into a basin in the centre of the room. The Bey put it to his handsome lips, and drew till the smoke mounted to the ceiling, and then handed it, with a graceful gesture, to the commodore.

The conversation went on through two interpretations. The Bey's interpreter spoke Greek and Turkish, and the ship's pilot, who accompanied us, spoke Greek and English, and the usual expressions of good feeling, and offers of mutual service, were thus passed between the puffs of the pipe with sufficient facility. The dwarf soon entered with coffee. The small gilded cups had about the capacity of a goodwife's thimble, and were covered with gold tops to retain the aroma. The fragrance of the rich berry filled the room. We acknowledged, at once, the superiority of the Turkish manner of preparing it. It is excessively strong, and drunk without milk.

I looked into every corner while the attendants were removing the cups, but could see no trace of a *book*. Ten or twelve guns, with stocks inlaid with pearl and silver, two or three pair of gold-handled pistols, and a superb Turkish cimeter and belt, hung upon the walls, but there was no other furniture. We rose, after a half hour's visit, and were bowed out by the handsome Effendi, coldly and politely. As we passed under the walls of the castle, on the way to the boat, we saw six or seven women, probably a part of his harem, peeping from the embrasures of one of the bastions. Their heads were wrapped in white, one eye only left visible. It was easy to imagine them Zuleikas after having seen their master.

Went ashore at Castle Europe, with one or two of the officers, to take a bath. An old Turk, sitting upon his hams, at the entrance, pointed to the low door at his side, without looking at us, and we descended, by a step or two, into a vaulted hall, with a large, circular ottoman in the centre, and a very broad divan all around. Two tall young Mussulmans, with only turbans and waistcloths to conceal their natural proportions, assisted us to undress, and led us into a stone room, several degrees warmer than the first. We walked about here for a few minutes, and as we began to perspire, were taken into another, filled with hot vapour, and, for the first moment or two, almost intolerable. It was shaped like a dome, with twenty or thirty small windows at the top, several basins at the sides into which hot water was pouring, and a raised stone platform in the centre, upon which we were all requested, by gestures, to lie upon our backs. The perspiration, by this time, was pouring from us like rain. I lay down with the others, and a Turk, a dark-skinned, fine-looking fellow, drew on a mitten of rough grass cloth, and laying one hand upon my breast to hold me steady, commenced rubbing me without water, violently. The skin peeled off under the friction, and I thought he must have rubbed into the flesh repeatedly. Nothing but curiosity to go through the regular operation of a Turkish bath prevented my crying out "Enough!" He rubbed away, turning me from side to side, till the rough glove passed smoothly all over my body and limbs, and then handing me a pair of wooden slippers, suffered me to rise. I walked about for a few minutes, looking with surprise at the rolls of skin he had taken from me, and feeling almost transparent as the hot air blew upon me.

In a few minutes my Mussulman beckoned to me to follow him to a smaller room, where he seated me on a stone beside a fount of hot water. He then made some thick soap-suds in a basin, and, with a handful of fine flax, soaped and rubbed me all over again, and a few dashes of the hot water, from a wooden saucer, completed the bath.

The next room, which had seemed so warm on our entrance, was now quite chilly. We remained here until we were dry, and then returned to the hall in which our clothes were left,

where beds were prepared on the divans, and we were covered in warm cloths, and left to our repose. The disposition to sleep was almost irresistible. We rose in a short time, and went to the coffee-house opposite, when a cup of strong coffee, and a hookah smoked through a highly ornamented glass bubbling with water, refreshed us deliciously.

I have had ever since a feeling of suppleness and lightness, which is like wings growing at my feet. It is certainly a very great luxury, though, unquestionably, most enervating as a habit.

LETTER XXVIII.

A Turkish Pic-Nic, on the plain of Troy—Fingers v. Forks—Trieste—The Boschetto—Graceful freedom of Italian Manners—A Rural Fête—Fireworks—Amateur Musicians.

DARDANELLES.—The oddest invitation I ever had in my life was from a Turkish Bey to a *fête champêtre*, on the ruins of Troy! We have just returned, full of wassail and pillaw, by the light of an Asian moon.

The morning was such a one as you would expect in the country where mornings were first made. The sun was clear, but the breeze was fresh, and as we sat on the Bey's soft divans, taking coffee before starting, I turned my cheek to the open window, and confessed the blessing of existence.

We were sixteen, from the ship, and our boat was attended by his interpreter, the general of his troops, the governor of Boumabashi (the name of the Turkish town near Troy), and a host of attendants on foot and horseback. His cook had been sent forward at daylight with the provisions.

The handsome Bey came to the door, and helped to mount us upon his own horses, and we rode on, with the whole population of the village assembled to see our departure. We forded the Scamander, near the town, and pushed on at a hard gallop over the plain. The Bey soon overtook us upon a fleet grey mare, caparisoned with red trappings, holding an umbrella over his head, which he courteously offered to the commodore on coming up. We followed a grass path, without hill or stone, for nine or ten miles, and after having passed one or two hamlets, with their open threshing-floors, and crossed the Simois, with the water to our saddle-girths, we left a slight rising ground by a sudden turn, and descended to a cluster of trees, where the Turks sprang from their horses, and made signs for us to dismount.

It was one of nature's drawing-rooms. Thickets of brush and willows enclosed a fountain, whose clear waters were confined in a tank, formed of marble slabs, from the neighbouring ruins. A spreading tree above, and soft meadow-grass to its very tip, left nothing to wish but friends and a quiet mind to perfect its beauty. The cook's fires were smoking in the thicket, the horses were grazing without saddle or bridle in the pasture below, and we laid down upon the soft Turkish carpets, spread beneath the trees, and reposed from our fatigues for an hour.

The interpreter came when the sun had slanted a little across the trees, and invited us to the Bey's gardens, hard by. A path, overshadowed with wild brush, led us round the little meadow to a gate, close to the fountain-head of the Scamander. One of the common cottages of the country stood upon the left, and in front of it a large arbour, covered with a grape-vine, was under-laid with cushions and carpets. Here we reclined, and coffee was brought us with baskets of grapes, figs, quinces, and pomegranates, the Bey and his officers waiting on us

themselves with amusing assiduity. The people of the house, meantime, were sent to the fields for green corn, which was roasted for us, and this with nuts, wine, and conversation, and a ramble to the source of the Simois, which bursts from a cleft in the rock very beautifully, whiled away the hours till dinner.

About four o'clock we returned to the fountain. A white muslin cloth was laid upon the grass between the edge and the overshadowing tree, and all around it were spread the carpets upon which we were to recline while eating. Wine and melons were cooling in the tank, and plates of honey and grapes, and new-made butter (a great luxury in the Archipelago), stood on the marble rim. The dinner might have fed Priam's army. Half a lamb, turkeys, and chickens, were the principal meats, but there was, besides, "a rabble rout" of made dishes, peculiar to the country, of ingredients at which I could not hazard even a conjecture.

We crooked our legs under us with some awkwardness, and producing our knives and forks (which we had brought with the advice of the interpreter), commenced, somewhat abated in appetite by too liberal a lunch. The Bey and his officers sitting upright with, their feet under them, pinched off bits of meat dexterously with the thumb and forefinger, passing from one to the other a dish of rice, with a large spoon, which all used indiscriminately. It is odd that eating with the fingers seemed only disgusting to me in the Bey. His European dress probably made the peculiarity more glaring. The fat old governor who sat beside me was greased to the elbows, and his long grey beard was studded with rice and drops of gravy to his girdle. He rose when the meats were removed, and waddled off to the stream below, where a wash in the clean water made him once more a presentable person.

It is a Turkish custom to rise and retire while the dishes are changing, and after a little ramble through the meadow, we returned to a lavish spread of fruits and honey, which concluded the repast.

It is doubted where Troy stood. The reputed site is a rising ground, near the fountain of Bournabashi, to which we strolled after dinner. We found nothing but quantities of fragments of columns, believed by antiquaries to be the ruins of a city that sprung up and died long since Troy.

We mounted and rode home by a round moon, whose light filled the air like a dust of phosphoric silver. The plains were in a glow with it. Our Indian summer nights, beautiful as they are, give you no idea of an Asian moon.

The Bey's rooms were lit, and we took coffee with him once more, and, fatigued with pleasure and excitement, got to our boats, and pulled up against the arrowy current of the Dardanelles to the frigate.

A long, narrow valley, with precipitous sides, commences directly at the gate of Trieste, and follows a small stream into the mountains of Friuli. It is a very sweet, green place, and studded on both sides with cottages and kitchen-gardens, which supply the city with flowers and vegetables. The right hand slope is called the Boschetto, and is laid out with pretty avenues of beech and elm as a public walk, while, at every few steps, stands a bowling-alley or drinking arbour, and here and there a trim little restaurant, just large enough for a rural party. It is perhaps a mile and a half in length, and one grand café in the centre, usually tempts the better class of promenaders into the expense of an ice.

It was a Sunday afternoon, and all Trieste was pouring out to the Boschetto. I had come ashore with one of the officers, and we fell into the tide. Few spots in the world are so variously peopled as this thriving seaport, and we encountered every style of dress and feature. The

greater part were Jewesses. How instantly the most common observer distinguishes them in a crowd! The clear sallow skin, the sharp black eye and broad eyebrow, the aquiline nose, the small person, the slow, cautious step of the old, and the quick, restless one of the young, the ambitious ornaments, and the look of cunning, which nothing but the highest degree of education does away, mark the race with the definiteness of another species.

We strolled on to the end of the walk, amused constantly with the family groups sitting under the trees with their simple repast of a fritata and a mug of beer, perfectly unconscious of the presence of the crowd. There was something pastoral and contented in the scene that took my fancy. Almost all the female promenaders were without bonnets, and the mixture of the Greek style of head-dress with the Parisian coiffure, had a charming effect. There was just enough of fashion to take off the vulgarity.

We coquetted along, smiled upon by here and there a group that had visited the ship, and on our return sat down at a table in front of the café, surrounded by some hundreds of people of all classes, conversing and eating ices. I thought as I glanced about me, how oddly such a scene would look in America. In the broad part of an open walk, the whole town passing and repassing, sat elegantly dressed ladies, with their husbands or lovers, mothers with their daughters, and occasionally a group of modest girls alone, eating or drinking with as little embarrassment as at home, and preserving toward each other that courtesy of deportment which in these classes of society can result only from being so much in public.

Under the next tree to us sat an excessively pretty woman with two gentlemen, probably her husband and cavalier. I touched my hat to them as we seated ourselves, and this common courtesy of the country was returned with smiles that put us instantly upon the footing of a half acquaintance. A caress to the lady's greyhound, and an apology for smoking, produced a little conversation, and when they rose to leave us, the compliments of the evening were exchanged with a cordiality that in America would scarce follow an acquaintance of months. I mention it as an every-day instance of the kind-hearted and open manners of Europe. It is what makes these countries so agreeable to the stranger and the traveller. Every café, on a second visit, seems like a home.

We were at a rural fête last night, given by a wealthy merchant of Trieste, at his villa in the neighbourhood. We found the company assembled on a terraced observatory, crowning a summer-house, watching the sunset over one of the sweetest landscapes in the world. We were at the head of a valley, broken at the edge of the Adriatic by the city, and beyond spread the golden waters of the gulf toward Venice, headed in on the right by the long chain of the Friuli. The country around was green and fertile, and small white villas peeped out everywhere from the foliage, evidences of the prosperous commerce of the town. We watched the warm colours out of the sky, and the party having by this time assembled, we walked through the long gardens to a house open with long windows from the ceiling to the floor, and furnished only with the light and luxurious arrangement of summer.

Music is the life of all amusement within the reach of Italy, and the waltzing was mingled with performances on the piano (and very wonderful ones to me) by an Italian count and his friend, a German. They played duets in a style I have seldom heard even by professors.

The supper was fantastically rural. The table was spread under a large tree, from the branches of which was trailed a vine, by a square frame of lattice-work in the proportions of a pretty saloon. The lamps were hung in coloured lanterns among the branches, and the trunk of the tree passed through the centre of the table hollowed to receive it. The supper was

sumptuously splendid, and the effect of the party within, seen from the grounds about, through the arched and vine-concealed doors, was the most picturesque imaginable.

A waltz or two followed, and we were about calling for our horses, when the whole place was illuminated with a discharge of fireworks. Every description of odd figures was described in flame during the hour they detained us, and the bright glare on the trees, and the figures of the party strolling up and down the gravelled walks, was admirably beautiful.

They do these things so prettily here! We were invited out on the morning of the same day, and expected nothing but a drive and a cup of tea, and we found an entertainment worthy of a king. The simplicity and frankness with which we were received, and the unpretendingness of the manner of introducing the amusements of the evening, might have been lessons in politeness to nobles.

A drive to town by starlight, and a pull off to the ship in the cool and refreshing night air, concluded a day of pure pleasure. It has been my good fortune of late to number many such.

LETTER XXIX.

The Dardanelles—Visit from the Pacha—His Delight at hearing the Piano—Turkish Fountains—Caravan of Mules laden with Grapes—Turkish Mode of Living—Houses, Cafés, and Women—The Mosque and the Muezzin—American Consul of the Dardanelles, another “Caleb Quotem.”

COAST OF ASIA.—We have lain in the mouth of the Dardanelles sixteen mortal days, waiting for a wind. Like Don Juan (who passed here on his way to Constantinople)—

“Another time we might have liked to see ’em,
But now are not much pleased with Cape Sigæum.”

An occasional trip with the boats to the watering-place, a Turkish bath, and a stroll in the bazaar of the town behind the castle, gazing with a glass at the tombs of Ajax and Achilles, and the long, undulating shores of Asia, eating often and sleeping much, are the only appliances to our philosophy. One cannot always be thinking of Hero and Leander, though he lie in the Hellespont.

A merchant-brig from Smyrna is anchored just astern of us, waiting like ourselves for this eternal northeaster to blow itself out. She has forty or fifty passengers for Constantinople, among whom are the wife of an American merchant (a Greek lady), and Mr. Schauffler, a missionary, in whom I recognised a quondam fellow-student. They were nearly starved on board the brig, as she was provisioned but for a few days, and the commodore has courteously offered them a passage in the frigate. Fifty or sixty sail lie below Castle Europe, in the same predicament. With the “cap of King Erricus,” this cruising, pleasant as it is, would be a thought pleasanter to my fancy.

Still wind-bound. The angel that

“Looked o’er my almanac
And crossed out my ill-days,”

suffered a week or so to escape him here. Not that the ship is not pleasant enough, and the

climate deserving of its Sybarite fame, and the sunsets and stars as much brighter than those of the rest of the world, as Byron has described them to be (*vide* letter to Leigh Hunt), but life has run in so deep a current with me of late, that the absence of incident seems like water without wine. The agreeable stir of travel, the incomplete adventure, the change of costumes and scenery, the busy calls upon the curiosity and the imagination, have become, in a manner, very breath to me. Hitherto upon the cruise, we have scarce ever been more than one or two days at a time out of port. Elba, Sicily, Naples, Vienna, the Ionian Isles, and the various ports of Greece have come and gone so rapidly, and so entirely without exertion of my own, that I seem to have lived in a magic panorama. After dinner on one day I visit a city here, and the day or two after, lounging and reading and sleeping meanwhile quietly at home, I find myself rising from table, hundreds of miles farther to the north or east, and another famous city before me, having taken no care, and felt no motion, nor encountered danger or fatigue. A summer cruise in the Mediterranean is certainly the perfection of sight-seeing. With a sea as smooth as a river, and cities of interest, classical and mercantile, everywhere on the lee, I can conceive of no class of persons to whom it would not be delightful. A company of pleasure, in a private vessel, would see all Greece and Italy with less trouble and expense than is common on a trip to the lakes.

“All hands up anchor!” The dog-vane points at last to Constantinople. The capstan is manned, the sails loosed, the quarter-master at the wheel, and the wind freshens every moment from the “sweet south.” “Heave round merrily!” The anchor is dragged in by this rushing Hellespont, and holds on as if the bridge of Xerxes were tangled about the flukes. “Up she comes at last,” and, yielding to her broad canvass, the gallant frigate begins to make headway against the current. There is nothing in the whole world of senseless matter, so like a breathing creature as a ship! The energy of her motion, the beauty of her shape and contrivance, and the ease with which she is managed by the one mind upon her quarter-deck, to whose voice she is as obedient as the courser to the rein, inspire me with daily admiration. I have been four months a guest in this noble man-of-war, and to this hour, I never set my foot on her deck without a feeling of fresh wonder. And then Cooper’s novels read in a ward-room as grapes eat in Tuscany. It were missing one of the golden leaves of a life not to have thumbed them on a cruise.

The wind has headed us off again, and we have dropped anchor just below the castles of the Dardanelles. We have made but eight miles, but we have new scenery from the ports, and that is something to a weary eye. I was as tired of “the shores of Ilion” as ever was Ulysses. The hills about our present anchorage are green and boldly marked, and the frowning castles above us give that addition to the landscape which is alone wanting on the Hudson. Sestos and Abydos are six or seven miles up the stream. The Asian shore (I should have thought it a pretty circumstance, once, to be able to set foot either in Europe or Asia in five minutes) is enlivened by numbers of small vessels, tracking up with buffaloes, against wind and tide. And here we lie, says the old pilot, without hope till the moon changes. The “*fickle* moon,” quotha! I wish my friends were half as constant!

The Pacha of the Dardanelles has honoured us with a visit. He came in a long caïque, pulled by twenty stout rascals, his Excellency of “two tails” sitting on a rich carpet on the bottom of the boat, with his boy of a year old in the same uniform as himself, and his suite of pipe and slipper-bearers, dwarf and executioner, sitting cross-legged about him. He was received with the guard and all the honour due to his rank. His face is that of a cold, haughty, and resolute, but well-born man, and his son is like him. He looked at everything attentively, without expressing

any surprise, till he came to the pianoforte, which one of the ladies played to his undisguised delight. It was the first he had ever seen. He inquired, through his interpreter, if she had not been all her life in learning.

The poet says, "The seasons of the year come in like masquers." To one who had made their acquaintance in New-England, most of the months would literally pass *incog.* in Italy. But here is honest October, the same merry old gentleman, though I meet him in Asia, and I remember him, last year, at the baths of Lucca, as unchanged as here. It has been a clear, bright, invigorating day, with a vitality in the air as rousing to the spirits as a blast from the "horn of Astolpho." I can remember just such a day ten years ago. It is odd how a little sunshine will cling to the memory when loves and hates that, in their time, convulsed the very soul, are so easily forgotten.

We heard yesterday that there was a Turkish village seven or eight miles in the mountains on the Asian side, and, as a variety to the promenade on the quarter-deck, a ramble was proposed to it.

We landed, this morning, on the bold shore of the Dardanelles, and, climbing up the face of a sand-hill, struck across a broad plain, through bush and brier, for a mile. On the edge of a ravine we found a pretty road, half-hedged over with oak and hemlock, and a mounted Turk, whom we met soon after, with a gun across his pommel, and a goose looking from his saddle-bag, directed us to follow it till we reached the village.

It was a beautiful path, flecked with the shade of leaves of all the variety of eastern trees, and refreshed with a fountain at every mile. About half way we stopped at a spring welling from a rock, under a large fig-tree, from which the water poured, as clear as crystal, into seven tanks, and one after the other rippling away from the last into a wild thicket, whence a stripe of brighter green marked its course down the mountain. It was a spot worthy of Tempé. We seated ourselves on the rim of the rocky basin, and, with a drink of bright water, and a half hour's repose, re-commenced our ascent, blessing the nymph of the fount, like true pilgrims of the East.

A few steps beyond we met a caravan of the pacha's tithe-gatherers, with mules laden with grapes; the turbaned and showily-armed drivers, as they came winding down the dell, produced the picturesque effect of a theatrical ballet. They laid their hands on their breasts, with grave courtesy, as they approached, and we helped ourselves to the ripe, blushing clusters, as the panniers went by, with Arcadian freedom.

We reached the summit of the ridge a little before noon, and turned our faces back for a moment to catch the cool wind from the Hellespont. The Dardanelles came winding out from the hills, just above Abydos, and sweeping past the upper castles of Europe and Asia, rushed down by Tenedos into the Archipelago. Perhaps twenty miles of its course lay within our view. Its colours were borrowed from the divine sky above, and the rainbow is scarce more varied or brighter. The changing purple and blue of the mid-stream, specked with white crests, the chrysoprase green of the shallows, and the dyes of the various depths along the shore, gave it the appearance of a vein of transparent marble, inlaid through the valley. The frigate looked like a child's boat on its bosom. To our left, the tombs of Ajax and Achilles were just distinguishable in the plains of the Scamander, and Troy (if Troy ever stood) stood back from the sea, and the blue-wreathed isles of the Archipelago bounded the reach of the eye. It was a view that might "cure a month's grief in a day."

We descended now into a kind of cradle valley, yellow with rich vineyards. It was alive with

people gathering in the grapes. The creaking wagons filled the road, and shouts and laughter rang over the mountain-sides merrily. The scene would have been Italian, but for the turbans peering out everywhere from the leaves, and those diabolical-looking buffaloes in the wagons. The village was a mile or two before us, and we loitered on, entering here and there a vineyard, where the only thing evidently grudged us was our peep at the women. They scattered like deer as we stepped over the walls.

Near the village we found a grave Turk, of whom one of the officers made some inquiries, which were a part of our errand to the mountains. It may spoil the sentiment of my description, but, in addition to the poetry of the ramble, we were to purchase beef for the mess. His bullocks were out at grass (feeding in pastoral security, poor things!), and he invited us to his house, while he sent his boy to drive them in. I recognised them, when they came, as two handsome steers, which had completed the beauty of an open glade, in the centre of a clump of forest trees, on our route. The pleasure they have afforded to the eye will be repeated upon the palate—a double destiny not accorded to all beautiful creatures.

Our host led us up a flight of rough stone steps to the second story of his house, where an old woman sat upon her heels, rolling out paste, and a younger one nursed a little Turk at her bosom. They had, like every man, woman, or child I have seen in this country, superb eyes and noses. No chisel could improve the meanest of them in these features. Our friend's wife seemed ashamed to be caught with her face uncovered, but she offered us cushions on the floor before she retired, and her husband followed up her courtesy with his pipe.

We went thence to the café, where a bubbling hookah, a cup of coffee, and a divan, refreshed us a little from our fatigues. While the rest of the party were lingering over their pipes, I took a turn through the village in search of the house of the Aga. After strolling up and down the crooked streets for half an hour, a pretty female figure, closely enveloped in her veil, and showing, as she ran across the street, a dainty pair of feet in small yellow slippers, attracted me into the open court of the best-looking house in the village. The lady had disappeared, but a curious-looking carriage, lined with rich Turkey carpeting and cushions, and covered with red curtains, made to draw close in front, stood in the centre of the court. I was going up to examine it, when an old man, with a beard to his girdle, and an uncommonly rich turban, stepped from the house and motioned me angrily away. A large wolf-dog, which he held by the collar, added emphasis to his command, and I retreated directly. A giggle and several female voices from the closely-latticed window, rather aggravated the mortification. I had intruded on the premises of the Aga, a high offence in Turkey, when a woman is in the case.

It was “deep i’ the afternoon,” when we arrived at the beach, and made signal for a boat. We were on board as the sky kindled with the warm colours of an Asian sunset—a daily offset to our wearisome detention which goes far to keep me in temper. My fear is that the commodore's patience is not “so good a continuer” as this “vento maledetto,” as the pilot calls it, and in such a case I lose Constantinople most provokingly.

Walked to the Upper Castle Asia, some eight miles above our anchorage. This is the main town on the Dardanelles, and contains forty or fifty thousand inhabitants. Sestos and Abydos are a mile or two farther up the Strait.

We kept along the beach for an hour or two, passing occasionally a Turk on horseback, till we were stopped by a small and shallow creek without a bridge, just on the skirts of the town. A woman with one eye peeping from her veil, dressed in a tunic of fine blue cloth, stood at the head of a large drove of camels on the other side, and a beggar with one eye, smoked his pipe on the sand at a little distance. The water was knee-deep, and we were hesitating on the brink,

when the beggar offered to carry us across on his back—a task he accomplished (there were six of us) without taking his pipe from his mouth.

I tried in vain to get a peep at the camel-driver's wife or daughter, but she seemed jealous of showing even her eyebrow, and I followed on to the town. The Turks live differently from every other people, I believe. You walk through their town and see every individual in it, except perhaps the women of the pacha. Their houses are square boxes, the front side of which lifts on a hinge in the day-time, exposing the whole interior, with its occupants squatted in the corners or on the broad platform where their trades are followed. They are scarce larger than boxes in the theatre, and the roof projects into the middle of the street, meeting that of the opposite neighbour, so that the pavement between is always dark and cool. The three or four Turkish towns I have seen, have the appearance of cabins thrown up hastily after a fire. You would not suppose they were intended to last more than a month at the farthest.

We roved through the narrow streets an hour or more, admiring the fine bearded old Turks, smoking cross-legged in the cafés, the slipper-makers with their gay morocco wares in goodly rows around them, the wily Jews with their high caps and caftans (looking, crouched among their merchandise, like the “venders of old bottles and abominable lies,” as they are drawn in the plays of Queen Elizabeth's time), the muffled and gliding spectres of the Moslem women, and the livelier-footed Greek girls, in their velvet jackets and braided hair, and by this time we were kindly disposed to our dinners.

On our way to the consul's, where we were to dine, we passed a mosque. The minaret (a tall peaked tower, about of the shape and proportions of a pencil-case) commanded a view down the principal streets; and a stout fellow, with a sharp clear voice, leaned over the balustrade at the top, crying out the invitation to prayer in a long drawling sing-song, that must have been audible on the other side of the Hellespont. Open porches, supported by a paling, extended all around the church, and the floors were filled with kneeling Turks, with their pistols and ataghans lying beside them. I had never seen so picturesque a congregation. The slippers were left in hundreds at the threshold, and the bare and muscular feet and legs, half concealed by the full trowsers, supported as earnest a troop of worshippers as ever bent forehead to the ground. I left them rising from a flat prostration, and hurried after my companions to dinner.

Our consul of the Dardanelles is an American. He is absent just now, in search of a runaway female slave of the sultan's; and his wife, a gracious Italian, full of movement and hospitality, does the honours of his house in his absence. He is a physician as well as consul and slave-catcher, and the presents of a hand-organ, a French clock, and a bronze standish, rather prove him to be a favourite with the “brother of the sun.”

We were smoking the hookah after dinner, when an intelligent-looking man, of fifty or so, came in to pay us a visit. He is at present an exile from Constantinople, by order of the Grand Seignior, because a brother physician, his friend, failed in an attempt to cure one of the favourites of the imperial harem! This is what might be called “sympathy upon compulsion.” It is unnecessary, one would think, to make friendship more dangerous than common human treachery renders it already.

A half hour's walk brought us within sight of the pacha's camp. The green and white tents of five thousand Turkish troops were pitched on the edge of a stream, partly sheltered by a grove of noble oaks, and defended by wicker batteries at distances of thirty or forty feet. We were stopped by the sentinel on guard, while a message was sent in to the pacha for permission to wait upon him. Meantime a number of young officers came out from their tents, and commenced examining our dresses with the curiosity of boys. One put on my gloves, another examined the cloth of my coat, a third took from me a curious stick I had purchased at Vienna, and a more familiar gentleman took up my hand, and after comparing it with his own black fingers, stroked it with an approving smile that was meant probably as a compliment. My companions underwent the same review, and their curiosity was still unsated when a good-looking officer, with his cimetar under his arm, came to conduct us to the commander-in-chief.

The long lines of tents were bent to the direction of the stream, and, at short distances, the silken banner stuck in the ground under the charge of a sentinel, and a divan covered with rich carpets under the shade of the nearest tree, marked the tent of an officer. The interior of those of the soldiers exhibited merely a stand of muskets and a raised platform for bed and table, covered with coarse mats, and decked with the European accoutrements now common in Turkey. It was the middle of the afternoon, and most of the officers lay asleep on low ottomans, with their tent-curtains undrawn, and their long chibouques beside them, or still at their lips. Hundreds of soldiers loitered about, engaged in various occupations, sweeping, driving their tent-stakes more firmly into the ground, cleaning arms, cooking, or with their heels under them playing silently at dominoes. Half the camp lay on the opposite bank of the stream, and there was repeated the same warlike picture, the white uniform and the loose red cap with its gold bullion and blue tassel, appearing and disappearing between the rows of tents, and the bright red banners clinging to the staff in the breathless sunshine.

We soon approached the splendid pavilion of the pacha, unlike the rest in shape, and surrounded by a quantity of servants, some cooking at the root of a tree, and all pursuing their vocation with a singular earnestness. A superb banner of bright crimson silk, wrought with long lines of Turkish characters, probably passages from the Koran, stood in a raised socket guarded by two sentinels. Near the tent, and not far from the edge of the stream, stood a gaily-painted kiosk, not unlike the fantastic summer-houses sometimes seen in a European garden, and here our conductor stopped, and kicking off his slippers, motioned for us to enter.

We mounted the steps, and passing a small entrance-room filled with guards, stood in the presence of the commander-in-chief. He sat on a divan, cross-legged, in a military frock-coat wrought with gold on the collar and cuffs, a sparkling diamond crescent on his breast, and a cimetar at his side, with a belt richly wrought, and held by a buckle of dazzling brilliance. His aide sat beside him, in a dress somewhat similar, and both appeared to be men of about forty. The pacha is a stern, dark, soldier-like man, with a thick, straight beard as black as jet, and features which look incapable of a smile. He bowed without rising when we entered, and motioned for us to be seated. A little conversation passed between him and the consul's son, who acted as our interpreter, and coffee came in almost immediately. There was an aroma about it which might revive a mummy. The small china-cups, with thin gold filagree sockets, were soon emptied and taken away, and the officer in waiting introduced a soldier to go through the manual exercise by way of amusing us.

He was a powerful fellow, and threw his musket about with so much violence, that I feared

every moment the stock, lock, and barrel would part company. He had taken off his shoes before venturing into the presence of his commander, and looked oddly enough, playing the soldier in his stockings. I was relieved of considerable apprehension when he ordered arms, and backed out to his slippers.

The next exhibition was that of a military band. A drum-major, with a proper gold-headed stick, wheeled some sixty fellows with all kinds of instruments under the windows of the kiosk, and with a whirl of his baton, the harmony commenced. I could just detect some resemblance to a march. The drums rolled, the "ear-piercing fifes" fulfilled their destiny, and trombone, serpent, and horn showed of what they were capable. The pacha got upon his knees to lean out of the window, and as I rose from my low seat at the same time, he pulled me down beside him, and gave me half his carpet, patting me on the back, and pressing me to the window with his arm over my neck. I have observed frequently among the Turks this singular familiarity of manners both to strangers and to one another. It is an odd contrast with their habitual gravity.

The sultan, I think unwisely, has introduced the European uniform into his army. With the exception of the Tunisian cap, which is substituted for a thick and handsome turban, the dress is such as is worn by the soldiers of the French army. Their tailors are of course bad, and their figures, accustomed only to the loose and graceful costume of the East, are awkward and constrained. I never saw so uncouth a set of fellows as the five thousand Mussulmans in this army of the Dardanelles; and yet in their Turkish trowsers and turban, with the belt stuck full of arms, and their long moustache, they would be as martial-looking troops as ever followed a banner.

We embarked at sunset to return to the ship. The shell-shaped caïque, with her tall sharp extremities and fantastic sail, yielded to the rapid current of the Hellespont; and our two boatmen, as handsome a brace of Turks as were ever drawn in a picture, pulled their legs under them more closely, and commenced singing the alternate stanzas of a villainous duet. The helmsman's part was rather humorous, and his merry black eye redeemed it somewhat, but his fellow was as grave as a dervish, and howled as if he were ferrying over Xerxes after his defeat.

If I were to live in the East as long as the wandering Jew, I think these heavenly sunsets, evening after evening, scarce varying by a shade, would never become familiar to my eye. They surprise me day after day, like some new and brilliant phenomenon, though the thoughts which they bring, as it were by a habit contracted of the hour, are almost always the same. The day, in these countries where life flows so thickly, is engrossed, and pretty busily too, by the *present*. The *past* comes up with the twilight, and wherever I may be, and in whatever scene mingling, my heart breaks away, and goes down into the west with the sun. I am *at home* as duly as the bird settles to her nest.

It was natural in paying the boatman, after such a musing passage, to remember the poetical justice of Uhland in crossing the ferry:—

"Take, O boatman, thrice thy fee!
Take! I give it willingly;
For, invisibly to thee,
Spirits twain have crossed with me!"

I should have paid for one other seat, at least, by this fanciful tariff. Our unmusical Mussulmans were content, however, and we left them to pull back against the tide, by a star that cast a shadow like a meteor.

The moon changed this morning, and the wind, that in this clime of fable is as constant to her as Endymion, changed too. The white caps vanished from the hurrying waves of the Dardanelles, and after an hour or two of calm, the long-expected breeze came tripping out of Asia, with oriental softness, and is now leading us gently up the Hellespont.

As we passed between the two castles of the Dardanelles, the commodore saluted the pacha with nineteen guns, and in half an hour we were off Abydos, where our friend from the south has deserted us, and we are compelled to anchor. It would be unclassical to complain of delay on so poetical a spot. It is beautiful, too. The shores on both the Asian and European sides are charmingly varied and the sun lies on them, and on the calm strait that links them, with a beauty worthy of the fair spirit of Hero. A small Turkish castle occupies the site of the “torch-lit tower” of Abydos, and there is a corresponding one at Sestos. The distance between looks little more than a mile—not a surprising feat for any swimmer, I should think. Lady-loves in our day, alas! are not won so lightly. The current of the Hellespont, however, remains the same, and so does the moral of Leander’s story. The Hellespont of matrimony may be crossed with the tide. The deuce is to *get back*!

Lampsacus on the starboard-bow, and a fairer spot lies on no river’s brink. Its trees, vineyards, and cottages, slant up almost imperceptibly from the water’s edge, and the hills around have the look “of a clean and quiet privacy,” with a rural elegance that might tempt Shakspeare’s Jaques to come and moralise. By the way, there have been philosophers here. Did not Alexander forgive the city its obstinate defence for the sake of Anaximenes? There was a sad dog of a deity worshipped here about that time.

I take a fresh look at it from the port, as I write. Pastures, every one with a bordering of tall trees, cattle as beautiful as the daughter of Ianchus, lanes of wild shrubbery, a greener stripe through the fields like the track of a stream, and smoke curling from every cluster of trees, telling as plainly as the fancy can read, that there is both poetry and pillaw at Lampsacus.

Just opposite stands the modern Gallipoli, a Turkish town of some thirty thousand inhabitants, at the head of the Hellespont. The Hellespont gets broader here, and a few miles farther up we open into the Sea of Marmora. A French brig-of-war, that has been hanging about us for a fortnight (watching our movements in this unusual cruise for an American frigate, perhaps), is just ahead, and a quantity of sail are stretching off on the southern tack, to make the best use of their new sea-room for beating up to Constantinople.

We hope to see Seraglio Point to-morrow. Mr. Hodgson, the secretary of our embassy to Turkey, has just come on board from the Smyrna packet, and the agreeable preparations for going on shore are already on the stir. I do not find that the edge of curiosity dulls with use. The prospect of seeing a strange city, to-morrow, produces the same quick-pulsed emotion that I felt in the diligence two years ago, rattling over the last post to Paris. The entrances to Florence, Rome, Venice, Vienna, Athens, are marked each with as white a stone. He may “gather no moss” who rolls about the world; but that which the gold of the careful cannot buy—pleasure—when the soul is most athirst for it, grows under his feet. Of the many daily reasons I find to thank Providence, not the least is that of being what Clodio calls himself in the play, “a *here-and-there-ian*.”

What an image of life it is! The good ship dashes bravely on her course—the spray flies from her prow—her sheets are steady and full—to look up to her spreading canvass, and feel her springing away beneath, you would not give her “for the best horse the sun has in his stable.” The next moment, hey! the foresail is aback! the wind baffles and dies, the ripples sink from the sea, the ship loses her “way,” and the pennant drops to the mast in a breathless calm! “Clear away the anchor!” and here we are till this “crab in the ascendant” that makes “all our affairs go backwards,” yields to our better stars.

We went ashore to take a stroll through the streets of Gallipoli (the ancient Gallipoli of Thrace) as a sop to our patience. A deeply-laden Spanish merchant lay off the pier, with a crew of red-capped and olive-complexioned fellows taking in grain from a Turkish caique, and a crowd of modern Thracians, in the noble costumes and flowing beards of the country, closed around us as we stepped from the boat.

A street of cafés led from the end of the pier, and as usual, they were all crowded with Turks, leaning forward over their slippers, and crossing their long chibouques as they conversed together. It is odd that even the habit of a life can make their painful and unnatural posture an agreeable one. Yet they will sit with their legs crooked under them, in a way that strains the unaccustomed knee till it cracks again, motionless by the hour together.

I had no idea till I came to Turkey how rare a beauty is a handsome beard. Here no man shaves, and there is as great a difference in beards as in stature. The men of rank that we have seen, might have been picked out anywhere by their superior beauty in this respect. It grows vilely, it seems to me, on scoundrels. The beggars ashore, the low Jews who board us with provisions, the greater part of the soldiers and petty shop-keepers of the towns, have all some mark in their beards, that nature never intended them for gentlemen. Your smooth chin is a great leveller, trust me!

These Turkish towns have a queer look altogether. Gallipoli is so seldom touched by a Christian foot, that it preserves all its peculiarities entire, and is likely to do so for the next century. We walked on, ascending a narrow street completely shut in by the roofs of the low houses meeting above. There are no carriages or carts, and the Turks glide over the stones in their loose slippers with an indolent shuffle that seems rather to add to the silence. You hear no voice, for they seldom speak, and never above the key of a bassoon; and what with the odd costumes, long beards, grave faces, and twilight darkness all about you, it is like a scene on the stage when the lights are lowered in some incantation scene.

Each street is devoted to some one trade. We first got among the grocers. Every shop was a fellow to the other, containing an old Turk, squatted among soap, jars of oil, raisins, olives, pickled fish, and sweetmeats, and everything within his reach. He would sell you his whole stock in trade without taking his pipe from his mouth, or disturbing his yellow slipper.

The next turn brought us into the Jews' quarter. They were all tailors, and their shops were as dark as Erebus. The light crept through the chinks in the roof, falling invariably on the same aquiline nose and ragged beard, with now and then a pair of copper spectacles, while in the back of the dim tenement sat an old woman with a group of handsome little Hebrews, (they are always handsome when very young, with their clear skins and dark eyes) the whole family stitching away most diligently. It was laughable to see how every shop in the street presented the same picture.

We then got among the slipper-makers, and vile work they turned out. We were hesitating

between two turnings when an old Jew, with a high lamb's-wool cap and long black caftan, rather shabby for wear, addressed me in a sort of *lingua Franca*, half Italian, half French, with a sprinkling of Spanish, and inquiring whether I belonged to the frigate in the harbour, offered to supply us with provisions, &c. &c. I declined his services, and he asked us directly to his house to take coffee—as plump a *non sequitur* as I have met in my travels.

We followed the old man to a very secluded part of the town, stopping a moment by the way to look at the remains of an old fort built by the Genoese in the stout times of Andrea Doria. (Where be their galleys now?) Hajji (so he was called, he said from having been to Jerusalem) stopped at last at the door of a shabby house, and throwing it open with a hospitable smile, bade us welcome. We mounted a creaking stair, and found things within better than the promise of the exterior. One half the floor of the room was raised perhaps a foot, and matted neatly, and a nicely carpeted and cushioned divan ran around the three sides, closed at the two extremities by a lattice-work like the arm of a sofa. The windows were set in fantastical arabesque frames, the upper panes coarsely coloured, but with a rich effect, and the view hence stretched over the Hellespont toward the south, with a delicious background of the valleys about Lampsacus. No palace window looks on a fairer scene. The broad Strait was as smooth as the amber of the old Hebrew's pipe, and the vines that furnished Themistocles with wine during his exile in Persia, looked of as golden a green in the light of the sunset, as if the honour of the tribute still warmed their classic juices.

The rich Turkish coffee was brought in by an old woman, who left her slippers below as she stepped upon the mat, and our host followed with chibouques and a renewed welcome. A bright pair of eyes had been peeping for some time from one of the chambers, and with Hajji's permission I called out a graceful creature of fourteen, with a shape like a Grecian Cupidon and a timid sweetness of expression that might have descended to her from the gentle Ruth of Scripture. There are lovely beings all over the world. It were a desert else. But I did not think to find such a diamond in a Hebrew's bosom. I have forgotten to mention her hair, which was very remarkable. I thought at first it was dyed with henna. It covered her back and shoulders in the greatest profusion, braided near the head, and floating below in glossy and silken curls of a richness you would deny nature had you seen it in a painting. The colour was of the deep burnt brown of a berry, almost black in the shade, but catching the light at every motion like threads of gold. In my life I have seen nothing so beautiful. It was the "hair lustrous and smiling" of quaint old Burton.^[13] There was something in it that you could scarce avoid associating with the character of the wearer—as if it stole its softness from some inborn gentleness in her heart. I shall never thread my fingers through such locks again!

We shook our kind host by the hand, and stepped gingerly down in the fading twilight to our boat. As we were crossing an open space between the bazaars, two gentlemen in a costume half European, half Oriental, with spurs and pistols, and a quantity of dust on their moustaches, passed, and immediately turned and called me by name. The last place in which I should have looked for acquaintances, would be Gallipoli. They were two French exquisites whom I had known at Rome, travelling to Constantinople with no more serious object, I dare be sworn, than to return with long beards from the East. They had just arrived on horseback, and were looking for a khan. I commended them to my old friend the Jew, who offered at once to lodge them at his house, and we parted in this by-corner of Thrace, as if we had but met for the second time in a morning stroll to St. Peter's.

We lay till noon in the glassy harbour of Gallipoli, and then the breeze came slowly up the

Hellespont, its advancing edge marked by a crowd of small sail keeping even pace with its wings. We soon opened into the extending sea of Marmora, and the cloudy island of the same name is at this moment on our lee. The sun is setting gorgeously over the hills of Thrace, and thankful for sea-room once more, and a good breeze, we make ourselves certain of seeing Constantinople to-morrow.

We were ten miles distant when I came on deck this morning. A long line of land with a slightly waving outline began to emerge from the mist of sunrise, and with a glass I could distinguish the clustering masses and shining eminences of a distant and far extending city. We were approaching it with a cloud of company. A Turkish ship-of-war, with the crescent and star fluttering on her blood-red flag, a French cutter bearing the handsome tricolor at her peak, and an uncounted swarm of merchantmen, taking advantage of the newly-changed wind, were spreading every thread of canvass, and stretching on as eagerly as we toward the metropolis of the East. There was something in the companionship which elated me. It seemed as if all the world shared in my anticipations—as if all the world were going to Constantinople.

I approached the mistress of the East with different feelings from that which had inspired me in entering the older cities of Europe. The interest of the latter sprang from the past. Rome, Florence, Athens, were delightful from the store of history and poetry I brought with me and had accumulated in my youth—from what they once were, and for that of which they preserved the ruins. Constantinople, on the contrary, is still the gem of the Orient—still the home of the superb Turk, and the resort of many nations of the East—still all that fires curiosity and excites the imagination in the descriptions of the traveller. I was coming to a living city, full of strange people and strange costumes, language, and manners. It was, to the places I had seen, like the warm and breathing woman perfect in life, to the interesting but lifeless and mutilated statue.

As the distance lessened, the tall, slender, glittering minarets of a hundred mosques were first distinguishable. Towers, domes, and dark spots of cypresses next emerged to the eye, and a sea of buildings, followed undulating in many swells and widening along the line of the sea as if we were approaching a continent covered to its farthest limits with one unbroken city.

We kept on with unslackened sail to the shore which seemed closed before us. A few minutes opened to us a curving bay, winding in and lost to the eye behind a swelling eminence, and as if mosques, towers, and palaces, had spread away and opened to receive us into their bosom, we shot into the heart of a busy city, and dropped anchor at the feet of a cluster of hills, studded from base to summit with buildings of indescribable splendour.

An American gentleman had joined us in the Dardanelles, and stood with us, looking at the transcendent panorama. "What is this lovely point, gemmed with gardens and fantastic palaces, and with every variety of tree and building on its gentle slope descending so gracefully to the sea?" *The Seraglio!* "What is this opening of bright water, crowded with shipping, and sprinkled with these fairy boats so gaily decked and so slender, shooting from side to side like the crossing flight of a thousand arrows?" *The Golden Horn*, that winds up through the city and terminates in the valley of Sweet Waters! "And what is this other stream, opening into the hills to the east, and lined with glittering palaces as far as the eye can reach?" *The Bosphorus*. "And what is this, and that, and the other exquisite and surpassing beauty—features of a scene to which the earth surely has no shadow of a parallel?" Patience! patience! We have a month before us, and we will see.

[13] “Hair lustrous and smiling. The trope is none of mine. Æneas Sylvius hath *crines ridentes*.”—*Anatomy of Melancholy*.

LETTER XXXII.

Constantinople—An Adventure with the Dogs of Stamboul—The Sultan’s Kiosk—The Bazaars—Georgians—Sweetmeats—Hindoostanee Fakeers—Turkish Women and their Eyes—The Jews—A Token of Home—The Drug Bazaar—Opium Eaters.

The invariable “*Where am I?*” with which a traveller awakes at morning was to me never more agreeably answered. *At Constantinople!* The early ship-of-war summons to “turn out,” was obeyed with alacrity, and with the first boat after breakfast I was set ashore at Tophana, the landing place of the Frank quarter of Stamboul.

A row of low-built cafés, with a latticed enclosure and a plentiful shade of plane-trees on the right; a large square, in the centre of which stood a magnificent Persian fountain, as large as a church, covered with lapis-lazuli and gold, and endless inscriptions in Turkish; a mosque buried in cypresses on the left; a hundred indolent-looking, large-trousered, moustached, and withal very handsome men, and twice the number of snarling, wolfish, and half-starved dogs, are some of the objects which the first glance, as I stepped on shore, left on my memory.

I had heard that the dogs of Constantinople knew and hated a Christian. By the time I had reached the middle of the square, a wretched puppy at my heels had succeeded in announcing the presence of a stranger. They were upon me in a moment from every heap of garbage, and every hole and corner. I was beginning to be seriously alarmed, standing perfectly still, with at least a hundred infuriated dogs barking in a circle around me, when an old Turk, selling sherbet under the shelter of the projecting roof of the Persian fountain, came kindly to my relief. A stone or two well aimed, and a peculiar cry, which I have since tried in vain to imitate, dispersed the hungry wretches, and I took a glass of the old man’s raising water, and pursued my way up the street. The circumstance, however, had discoloured my anticipations; nothing looked agreeably to me for an hour after it.

I ascended through narrow and steep lanes, between rows of small wooden houses, miserably built and painted, to the main street of the quarter of Pera. Here live all Christians and Christian ambassadors, and here I found our secretary of legation, Mr. H., who kindly offered to accompany me to old Stamboul.

We descended to the water-side, and stepping into an egg-shell caique, crossed the Golden Horn, and landed on a pier between the sultans green kiosk and the seraglio. I was fortunate in a companion who knew the people and spoke the language. The red-trousered and armed kervas, at the door of the kiosk, took his pipe from his mouth, after a bribe and a little persuasion, and motioned to a boy to show us the interior. A circular room, with a throne of solid silver embraced in a double colonnade of marble pillars, and covered with a roof laced with lapis lazuli and gold, formed the place from which Sultan Mahmoud formerly contemplated, on certain days, the busy and beautiful panorama of his matchless bay. The kiosk is on the edge of the water, and the poorest caikjee might row his little bark under its threshold, and fill his monarch’s eye, and look on his monarch’s face with the proudest. The green canvass curtains, which envelop the whole building, have, for a long time, been unraised, and Mahmoud

is oftener to be seen on horseback, in the dress of a European officer, guarded by troops in European costume and array. The change is said to be dangerously unpopular.

We walked on to the square of Sultana Valide. Its large area was crowded with the buyers and sellers of a travelling fair—a sort of Jews' market held on different days in different parts of this vast capital. In Turkey every nation is distinguished by its dress, and almost as certainly by its branch of trade. On the right of the gate, under a huge plane-tree, shedding its yellow leaves among the various wares, stood the booths of a group of Georgians, their round and rosy-dark faces (you would know their sisters must be half houris) set off with a tall black cap of curling wool, their small shoulders with a tight jacket studded with silk buttons, and their waist with a voluminous silken sash, whose fringed ends fell over their heels as they sat cross-legged, patiently waiting for custom. Hardware is the staple of their shops, but the cross-pole in front is fantastically hung with silken garters and tasselled cords, and their own Georgian caps, with a gay crown of cashmere, enrich and diversify the shelves. I bought a pair or two of blushing silk garters of a young man, whose eyes and teeth should have been a woman's, and we strolled on to the next booth.

Here was a Turk, with a table covered by a broad brass waiter, on which was displayed a tempting array of mucilage, white and pink, something of the consistency of blanc-mange. A dish of sugar, small gilded saucers, and long-handled, flat, brass spoons, with a vase of rose-water, completed his establishment. The grave Mussulman cut, sugared, and scented the portions for which we asked, without condescending to look at us or open his lips, and, with a glass of mild and pleasant sherbet from his next neighbour, as immovable a Turk as himself, we had lunched, extremely to my taste, for just five cents American currency.

A little farther on I was struck with the appearance of two men, who stood bargaining with a Jew. My friend knew them immediately as *fakeers*, or religious devotees from Hindoostan. He addressed them in Arabic, and, during their conversation of ten minutes, I studied them with some curiosity. They were singularly small, without any appearance of dwarfishness, their limbs and persons slight, and very equally and gracefully proportioned. Their features were absolutely regular, and, though small as a child's of ten or twelve years, were perfectly developed. They appeared like men seen through an inverted opera-glass. An exceedingly ashy, olive complexion, hair of a kind of glittering black, quite unlike in texture and colour any I have ever before seen; large, brilliant, intense black eyes, and lips (the most peculiar feature of all), of lustreless black,^[14] completed the portraits of two as remarkable-looking men as I have anywhere met. Their costume was humble, but not unpicturesque. A well-worn sash of red silk enveloped the waist in many folds, and sustained trowsers tight to the legs, but of the Turkish ampleness over the hips. Their small feet, which seemed dried up to the bone, were bare. A blanket, with a hood marked in a kind of arabesque figure, covered their shoulders, and a high quilted cap, with a rim of curling wool, was pressed down closely over the forehead. A crescent-shaped tin vessel, suspended by a leather strap to the waist, and serving the two purposes of a charity-box, and a receptacle for bread and vegetables, seemed a kind of badge of their profession. They were lately from Hindoostan, and were begging their way still farther into Europe. They received our proffered alms without any mark of surprise or even pleasure, and laying their hands on their breasts, with countenances perfectly immoveable, gave us a Hindoostanee blessing, and resumed their traffic. They see the world, these rovers on foot! And I think, could I see it myself in no other way, I would e'en take sandal and scrip, and traverse it as a dervish or beggar!

The alleys between the booths were crowded with Turkish women, who seemed the chief

purchasers. The effect of their enveloped persons, and eyes peering from the muslin folds of the *yashmack*, is droll to a stranger. It seemed to me like a masquerade, and the singular sound of female voices, speaking through several thicknesses of a stuff, bound so close on the mouth as to show the shape of the lips exactly, perfected the delusion. It reminded me of the half-smothered tones beneath the masks in carnival-time. A clothes-bag with yellow slippers would have about as much form, and might be walked about with as much grace as a Turkish woman. Their fat hands, the finger-nails dyed with henna, and their unexceptionably magnificent eyes, are all that the stranger is permitted to peruse. It is strange how universal is the beauty of the eastern eye. I have looked in vain hitherto, for a small or inexpressive one. It is quite startling to meet the gaze of such large liquid orbs, bent upon you from their long silken fringes, with the unwinking steadiness of look common to the females of this country. Wrapped in their veils, they seem unconscious of attracting attention, and turn and look you full in the face, while you seek in vain for a pair of lips to explain by their expression the meaning of such particular notice.

The Jew is more distinguishable at Constantinople than elsewhere. He is compelled to wear the dress of his tribe (and its “badge of sufferance,” too), and you will find him, wherever there is trafficking to be done, in a small cap, not ungracefully shaped, twisted about with a peculiar handkerchief of a small black print, and set back so as to show the whole of his national high and narrow forehead. He is always good humoured and obsequious, and receives the curse with which his officious offers of service are often repelled, with a smile, and a hope that he may serve you another time. One of them, as we passed his booth, called our attention to some newly-opened bales, bearing the stamp, “TREMONT MILL, LOWELL, MASS.” It was a long distance from home to meet such familiar words!

We left the square of the sultan mother, and entered a street of *confectioners*. The East is famous for its sweetmeats, and truly a more tempting array never visited the Christmas dream of a schoolboy. Even Felix, the *patissier nonpareil* of Paris, might take a lesson in jellies. And then for “candy” of all colours of the rainbow (not shut enviously in with pitiful glass cases, but piled up to the ceiling in a shop all in the street, as it might be in Eutopia, with nothing to pay), it is like a scene in the Arabian Nights. The last part of the parenthesis is almost true, for with a small coin of the value of two American cents, I bought of a certain kind called, in Turkish, “peace to your throat” (they call things by such poetical names in the East), the quarter of which I could not have eaten, even in my best “days of sugar candy.” The women of Constantinople, I am told, almost live on confectionery. They eat incredible quantities. The sultan’s eight hundred wives and women employ five hundred cooks, and consume *two thousand five hundred pounds of sugar daily*! It is probably the most expensive item of the seraglio kitchen.

A turn or two brought us to the entrance of a long dark passage, of about the architecture of a covered bridge in our country. A place richer in the oriental and picturesque could scarce be found between the Danube and the Nile. It is the bazaar of *drugs*. As your eye becomes accustomed to the light, you distinguish vessels of every size and shape, ranged along the receding shelves of a stall, and filled to the uncovered brim with the various productions of the Orient. The edges of the baskets and jars are turned over with rich coloured papers (a peculiar colour to every drug), and broad spoons of boxwood are crossed on the top. There is the *henna*, in a powder of deep brown, with an envelope of deep Tyrian purple, and all the precious gums in their jars, golden-leaved, and spices and dyes and medicinal roots, and above hang anatomies of curious monsters, dried and stuffed, and in the midst of all, motionless as the box

of sulphur beside him, and almost as yellow, sits a venerable Turk, with his beard on his knees, and his pipe-bowl thrust away over his drugs, its ascending smoke-curls his only sign of life. This class of merchants is famous for opium eaters, and if you pass at the right hour, you find the large eye of the silent smoker dilated and wandering, his fingers busy in tremulously counting his spice-wood beads, and the roof of his stall wreathed with clouds of smoke, the vent to every species of eastern enthusiasm. If you address him, he smiles, and puts his hand to his forehead and breast, but condescends to answer no question till it is thrice reiterated, and then in the briefest word possible, he answers wide of your meaning, strokes the smoke out of his moustache, and slipping the costly amber between his lips, abandons himself again to his exalted revery. I write this after being a week at Constantinople, during which the Egyptian bazaar has been my frequent and most fancy-stirring lounge. Of its forty merchants, there is not one whose picturesque features are not imprinted deeply in my memory. I have idled up and down in the dim light, and fingered the soft henna, and bought small parcels of incense-wood for my pastille lamp, studying the remarkable faces of the unconscious old Mussulmans, till my mind became somehow tintured of the East, and (what will be better understood) my clothes steeped in the mixed and agreeable odours of the thousand spices. Where are the painters, that they have never found this mine of admirable studies? There is not a corner of Constantinople, nor a man in its streets, that were not a novel and a capital subject for the pencil. Pray, Mr. Cole, leave things that have been painted so often, as aqueducts and Italian ruins (though you *do* make delicious pictures, and could never waste time or pencils on *anything*), and come to the East for one single book of sketches! How I have wished I was a painter since I have been here!

[14] I have since met many of them in the streets of Constantinople, and I find it a distinguishing feature of their race. They look as if their lips were dead—as if the blood had dried beneath the skin.

LETTER XXXIII.

The Sultan's Perfumer—Etiquette of Smoking—Temptations for Purchasers—Exquisite Flavour of the Turkish Perfumes—The Slave Market of Constantinople—Slaves from various Countries, Greek, Circassian, Egyptian, Persian—African female Slaves—An Improvisatrice—Exposure for Sale—Circassian Beauties prohibited to Europeans—First sight of one, eating a Pie—Shock to romantic Feelings—Beautiful Arab Girl chained to the Floor—The Silk Merchant—A cheap Purchase.

An Abyssinian slave, with bracelets on his wrists and ankles, a white turban, folded in the most approved fashion around his curly head, and a showy silk sash about his waist, addressed us in broken English as we passed a small shop on the way to the Bozestein. His master was an old acquaintance of my polyglot friend, and, passing in at a side door, we entered a dimly-lighted apartment in the rear, and were received, with a profusion of salaams, by the sultan's perfumer. For a Turk, Mustapha Effendi was the most voluble gentleman in his discourse that I had yet met in Stamboul. A sparse grey beard just sprinkled a pair of blown-up cheeks, and a collapsed double chin that fell in curtain folds to his bosom, a moustache, of seven or eight hairs on a side, curled demurely about the corners of his mouth, his heavy oily

black eyes twinkled in their pursy recesses, with the salacious good humour of a satyr; and, as he coiled his legs under him on the broad ottoman in the corner, his boneless body completely lapped over them, knees and all, and left him, apparently, bolt upright on his trunk, like a man amputated at the hips. A string of beads in one hand, and a splendid *narghilé*, or rose-water pipe in the other, completed as fine a picture of a mere animal as I remember to have met in my travels.

My learned friend pursued the conversation in Turkish, and in a few minutes, the black entered, with pipes of exquisite amber filled with the mild Persian tobacco. Leaving his slippers at the door, he dropped upon his knee, and placed two small brass dishes in the centre of the room to receive the hot pipe bowls, and, with a showy flourish of his long, naked arm, brought round the rich mouth-pieces to our lips. A spicy atom of some aromatic composition, laid in the centre of the bowl, removed from the smoke all that could offend the most delicate organs, and, as I looked about the perfumer's retired sanctum, and my eye rested on the small heaps of spice-woods, the gilded pastilles, the curious bottles of attar of roses and jasmine, and thence to the broad soft divans extending quite around the room, piled in the corners with cushions of down, I thought Mustapha, the perfumer, among those who lived by traffic, had the cleanliest and most gentlemanlike vocation.

Observing that I smoked but little, Mustapha gave an order to his familiar, who soon appeared, with two small gilded saucers; one containing a jelly of incomparable delicacy and whiteness, and the other a candied liquid, tintured with quince and cinnamon. My friend explained to me that I was to eat both, and that Mustapha said, "on his head be the injury it would do me." There needed little persuasion. The cook to a court of fairies might have mingled sweets less delicately.

For all this courtesy Mustapha finds his offset in the opened hearts of his customers, when the pipes are smoked out, and there is nothing to delay the offer of his costly wares. First calling for a jar of jessamine, than which the sultan himself perfumes his beard with no rarer, he turned it upside down, and, leaning towards me, rubbed the moistened cork over my nascent moustache, and waited with a satisfied certainty for my expression of admiration as it "ascended me into the brain." There was no denying it was of celestial flavour. He held up his fingers: "One? two? three? ten? How many bottles shall your slave fill for you?" It was a most lucid pantomime. An interpreter would have been superfluous.

The attar of roses stood next on the shelf. It was the best ever sent from Adrianople. Bottle after bottle of different extracts were passed under nasal review; each, one might think, the triumph of the alchemy of flowers, and of each a specimen was laid aside for me in a slender vial, dexterously capped with vellum, and tied with a silken thread by the adroit Abyssinian. I escaped emptying my purse by a single worthless coin, the fee I required for my return boat over the Golden Horn—but I had seen Mustapha the perfumer.

My friend led the way through several intricate windings, and passing through a gateway, we entered a circular area, surrounded with a single building divided into small apartments, faced with open porches. It was the slave-market of Constantinople. My first idea was to look round for Don Juan and Johnson. In their place we found slaves of almost every eastern nation, who looked at us with an "I wish to heaven that somebody would buy us" sort of an expression, but none so handsome as Haidee's lover. In a low cellar, beneath one of the apartments, lay twenty or thirty white men chained together by the legs, and with scarce the covering required by decency. A small-featured Arab stood at the door, wrapped in a purple-hooded cloak, and Mr. H. addressing him in Arabic, inquired their nations. He was not their

master, but the stout fellow in the corner, he said, was a Greek by his regular features, and the boy chained to him was a Circassian by his rosy cheek and curly hair, and the black-lipped villain with the scar over his forehead, was an Egyptian doubtless, and the two that looked like brothers were Georgians or Persians, or perhaps Bulgarians. Poor devils! they lay on the clay floor with a cold easterly wind blowing in upon them, dispirited and chilled, with the prospect of being sold to a taskmaster for their best hope of relief.

A shout of African laughter drew us to the other side of the bazaar. A dozen Nubian damsels, flat-nosed and curly-headed, but as straight and fine-limbed as pieces of black statuary, lay around on a platform in front of their apartment, while one sat upright in the middle, and amused her companions by some narration, accompanied by grimaces irresistibly ludicrous. Each had a somewhat scant blanket, black with dirt, and worn as carelessly as a lady carries her shawl. Their black, polished frames were disposed about, in postures a painter would scarce call ungraceful, and no start or change of attitude when we approached, betrayed the innate coyness of the sex. After watching the *improvisatrice* awhile, we were about passing on, when a man came out from the inner apartment, and beckoning to one of them to follow him, walked into the middle of the bazaar. She was a tall, arrow-straight lass of about eighteen, with the form of a nymph, and the head of a baboon. He commenced by crying in a voice that must have been educated in the gallery of a minaret, setting forth the qualities of the animal at his back, who was to be sold at public auction forthwith. As he closed his harangue, he slipped his pipe back into his mouth, and lifting the scrimped blanket of the ebon Venus, turned her twice round, and walked to the other side of the bazaar, where his cry and the exposure of the submissive wench were repeated.

We left him to finish his circuit, and walked on in search of the Circassian beauties of the market. Several turbaned slave-merchants were sitting round a *manghal*, or brass vessel of coals, smoking or making their coffee, in one of the porticoes, and my friend addressed one of them with an inquiry on the subject. "There were Circassians in the bazaar," he said, "but there was an express firman, prohibiting the exposing or selling of them to Franks, under heavy penalties." We tried to bribe him. It was of no use. He pointed to the apartment in which they were, and, as it was upon the ground floor, I took advice of modest assurance, and approaching the window, sheltered my eyes with my hand, and looked in. A great fat girl, with a pair of saucer-like black eyes, and cheeks as red and round as a cabbage-rose, sat facing the window, devouring a pie most voraciously. She had a small carpet spread beneath her, and sat on one of her heels, with a row of fat, red toes, whose nails were tinged with henna, just protruding on the other side from the folds of her ample trousers. The light was so dim that I could not see the features of the others, of whom there were six or seven in groups in the corners. And so faded the bright colours of a certain boyish dream of Circassian beauty! A fat girl eating a pie!

As we were about leaving the bazaar, the door of a small apartment near the gate opened, and disclosed the common cheerless interior of a chamber in a khan. In the centre burned the almost extinguished embers of a Turkish *manghal*, and, at the moment of my passing, a figure rose from a prostrate position, and exposed, as a shawl dropped from her face in rising, the exquisitely small features and bright olive skin of an Arab girl. Her hair was black as night, and the bright braid of it across her forehead seemed but another shade of the warm dark eye that lifted its heavy and sleepy lids, and looked out of the accidentally-opened door as if she were trying to remember how she had dropped out of "Araby the blest" upon so cheerless a spot. She was very beautiful. I should have taken her for a child, from her diminutive size, but for a certain fulness in the limbs and a womanly ripeness in the bust and features. The same dusky

lips which give the males of her race a look of ghastliness, either by contrast with a row of dazzlingly white teeth, or from their round and perfect chiselling, seemed in her almost a beauty, I had looked at her several minutes before she chose to consider it as impertinence. At last she slowly raised her little symmetrical figure (the “Barbary shape” the old poets talk of), and slipping forward to reach the latch, I observed that she was chained by one of her ankles to a ring in the floor. To think that only a “malignant and turbaned Turk” may possess such a Hebe! Beautiful creature! Your lot,

“By some o’er-hasty angel was misplaced,
In Fate’s eternal volume.”

And yet it is very possible she would eat pies, too!

We left the slave-market, and wishing to buy a piece of Brusa silk for a dressing-gown, my friend conducted me to a secluded khan in the neighbourhood of the far-famed “burnt column.” Entering by a very mean door, closed within by a curtain, we stood on fine Indian mats in a large room, piled to the ceiling with silks enveloped in the soft satin-paper of the East. Here again coffee must be handed round before a single fold of the old Armenian’s wares could see the light, and fortunate it is, since one may not courteously refuse it, that Turkish coffee is very delicious, and served in acorn cups for size. A handsome boy took away the little filagree holders at last, and the old trader, setting his huge calpack firmly on his shaven head, began to reach down his costly wares. I had never seen such an array. The floor was soon like a shivered rainbow, almost paining the eye with the brilliancy and variety of beautiful fabrics. And all this to tempt the taste of a poor description-monger, who wanted but a plain robe de chambre to conceal from a chance visitor the poverty of an unmade toilet! There were stuffs of gold for a queen’s wardrobe; there were gauze-like fabrics interwoven with flowers of silver; and there was no leaf in botany, nor device in antiquity, that was not imitated in their rich borderings. I laid my hand on a plain pattern of blue and silver, and half-shutting my eyes to imagine how I should look in it, resolved upon the degree of depletion which my purse could bear, and inquired the price. As “green door and brass knocker” says of his charges in the farce, it was “ridiculously trifling.” It is a cheap country, the East! A beautiful Circassian slave for a hundred dollars (if you are a Turk), and an emperor’s dressing-gown for three! The Armenian laid his hand on his breast, as if he had made a good sale of it, the coffee-bearer wanted but a sous, and that was charity; and thus, by a mere change of place, that which were but a gingerbread expenditure becomes a rich man’s purchase.

LETTER XXXIV.

The Bosphorus—Turkish Palaces—The Black Sea—Buyukdere.

We left the ship with two caïques, each pulled by three men, and carrying three persons, on an excursion to the Black Sea. We were followed by the captain in his fast-pulling gig with six oars, who proposed to beat the feathery boats of the country in a twenty miles’ pull against the tremendous current of the Bosphorus.

The day was made for us. We coiled ourselves *à la Turquie*, in the bottom of the sharp

caïque, and as our broad-brimmed pagans, after the first mile, took off their shawled turbans, unwound their cashmere girdles, laid aside their gold-brodered jackets, and with nothing but the flowing silk shirt and ample trowsers to embarrass their action, commenced “giving way,” in long energetic strokes—I say, just then, with the sunshine and the west wind attempered to half a degree warmer than the blood (which I take to be the perfection of temperature), and a long, long autumn day, or two, or three, before us, and not a thought in the company that was not kindly and joyous—just then, I say, I dropped a “white stone” on the hour, and said, “Here is a moment, old Care, that has slipped through your rusty fingers! You have pinched me the past somewhat, and you will doubtless mark your cross on the future—but the present, by a thousand pulses in this warm frame laid along in the sunshine, is care-free, and the last hour of Eden came not on a softer pinion!”

We shot along through the sultan’s fleet (some eighteen or twenty lofty ships-of-war, looking, as they lie at anchor in this narrow strait, of a supernatural size), and then, nearing the European shore to take advantage of the counter-current, my kind friend, Mr. H., who is at home on these beautiful waters, began to name to me the palaces we were shooting by, with many a little history of their occupants between, to which in a letter, written with a traveller’s haste, and in moments stolen from fatigue, or pleasure, or sleep, I could not pretend to do justice.

The Bosphorus is quite—there can be no manner of doubt of it—the most singularly beautiful scenery in the world. From Constantinople to the Black Sea, a distance of twenty miles, the two shores of Asia and Europe, separated by but half a mile of bright blue water, are lined by lovely villages, each with its splendid palace or two, its mosque and minarets, and its hundred small houses buried in trees, each with its small dark cemetery of cypresses and turbaned head-stones, and each with its valley stretching back into the hills, of which every summit and swell is crowned with a fairy kiosk. There is no tide, and the palaces of the sultan and his ministers, and of the wealthier Turks and Armenians, are built half over the water, and the ascending caïque shoots beneath his window, within the length of the owner’s pipe; and with his own slender boat lying under the stairs, the luxurious oriental makes but a step from the cushions of his saloon to those of a conveyance, which bears him (so built on the water’s edge is this magnificent capital) to almost every spot that can require his presence.

A beautiful palace is that of the “Marble Cradle,” or Beshiktash, the sultan’s winter residence. Its bright gardens with latticed fences (through which, as we almost touched in passing, we saw the gleam of the golden orange and lemon-trees, and the thousand flowers, and heard the splash of fountains, and the singing of birds) lean down to the lip of the Bosphorus, and declining to the south, and protected from everything but the sun by an enclosing wall, enjoy, like the terrace of old King René, a perpetual summer. The brazen gates open on the water, and the palace itself, a beautiful building, painted in the oriental style, of a bright pink, stands between the gardens, with its back to the wall.

The summer palace, where the “unmuzzled lion,” as his flatterers call him, resides at present, is just above on the Asian side, at a village called Beylerbey. It is an immense building, painted yellow, with white cornices, and has an extensive terrace-garden, rising over the hill behind. The harem has eight projecting wings, each occupied by one of the sultan’s lawful wives.

Six or seven miles from Constantinople, on the European shore, stands the serai of the sultan’s eldest sister. It is a Chinese-looking structure, but exceedingly picturesque, and like everything else on the Bosphorus, quite in keeping with the scene. There is not a building on either side, from the Black Sea to Marmora, that would not be ridiculous in other countries; and

yet, here, their gingerbread balconies, imitation perspectives, lattices, bird-cages, and kiosks, seem as naturally the growth of the climate as the pomegranate and the cypress. The old maid sultana lives here with a hundred or two female slaves of condition, a little empress in an empire sufficiently large (for a woman); seeing no bearded face, it is presumed, except her black eunuchs' and her European physician's, and having, though a sultan's sister, less liberty than she gives even her slaves, whom she permits to marry if they will. She can neither read nor write, and is said to be fat, indolent, kind, and childish.

A little farther up, the sultan is repairing a fantastical little palace for his youngest sister, Esmeh Sultana, who is to be married to Haleil Pacha, the commander of the artillery. She is about twenty, and, report says, handsome and spirited. Her betrothed was a Georgian slave, bought by the sultan when a boy, and advanced by the usual steps of favouritism. By the laws of imperial marriages in this empire, he is to be banished to a distant pachalick after living with his wife a year, his connexion with blood-royal making him dangerously eligible to the throne. His bride remains at Stamboul, takes care of her child (if she has one), and lives the remainder of her life in a widow's seclusion, with an allowance proportioned to her rank. *His* consolation is provided for by the Mussulman privilege of as many more wives as he can support. Heaven send him resignation—if he needs it notwithstanding.

The hakim, or chief physician to the sultan, has a handsome palace on the same side of the Bosphorus; and the Armenian seraffs, or bankers, though compelled, like all rayahs, to paint their houses of a dull lead colour (only a Mussulman may live in a red house in Constantinople), are said, in those dusky-looking tenements, to maintain a luxury not inferior to that of the sultan himself. They have a singular effect, those black, funereal houses, standing in the foreground of a picture of such light and beauty!

We pass Orta-keni, the Jew village; the Arnaout-keni, occupied mostly by Greeks; and here, if you have read "The Armenians," you are in the midst of its most stirring scenes. The story is a true one, not much embellished in the hands of the novelist; and there, on the hill opposite, in Anatolia, stands the house of the heroine's father, the old seraff Oglou, and, behind the garden, you may see the small cottage, inhabited, secretly, by the enamoured Constantine; and here, in the pretty village of Bebec, lives, at this moment, the widowed and disconsolate Veronica, dressed ever in weeds, and obstinately refusing all society but her own sad remembrance. I must try to see her. Her "husband of a night" was compelled to marry again by the hospidar, his father (but this is not in the novel, you will remember), and there is late news that his wife is dead, and the lovers of romance in Stamboul are hoping he will return and make a happier sequel than the sad one in the story. The "orthodox catholic Armenian, broker and money-changer to boot," who was to have been her forced husband, is a very amiable and good-looking fellow, now in the employ of our *chargé d'affaires* as second dragoman.

We approach Roumeli Hissar, a jutting point almost meeting a similar projection from the Asian shore, crowned, like its *vis-a-vis*, with a formidable battery. The Bosphorus here is but half an arrow-flight in width, and Europe and Asia, here at their nearest approach, stand looking each other in the face, like boxers, with foot forward, fist doubled, and a most formidable row of teeth on either side. The current scampers through between the two castles, as if happy to get out of the way, and, up-stream, it is hard pulling for a caique. They are beautiful points, however, and I am ashamed of my coarse simile, when I remember how green was the foliage that half-enveloped the walls, and how richly picturesque the hills behind them. Here, in the European castle, were executed the greater part of the janisaries, hundreds in a day, of the manliest frames in the empire, thrown into the rapid Bosphorus, headless and stripped, to float,

unmourned and unregarded, to the sea.

Above Roumeli-Hissar, the Bosphorus spreads again, and a curving bay, which is set like a mirror, in a frame of the softest foliage and verdure, is pointed out as a spot at which the crusaders, Godfrey of Bouillon, and Raymond of Toulouse, encamped on their way to Palestine. The hills beyond this are loftier, and the Giant's Mountain, upon which the Russian army encamped at their late visit to the Porte, would be a respectable eminence in any country. At its foot, the Strait expands into quite a lake; and on the European side, in a scoop of the shore, exquisitely placed, stand the diplomatic villages of Terapia and Buyukdere. The English, French, Russian, Austrian and other flags were flying over half-a-dozen of the most desirable residences I have seen since Italy.

We soon pulled the remaining mile or two, and our spent caikjees drew breath, and lay on their oars in the Black Sea. The waves were breaking on the "blue Symplegades," a mile on our left; and, before us, toward the Cimmerian, Bosphorus; and, south, toward Colchis and Trebizond, spread one broad, blue waste of waters, apparently as limitless as the ocean. The *Black Sea* is particularly *blue*.

We turned our prow to the west, and I sighed to remember that I had reached my farthest step into the East. Henceforth I shall be on the return. I sent a long look over the waters to the bright lands beyond, so famed in history and fiction, and wishing for even a metamorphosis into the poor sea-bird flying above us (whose travelling expenses Nature pays), I lay back in the boat with a "change in the spirit of my dream."

We stopped on the Anatolian shore to visit the ruins of a fine old Genoese castle, which looks over the Black Sea, and after a lunch upon grapes and coffee, at a small village at the foot of the hill on which it stands, we embarked and followed our companions. Running down with the current to Buyukdere, we landed and walked along the thronged and beautiful shore to Terapia, meeting hundreds of fair Armenians and Greeks (*all* beautiful, it seemed to me), issuing forth for their evening promenade, and, with a call of ceremony on the English ambassador, for whom I had letters, we again took to the caique, and fled down with the current like a bird. Oh what a sunset was there!

We were to dine and pass the night at the country-house of an English gentleman at Bebec, a secluded and lovely village, six or eight miles from Constantinople. We reached the landing as the stars began to glimmer, and, after one of the most agreeable and hospitable entertainments I remember to have shared, we took an early breakfast with our noble host, and returned to the ship. I could wish my friends no brighter passage in their lives than such an excursion as mine to the Black Sea.

LETTER XXXV.

The Golden Horn and its Scenery—The Sultan's Wives and Arabians—The Valley of Sweet Waters—Beauty of the Turkish Minarets—The Mosque of Sulymany—Mussulmans at their Devotions—The Muezzin—The Bazaar of the Opium-eaters—The Mad House of Constantinople, and Description of its Inmates—Their Wretched Treatment—The Hippodrome and the Mosque of Sultan Achmet—The Janizaries—Reflections on the Past, the Present, and the Future.

The "Golden Horn" is a curved arm of the sea, the broadest extremity meeting the

Bosphorus and forming the harbour of Constantinople, and the other tapering away till it is lost in the “Valley of Sweet Waters.” It curls through the midst of the “seven-hilled” city, and you cross it whenever you have an errand in old Stamboul. Its hundreds of shooting caïques, its forests of merchantmen and men-of-war, its noise and its confusion, are exchanged in scarce ten minutes of swift pulling for the breathless and Eden-like solitude of a valley that has not its parallel, I am inclined to think, between the Mississippi and the Caspian. It is called in Turkish *khyat-khana*. Opening with a gentle curve from the Golden Horn, it winds away into the hills toward Belgrade, its long and even hollow thridded by a lively stream, and carpeted by a broad belt of unbroken green sward swelling up to the enclosing hills, with a grass so verdant and silken that it seems the very floor of faëry. In the midst of its longest stretch to the eye (perhaps two miles of level meadow) stands a beautiful serai of the sultan’s, unfenced and open, as if it had sprung from the lap of the green meadow like a lily. The stream runs by its door, and over a mimic fall whose lip is of scalloped marble, is built an oriental kiosk, all carving and gold, that is only too delicate and fantastical for reality.

Here, with, the first grass of spring, the sultan sends his fine-footed Arabians to pasture; and here come the ladies of his harem (chosen, women and horses, for much the same class of qualities), and in the long summer afternoon, with mounted eunuchs on the hills around, forbidding on pain of death, all approach to the sacred retreat, they venture to drop their jealous veils and ramble about in their unsunned beauty.

After a gallop of three or four miles over the broad waste table plains, in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, we checked our horses suddenly on the brow of a precipitous descent, with this scene of beauty spread out before us. I had not yet approached it by water, and it seemed to me as if the earth had burst open at my feet, and revealed some realm of enchantment. Behind me, and away beyond the valley to the very horizon, I could see only a trackless heath, brown and treeless, while a hundred feet below lay a strip of very Paradise, blooming in all the verdure and heavenly freshness of spring. We descended slowly, and crossing a bridge half hidden by willows, rode in upon the elastic green sward (for myself) with half a feeling of profanation. There were no eunuchs upon the hills, however, and our spirited Turkish horses threw their wild heads into the air, and we flew over the verdant turf like a troop of Delhis, the sound of the hoofs on the yielding carpet scarcely audible. The fair palace in the centre of this domain of loveliness was closed, and it was only after we had walked around it that we observed a small tent of the prophet’s green couched in a small dell on the hill-side, and containing probably the guard of its imperial master.

We mounted again and rode up the valley for two or three miles, following the same level and verdant curve, the soft carpet broken only by the silver thread of the Barbyzes, loitering through it on its way to the sea. A herd of buffaloes, tended by a Bulgarian boy, stretched on his back in the sunshine, and a small caravan of camels bringing wood from the hills, and keeping to the soft valley as a relief to their spongy feet, were the only animated portions of the landscape. I think I shall never form to my mind another picture of romantic rural beauty (an employment of the imagination I am much given to when out of humour with the world) that will not resemble the “Valley of Sweet Waters”—the *khyat-khana* of Constantinople. “Poor Slingsby” never was here.^[15]

The lofty mosque of Sulymanye, the bazaars of the opium-eaters, and the *Timar-hané*, or mad-house of Constantinople, are all upon one square in the highest part of the city. We entered the vast court of the mosque from a narrow and filthy street, and the impression of its towering plane-trees and noble area, and of the strange, but grand and costly pile in its centre,

was almost devotional. An inner court, enclosed by a kind of romanesque wall, contained a sacred marble fountain of light and airy architecture, and the portico facing this was sustained by some of those splendid and gigantic columns of porphyry and jasper, the spoils of the churches of Asia Minor.^[16]

I think the most beautiful spire that rises into the sky is the Turkish minaret. If I may illustrate an object of such magnitude by so trifling a comparison, it is exactly the shape and proportions of an ever-pointed pencil-case—the silver bands answering to the encircling galleries, one above another, from which the muezzin calls out the hour of prayer. The minaret is painted white, the galleries are fantastically carved, and rising to the height of the highest steeples in our country (four and sometimes six to a single mosque), these slender and pointed fingers of devotion seem to enter the very sky. Remembering, dear reader, that there are two hundred and twenty mosques and three hundred chapels in Constantinople, raising, perhaps, in all, a thousand minarets to heaven, you may get some idea of the magnificence of this seven-hilled capital of the East.

It was near the hour of prayer, and the devout Mussulmans were thronging into the court of Sulymanye by every gate. Passing the noble doors, with their strangely-carved arches of arabesque, which invite all to enter but the profaning foot of the Christian, the turbaned crowd repaired first to the fountains. From the walls of every mosque, by small conduits pouring into a marble basin, flow streams of pure water for the religious ablutions of the faithful. The Mussulman approaches, throws off his flowing robe, steps out of his yellow slippers, and unwinds his voluminous turban with devout deliberateness. A small marble step, worn hollow with pious use, supports his foot while he washes from the knee downward. His hands and arms, with the flowing sleeve of his silk shirt rolled to the shoulder, receive the same lavation, and then, washing his face, he repeats a brief prayer, resumes all but his slippers, and enters the mosque, barefooted. The *mihrab* (or niche indicating the side toward the tomb of the prophet), fixes his eye. He folds his hands together, prays a moment standing, prostrates himself flat on his face toward the hallowed quarter, rises upon his knees, and continues praying and prostrating himself for perhaps half an hour. And all this process is required by the mufti, and performed by every good Mussulman five times a day! A rigid adherence to it is almost universal among the Turks. In what an odour of sanctity would a Christian live, who should make himself thus “familiar with heaven!”

As the muezzin from the minaret was shouting his last “mash-allah!” with a voice like a man calling out from the clouds, we left the court of the majestic mosque, with Byron’s reflection:—

“Alas! man makes that great, which makes him little!”

and, having delivered ourselves of this scrap of poetical philosophy, we crossed over the square to the opium-eaters.

A long row of half-ruined buildings, of a single story, with porticoes in front, and the broad, raised platform beneath, on which the Turks sit cross-legged at public places, is the scene of what was once a peculiarly oriental spectacle. The mufti has of late years denounced the use of opium, and the devotees to its sublime intoxication have either conquered the habit, or what is more probable, indulge it in more secret places. The shops are partly ruinous, and those that remain in order are used as cafés, in which, however, it is said that the dangerous drug may still be procured. My companion inquired of a good-humoured-looking caféjee whether there was any place at which a confirmed opium-eater could be seen under its influence. He said there

was an old Turk, who was in the habit of frequenting his shop, and, if we could wait an hour or two, we might see him in the highest state of intoxication. We had no time to spare, if the object had been worth our while.

And here, thought I, as we sat down and took a cup of coffee in the half-ruined café, have descended upon the delirious brains of these noble drunkards, the visions of Paradise so glowingly described in books—visions, it is said, as far exceeding the poor invention of the poet, as the houris of the prophet exceed the fair damsels of this world. Here men, otherwise in their senses, have believed themselves emperors, warriors, poets; these wretched walls and bending roof, the fair proportions of a palace; this gray old caféjee, a Hylas or a Ganymede. Here men have come to cast off, for an hour, the dull thralldom of the body; to soar into the glorious world of fancy at a penalty of a thousand times the proportion of real misery; to sacrifice the invaluable energies of health, and deliberately poison the very fountain of life, for a few brief moments of magnificent and phrensied blessedness. It is powerfully described in the “Opium Eater” of De Quincy.

At the extremity of this line of buildings, by a natural proximity, stands the *Timar-hané*. We passed the porter at the gate without question, and entered a large quadrangle, surrounded with the grated windows of cells on the ground-floor. In every window was chained a maniac. The doors of the cells were all open, and, descending by a step upon the low stone floor of the first, we found ourselves in the presence of four men chained to rings in the four corners by massy iron collars. The man in the window sat crouched together, like a person benumbed (the day was raw and cold as December), the heavy chain of his collar hanging on his naked breast, and his shoulders imperfectly covered with a narrow blanket. His eyes were large and fierce, and his mouth was fixed in an expression of indignant sullenness. My companion asked him if he were ill. He said he should be well, if he were out—that he was brought there in a fit of intoxication, two years ago, and was no more crazy than his keeper. Poor fellow! It might easily be true! He lifted his heavy collar from his neck as he spoke, and it was not difficult to believe that misery like his for two long years would, of itself, destroy reason. There was a better dressed man in the opposite corner, who informed us, in a gentlemanly voice, that he had been a captain in the sultan’s army, and was brought there in the delirium of a fever. He was at a loss to know, he said, why he was imprisoned still.

We passed on to a poor, half-naked wretch in the last stage of illness and idiocy, who sat chattering to himself, and, though trembling with the cold, interrupted his monologue continually with fits of the wildest laughter. Farther on sat a young man of a face so full of intellectual beauty, an eye so large and mild, a mouth of such mingled sadness and sweetness, and a forehead so broad, and marked so nobly, that we stood, all of us, struck with a simultaneous feeling of pity and surprise. A countenance more beaming with all that is admirable in human nature, I have never seen, even in painting. He might have sat to Da Vinci for the “beloved apostle.” He had tied the heavy chain by a shred to a round of the grating, to keep its weight from his neck, and seemed calm and resigned, with all his sadness. My friend spoke to him, but he answered obscurely, and seeing that our gaze disturbed him, we passed unwillingly on. Oh what room there is in the world for pity! If that poor prisoner be not a maniac (as he may not be), and if nature has not falsified in the structure of his mind the superior impress on his features, what Prometheus-like agony has he suffered! The guiltiest felon is better cared for. And, allowing his mind to be a wreck, and allowing the hundred human minds, in the same cheerless prison, to be certainly in ruins, oh what have they done to be weighed down with iron on their necks, and exposed, like caged beasts, shivering and naked, to the eye

of pitiless curiosity? I have visited lunatic asylums in France, Italy, Sicily, and Germany, but, culpably neglected as most of them are, I have seen nothing comparable to this in horror.

"Is he never unchained?" we asked. "Never!" And yet from the ring to the iron collar there was just chain enough to permit him to stand upright! There were no vessels near them, not even a pitcher of water. Their dens were cleansed and the poor sufferers fed at appointed hours, and, come wind or rain, there was neither shutter nor glass to defend them from the inclemency of the weather.

We entered most of the rooms, and found in all the same dampness, filth, and misery. One poor wretch had been chained to the same spot for twenty years. The keeper said he never slept. He talked all the night long. Sometimes at mid-day his voice would cease, and his head nod for an instant, and then with a start as if he feared to be silent, he raved on with the same incoherent rapidity. He had been a dervish. His collar and chain were bound with rags, and a tattered coat was fastened up on the inside of the window, forming a small recess in which he sat, between the room and the grating. He was emaciated to the last degree. His beard was tangled and filthy, his nails curled over the ends of his fingers, and his appearance, save only an eye of the keenest lustre, that of a wild beast.

In the last room we entered, we found a good-looking young man, well-dressed, healthy, composed, and having every appearance of a person in the soundest state of mind and body. He saluted us courteously, and told my friend that he was a renegade Greek. He had turned Mussulman a year or two ago, had lost his reason, and so was brought here. He talked of it quite as a thing of course, and seemed to be entirely satisfied that the best had been done for him. One of the party took hold of his chain. He winced as the collar stirred on his neck, and said the lock was on the outside of the window (which was true), and that the boys came in and tormented him by pulling it sometimes, "There they are," he said, pointing to two or three children who had just entered the court, and were running round from one prisoner to another. We bade him good morning, and he laid his hand to his breast, and bowed with a smile. As we passed toward the gate, the chattering lunatic on the opposite side screamed after us, the old dervish laid his skinny hands on the bars of his window, and talked louder and faster, and the children, approaching close to the poor creatures, laughed with delight at their excitement.

It was a relief to escape the common sights and sounds of the city. We walked on to the Hippodrome. The only remaining beauty of this famous square is the unrivalled mosque of Sultan Achmet, which, though inferior in size to the renowned Santa Sophia, is superior in elegance both within and without. Its six slender and towering minarets are the handsomest in Constantinople. The wondrous obelisk in the centre of the square, remains perfect as in the time of the Christian emperors, but the brazen tripod is gone from the twisted column, and the serpent-like pillar itself is leaning over with its brazen folds to its fall.

Here stood the barracks of the powerful Janisaries, and from the side of Sultan Achmet the cannon were levelled upon them, as they rushed from the conflagration within. And here, when Constantinople was "the second Rome," were witnessed the triumphal processions of Christian conquest, the march of the crusaders, bound for Palestine, and the civil tumults which Justinian, walking among the people with the Gospel in his hand, tried in vain to allay ere they burnt the great edifice built of the ruins of the temple of Solomon. And around this now neglected area, the captive Gelimer followed in chains the chariot of the conquering Belisarius, repeating the words of Solomon, "Vanity of vanities! all is vanity!" while the conqueror himself, throwing aside his crown, prostrated himself at the feet of the beautiful Theodora, raised from a Roman actress to be the Christian empress of the East. From any elevated point of the city, you

may still see the ruins of the palace of the renowned warrior, and read yourself a lesson on human vicissitudes, remembering the school-book story of “an obolon for Belisarius!”

The Hippodome was, until late years, the constant scene of the games of the jereed. With the destruction of the Janisaries, and the introduction of European tactics, this graceful exercise has gone out of fashion. The East is fast losing its picturesqueness. Dress, habits, character, everything seems to be undergoing a gradual change, and when, as the Turks themselves predict, the Moslem is driven into Asia, this splendid capital will become another Paris, and with the improvements in travel, a summer in Constantinople will be as little thought of as a tour in Italy. Politicians in this part of the world predict such a change as about to arrive.

[15] Irving says, in one of his most exquisite passages—“He who has sallied forth into the world like poor Slingsby, full of sunny anticipations, finds too soon how different the distant scene becomes when visited. The smooth place roughens as he approaches; the wild place becomes tame and barren; the fairy tints that beguiled him on, still fly to the distant hill, or gather upon the land he has left behind, and every part of the landscape is greener than the spot he stands on.” Full of merit and beautiful expression as this is, I, for one, have not found it true. Bright as I had imagined the much-sung lands beyond the water, I have found many a scene in Italy and the East that has more than answered the craving for beauty in my heart. Val d’Arno, Vallombrosa, Venice, Terni, Tivoli, Albano, the Isles of Greece, the Bosphorus, and the matchless valley I have described, have, with a hundred other spots less famous, far outgone in their exquisite reality, even the brightest of my anticipations. The passage is not necessarily limited in its meaning to scenery, however, and of *moral* disappointment it is beautifully true. There is many a “poor Slingsby,” the fate of whose sunny anticipations of life it describes but too faithfully.

[16] Sulymanye was built of the ruins of the church St. Euphemia, at Chalcedonia.

LETTER XXXVI.

Sultan Mahmoud at his Devotions—Comparative Splendour of Papal, Austrian, and Turkish Equipages—The Sultan’s Barge or Caique—Description of the Sultan—Visit to a Turkish Lancasterian School—The Dancing Dervishes—Visit from the Sultan’s Cabinet—The Seraskier and the Capitan Pacha—Humble Origin of Turkish Dignitaries.

I had slept on shore, and it was rather late before I remembered that it was Friday (the Moslem Sunday), and that Sultan Mahmoud was to go in state to mosque at twelve. I hurried down the precipitous street of Pera, and, as usual, escaping barely with my life from the Christian-hating dogs of Tophana, embarked in a caique, and made all speed up the Bosphorus. There is no word in Turkish for faster, but I was urging on my caikjees by a wave of the hand and the sight of a bishlik (about the value of a quarter of a dollar), when suddenly a broadside

was fired from the three-decker, “Mahmoudier,” the largest ship in the world, and to the rigging of every man-of-war in the fleet through which I was passing, mounted, simultaneously, hundreds of blood-red flags, filling the air about us like a shower of tulips and roses. Imagine twenty ships of war, with yards manned, and scarce a line in their rigging to be seen for the flaunting of colours! The jar of the guns, thundering in every direction close over us, almost lifted our light boat out of the water, and the smoke rendered our pilotage between the ships and among their extending cables rather doubtful. The white cloud lifted after a few minutes, and, with, the last gun, down went the flags altogether, announcing that the “Brother of the Sun” had left his palace.

He had but crossed to the mosque of the small village on the opposite side of the Bosphorus, and was already at his prayers when I arrived. His body-guard was drawn up before the door, in their villainous European dress, and, as their arms were stacked, I presumed it would be some time before the sultan reappeared, and I improved the interval in examining the handja-bashes or state-caïques, lying at the landing. I have arrived at my present notions of equipage by three degrees. The pope’s carriages at Rome rather astonished me. The emperor of Austria’s sleighs diminished the pope in my admiration, and the sultan’s caïques, in their turn, “pale the fires” of the emperor of Austria. The handja-bash is built something like the ancient galley, very high at the prow and stem, carries some fifty oars, and has a roof over her poop, supported by four columns, and loaded with the most sumptuous ornaments, the whole gilt brilliantly. The prow is curved over, and wreathed into every possible device that would not affect the necessary lines of the model; her crew are dressed in the beautiful costume of the country, rich and flowing, and with the costly and bright-coloured carpets hanging over her side, and the flashing of the sun on her ornaments of gold, she is really the most splendid object of state equipage (if I may be allowed the misnomer) in the world.

I was still examining the principal barge, when the troops stood to their arms, and preparation was made for the passing out of the sultan. Thirty or forty of his highest military officers formed themselves into two lines from the door of the mosque to the landing, and behind them were drawn up single files of soldiers. I took advantage of the respect paid to the rank of Commodore Patterson, and obtained an excellent position, with him, at the side of the caïque. First issued from the door two Georgian slaves, bearing censers, from which they waved the smoke on either side, and the sultan immediately followed, supported by the capitan-pacha, the seraskier, and Haleil Pacha (who is to marry the Sultana Esmeh). He walked slowly down to the landing, smiling and talking gaily with the seraskier, and, bowing to the commodore in passing, stepped into his barge, seated himself on a raised sofa, while his attendants coiled their legs on the carpet below, and turned his prow across the Bosphorus.

I have perhaps never set my eyes on a handsomer man than Sultan Mahmoud. His figure is tall, straight, and manly, his air unembarrassed and dignified, and his step indicative of the well-known firmness of his character. A superb beard of jetty blackness, with a curling moustache, conceals all the lower part of his face; the decided and bold lines of his mouth just marking themselves when he speaks. It is said he both paints and dyes his beard, but a manlier brown upon a cheek, or a richer gloss upon a beard, I never saw. His eye is described by writers as having a *doomed darkness* of expression, and it is certainly one that would well become a chief of bandits—large, steady, and overhung with an eyebrow like a thunder cloud. He looks the monarch. The child of a seraglio (where mothers are chosen for beauty alone) could scarce escape being handsome. The blood of Circassian upon Circassian is in his veins, and the wonder is, not that he is the handsomest man in his empire, but that he is not the greatest slave.

Our "mother's humour," they say, predominates in our mixtures. Sultan Mahmoud, however, was marked by nature for a throne.

I accompanied Mr. Goodell and Mr. Dwight, American missionaries at Constantinople, to visit a Lancasterian school established with their assistance in the Turkish barracks. The building stands on the ascent of one of the lovely valleys that open into the Bosphorus, some three miles from the city, on the European side. We were received by the colonel of the regiment; a young man of fine appearance, with the diamond crescent and star glittering on the breast of his military frock, and after the inevitable compliment of pipes and coffee, the drum was beat and the soldiers called to school.

The Sultan has an army of boys. Nine-tenths of those I have seen are under twenty. They marched in, in single file, and facing about, held up their hands at the word of command, while a subaltern looked that each had performed the morning ablution. They were healthy-looking lads, mostly from the interior provinces, whence they are driven down like cattle to fill the ranks of their sovereign. Duller-looking subjects for an idea it has not been my fortune to see.

The Turkish alphabet hung over the teacher's desk (the colonel is the schoolmaster, and takes the greatest interest in his occupation), and the front seats are faced with a long box covered with sand, in which the beginners write with their fingers. It is fitted with a slide that erases the clumsy imitation when completed, and seemed to me an ingenious economy of ink and paper. (I would suggest to the mind of the benevolent, a school on the same principle for beginners in poetry. It would save the critics much murder, and tend to the suppression of suicide.) The classes having filed into their seats, the school opened with a prayer by the colonel. The higher benches then commenced writing, on slates and paper, sentences dictated from the desk, and I was somewhat surprised at the neatness and beauty of the characters.

We passed afterward into another room where arithmetic and geography were taught, and then mounted to an apartment on the second story occupied by students in military drawing. The proficiency of all was most creditable, considering the brief period during which the schools have been in operation—something less than a year. Prejudiced as the Turks are against European innovation, this advanced step towards improvement tells well. Our estimable and useful missionaries appear, from the respect everywhere shown them, to be in high esteem, and with the Sultan's energetic disposition for reform, they hope everything in the way of an enlightened change in the moral condition of the people.

We went to the chapel of the dancing dervishes. It is a beautiful marble building, with a court-yard ornamented with a small cemetery shaded with cypresses, and a fountain enclosed in a handsome edifice, and defended by gilt gratings from the street of the suburb of Pera, in which it stands. They dance here twice a week. We arrived before the hour, and were detained at the door by a soldier on guard, who would not permit us to enter without taking off our boots—a matter about which, between straps and their very muddy condition, we had some debate. The dervishes began to arrive before the question was settled, and one of them, a fine-looking old man, inviting us to enter, Mr. H. explained the difficulty. "Go in," said he, "go in!" and turning to the more scrupulous Mussulman with the musket, as he pushed us within the door, "Stupid fellow!" said he, "if you had been less obstinate, they would have given you a *bakshish*" (Turkish for a *fee*). He should have said less *religious*—for the poor fellow looked horror-struck as our dirty boots profaned the clean white Persian matting of the sacred floor. One would think "the nearer the church the farther from God," were as true here as it is said to be in some more civilised countries.

It was a pretty, octagonal interior, with a gallery, the *mihrab* or niche indicating the direction of the prophet's tomb, standing obliquely from the front of the building. Hundreds of small lamps hung in the area, just out of the reach of the dervishes' tall caps, and all around between the gallery; a part of the floor was raised, matted, and divided from the body of the church by a balustrade. It would have made an exceedingly pretty ball-room.

None but the dervishes entered within the paling, and they soon began to enter, each advancing first toward the *mihrab*, and going through fifteen or twenty minutes' prostrations and prayers. Their dress is very humble. A high, white felt cap, without a rim, like a sugar-loaf enlarged a little at the smaller end, protects the head, and a long dress of dirt-coloured cloth, reaching quite to the heels and bound at the waist with a girdle, completes the costume. They look like men who have made up their minds to *seem* religious, and though said to be a set of very good fellows, they have a Mawworm expression of face generally, which was very repulsive. I must except the chief of the sect, however, who entered when all the rest had seated themselves on the floor, and after a brief genuflexion or two took possession of a rich Angora carpet placed for him near the *mihrab*. He was a small old man, distinguished in his dress only by the addition of a green band to his cap (the sign of his pilgrimage to Mecca) and the entire absence of the sanctimonious look. Still he was serious, and there was no mark in his clear, intelligent eye and amiable features, of any hesitancy or want of sincerity in his devotion. He is said to be a learned man, and he is certainly a very prepossessing one, though he would be taken up as a beggar in any city in the United States. It is a thing one learns in "dangling about the world," by the way, to form opinions of men quite independently of their dress.

After sitting a while in quaker meditation, the brotherhood rose one by one (there were ten of them I think), and marched round the room with their toes turned in, to the music of a drum and a Persian flute, played invisibly in some part of the gallery. As they passed the carpet of the cross-legged chief, they twisted dexterously and made three salaams, and then raising their arms, which they held out straight during the whole dance, they commenced twirling on one foot, using the other after the manner of a paddle to keep up the motion. I forgot to mention that they laid aside their outer dresses before commencing the dance. They remained in dirty white tunics reaching to the floor, and very full at the bottom, so that with the regular motion of their whirl, the wind blew them out into a circle, like what the girls in our country call "making cheeses." They twisted with surprising exactness and rapidity, keeping clear of each other, and maintaining their places with the regularity of machines. I have seen a great deal of waltzing, but I think the dancing dervishes for precision and spirit, might give a lesson even to the Germans.

We left them twisting. They had been going for half an hour, and it began to look very like perpetual motion. Unless their brains are addled, their devotion, during this dizzy performance at least, must be quite suspended. A man who could think of his Maker, while revolving so fast that his nose is indistinct, must have some power of abstraction.

The frigate was visited to-day by the sultan's cabinet. The *seraskier pacha* came alongside first, in his state caique, and embraced the commodore as he stepped upon the deck, with great cordiality. He is a short, fat old man, with a snow-white beard, and so bow-legged as to be quite deformed. He wore the red Fez cap of the army, with a long blue frock-coat, the collar so tight as nearly to choke him, and the body not shaped to the figure, but made to fall around him like a sack. The red, bloated skin of his neck fell over, so as to almost cover the gold with which the collar was embroidered. He was formerly capitan pacha, or admiral-in-chief of the fleet, and

though a good-humoured, merry-looking old man, has shown himself, both in his former and present capacity, to be wily, cold, and a butcher in cruelty. He possesses unlimited influence over the sultan, and though nominally subordinate to the grand vizier, is really the second if not the first person in the empire. He was originally a Georgian slave.

The seraskier was still talking with the commodore in the gangway, when the present capitan pacha mounted the ladder, and the old man, who is understood to be at feud with his successor, turned abruptly away and walked aft. The capitan pacha is a tall, slender man, of precisely that look and manner which we call gentlemanly. His beard grows untrimmed in the Turkish fashion, and is slightly touched with gray. His eye is anxious, but resolute, and he looks like a man of resource and ability. His history is as singular as that of most other great men in Turkey. He was a slave of Mohammed Ali, the rebellious Pacha of Egypt. Being intrusted by his master with a brig and cargo for Leghorn, he sold the vessel and lading, lived like a gentleman in Italy for some years with the proceeds, and as the best security against the retribution of his old master, offered his services to the sultan, with whom Ali was just commencing hostilities. Naval talent was in request, and he soon arrived at his present dignity. He is said to be the only officer in the fleet who knows anything of his profession.

Haleil Pacha arrived last. The sultan's future son-in-law is a man of perhaps thirty-five. He is light-complexioned, stout, round-faced, and looks like a respectable grocer, "well to do in the world." He has commanded the artillery long enough to have acquired a certain air of ease and command, and carries the promise of good fortune in his confident features. He is to be married almost immediately. He, too, was a Georgian, sent as a present to the sultan.

The three dignitaries made the rounds of the ship and then entered the cabin, where the pianoforte (a novelty to the seraskier and Haleil Pacha, and to most of the attendant officers), and the commodore's agreeable society and champagne, promised to detain them the remainder of the day. They were like children with a holiday. I was engaged to dine on shore, and left them aboard.

In a country where there is no education and no rank, except in the possession of present power, it is not surprising that men should rise from the lowest class to the highest offices, or that they should fill those offices to the satisfaction of the sultan. Yet it is curious to hear their histories. An English physician, who is frequently called into the seraglio, and whose practice among all the families in power gives him the best means of information, has entertained me not a little with these secrets. I shall make use of them when I have more leisure, merely mentioning here, in connexion with the above accounts, that the present grand vizier was a boatman on the Bosphorus, and the commander of the sultan's body-guard, a shoemaker. The latter still employs all his leisure in making slippers, which he presents to the sultan and his friends, not at all ashamed of his former vocation. So far, indeed, are any of these mushroom officers from blushing at their origin, that it is common to prefix the name of their profession to the title of pacha, and they are addressed by it as a proper name. This is one respect in which their European education will refine them to their disadvantage.

LETTER XXXVII.

Bring all the shops of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, around the City Hall, remove their fronts, pile up all their goods on shelves facing the street, cover the whole with a roof, and metamorphose your trim clerks into bearded, turbaned, and solemn old Mussulmans, smooth Jews, and calpacked and rosy Armenians, and you will have something like the grand bazaar of Constantinople. You can scarcely get an idea of it, without having been there. It is a city under cover. You walk all day, and day after day, from one street to another, winding and turning, and trudging up hill and down, and never go out of doors. The roof is as high as those of our three-story houses, and the dim light, so favourable to shop-keepers, comes struggling down through skylights, never cleaned except by the rains of heaven.

Strolling through the bazaar is an endless amusement. It is slow work, for the streets are as crowded as a church-aisle after service; and, pushed aside one moment by a bevy of Turkish ladies, shuffling along in their yellow slippers, muffled to the eyes, the next by a fat slave carrying a child, again by a *kervas* armed to the teeth, and clearing the way for some coming dignitary, you find your only policy is to draw in your elbows, and suffer the motley crowd to shove you about at their pleasure.

Each shop in this world of traffic may be two yards wide. The owner sits cross-legged on the broad counter below, the height of a chair from the ground, and hands you all you want without stirring from his seat. One broad bench counter runs the length of the street, and the different shops are only divided by the slight partition of the shelves. The purchaser seats himself on the counter, to be out of the way of the crowd, and the shopman spreads out his goods on his knees, never condescending to open his lips except to tell you the price. If he exclaims “bono,” or “calo,” (the only words a real Turk ever knows of another language), he is stared at by his neighbours as a man would be in Broadway who should break out with an Italian bravura. Ten to one, while you are examining his goods, the bearded trader creeps through the hole leading to his kennel of a dormitory in the rear, washes himself, and returns to his counter, where, spreading his sacred carpet in the direction of Mecca, he goes through his prayers and prostrations, perfectly unconscious of your presence, or that of the passing crowd. No vocation interferes with his religious duty. Five times a day, if he were running from the plague, the Mussulman would find time for prayers.

The Frank purchaser attracts a great deal of curiosity. As he points to an embroidered handkerchief, or a rich shawl, or a pair of gold-worked slippers, Turkish ladies of the first rank, gathering their *yashmaks* securely over their faces, stop close to his side, not minding if they push him a little to get nearer the desired article. Feeling not the least timidity, except for their faces, these true children of Eve examine the goods in barter, watch the stranger’s countenance, and if he takes off his glove, or pulls out his purse, take it up and look at it, without even saying “by your leave.” Their curiosity often extends to your dress, and they put out their little henna-stained fingers and pass them over the sleeve of your coat with a gurgling expression of admiration at its fineness, or if you have rings or a watch-guard, they lift your hand or pull out your watch with no kind of scruple, I have met with several instances of this in the course of my rambles. But a day or two ago I found myself rather more than usual a subject of curiosity. I was alone in the street of embroidered handkerchiefs (every minute article has its peculiar bazaar), and wishing to look at some of uncommon beauty, I called one of the many Jews always near a stranger to turn a penny by interpreting for him, and was soon up to the elbows in goods that would tempt a female angel out of Paradise. As I was selecting one for a

purchase, a woman plumped down on the seat beside me, and fixed her great, black, unwinking eyes upon my face, while an Abyssinian slave and another white woman, both apparently her dependents, stood respectfully at her back. A small turquoise ring (the favourite colour in Turkey), first attracted her attention. She took up my hand in her soft, fat fingers, and dropped it again without saying a word. I looked at my interpreter, but he seemed to think it nothing extraordinary, and I went on with my bargain. Presently my fine-eyed friend pulled me by the sleeve, and as I leaned toward her, rubbed her forefinger very quickly over my cheek, looking at me intently all the while. I was a little disturbed with the lady's familiarity, and asked my Jew what she wanted. I found that my rubicund complexion was something uncommon among these dark-skinned orientals, and she wished to satisfy herself that I was not painted! I concluded my purchase, and putting the parcel into my pocket, did my prettiest at an oriental salaam, but to my mortification, the lady only gathered up her *yashmack*, and looked surprised out of her great eyes at my freedom. My Constantinople friends inform me that I am to lay no "unction to my soul" from her notice, such liberties being not at all particular. The husband exacts from his half-dozen wives only the concealment of their faces, and they have no other idea of impropriety in public.

In the centre of the bazaar, occupying about as much space as the body of the City Hall in New York, is what is called the *bezestein*. You descend into it from four directions by massive gates which are shut, and all persons excluded, except between seven and twelve of the forenoon. This is the core of Constantinople—the soul and citadel of orientalism. It is devoted to the sale of arms and to costly articles only. The roof is loftier, and the light more dim than on the outer bazaars, and the merchants who occupy its stalls are old and of established credit. Here are subjects for the pencil! If you can take your eye from those Damascus sabres, with their jewelled hilts and costly scabbards, or from those gemmed daggers and guns inlaid with silver and gold, cast a glance along that dim avenue and see what a range there is of glorious old grey beards, with their snowy turbans! These are the Turks of the old *régime*, before Sultan Mahmoud disfigured himself with a coat like a "dog of a Christian," and broke in upon the customs of the Orient. These are your opium-eaters, who smoke even in their sleep, and would not touch wine if it were handed to them by houris! These are your fatalists, who would scarce take the trouble to get out of the way of a lion, and who are as certain of the miracle of Mohammed's coffin as of the length of the pipe, or of the quality of the tobacco of Shiraz!

I have spent many an hour in the *bezestein*, steeping my fancy in its rich orientalism, and sometimes trying to make a purchase for myself or others. It is curious to see with what perfect indifference these old cross-legs attend to the wishes of a Christian. I was idling round one day with an English traveller, whom I had known in Italy, when a Persian robe of singular beauty hanging on one of the stalls arrested my companion's attention. He had with him his Turkish dragoman, and as the old merchant was smoking away and looking right at us, we pointed to the dress over his head, and the interpreter asked to see it. The Mussulman smoked calmly on, taking no more notice of us than of the white clouds curling through his beard. He might have sat for Michael Angelo's Moses. Thin, pale, calm, and of a statue-like repose of countenance and posture, with a large old-fashioned turban, and a curling beard half mingled with grey, his neck bare, and his fine bust enveloped in the flowing and bright coloured drapery of the East—I had never seen a more majestic figure. He evidently did not wish to have anything to do with us. At last I took out my snuff-box, and addressing him with "effendi!" the Turkish title of courtesy, laid my hand on my breast and offered him a pinch. Tobacco in this unaccustomed shape is a luxury here, and the amber mouth-piece emerged from his moustache, and putting his

three fingers into my box, he said "*pekkhe!*" the Turkish ejaculation of approval. He then made room for us on his carpet, and with a cloth measure took the robe from its nail, and spread it before us. My friend bought it unhesitatingly for a dressing-gown, and we spent an hour in looking at shawls, of prices perfectly startling, arms, chalices for incense, spotless amber for pipes, pearls, bracelets of the time of Sultan Selim, and an endless variety of things "rich and rare." The closing of the bezestein gates interrupted our agreeable employment, and our old friend gave us the parting salaam very cordially for a Turk. I have been there frequently since, and never pass without offering my snuff-box, and taking a whiff or two from his pipe, which I cannot refuse, though it is not out of his mouth, except when offered to a friend, from sunrise to midnight.

One of the regular "lions" of Constantinople is a *kibaub shop*, or Turkish restaurant. In a ramble with our consul, the other day, in search of the newly-discovered cistern of a "thousand and one columns," we found ourselves, at the hungry hour of twelve, opposite a famous shop near the slave-market. I was rather staggered at the first glance. A greasy fellow, with his shirt rolled to his shoulders, stood near the door, commending his shop to the world by slapping on the flank a whole mutton that hung beside him, while, as a customer came in, he dexterously whipped out a slice, had it cut in a twinkling into bits as large as a piece of chalk (I have stopped five minutes in vain, to find a better comparison), strung upon a long iron skewer, and laid on the coals. My friend is an old Constantinopolitan, and had eaten kibaubs before. He entered without hesitation, and the adroit butcher, giving his big trowsers a fresh hitch, and tightening his girdle, made a new cut for his "narrow-legged" customers, and wished us a good appetite (the Turks look with great contempt on our tight pantaloons, and distinguish us by this epithet). We got up on the platform, crossed our legs under us as well as we could, and I cannot deny that the savoury missives that occasionally reached my nostrils, bred a gradual reconciliation between my stomach and my eyes.

In some five minutes, a tin platter was set between us, loaded with piping hot kibaubs, sprinkled with salad, and mixed with bits of bread; our friend the cook, by way of making the amiable, stirring it up well with his fingers as he brought it along. As Modely says in the play, "In love or mutton, I generally fall to without ceremony," but, spite of its agreeable flavour, I shut my eyes, and selected a very small bit, before I commenced upon the kibaubs. It was very good eating, I soon found out, and, my fingers once greased (for we are indulged with neither knife, fork, nor skewer, in Turkey), I proved myself as good a trencherman as my friend.

The middle and lower classes of Constantinople live between these shops and the cafés. A dish of kibaubs serves them for dinner, and they drink coffee, which they get for about half a cent a cup, from morning till night. We paid for our mess (which was more than any two men could eat at once, unless *very* hungry), twelve cents.

We started again with fresh courage, in search of the cistern. We soon found the old one, which is an immense excavation, with a roof, supported by five hundred granite columns, employed now as a place for twisting silk, and escaping from its clamorous denizens, who rushed up after us to the daylight, begging *paras*, we took one of the boys for a guide, and soon found the object of our search.

Knocking at the door of a half-ruined house, in one of the loneliest streets of the city, an old, sore-eyed Armenian, with shabby calpack, and every mark of extreme poverty, admitted us, pettishly demanding our entrance money, before he let us pass the threshold. Flights of steps, dangerously ruinous, led us down, first into a garden, far below the level of the street, and

thence into a dark and damp cavern, the bottom of which was covered with water. As the eye became accustomed to the darkness, we could distinguish tall and beautiful columns of marble and granite, with superb Corinthian capitals, perhaps thirty feet in height, receding as far as the limits of our obscured sight. The old man said there were a thousand of them. The number was doubtless exaggerated, but we saw enough to convince us, that here was covered up, almost unknown, one of the most costly and magnificent works of the Christian emperors of Constantinople.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Belgrade—The Cottage of Lady Montagu—Turkish Cemeteries—Natural Taste of the Moslems for the Picturesque—A Turkish Carriage—Washerwomen Surprised—Gigantic Forest Trees—The Reservoir—Return to Constantinople.

I left Constantinople on horseback with a party of officers, and two American travellers in the East, early on one of nature's holiday mornings, for Belgrade. We loitered a moment in the small Armenian cemetery, the only suburb that separates the thickly crowded street from the barren heath that stretches away from the city on every side to the edge of the horizon. It is singular to gallop thus from the crowded pavement, at once into an uncultivated and unfenced desert. We are so accustomed to suburban gardens that the traveller wonders how the markets of this overgrown and immense capital are supplied. A glance back upon the Bosphorus, and toward the Asian shore, and the islands of the sea of Marmora, explains the secret. The waters in every direction around this sea-girdled city are alive with boats, from the larger *kachambas* and *sandals* to the egg-shell caique, swarming into the Golden Horn in countless numbers, laden with every vegetable of the productive East. It is said, however, that it is dangerous to thrive too near the eye of the sultan. The summary mode for rewarding favourites and providing for the residence of ambassadors, by the simple confiscation of the prettiest estate desirably situated, is thought to have something to do with the barrenness of the immediate neighbourhood.

The Turks carry their contempt of the Christian even beyond the grave. The funereal cypress, so singularly beautiful in its native East, is permitted to throw its dark shadows only upon turbaned tombstones. The Armenian *rayah*, the oppressed Greek, and the more hated Jew, slumber in their unprotected graves on the open heath. It almost reconciles one to the haughtiness and cruelty of the Turkish character, however, to stand on one of the "seven hills" of Stamboul, and look around upon their own beautiful cemeteries. On every sloping hill-side, in every rural nook, in the court of the splendid mosque, stands a dark necropolis, a small city of the dead, shadowed so thickly by the close growing cypresses, that the light of heaven penetrates but dimly. You can have no conception of the beauty it adds to the landscape. And then from the bosom of each, a slender minaret shoots into the sky as if pointing out the flight of the departed spirit, and if you enter within its religious darkness, you find a taste and elegance unknown in more civilised countries; the humblest headstone lettered with gold, and the more costly sculptured into forms the most sumptuous, and fenced and planted with flowers never neglected.

In the East, the grave-yard is not, as with us, a place abandoned to its dead. Occupying a

spot of chosen loveliness, it is resorted to by women and children, and on holidays by men, whose indolent natures find happiness enough in sitting on the green bank around the resting-place of their relatives and friends. Here, while their children are playing around them, they smoke in motionless silence, watching the gay Bosphorus or the busier curve of the Golden Horn, one of which is visible from every cemetery in the Stamboul. Occasionally you see large parties of twenty or thirty, sitting together, their slight feast of sweetmeats and sherbet spread in some grassy nook, and the surrounding head-stones serving as leaning-places for the women, or bounds for the infant gambols of the gaily-dressed little Mussulmans.

Whatever else we may deny the Turk, we must allow him to possess a genuine love for rural beauty. The cemeteries we have described, the choice of his dwelling on the Bosphorus, and his habit of resorting, whenever he has leisure, to some lovely scene to sit the livelong day in the sunshine, are proof enough. And then all over the hills, both in Anatolia and Roumelia, wherever there is a finer view or greener spot than elsewhere, you find the small *sairgah*, the grassy platform on which he spreads his carpet, and you may look in vain for a spot better selected for his purpose.

Things are sooner seen than described (I wish it were as agreeable to describe as to see them!) and all this digression, and much more which I spare the reader, is the fruit of five minutes' reflection while the suridjee tightens his girths in the Armenian burying-ground. The turbaned Turk once more in his saddle, then we will canter on some three miles, if you please, over as naked a heath as the sun looks upon, to the "Valley of Sweet Waters." I have described this, I think, before. We five to learn, and my intelligent friend tells me, as we draw rein, and wind carefully down the steep descent, that the site of the Sultan's romantic serai, in the bosom of the valley, was once occupied by the first printing-press established in Turkey—the fruit of an embassy to the Court of Louis the Fifteenth, by Mehemet Effendi, in the reign of Achmet the Third. And thus having delivered myself of a fact, a thing for which I have a natural antipathy in writing, let us gallop up the velvet brink of the Barbyses.

We had kept our small Turkish horses to their speed for a mile, with the enraged suridjee crying after us at the top of his voice, "Ya-wash! ya-wash!" (slowly, slowly!) when, at a bend of the valley, right through the midst of its velvet verdure, came rolling along an *aruba*, loaded with ladies. This pretty word signifies in Turkish a carriage, and the thing itself reminds you directly of the fantastic vehicles in which fairy queens come upon the stage. First appear two grey oxen, with their tails tied to a hoop bent back from the bend of the pole, their heads and horns and the long curve of the hoop decked with red and yellow tassels so profusely, that it looks at a distance like a walking clump of hollyhocks. As you pass the poor oxen (almost lifted off their hind legs by the straining of the hoop upon their tails), a four-wheeled vehicle makes its appearance, the body and wheels carved elaborately and gilt all over, and the crimson cover rolled up just so far as to show a cluster of veiled women, cross-legged upon cushions within, and riding *in perfect silence*.^[17] A eunuch or a *very* old Turk walks at the side, and thus the Moslem ladies "take kaif," as it is called—in other words *go a pleasuring*. But a prettier sight than this gay affair rolling noiselessly over the pathless greensward of the Valley of Sweet Waters, you may not see in a year's travel.

A beautiful Englishwoman, mounted (if I may dare to write it) on a *more* beautiful Arabian, came flying toward us as we approached the head of the valley, the long feathers in her riding cap all but brushing our admiring eyes out as she passed, and other living thing met we none till we drew up in the edge of the forest of Belgrade. A half hour brought us to a bold descent, and through the openings in the wood we caught a glimpse of the celebrated retreat of Lady

Montagu, a village, tossed into the lap of as bright a dell as the sun looks upon in his journey. A lively brook, that curls about in the grass like a silver flower worked into the green carpet, overcomes at last its unwillingness to depart, and vanishes from the fair scene under a clump of willows; and, as if it knew it was sitting for its picture, there must needs be a group of girls with their trowsers tucked up to the knee, washing away so busily in the brook, that they did not see that half a dozen Frank horsemen were upon them, and their forgotten yashmaks all fallen about their shoulders!

We dismounted, and finding (what I never saw before) a *red-headed* Frenchman, walking about in his slippers, we inquired for the house of Lady Montagu. He had never heard of her! A cottage, a little separated from the village, untenanted, and looking as if it should be hers, stood on a swell of the valley, and we found by the scrawled names and effusions of travellers upon the gates, that we were not mistaken in selecting it for the shrine of our sentiment.

I am sorry to be obliged to add, that in the romantic forest of Belgrade, we listened to the calls of mortal hunger. With some very sour wine, however, we did drink to the memory of Lady Mary and the “fair Fatima,” washing down with the same draught as brown bread as ever I saw, and some very indifferent filberts.

We mounted once more, and followed our silent guide across the brook, politely taking it below the spot where our naiads of the stream were washing, and following its slender valley for a mile, arrived at one of the gigantic bendts, for which the place is famous. To give romance its proper precedence over reality, however, I must first mention, that on the soft bank of the artificial lake, which I shall presently describe, Constantine Ghika, disguised as a shepherd, stole an interview with the fair Veronica, and in the wild forest to the right, they wandered till they lost their way; an adventure of which they only regretted the sequel, finding it again! If you have not read “The Armenians,” this pretty turn in my travels is thrown away upon you.

The valley of Belgrade widens and rounds into a lake-shaped hollow just here, and across it, to form a reservoir for the supply of the city by the aqueducts of Valens and Justinian, is built a gigantic marble wall. There is no water just now, which, for a lake, is rather a deficiency; but the vast white wall only stands up against the sky, bolder and more towering, and coming suddenly upon it in that lonely place, you might take it, if the “fine phrensy” were on you, for the barrier of some enchanted demesne.

We passed on into the forest, winding after an almost invisible path, up hill and down dale, till we came to the second bendt. This, and the third, which is near by, are larger and of more ornamental architecture than the first, and the forest around them is one in which, if he turned his back on the lofty walls, a wild Indian would feel himself at home. I have not seen such trees since I left America; clear of all underwood, and the long vistas broken only by the trunk of some noble oak, fallen aslant, it has for miles the air of a grand old wilderness, unprofaned by axe or fire. In the midst of such scenery as this, to ride up to the majestic bendt, faced with a front like a temple, and crowned by a marble balustrade, with a salient and raised crescent in the centre, like a throne for some monarch of the forest, it must be a more staid imagination than mine that would not feel a touch of the knight of La Mancha, and spur up to find a gate, and a bugle to blow a blast for the warder! It is just the looking place I imagined for an enchanted castle, when reading my first romances.

Farther on in the forest we found several circular structures, like baths, sunk in the earth, with flights of steps winding to the bottom, but with the same gigantic trees growing at their very rim, and nothing near them to show the purpose of their costly masonry. We stopped to form a conjecture or two with the aid of the *genus loci*; but the surly suridjee, probably at a loss

to comprehend the object of looking into a hole full of dead leaves, chose to put his horse to a gallop; and having no Veronica to make a romance of a lost path, we left our conjectures to gallop after.

We reached the waste plains above the city at sunset, and turned a little out of our way to enter through the Turkish cemetery (poetically called by Mr. MacFarlane “death’s coronal”), on the summit and sides of the hill behind Pera. Broad daylight, as it was still without, it was deep twilight among its thick-planted cypresses; and our horses, starting at the tall, white tombstones, hurried through its damp hollows and emerged on a brow overlooking the bright and crowded Bosphorus, bathed at the moment in a flood of sunset glory. I said again, as I reined in my horse and gazed down upon those lovely waters, there is no such scene of beauty in the world! And again I say, “poor Slingsby” never was here!

[17] Whether the difficulty of talking through the *yashmack*, which is drawn tight over the mouth and nose, may account for it, or whether they have another race of the sex in the East, I am not prepared to say, but Turkish women are remarkable for their taciturnity.

LETTER XXXIX.

Scutari—Tomb of the Sultana Valide—Mosque of the Howling Dervishes—A Clerical Shoemaker—Visit to a Turkish Cemetery—Bird’s-Eye View of Stamboul and its Environs—Seraglio-Point—The Seven Towers.

Pulled over to Scutari in a caique, for a day’s ramble. The Chrysopolis, the “golden city” of the ancients, forms the Asian side of the bay, and though reckoned, generally, as a part of Constantinople, is in itself a large and populous capital. It is built on a hill, very bold upon the side washed by the sea of Marmora, but leaning toward the seraglio, on the opposite shore, with the grace of a lady (Asia) bowing to her partner (Europe). You will find the simile very beautifully elaborated in the first chapter of “The Armenians.”

We strolled through the bazaar awhile, meeting, occasionally, a caravan of tired and dusty merchants, coming in from Asia, some with Syrian horses, and some with dusky Nubian slaves, following barefoot, in their blankets; and, emerging from the crowded street upon a square, we stopped a moment to look at the cemetery and gilded fountains of a noble mosque. Close to the street, defended by a railing of gilt iron, and planted about closely with cypresses, stands a small temple of airy architecture, supported on four slender columns, and enclosed by a net of gilt wire, forming a spacious aviary. Within sleeps the Sultana Valide. Her costly monument, elaborately inscribed in red and gold, occupies the area of this poetical sepulchre; small, sweet-scented shrubs half bury it in their rich flowers, and birds of the gayest plumage flutter and sing above her in their beautiful prison. If the soul of the departed Sultana is still susceptible of sentiment, she must look down with some complacency upon the disposition of her “mortal coil.” I have not seen so fanciful a grave in my travels.

We ascended the hill to the mosque of the Howling Dervishes. It stands in the edge of the great cemetery of Scutari, the favourite burial-place of the Turks. The self-torturing worship of this singular class of devotees takes place only on a certain day of the week, and we found the

gates closed. A small café stood opposite, sheltered by large plane-trees, and on a bench at the door sat a dervish, employed in the unclerical vocation of mending slippers. Calling for a cup of the fragrant Turkish coffee, we seated ourselves on the matted bench beside him, and, entering into conversation, my friend and he were soon upon the most courteous terms. He laid down his last, and accepted a proffered narghilé, and, between the heavily-drawn puff's of the bubbling vase, gave us some information respecting his order, of which the peculiarity that most struck me was a law compelling them to follow some secular profession. In this point, at least, they are more apostolic than the clergy of Christendom. Whatever may be the dervish's excellence as a "mender of souls," thought I, as I took up the last, and looked at the stitching of the bright new patch, (may I get well out of this sentence without a pun!) I doubt whether there is a divine within the Christian pale who could turn out so pretty a piece of work in any corresponding calling. Our coffee drunk and our chibouques smoked to ashes, we took leave of our papoosh-mending friend, who laid his hand on his breast, and said, with the expressive phraseology of the East, "You shall be welcome again."

We entered the gloomy shadow of the vast cemetery, and found its cool and damp air a grateful exchange for the sunshine. The author of "Anastasius" gives a very graphic description of this place, throwing in some horrors, however, for which he is indebted to his admirable imagination. I never was in a more agreeable place for a summer-morning's lounge, and, as I sat down on a turbaned headstone, near the tomb of Mohammed the Second's horse, and indulged in a train of reflections arising from the superior distinction of the brute's ashes over those of his master, I could remember no place, except Plato's Academy at Athens, where I had mused so absolutely at my ease.

We strolled on. A slender and elegantly-carved slab, capped with a small turban, fretted and gilt, arrested my attention. "It is the tomb," said my companion, "of one of the ichoglans or sultan's pages. The peculiar turban is distinctive of his rank, and the inscription says, he died at eighteen, after having seen enough of the world! Similar sentiments are to be found on almost every stone. Close by stood the ambitious cenotaph of a former pacha of Widin, with a swollen turban, crossed with folds of gold, and a footstone painted and carved, only less gorgeously than the other; and under his name and titles was written, "I enjoyed not the world." Farther on, we stopped at the black-banded turban of a *cadi*, and read again, underneath, "I took no pleasure in this evil world." You would think the Turks a philosophising people, judging by these posthumous declarations; but one need not travel to learn that tombstones are sad liars.

The cemetery of Scutari covers as much ground as a city. Its black cypress pall spreads away over hill and dale, and terminates, at last, on a long point projecting into Marmora, as if it would pour into the sea the dead it could no longer cover. From the Armenian village, immediately above, it forms a dark, and not unpicturesque foreground to a brilliant picture of the gulf of Nicomedia and the clustering Princes' Islands. With the economy of room which the Turks practise in their burying-grounds, laying the dead, literally, side by side, and the immense extent of this forest of cypresses, it is probable that on no one spot on the earth are so many of the human race gathered together.

We wandered about among the tombs till we began to desire to see the cheerful light of day, and crossing toward the height of Bulgurlu, commenced its ascent, with the design of descending by the other side to the Bosphorus, and returning, by caique, to the city. Walking leisurely on between fields of the brightest cultivation, we passed, half way up, a small and rural serai, the summer residence of Esmeh Sultana, the younger sister of the sultan, and soon

after stood, well breathed, on the lofty summit of Bulgurlu. The constantly-occurring sairgahs, or small grass platforms, for spreading the carpet and “taking kaif,” show how well the Turks appreciate the advantages of a position commanding, perhaps, views unparalleled in the world for their extraordinary beauty. But let us take breath and look around us.

We stood some three miles back from the Bosphorus, perhaps a thousand feet above its level. There lay Constantinople! The “temptation of Satan” could not have been more sublime. It seemed as if all the “kingdoms of the earth” were swept confusedly to the borders of the two continents. From Seraglio Point, seven miles down the coast of Roumelia, the eye followed a continued wall; and from the same point, twenty miles up the Bosphorus, on either shore, stretched one crowded and unbroken city! The star-shaped bay in the midst, crowded with flying boats; the Golden Horn sweeping out from behind the hills, and pouring through the city like a broad river, studded with ships; and, in the palace-lined and hill-sheltered Bosphorus, the sultan’s fleet at anchor, the lofty men-of-war flaunting their blood-red flags, and thrusting their tapering spars almost into the balconies of the fairy dwellings, and among the bright foliage of the terraced gardens above them. Could a scene be more strangely and beautifully mingled?

But sit down upon this silky grass, and let us listen to my polyglot friend, while he explains the details of the panorama.

First, clear over the sea of Marmora, you observe a snow-white cloud resting on the edge of the horizon. That is Olympus. Within sight of his snowy summit, and along toward the extremity of this long line of eastern hills, lie Bithynia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, and the whole scene of the apostles’ travels in Asia Minor; and just at his feet, if you will condescend to be modern, lies Brusa, famous for its silks, and one of the most populous and thriving of the sultan’s cities. Returning over Marmora by the Princes’ Islands, at the western extremity of Constantinople, stands the Fortress of the Seven Towers, where fell the Emperor Constantine Palæologus, where Othman the Second was strangled, where refractory ambassadors are left to come to their senses and the sultan’s terms, and where, in short, that “zealous public butcher,” the seraskier, cuts any Gordian knot that may tangle his political meshes; and here was the famous “Golden Gate,” attended no more by its “fifty porters with white wands,” and its crowds of “*ichoglans* and mutes, turban-keepers, nail-cutters, and slipper-bearers,” as in the days of the Selims.

Between the Seven Towers and the Golden Horn you may count the “seven hills” of ancient Stamboul, the towering arches of the aqueduct of Valens, crossing from one to the other, and the swelling dome and gold-tipped minarets of a hundred imperial mosques crowning and surrounding their summits. What an Orient look do those gallery-bound and sky-piercing shafts give to the varied picture!

There is but one “Seraglio Point” in the world. Look at that tapering cape, shaped like a lady’s foot, projecting from Stamboul toward the shore of Asia, and dividing the bay from the sea of Marmora. It is cut off from the rest of the city, you observe, by a high wall, flanked with towers, and the circumference of the whole seraglio may be three miles. But what a gem of beauty it is! In what varied foliage its unapproachable palaces are buried, and how exquisitely gleam from the midst of the bright leaves its gilded cupolas, its gay balconies, its airy belvideres, and its glittering domes! And mark the height of those dark and arrowy cypresses, shooting from every corner of its imperial gardens, and throwing their deep shadows on every bright cluster of foliage, and every gilded lattice of the sacred enclosure. They seem to remind one, that amid all its splendour, and with all its secluded retirement, this gorgeous sanctuary of royalty, has been stained, from its first appropriation by the monarchs of the East till now, with

the blood of victims to the ambition of its changing masters. The cypresses are still young over the graves of an uncle and a brother, whose cold murder within those lovely precincts prepared the throne for the present sultan. The seraglio, no longer the residence of Mahmoud himself, is at present occupied by his children, two noble boys, of whom one, by the usual system, must fall a sacrifice to the security of the other.

Keeping on toward the Black Sea, we cross the Golden Horn to Pera, the European and diplomatic quarter of the city. The high hill on which it stands overlooks all Constantinople; and along its ridge toward the beautiful cemetery on the brow, runs the principal street of the Franks, the promenade of the dragoman exquisites, and the Broadway of shops and belles. Here meet, on the narrow *pavé*, the veiled Armenian, who would die with shame to show her chin to a stranger, and the wife of the European merchant, in a Paris hat and short petticoats, mutually each other's sincere horror. Here the street is somewhat cleaner, the dogs somewhat less anti-Christian, and hat and trowsers somewhat less objects of contempt. It is a poor abortion of a place, withal, neither Turkish nor Christian; and nobody who could claim a shelter for his head elsewhere, would take the whole of its slate-coloured and shingled palaces as a gift.

Just beyond is the mercantile suburb of Galatan, which your dainty diplomatist would not write on his card for an embassy, but for which, as being honestly what it calls itself, I entertain a certain respect, wanting in my opinion of its mongrel neighbour. Heavy gates divide these different quarters of the city, and if you would pass after sunset, you must anoint the hinges with a piastre.

LETTER XL.

Beauties of the Bosphorus—Summer-Palace of the Sultan—Adventure with an old Turkish Woman—The Feast of Bairam—The Sultan his own Butcher—His evil Propensities—Visit to the Mosques—A formidable Dervish—Santa Sophia—Mosque of Sultan Achmet—Traces of Christianity.

From this elevated point, the singular effect of a desert commencing from the very streets of the city is still more observable. The compact edge of the metropolis is visible even upon the more rural Bosphorus, not an enclosure or a straggling house venturing to protrude beyond the closely pressed limit. To repeat the figure, it seems, with the prodigious mass of habitations on either shore, as if all the cities of both Europe and Asia were swept to their respective borders, or as if the crowded masses upon the long extending shores were the deposit of some mighty overflow of the sea.

From Pera commence the numerous villages, separated only by name, which form a fringe of peculiarly light and fantastic architecture to the never-wearying Bosphorus. Within the small limit of your eye, upon that silver link between the two seas, there are fifty valleys and thirty rivers, and an imperial palace on every loveliest spot from the Black Sea to Marmora. The Italians say, "See Naples and die!" but for *Naples* I would read *Stamboul and the Bosphorus*.

Descending unwillingly from this enchanting spot, we entered a long glen, closed at the water's edge by the Sultan's summer-palace, and present residence of Beylerbey. Half way down, we met a decrepit old woman, toiling up the path, and my friend, with a Wordsworthian passion for all things humble and simple, gave her the Turkish good-morrow, and inquired her business at the village. She had been to Stavros, to sell ten paras' worth of herbs—about *one*

cent of our currency. He put a small piece of silver into her hand, while, with the still strong habit of Turkish modesty, she employed the other in folding her tattered *yashmack* so as to conceal her features from the gaze of strangers. She had not expected charity. "What is this for?" she asked, looking at it with some surprise. "To buy bread for your children, mother!" "Effendi!" said the poor old creature, her voice trembling, and the tears streaming from her eyes, "My children are all dead! *There is no one now between me and Allah!*" It were worth a poet's while to live in the East. Like the fairy in the tale, they never open their lips but they "speak pearls."

We took a caïque at the mosque of Sultan Selim, at Beylerbey, and floated slowly past the imperial palace. Five or six eunuchs, with their red caps and long blue dresses, were talking at a high tenor in the court-yard of the harem, and we gazed long and earnestly at the fine lattices above, concealing so many of the picked beauties of the empire. A mandolin, very indifferently strummed in one of the projecting wings, betrayed the employment of some fair Fatima, and there was a single moment when we could see, by the relief of a corner window, the outline of a female figure; but the caïque floated remorselessly on, and our busy imaginations had their own unreal shadows for their reward. As we approached the central façade the polished brazen gates flew open, and a band of thirty musicians came out and ranged themselves on the terrace beneath the palace-windows, announcing, in their first flourish, that Sultan Mahmoud had thrust his fingers into his *pilaw*, and his subjects were at liberty to dine. Not finding their music much to our taste, we ordered the caikjees to assist the current a little, and shooting past Stavros, we cut across the Strait from the old palace of Shemsheh the vizier, and, in a few minutes, I was once more in my floating home, under the "star-spangled banner."

Constantinople was in a blaze last night, with the illumination for the approach of the Turkish feast of Bairam. The minarets were extremely beautiful, their encircling galleries hung with coloured lamps, and illuminated festoons suspended from one to the other. The ships of the fleet were decked also with thousands of lamps, and the effect was exceedingly fine, with the reflection in the Bosphorus, and the waving of the suspended lights in the wind. The Sultan celebrates the festa by taking a virgin to his bed, and sacrificing twenty sheep with his own hand. I am told by an intelligent physician here, that this playing the butcher is an every-day business with the "Brother of the Sun," every safe return from a ride, or an excursion in his *sultanethe caïque*, requiring him to cut the throat of his next day's mutton. It may account partly for the excessive cruelty of character attributed to him.

Among other bad traits, Mahmoud is said to be very avaricious. It is related of his youth, that he was permitted occasionally, with his brother (who was murdered to make room for him on the throne), to walk out in public on certain days with their governor; and that, upon these occasions, each was intrusted with a purse to be expended in charity. The elder brother soon distributed his piastres, and borrowed of his attendants to continue his charities; while Mahmoud quietly put the purse in his pocket, and added it to his private hoard on his return. It is said, too, that he has a particular passion for upholstery, and in his frequent change from one serai to another, allows no nail to be driven without his supervision. Add to this a spirit of perverse contradiction, so truculent that none but the most abject flatterers can preserve his favour, and you have a pretty handful of offsets against a character certainly not without some royal qualities.

With one of the reis effendi's and one of the seraskier's officers, followed by four *kervasses*

in the Turkish military dress, and every man a pair of slippers in his pocket, we accompanied the commodore, to-day, on a visit to the principal mosques.

Landing first at Tophana, on the Pera side, we entered the court of the new mosque built by the present sultan, whose elegant exterior of white marble and two freshly-gilded minarets we had admired daily, lying at anchor without sound of the muezzin. The morning prayers were just over, and the retiring Turks looked, with lowering brows at us, as we pulled off our boots on the sacred threshold.

We entered upon what, but for the high pulpit, I should have taken for rather a superb ball-room. An unencumbered floor carpeted gaily, a small arabesque gallery over the door quite like an orchestra, chandeliers and lamps in great profusion, and walls painted of the brightest and most varied colours, formed an interior rather wanting in the "dim religious light" of a place of worship. We were shuffling around in our slippers from one side to the other, examining the marble *mihrab* and the narrow and towering pulpit, when a ragged and decrepid dervish, with his papooshes in his hand, and his toes and heels protruding from a very dirty pair of stockings, rose from his prayers, and began walking backward and forward, eyeing us ferociously and muttering himself into quite a passion. His charity for infidels was evidently at a low ebb. Every step we took upon the holy floor seemed to add to his fury. The kervasses observed him, but his sugar-loaf cap carried some respect with it, and they evidently did not like to meddle with him. He followed us to the door, fixing his hollow grey eyes with a deadly glare upon each one as he went out, and the Turkish officers seemed rather glad to hurry us out of his way. He left us in the vestibule, and we mounted a handsome marble staircase to a suite of apartments above, communicating with the sultan's private gallery. The carpets here were richer, and the divans with which the half dozen saloons were surrounded, were covered with the most costly stuffs of the East. The gallery was divided from the area of the mosque by a fine brazen grating curiously wrought, and its centre occupied by a rich ottoman, whereon the imperial legs are crossed in the intervals of his prostrations. It was about the size and had the air altogether of a private box at the opera.

We crossed the Golden Horn, and passing the eunuch's guard, entered the gardens of the seraglio on our way to Santa Sophia. An inner wall still separated us from the gilded kiosks, at whose latticed windows peering above the trees, we might have clearly perused the features of any peeping inmate; but the little cross-bars revealed nothing but their own provoking eye of the size of a rose-leaf in the centre, and we reached the upper gate without even a glimpse of a waved handkerchief to stir our chivalry to the rescue.

A confused mass of buttresses without form or order, is all that you are shown for the exterior of that "wonder of the world," the mosque of mosques, the renowned Santa Sophia. We descended a dark avenue, and leaving our boots in a vestibule that the horse of Mohammed the Second, if he was lodged as ambitiously living as dead, would have disdained for his stable, we entered the vaulted area. A long breath and an admission of its almost attributable supernatural grandeur, followed our too hasty disappointment. It is indeed a "vast and wondrous dome!" Its dimensions are less than those of St. Peter's at Rome, but its effect, owing to its unity and simplicity of design, is, I think, superior. The numerous small galleries let into its sides add richness to it without impairing its apparent magnitude, and its vast floor, upon which a single individual is almost lost, the sombre colours of its walls untouched probably for centuries, and the dim sepulchral light that struggles through the deep-niched and retiring windows, form altogether an interior from which the imagination returns, like the dove to the ark, fluttering and bewildered.

Our large party separated over its wilderness of a floor, and each might have had his hour of solitude, had the once Christian spirit of the spot (or the present pagan demon) affected him religiously. I found, myself, a singular pleasure in wandering about upon the elastic mats (laid four or five thick all over the floor), examining here a tattered banner hung against the wall, and there a rich cashmere which had covered the tomb of the prophet; on one side a slab of transparent alabaster from the temple of Solomon (a strange relic for a Mohammedan mosque!) and on the other, a dark mihrab surrounded by candles of incredible proportions, looking like the marble columns of some friezeless portico. The four “six-winged cherubim” on the roof of the dome, sole remaining trace as they are of the religion to which the building was first dedicated, had better been left to the imagination. They are monstrous in mosaic. It is said that the whole interior of the mosque is cased beneath its dusky plaster with the same costly mosaic which covers the ceiling. To make a Mohammedan mosque of a Christian church, however, it was necessary to erase Christian emblems from the walls; besides which the Turks have a superstitious horror of all imitative arts, considering the painting of the Iranian features particularly, as a mockery of the handiwork of Allah.

We went hence to the more modern mosque of Sultan Achmet, which is in imitation of Santa Sophia within, but its own beautiful prototype in exterior. Its spacious and solemn court, its six heaven-piercing minarets, its fountains, and the mausoleums of the sultans, with their gilded cupolas and sarcophagi covered with cashmeres (the murdering sultan and his murdered brothers lying in equal splendour side by side!), are of a style of richness peculiarly oriental and imposing. We visited in succession Sultan Bajazet, Sulymany, and Sultana Valide, all of the same arabesque exterior, and very similar within. The description of one leaves little to be said of the other, and, with the exception of Santa Sophia, of which I should like to make a lounge when I am in love with my own company, the mosques of Constantinople are a kind of “lion” well killed in a single visit.

LETTER XLI.

Unerring Detection of Foreigners—A Cargo of Odaliskues—The Fanar, or Quarter of the Greeks—Street of the Booksellers—Aspect of Antiquity—Purchases—Charity for Dogs and Pigeons—Punishment of Canicide—A Bridal Procession—Turkish Female Physiognomy.

Pulling up the Golden Horn to-day in a caique without any definite errand (a sort of excursion particularly after my own heart), I was amused at the caikjee’s asking my companion, who shaves clean like a Christian, and has his clothes from Regent-street, and looks for aught I can see, as much like a foreigner in Constantinople as myself, “in what vessel I had arrived.” We asked him if he had ever seen either of us before. “No!” How then did he know that my friend, who had not hitherto spoken a word of Turkish, was not as lately arrived as myself? What is it that so infallibly, in every part of the world, distinguishes the stranger?

We passed under the stern of an outlandish-looking vessel just dropping her anchor. Her deck was crowded with men and women in singular costumes, and near the helm, apparently under the protection of a dark-visaged fellow in a voluminous turban, stood three young, and, as well as we could see, uncommonly pretty girls. The captain answered to our hail that he was from Trebizond, and his passengers were slaves for the bazaar. How redolent of the East! Were

one but a Turk, now, to forestall the market and barter for a pair of those dark eyes while they are still full of surprise and innocence!

We landed at the *Fanar*. Bow-windows crowded with fair faces, in enormous pink turbans, naked shoulders (which I am already so orientalisised as to think very indecent), puffed curls and pinched waists, reminded us at every step that we were in a Christian quarter of Constantinople. From this paltry and miserable suburb, spring the modern princes of Greece, the Mavrocordatos, and Ghikas, the Hospodars of Wallachia and Moldavia, the subtle, insinuating, intriguing, but talented and ever-successful Fanariotes. One hears so much of them in Europe, and so much is made of a stray scion from the very far-traced root of Palæologus or some equally boasted blood of the Fanar (I met a Fanariote princess G—— at the baths of Lucca last year, whom I except from every disparaging remark), that he is a little disappointed with the dirty alleys and the stuffed windows shown him as hereditary homes of these very sounding names. There are a hundred families at least in the Fanar, that trace their origin back to no less than an imperial stock, and there is not a house in the whole quarter that would pass in our country for a respectable barn. In personal appearance they are certainly very inferior to any other race of their own nation. The Albanians and the Greeks I saw at Napoli and in the Morea, were (except the North American Indians) the finest people, physically, I have ever been among; while it would be difficult to find a more diminutive and degenerate-looking body of men and women, than swarm in this nest of Grecian princes.

We re-entered our little bark, and gliding along leisurely through the crowd of piades, kachambas, and caiques, landed at Stamboul, and walked on toward the bazaar. Always discovering new passages in that labyrinth of shops, we found ourselves, after an hour's rambling, in a long street of booksellers. This is rather the oldest and narrowest part of the bazaar, and the light of heaven meets with the additional interruption of two rows of pillars with arched friezes standing in the middle of the street. On entering the literary twilight of the passage in the rear of these columns, the classic nostril detects instantly the genuine odour of manuscript, black-letter, and ancient binding; and the trained eye, accustomed to the dim niches of libraries, wanders over the well-piled shelves with their quaint rows of volumes in vellum, and appreciates at once their varied riches. Here is nothing of the complexion of a shelf at the Harpers', or the Hendees', or the Careys'—no fresh and uncut novel, no new-born poem, no political pamphlet or gay souvenir! And the priceless treasures of learning are not here doled out by a talkative publisher or dapper clerk, skilled only in the lettered backs of the volumes he barter. But in sombre and uneven rows, or laid in heaps, whose order is not in their similarity of binding, but in the correspondence of their contents, lie venerable and much-thumbed tomes of Arabic or Persian; while the venerable bibliopole, seated motionless on his hams, with his grey beard reaching to his crossed slippers, peruses an illuminated volume of Hafiz, lifting his eyes from the page only to revolve some sweet image in his mind, and murmur a low "pekke!" of approbation.

We had stepped back into the last century. Here was the calamus still in use. The small, brown reed, not yet superseded by the more useful but less classic quill, stood in every clotted inkstand, and nothing less than the purchase of a whole scrivener's furniture, from a bearded bookworm, whose benevolent face took my fancy, would suffice my enthusiasm. Not to waste all our oriental experience at a single stall, we strolled farther on to buy an illuminated Hafiz. We stopped simultaneously before an old Armenian who seemed, by his rusty calpack and shabby robe, to be something poorer than even his plainly-clad neighbours: for in Turkey, as elsewhere, he who lives in a world of his own, has but a slender portion in that of the vulgar. A choice-

looking volume lay open upon one of the old man's knees, while from a wooden bowl he was eating hastily a pottage of rice. His meal was evidently an interruption. He had not even laid aside his book.

There was something in his handling the volume, as he took down a pocket-sized Hafiz, that showed an affection for the author. He turned it over with a slight dilation of countenance, and opening it with a careful thumb, read a line in mellifluous Persian. I took it from him open at the place, and marked the passage with my nail, to look for it in the translation.

With my cheaply-bought treasures in my pockets, we turned up the street of the diamond merchants, and making a single purchase more in the bazaar, of a tesbih or Turkish rosary of spice-wood, emerged to the open air in the neighbourhood of the mosque of Sultan Bajazet.

Whether slipping the pagan beads through my fingers affected me devoutly, or whether it was the mellow humour of the moment, I felt a disposition to forgive my enemies, and indulge in an act of Mohammedan piety—feeding the unowned dogs of the street. We stepped into a baker's shop, and laid out a piastre in bread, and were immediately observed and surrounded, before we could break a loaf, by twenty or thirty as ill-looking curs, as ever howled to the moon. Having distributed about a dozen loaves, and finding that our largess had by no means satisfied the appetites of the expecting rabble, we found ourselves embarrassed to escape. Nothing but the baker's threshold prevented them from jumping upon us, in their eagerness, and the array of so many formidable mouths ferocious with hunger, was rather staggering. The baker drew off the hungry pack at last, by walking round the corner with a loaf in his hand, while we made a speedy exit, patted on the back in passing by several of the assembled spectators.

It is surprising that the Turks can tolerate this filthy breed of curs, in such extraordinary numbers. They have a whimsical punishment for killing one of them. The dead dog is hung by his heels, so that his nose just touches the ground, and the *canicide* is compelled to heap wheat about him, till he is entirely covered; the wheat is then given to the poor, and the dog buried at the expense of the culprit. There are probably five dogs to every man in Constantinople, and besides their incessant barking, they often endanger the lives of children and strangers. MacFarlane, I think, tells the story of a drunken sea-captain, who was entirely devoured by the dogs at Tophana; nothing being found of him in the morning but his "indigestible pig-tail!"

We entered the court of Sultan Bajazet, and found the majestic plane-trees that shadow its arabesque fountains, bending beneath the weight of hundreds of pensionary pigeons. Here, as at several of the mosques, an old man sits by the gate, whose business it is to expend the alms given him in distributing grain to these sacred birds. Not to be outdone in piety, my friend gave the blind Turk a piastre; and, as he arose and unlocked the box beneath him, the pigeons descended about us in such a cloud, as literally to darken the air. Handful after handful was then thrown among them, and the beautiful creatures ran over our feet and fluttered round us with a fearlessness that sufficiently proved the safety in which they haunted the sacred precincts. In a few minutes they soared altogether again to the trees, and their Mussulman-feeder resumed his seat upon the box to wait for another charity.

A crowd of women at the harem gate, in the rear of the seraskier's palace, attracted our attention. Upon inquiry, we found that he had married a daughter to one of the sultan's military officers, and the bridal party was expected presently to come out in arubas, and make the tour of the Hippodrome, on the way to the house of the bridegroom. We wiled away an hour returning the gaze of curiosity bent upon us from the idle and bright eyes of a hundred women,

and the first of the gilded vehicles made its appearance; though in the same style of ornament with the one I have already described, it differed in being drawn by horses, and having a frame top, with small round mirrors set in the corners. Within sat four very young women, one of whom was the bride; but which, we found no one who could tell us. It is no description of a face in the East to say, that the eyes were dark, and the nose regular—all that the jealous yashmack permitted us to ascertain of the beauty of the bride. Their eyes are *all* dark, and their noses are *all* regular; the Turkish nose differing from the Grecian, as that of the Antinous from the Apollo, only in its more voluptuous fulness, and a nostril less dilated. Four darker pairs of eyes, however, and four brows of whiter orb, never pined in a harem, or were reflected in those golden-rimmed mirrors; and as the twelve succeeding arubas rattled by, and in each suite four young women, with the same eternal dark eyes, “full of sleep,” and the same curved and pearly forehead, and noses like the Antinous, I thought of *toujours perdrix*, and felt that if there had been but *one* with a slight toss in that prominent member, it would not have been displeasing.

In a conversation with a Greek lady the other day, she remarked that the veils of the Turkish ladies conceal no charms. Their mouths, she says, are generally coarse, and their teeth, from the immoderate use of sweetmeats, or neglect, or some other cause, almost universally defective. How far the interest excited by these hidden features may have jaundiced the eyes of my fair informer, I cannot say; but, as a general fact, uneducated women, whatever other beauties they may possess, have rarely expressive or agreeable mouths. Nature forms and colours the nose, the eyes, the forehead, and the complexion; but the character, from the cradle up, moulds gradually to its own inward changes, the plastic and passion-breathing lines of the lips. Allowing this, it would be rather surprising if there was a mouth in all Turkey that had more than a pretty silliness at the most—the art of dyeing their finger nails, and painting their eyebrows, being the highest branches of female education. How they came by these “eyes that teach us what the sun is made of,” the vales of Georgia and Circassia best can tell.

And so having rambled away a sunny autumn day, and earned some little appetite, if not experience, we will get out of Stamboul, before the sunset guard makes us prisoners, and climb up to our dinner in Pera.

LETTER XLII.

The Perfection of Bathing—Pipes—Downy Cushions—Coffee—Rubbing Down—“Circular Justice,” as displayed in the Retribution of Boiled Lobsters—A Deluge of Suds—The Shampoo—Luxurious helps to the Imagination—A Pedestrian Excursion—Story of an American Tar, burdened with Small Change—Beauty of the Turkish Children—A Civilised Monster—Glimpse of Sultan Mahmoud in an Ill-Humour.

“Time is (not) money” in the East. We were three hours to-day at the principal bath of Constantinople, going through the ordinary process of the establishment, and were outstayed, at last, by two Turkish officers who had entered with us. During this time, we had each the assiduous service of an attendant, and coffee, lemonade, and pipes *ad libitum*, for the consideration of half a Spanish dollar.

Although I have once described a Turkish bath, the metropolitan “pomp and circumstance” so far exceed the provincial in this luxury, that I think I shall be excused for dwelling a moment upon it again. The dressing-room opens at once from the street. We descended half a dozen

steps to a stone floor, in the centre of which stood a large marble fountain. Its basin was kept full by several *jets d'eau*, which threw their silver curves into the air, and the edge was set round with *narghilés* (or Persian water-pipes with glass vases), ready for the smokers of the mild tobacco of Shiraz. The ceiling of this large hall was lofty, and the sides were encircled by three galleries, one above the other, with open balustrades, within which the bathers undressed. In a corner sat several attendants, with only a napkin around their waists, smoking till their services should be required; and one who had just come from the inner bath, streaming with perspiration, covered himself with cloths, and lay crouched, upon a carpet till he could bear, with safety, the temperature of the outer air.

A half-naked Turk, without his turban, looks more a Mephistopheles than a Ganymede, and I could scarce forbear shrinking as this shaven-headed troop of servitors seized upon us, and, without a word, pulled off our boots, thrust our feet into slippers, and led us up into the gallery to undress. An ottoman, piled with cushions, and overhung, on the wall, by a small mirror, was allotted to each, and with the assistance of my familiar (who was quite too familiar!) I found myself stripped, *nolens volens*, and a snowy napkin, with gold and embroidered edge, twisted into a becoming turban around my head.

We were led immediately into the first bath, a small room, in which the heat, for the first breath or two, seemed rather oppressive. Carpets were spread for us on the warm marble floor, and crossing our legs, with more ease than when cased in our unoriental pantaloons, we were served with pipes and coffee of a delicious flavour.

After a half hour, the atmosphere, so warm when we entered, began to feel chilly, and we were taken by the arm, and led by our speechless Mussulman, through an intermediate room, into the grand bath. The heat here seemed to me, for a moment almost intolerable. The floor was hot, and the air so moist with the suffocating vapour, as to rest like mist upon the skin. It was a spacious and vaulted room, with perhaps fifty small square windows in the dome, and four arched recesses in the sides, supplied with marble seats, and small reservoirs of hot and cold water. In the centre was a broad platform, on which the bather was rubbed and shampooed, occupied, just then, by two or three dark-skinned Turks, lying on their backs, with their eyes shut, dreaming, if one might judge by their countenances, of Paradise.

After being left to walk about for half an hour, by this time bathed in perspiration, our respective demons seized upon us again, and led us to the marble seats in the recesses. Putting a rough mitten on the right hand, my Turk then commenced upon my breast, scouring me without water or mercy, from head to foot, and turning me over on my face or my back, without the least "by your leave" expression in his countenance, and with an adroitness which, in spite of the novelty of my situation, I could not but admire. I hardly knew whether the sensation was pleasurable or painful. I was less in doubt presently, when he seated me upright, and, with the brazen cup of the fountain, dashed upon my peeled shoulders a quantity of half-boiling water. If what Barnacle, in the play, calls "a circular justice," existed in the world, I should have thought it a judgment for eating of lobsters. My familiar was somewhat startled at the suddenness with which I sprang upon my feet, and, turning some cold water into the reservoir, laid his hand on his breast, and looked an apology. The scalding was only momentary, and the qualified contents of the succeeding cups highly grateful.

We were left again, for a while, to our reflections, and then reappeared our attendants, with large bowls of the suds of scented soap, and small bunches of soft Angora wool. With this we were tenderly washed, and those of my companions who wished it were shaved. The last operation they described as peculiarly agreeable, both from the softened state of the skin and

dexterity of the operators.

Rinsed once more with warm water, our snowy turbans were twisted around our heads again, cloths were tied about our waists, and we returned to the second room. The transition from the excessive heat within, made the air, that we had found oppressive when we entered, seem disagreeably chilly. We wrapped ourselves in our long cloths, and, resuming our carpets, took coffee and pipes as before. In a few minutes we began to feel a delightful glow in our veins, and then our cloths became unpleasantly warm, and by the time we were taken back to the dressing-room, its cold air was a relief. They led us to the ottomans, and piling the cushions so as to form a curve, laid us upon them, covered with clean white cloths, and bringing us sherbets, lemonade, and pipes, dropped upon their knees, and commenced pressing our limbs all over gently with their hands. My sensations during the half hour we lay here were indescribably agreeable, I felt an absolute repose of body, a calm, half-sleepy languor in my whole frame, and a tranquillity of mind, which, from the busy character of the scenes in which I was daily conversant, were equally unusual and pleasurable. Scarce stirring a muscle or a nerve, I lay the whole hour, gazing on the lofty ceiling, and listening to the murmur of the fountain, while my silent familiar pressed my limbs with a touch as gentle as a child's, and it seemed to me as if pleasure was breathing from every pore of my cleansed and softened skin. I could willingly have passed the remainder of the day upon the luxurious couch. I wonder less than ever at the flowery and poetical character of the oriental literature, where the mind is subjected to influences so refining and exhilarating. One could hardly fail to grow a poet, I should think, even with this habit of eastern luxury alone. If I am to conceive a romance, or to indite an epithalamium, send me to the bath on a day of idleness, and, covering me up with their snowy and lavendered napkins, leave me till sunset!

With a dinner in prospect at a friend's house, six or eight miles up the Bosphorus, we started in the morning on foot, with the intention of seeing Sultan Mahmoud go to mosque, by the way. We stopped a moment to look into the marble pavilion, containing the clocks of the mosque of Tophana, and drank at the opposite pavilion, from the brass cup chained in the window, and supplied constantly from the fountain within, and then kept on through the long street to the first village of Dolma-baktchi, or the Garden of Gourds.

Determined, with the day before us, to yield to every temptation on the road, we entered a small café, overlooking a segment of the Bosphorus, and while the acorn-sized cups were simmering on the manghal, my friend entered into conversation in Arabic with a tawny old Egyptian, who sat smoking in the corner. He was a fine specimen of the "responsible-looking" Oriental, and had lately arrived from Alexandria on business. Pleasant land of the East! where, to be the pink of courtesy, you must pass your snuff-box, or your tobacco-pouch to the stranger, and ask him those questions of his "whereabouts," so impertinent in more civilised Europe!

After a brief dialogue, which was Hebrew to me, our Alexandrian, knocking the ashes from his pipe, commenced a narration with a great deal of expressive gesture, at which my friend seemed very provokingly amused. I sipped my coffee, and wondered what could have led one of these silent grey-beards into an amusing story, till a pause gave me an opportunity to ask a translation. Hearing that we were Americans, the Egyptian had begun by asking whether there was a superstition in our country against receiving back money in change. He explained his question by saying that he was in a café, at Tophana, when a boat's crew, from the American frigate, waiting for some one at the landing, entered, and asked for coffee. They drank it very

quietly, and one of them gave the caféjee a dollar, receiving in change a handful of the shabby and adulterated money of Constantinople. Jack was rather surprised at getting a dozen cups of coffee, and so much coin for his dollar, and requested the boy, by signs, to treat the company at his expense. This was done, the Turks all acknowledging the courtesy by laying their hands upon their foreheads and breast, and still Jack's money lay heavy in his hands. He called for pipes, and they smoked awhile; but finding still that his riches were not perceptibly diminished, he hitched up his trowsers, and with a dexterous flirt, threw his piastres and paras all round upon the company, and rolled out of the café. From the gravity of the other sailors at this remarkable flourish, the old Egyptian and his fellow cross-legs had imagined it to be a national custom!

Idling along through the next village, we turned to admire a Turkish child, led by an Abyssinian slave. There is no country in the world where the children are so beautiful, and this was a cherub of a boy, like one of Domenichino's angels. As we stopped to look at him, the little fellow commenced crying most lustily.

"Hush! my rose!" said the Abyssinian, "these are good Franks! these are not the Franks that eat children! hush!"

It certainly takes the nonsense out of one to travel. I should never have thought it possible, if I had not been in Turkey, that I could be made a bugbear to scare a child!

We passed the tomb of Frederick Barbarossa, getting, between the walls of the palaces on the water's edge, continual and incomparable views of the Bosphorus, and arrived at Beshiktash (or the marble cradle), just as the troops were drawn up to the door of the mosque. We took our stand under a plane-tree, in the midst of a crowd of women, and presently the noisy band struck up the sultan's march, and the led horses appeared in sight. They came on with their grooms and their rich housings, a dozen matchless Arabians, scarce touching the ground with their prancings! Oh, how beautiful they were! Their delicate limbs, their small, veined heads and fiery nostrils, their glowing, intelligent eyes, their quick, light, bounding action, their round bodies, trembling with restrained and impatient energy, their curved, haughty necks, and dark manes flowing wildly in the wind! El Borak, the mare of the prophet, with the wings of a bird, was not lighter or more beautiful.

The sultan followed, preceded by his principal officers, with a stirrup-holder running at each side, and mounted on a tame-looking Hungarian horse. He wore the red Fez cap, and a cream-coloured cloak, which covered his horse to the tail. His face was lowering, his firm, powerful jaw, set in an expression of fixed displeasure, and his far-famed eye had a fierceness within its dark socket, from which I involuntarily shrank. The women, as he came along, set up a kind of howl, according to their custom, but he looked neither to the right nor left, and seemed totally unconscious of any one's existence but his own. He was quite another-looking man from the Mahmoud I had seen smiling in his handja-bash on the Bosphorus.

As he dismounted and entered the mosque, we went on our way, moralising sagely on the novel subject of human happiness—our text, the cloud on the brow of a sultan, and the quiet sunshine in the bosoms of two poor pedestrians by the way-side.

Punishment of Conjugal Infidelity—Drowning in the Bosphorus—Frequency of its occurrence accounted for—A Band of Wild Roumeliotes—Their Picturesque Appearance—Ali Pacha, of Yanina—A Turkish Funeral—Fat Widow of Sultan Selim—A Visit to the Sultan's Summer Palace—A Travelling Moslem—Unexpected Token of Home.

A Turkish woman was sacked and thrown into the Bosphorus this morning. I was idling away the day in the bazaar and did not see her. The ward-room steward of the "United States," a very intelligent man, who was at the pier when she was brought down to the caïque, describes her as a young woman of twenty-two or three years, strikingly beautiful; and with the exception of a short quick sob in her throat, as if she had wearied herself out with weeping, she was quite calm and submitted composedly to her fate. She was led down by two soldiers, in her usual dress, her yashmack only torn from her face, and rowed off to the mouth of the bay, where the sack was drawn over her without resistance. The splash of her body in the sea was distinctly seen by the crowd who had followed her to the water.

It is horrible to reflect on these summary executions, knowing as we do, that the poor victim is taken before the judge, upon the least jealous whim of her husband or master, condemned often upon bare suspicion, and hurried instantly from the tribunal to this violent and revolting death. Any suspicion of commerce with a Christian particularly, is, with or without evidence, instant ruin. Not long ago, the inhabitants of Arnaout-keni, a pretty village on the Bosphorus, were shocked with the spectacle of a Turkish woman and a young Greek, hanging dead from the shutters of a window on the water's side. He had been detected in leaving her house at daybreak, and in less than an hour the unfortunate lovers had met their fate. They are said to have died most heroically, embracing and declaring their attachment to the last.

Such tragedies occur every week or two in Constantinople, and it is not wonderful, considering the superiority of the educated and picturesque Greek to his brutal neighbour, or the daring and romance of Europeans in the pursuit of forbidden happiness. The liberty of going and coming, which the Turkish women enjoy, wrapped only in veils, which assist by their secrecy, is temptingly favourable to intrigue, and the self-sacrificing nature of the sex, when the heart is concerned, shows itself here in proportion to the demand for it.

An eminent physician, who attends the seraglio of the sultan's sister, consisting of a great number of women, tells me that their time is principally occupied in sentimental correspondence, by means of flowers, with the forbidden Greeks and Armenians. These platonic passions for persons whom they have only seen from their gilded lattices, are their only amusement, and they are permitted by the sultana, who has herself the reputation of being partial to Franks, and, old as she is, ingenious in contrivances to obtain their society. My intelligent informant thinks the Turkish women, in spite of their want of education, somewhat remarkable for their sentiment of character.

With two English travellers, whom I had known in Italy, I pulled out of the bay in a caïque, and ran down under the wall of the city, on the side of the sea of Marmora. For a mile or more we were beneath the wall of the seraglio, whose small water-gates, whence so many victims have found

"Their way to Marmora without a boat,"

are beset, to the imaginative eye of the traveller, with the *dramatis personæ* of a thousand tragedies. One smiles to detect himself gazing on an old postern, with his teeth shut hard together, and his hair on end, in the calm of a pure, silent, sunshiny morning of September!

We landed some seven miles below, at the Seven Towers, and dismissed our boat to walk

across to the Golden Horn. Our road was outside of the triple walls of Stamboul, whose two hundred and fifty towers look as if they were toppling after an earthquake, and are overgrown superbly with ivy. Large trees, rooted in the crevices, and gradually bursting the thick walls, overshadow entirely their once proud turrets, and for the whole length of the five or six miles across, it is one splendid picture of decay. I have seen in no country such beautiful ruins.

At the Adrianople gate, we found a large troop of horsemen, armed in the wild manner of the East, who had accompanied a Roumeliote chief from the mountains. They were not allowed to enter the city, and, with their horses picketed upon the plain, were lying about in groups, waiting till their leader should conclude his audience with the seraskier. They were as cut-throat looking a set as a painter would wish to see. The extreme richness of eastern arms, mounted showily in silver, and of shapes so cumbersome, yet picturesque, contrasted strangely with their ragged capotes, and torn leggings, and their way-worn and weary countenances. Yet they were almost without exception fine-featured, and with a resolute expression of face, and they had flung themselves, as savages will, into attitudes that art would find it difficult to improve.

Directly opposite this gate stand five marble slabs, indicating the spots in which are buried the heads of Ali Pacha, of Albania, his three sons and grandson. The inscription states, that the rebel lost his head for having dared to aspire to independence. He was a brave old barbarian, however, and, as the worthy chief of the most warlike people of modern times, one stands over his grave with regret. It would have been a classic spot had Byron survived to visit it. No event in his travels made more impression on his mind than the pacha's detecting his rank by the beauty of his hands. His fine description of the wild court of Yanina, in "Childe Harold," has already made the poet's return of immortality, but had he survived the revolution in Greece, with his increased knowledge of the Albanian soldier and his habits, and his esteem for the old chieftain, a hero so much to his taste would have been his most natural theme. It remains to be seen whether the age or the language will produce another Byron to take up the broken thread.

As we were poring over the Turkish inscription, four men, apparently quite intoxicated, came running and hallooing from the city gate, bearing upon their shoulders a dead man in his bier. Entering the cemetery, they went stumbling on over the foot-stones, tossing the corpse about so violently, that the helpless limbs frequently fell beyond the limits of the rude barrow, while the grave-digger, the only sober person, save the dead man, in the company, followed at his best speed, with his pick-axe and shovel. These extraordinary bearers set down their burden not far from the gate, and, to my surprise, walked laughing off like men who had merely engaged in a moment's frolic by the way, while the sexton, left quite alone, composed a little the posture of the disordered body, and sat down to get breath for his task.

My Constantinopolitan friend tells me that the Koran blesses him who carries a dead body forty paces on its way to the grave. The poor are thus carried out to the cemeteries by voluntary bearers, who, after they have completed their prescribed paces, change with the first individual whose reckoning with heaven may be in arrears.

The corpse we had seen so rudely borne on its last journey, was, or had been, a middle-aged Turk. He had neither shroud nor coffin, but

"Lay like a gentleman taking a snooze,"

in his slippers and turban, the bunch of flowers on his bosom the only token that he was dressed for any particular occasion. We had not time to stay and see his grave dug, and "his face laid toward the tomb of the prophet."

We entered the Adrianople gate, and crossed the triangle, which old Stamboul nearly forms,

by a line approaching its hypotenuse. Though in a city so thickly populated, it was one of the most lonely walks conceivable. We met, perhaps, one individual in a street; and the perfect silence, and the cheerless look of the Turkish houses, with their jealously closed windows, gave it the air of a city devastated by the plague. The population of Constantinople is only seen in the bazaars or in the streets bordering on the Golden Horn. In the extensive quarter occupied by dwelling-houses only, the inhabitants, if at home, occupy apartments opening on their secluded gardens, or are hidden from the gaze of the street by their fine dull-coloured lattices. It strikes one with melancholy after the gay balconies and open doors of France and Italy!

We passed the Eskai Serai, the palace in which the imperial widows wear their chaste weeds in solitude; and, weary with our long walk, emerged from the silent streets at the bazaar of wax-candles, and took *caique* for the *Argentopolis* of the ancients, the *Silver City* of Galatia.

The thundering of guns from the whole Ottoman fleet in the Bosphorus announced, some days since, that the sultan had changed his summer for his winter serai, and the commodore received yesterday a firman to visit the deserted palace of Beylerbey.

We left the frigate at an early hour, our large party of officers increased by the captain of the "Acteon," sloop-of-war, some gentlemen of the English ambassador's household, and several strangers who took advantage of the commodore's courtesy to enjoy a privilege granted so very rarely.

As we pulled up the Strait, some one pointed out the residence, on the European shore, of the once favourite wife, and now fat widow, of Sultan Selim. She is called by the Turks, the "boneless sultana," and is the model of shape by the oriental standard. The poet's lines,

"Who turned that little waist with so much care,
And shut perfection in so small a ring?"

though a very neat compliment in some countries, would be downright rudeness in the East. Near this jelly in weeds lives a venerable Turk, who was once ambassador to England. He came back too much enlightened, and the mufti immediately procured his exile, for infidelity. He passes his day, we are told, in looking at a large map hung on the wall before him, and wondering at his own travels.

We were received at the shining brazen gate of Beylerbey, by Hamik Pacha (a strikingly elegant man, just returned from a mission to England), deputed by the sultan to do the honours. A side-door introduced us immediately to the grand hall upon the lower floor, which was separated only by four marble pillars, and a heavy curtain rolled up at will, from the gravel walk of the garden in the rear. We ascended thence by an open staircase of wood, prettily inlaid, to the second floor, which was one long suite of spacious rooms, built entirely in the French style, and thence to the third floor, the same thing over again. It was quite like looking at lodgings in Paris. There was no furniture, except, an occasional ottoman turned with its face upon another, and a prodigious quantity of French musical clocks, three or four in every room, and all playing in our honour with an amusing confusion. One other article, by the way—a large, common, American rocking-chair! The poor thing stood in a great gilded room all alone, looking pitifully home-sick. I seated myself in it, *malgré* a thick coat of dust upon the bottom, as I would visit a sick countryman in exile.

The harem was locked, and the polite pacha regretted that he had no orders to open it. We descended to the gardens, which rise by terraces to a gimcrack temple and orangery, and

having looked at the sultan's poultry, we took our leave. If his pink palace in Europe is no finer than his yellow palace in Asia, there is many a merchant in America better lodged than the padishah of the Ottoman empire. We have not seen the *old* seraglio, however, and in its inaccessible recesses, probably, moulders that true oriental splendour which this upholsterer monarch abandons in his rage, for the novel luxuries of Europe.

LETTER XLIV.

Farewell to Constantinople—Europe and the East compared—The Departure—Smyrna, the great Mart for Figs—
An Excursion into Asia Minor—Travelling Equipments—Character of the Hajjis—Encampment of Gipsies—
A Youthful Hebe—Note—Horror of the Turks for the “Unclean Animal”—An Anecdote.

I have spent the last day or two in farewell visits to my favourite haunts in Constantinople. I galloped up the Bosphorus, almost envying *les ames damnées* that skim so swiftly and perpetually from the Symplegades to Marmora, and from Marmora back to the Symplegades. I took a caique to the Valley of Sweet Waters, and rambled away an hour on its silken sward. I lounged a morning in the bazaars, smoked a parting pipe with my old Turk in the bezestein, and exchanged a last salaam with the venerable Armenian bookseller, still poring over his illuminated Hafiz. And last night, with the sundown boat waiting at the pier, I loitered till twilight in the small and elevated cemetery between Galata and Pera, and, with feelings of even painful regret, gazed my last upon the matchless scene around me. In the words of the eloquent author of “Anastasius,” when taking the same farewell, “For the last time, my eye wandered over the dimpled hills, glided along the winding waters, and dived into the deep and delicious dells, in which branch out its jagged shores. Reverting from these smiling outlets of its sea-beat suburbs to its busy centre, I surveyed, in slow succession, every chaplet of swelling cupolas, every grove of slender minarets, and every avenue of glittering porticoes, whose pinnacles dart their golden shafts from between the dark cypress-trees into the azure sky. I dwelt on them as on things I never was to behold more; and not until the evening had deepened the veil it cast over the varied scene from orange to purple, and from purple to the sable hue of night, did I tear myself away from the impressive spot. I then bade the city of Constantine farewell for ever, descended the high-crested hill, stepped into the heaving boat, turned my back upon the shore, and sank my regrets in the sparkling wave, across which the moon had already flung a trembling bar of silvery light, pointing my way, as it were, to other unknown regions.”

There are few intellectual pleasures like that of finding our own thoughts and feelings well described by another!

I certainly would not live in the East; and when I sum up its inconveniences and deprivations to which the traveller from Europe, with his refined wants, is subjected, I marvel at the heart-ache with which I turn my back upon it, and the deep dye it has infused into my imagination. Its few peculiar luxuries do not compensate for the total absence of *comfort*; its lovely scenery cannot reconcile you to wretched lodgings; its picturesque costumes and poetical people, and golden sky, fine food for a summer's fancy as they are, cannot make you forget the civilised pleasures you abandon for them—the fresh literature, the arts and music, the refined society, the elegant pursuits, and the stirring intellectual collision of the cities of Europe.

Yet the world contains nothing like Constantinople! If we could compel all our senses into one, and live by the pleasures of the eye, it were a paradise untranscended. The Bosphorus—the superb, peculiar, incomparable Bosphorus! the dream-like, fairy-built seraglio! the sights within the city so richly strange, and the valleys and streams around it so exquisitely fair! the voluptuous softness of the dark eyes haunting your every step on shore, and the spirit-like swiftness and elegance of your darting caique upon the waters! In what land is the priceless sight such a treasure? Where is the fancy so delicately and divinely pampered?

Every heave at the capstan-bars drew upon my heart; and when the unwilling anchor at last let go its hold, and the frigate swung free with the outward current, I felt as if, in that moment, I had parted my hold upon a land of faëry. The dark cypresses and golden pinnacles of Seraglio Point, and the higher shafts of Sophia's sky-touching minarets were the last objects in my swiftly-receding eye, and, in a short hour or two, the whole bright vision had sunk below the horizon.

We crossed Marmora, and shot down the rapid Dardanelles in as many hours as a passage up had occupied days, and, rounding the coast of Anatolia, entered between Mitylene and the Asian shore, and, on the third day, anchored in the bay of Smyrna.

"Everybody knows Smyrna," says MacFarlane, "*it is such a place for figs!*" It is a low-built town, at the head of the long gulf, which bears its name, and, with the exception of the high rock immediately over it, topped by the ruins of an old castle, said to embody in its walls the ancient Christian church, it has no very striking features. Extensive gardens spread away on every side, and, without exciting much of your admiration for its beauty, there is a look of peace and rural comfort about the neighbourhood that affects the mind pleasantly.

Almost immediately on my arrival, I joined a party for a few days' tour in Asia Minor. We were five, and, with a baggage-horse, and a mounted suridjee, our caravan was rather respectable. Our appointments were orientally simple. We had each a Turkish bed (alias, a small carpet), a nightcap, and a "copy-hold" upon a pair of saddle-bags, containing certain things forbidden by the Koran, and therefore not likely to be found by the way. Our attendant was a most ill-favoured Turk, whose pilgrimage to Mecca (he was a hajji, and wore a green turban) had, at least, imparted no sanctity to his visage. If he was not a rogue, nature had mis-labelled him, and I shelter my want of charity under the Arabic proverb: "Distrust thy neighbour if he has made a hajji; if he has made two, make haste to leave thy house."

We wound our way slowly out of the narrow and ill-paved streets of Smyrna, and passing through the suburban gardens, yellow with lemons and oranges, crossed a small bridge over the Hermus. This is the favourite walk of the Smyrniotes, and if its classic river, whose "golden sands" (here, at least), are not golden, and its "Bath of Diana" near by, whose waters would scarce purify her "silver bow," are something less than their sounding names; there is a cool, dark cemetery beyond, less famous, but more practicable for sentiment, and many a shadowy vine and drooping tree in the gardens around, that might recompense lovers, perhaps, for the dirty labyrinth of the intervening suburb.

We spurred away over the long plain of Hadjilar, leaving to the right and left the pretty villages, ornamented by the summer residences of the wealthy merchants of Smyrna, and in two or three hours reached a small lone café, at the foot of its bounding range of mountains. We dismounted here to breathe our horses, and while coffee was preparing, I discovered, in a green hollow hard by, a small encampment of gipsies. With stones in our hands, as the caféjee told us the dogs were troublesome, we walked down into the little round-bottomed dell, a spot selected with "a lover's eye for nature," and were brought to bay by a dozen noble shepherd-dogs,

within a few yards of their outer tent.

The noise brought out an old sun-burnt woman, and two or three younger ones, with a troop of boys, who called in the dogs, and invited us kindly within their limits. The tents were placed in a half circle, with their doors inward, and were made with extreme neatness. There were eight or nine of them, very small and low, with round tops, the cloth stretched tightly over an inner frame, and bound curiously down on the outside with beautiful wicker-work. The curtains at the entrance were looped up to admit the grateful sun, and the compactly-arranged interiors lay open to our prying curiosity. In the rounded corner farthest from the door, lay uniformly the same goat-skin beds, flat on the ground, and in the centre of most of them, stood a small loom, at which the occupant plied her task like an automaton, not betraying by any sign a consciousness of our presence. They sat cross-legged like the Turks, and had all a look of habitual sternness, which, with their thin, strongly-marked gipsy features, and wild eyes, gave them more the appearance of men. It was the first time I had ever remarked such a character upon a class of female faces, and I should have thought I had mistaken their sex, if their half-naked figures had not put it beyond a doubt. The men were probably gone to Smyrna, as none were visible in the encampment. As we were about returning, the curtain of the largest tent, which had been dropped on our entrance, was lifted cautiously, by a beautiful girl, of perhaps thirteen, who, not remarking that I was somewhat in the rear of my companions, looked after them a moment, and then fastening back the dingy folds by a string, returned to her employment of swinging an infant in a small wicker hammock, suspended in the centre of the tent. Her dark, but prettily-rounded arm, was decked with a bracelet of silver pieces, and just between two of the finest eyes I ever saw, was suspended by a yellow thread, one of the small gold coins of Constantinople. Her softly-moulded bust was entirely bare, and might have served for the model of a youthful Hebe. A girdle round her waist sustained loosely a long pair of full Turkish trousers, of the colour and fashion usually worn by women in the East, and caught over her hip, hung suspended by its fringe the truant shawl that had been suffered to fall from her shoulders and expose her guarded beauty. I stood admiring her a full minute, before I observed a middle-aged woman in the opposite corner, who, bending over her work, was fortunately as late in observing my intrusive presence. As I advanced half a step, however, my shadow fell into the tent, and starting with surprise, she rose and dropped the curtain.

We remounted, and I rode on, thinking of the vision of loveliness I was leaving in that wild dell. We travel a great way to see hills and rivers, thought I, but, after all, a human being is a more interesting object than a mountain. I shall remember the little gipsy of Hadjilar, long after I have forgotten Hermus and Syphilus.

Our road dwindled to a mere bridle-path, as we advanced, and the scenery grew wild and barren. The horses were all sad stumblers, and the uneven rocks gave them every apology for coming down whenever they could forget the spur, and so we entered the broad and green valley of Yackerhem (I write it as I heard it pronounced), and drew up at the door of a small hovel, serving the double purpose of a café and a guard-house.

A Turkish officer of the old régime, turbanned and cross-legged, and armed with pistols and ataghan, sat smoking on one side the brazier of coals, and the caféjee exercised his small vocation on the other. Before the door, a raised platform of greensward and a marble slab, facing toward Mecca, indicated the place for prayer; and a dashing rider of a Turk, who had kept us company from Smyrna, flying past us and dropping to the rear alternately, had taken off his slippers at the moment we arrived, and was commencing his noon devotions.

We gathered round our commissary's saddle-bags and shocked our Mussulman friends, by

producing the unclean beast^[18] and the forbidden liquor, which, with the delicious Turkey coffee, never better than in these way-side hovels, furnished forth a traveller's meal.

[18] Talking of hams, two of the Sultan's chief eunuchs applied to an English physician, a friend of mine at Constantinople, to accompany them on board the American frigate. I engaged to wait on board for them on a certain day, but they did not make their appearance. They gave, as their apology, that they could not defile themselves by entering a ship polluted by the presence of that unclean animal, the hog.

LETTER XLV.

Natural Statue of Niobe—The Thorn of Syria and its Tradition—Approach to Magnesia—Hereditary Residence of the Family of Bey-Oglou—Character of its Present Occupant—The Truth about Oriental Caravanserais—Comforts and Appliances they yield to Travellers—Figaro of the Turks—The Pilaw—Morning Scene at the Departure—Playful Familiarity of a Solemn old Turk—Magnificent Prospect from Mount Sypilus.

Three or four hours more of hard riding brought us to a long glen, opening upon the broad plains of Lydia. We were on the look-out here for the "natural statue of Niobe," spoken of by the ancient writers as visible from the road in this neighbourhood; but there was nothing that looked like her, unless she was, as the poet describes her, a "Niobe, *all* tears," and runs down toward the Sarabat, in what we took to be only a very pretty mountain rivulet. It served for simple fresh water to our volunteer companion, who darted off an hour before sunset, and had finished his ablutions and prayers, and was rising from his knees as we overtook him upon its grassy border. Almost the only thing that grows in these long mountain passes, is the peculiar thorn of Syria, said to be the same of which our Saviour's crown was plaited. It differs from the common species, in having a hooked thorn alternating with the straight, adding cruelly to its power of laceration. It is remarkable that the flower, at this season withering on the bush, is a circular golden-coloured leaf, resembling exactly the radiated glory usually drawn around the heads of Christ and the Virgin.

Amid a sunset of uncommon splendour, firing every peak of the opposite range of hills with an effulgent red, and filling the valley between with an atmosphere of heavenly purple, we descended into the plain.

Mount Sypilus, in whose rocks the magnetic ore is said to have been first discovered, hung over us in bold precipices; and, rounding a projecting spur, we came suddenly in sight of the minarets and cypresses of *Magnesia* (not pronounced as if written in an apothecary's bill), the ancient capital of the Ottoman empire.

On the side of the ascent, above the town, we observed a large isolated mansion, surrounded with a wall, and planted about with noble trees, looking, with the exception that it was too freshly painted, like one of the fine old castle palaces of Italy. It was something very extraordinary for the East, where no man builds beyond the city wall, and no house is very much larger than another. It was the hereditary residence, we afterwards discovered, of almost the only noble family in Turkey—that of the Bey-Oglou. You will recollect Byron's allusion to it

in the "Bride of Abydos:"

"We Moslem reck not much of blood,
But yet the race of Karaïsmān,
Unchanged, unchangeable hath stood,
First of the bold Tīmāreot bands
Who won, and well can keep, their lands;
Enough that he who comes to woo
Is kinsman of the Bey-Oglou."

I quote from memory, perhaps incorrectly.

The present descendant is still in possession of the title, and is said to be a liberal-minded and hospitable old Turk, of the ancient and better school. His camels are the finest that come into Smyrna, and are famous for their beauty and appointments.

Our devout companion left us at the first turning in the town, laying his hand to his breast in gratitude for having been suffered to annoy us all day with his brilliant equitation, and we stumbled in through the increasing shadows of twilight to the caravanseraï.

It is very possible that the reader has but a slender conception of an *oriental hotel*. Supposing it, at least, from the inadequacy of my own previous ideas, I shall allow myself a little particularity in the description of the conveniences which the travelling Zuleikas and Fatimas, the Maleks and Othmans, of eastern story, encounter in their romantic journeys.

It was near the farther outskirt of the large city of Magnesia (the accent, I repeat, is on the penult), that we found the way encumbered with some scores of kneeling camels, announcing our vicinity to a khan. A large wooden building, rather off its perpendicular, with a great many windows, but no panes in them, and only here and there a shutter "hanging by the eyelids," presently appeared, and entering its hospitable gateway, which had neither gate nor porter, we dismounted in a large court, lit only by the stars, and pre-occupied by any number of mules and horses. An inviting staircase led to a gallery encircling the whole area, from which opened thirty or forty small doors; but, though we made as much noise as could be expected of as many men and horses, no waiter looked over the balustrades, nor maid Cicely, nor Boniface, or their corresponding representatives in Turkey, invited us in. The suridjee looked to his horses, which was his business, and to look to ourselves was ours; though, with our stiff limbs and clamorous appetites, we set about it rather despairingly.

The Figaro of the Turks is a caf  jee, who, besides shaving, making coffee, and bleeding, is supposed to be capable of every office required by man. He is generally a Greek, the Mussulman seldom having sufficient facility of character for the vocation. In a few minutes, then, the nearest Figaro was produced, who scarce dissembling his surprise at the improvidence of travellers who went about without pot or kettle, bag of rice or bottle of oil, led the way with his primitive lamp to our apartment. We might have our choice of twenty. Having looked at the other nineteen, we came back to the first, reconciled to it by sheer force of comparison. Of its two windows, one alone had a shutter that would fulfill its destiny. It contained neither chair, table, nor utensil of any description. Its floor had not been swept, nor its walls whitewashed since the days of Timour the Tartar. "Kalo! Kalo!" (Greek for *you will be very comfortable*), cried our commissary, throwing down some old mats to spread our carpets upon. But the mats were alive with vermin, and, for sweeping the room, the dust would not have been laid till midnight. So we threw down our carpets upon the floor, and driving from our minds the too luxurious thoughts of clean straw, and a corner in a warm barn, sat down, by the glimmer of a flaring taper, to wait, with what patience we might, for a chicken still breathing

freely on his roost, and turn our backs as ingeniously as possible on a chilly December wind, that came in at the open window, as if it knew the caravanserai were free to all comers. There is but one circumstance to add to this faithful description—and it is one which, in the minds of many very worthy persons, would turn the scale in favour of the hotels of the East, with all its disadvantages—*there was nothing to pay!*

Ali Bey, in his travels, predicts the fall of the Ottoman empire from the neglected state of the khans; this inattention to the public institutions of hospitality, being a falling away from the leading Mussulman virtue. They never gave the traveller more than a shelter, however, in their best days; and to enter a cold, unfurnished room, after a day's hard travel, even if the floor were clean, and the windows would shut, is rather comfortless. Yet such is Eastern travel, and the alternative is to take "the sky for a great coat," and find as soft a stone as possible for your pillow.

We gathered around our pilaw, which came in the progress of time, and consisted of a chicken, buried in a handsomely-shaped cone of rice and butter, forming, with a large crater-like black bowl in which it stood, the cloud of smoke issuing from its peak, and the lava of butter flowing down its sides, as pretty a miniature Vesuvius as you would find in a modeller's window in the Toledo. Encouraging that sin in Christians, which they would not commit themselves, they brought us some wine of the country, the sin of drinking which, one would think, was its own sufficient punishment. With each a wooden spoon, the immediate and only means of communication between the dish and the mouth, we soon solved the doubtful problem of the depth of the crater, and then casting lots who should lie next the window to take off the edge of the December blast, we improved upon some hints taken from the fig-packers of Smyrna, and with an economy of exposed surface which can only be learned by travel, disposed ourselves in a solid body to sleep.

The tinkling of the camels' bells awoke me as the day was breaking, and my toilet being already made, I sprang readily up and descended to the court of the caravanserai. It was an eastern scene, and not an unpoetical one. The patient and intelligent camels were kneeling in regular ranks to receive their loads, complaining in a voice almost human, as the driver flung the heavy bales upon the saddles too roughly, while the small donkey, no larger than a Newfoundland dog, leader of the long caravan, took his place at the head of the gigantic file, pricking back his long ears as if he were counting his spongy-footed followers, as they fell in behind him. Here and there knelt six or seven, with their unsightly humps still unburdened, eating with their peculiar deliberateness from small heaps of provender, and scattered over the adjacent fields, wandered separately the caravan of some indolent driver, browsing upon the shrubs, and looking occasionally with intelligent expectation toward the khan, for the appearance of their tardy master. Over all rose the mingled music of the small bells with which their gay-covered harness was profusely covered, varied by the heavy beat of the larger ones borne at the necks of the leading and last camels of the file, while the retreating sounds of the caravans already on their march, came in with the softer tones which completed its sweetness.

In a short time my companions joined me, and we started for a walk in the town. The necessity of attending the daylight prayers makes all Mussulmans early risers, and we found the streets already crowded, and the merchants and artificers as busy as at noon. Turning a corner to get out of the way of a row of butchers, who were slaughtering sheep revoltingly in front of their stalls, we met two old Turks coming from the mosque one of whom, with the familiarity of manners which characterises the nation, took from my hand a stout English riding-whip which I carried, and began to exercise it on the bag-like trowsers of his friend. After

amusing himself a while in this manner, he returned the whip, and, patting me condescendingly on the cheek, gave me two figs from his voluminous pocket, and walked on. Considering that I stand six feet in my stockings, an unwieldy size, you may say, for a pet, this freak of the old Magnesians would seem rather extraordinary. Yet it illustrates the Turkish manners, which, as I have often had occasion to notice, are a singular mixture of profound gravity and the most childish simplicity.

We found a few fine old marble columns in the porches of the mosques, but one Turkish town is just like another, and after an hour or two of wandering about among the wooden houses and narrow streets, we returned to the khan, and, with a cup of coffee, mounted and resumed our journey.

I have never seen a finer plain than that of Magnesia. With an even breadth of seven or eight miles, its length cannot be less than fifty or sixty, and throughout its whole extent it is one unbroken picture of fertile field and meadow, shut in by two lofty ranges of mountains, and watered by the full and winding Hermus. Without fence, and almost without human habitation, it is a noble expanse to the eye, possessing all the untrammelled beauty of a wilderness without its detracting inutility. It is literally “clothed with flocks.” As we rode on under the eastern brow of Mount Sypilus, and struck out more into the open plain, as far as we could distinguish by the eye, spread the snowy sheep in hundreds, at merely separating distances, checkered here and there by a herd of the tall jet-black goats of the East, walking onward in slow and sober procession, with the solemn state of a funeral. The road was lined with camels coming into Smyrna by this grand highway of nature, and bringing all the varied produce of Asia Minor to barter in its busy mart. We must have passed a thousand in our day’s journey.

LETTER XLVI.

The Eye of the Camel—Rocky Sepulchres—Virtue of an old Passport, backed by Impudence—Temple of Cybele
—Palace of Cæsus—Ancient Church of Sardus—Return to Smyrna.

Unsignificantly as the camel is, with its long snaky neck, its frightful hump, and its awkward legs and action, it wins much upon your kindness with a little acquaintance. Its eye is exceedingly fine. There is a lustrous, suffused softness in the large hazel orb that is the rarest beauty in a human eye, and so remarkable is this feature in the camel, that I wonder it has never fallen into use as a poetical simile. They do not shun the gaze of man like other animals, and I pleased myself often when the surdjee slackened his pace, with riding close to some returning caravan, and exchanging steady looks in passing with the slow-paced camels. It was like meeting the eye of a kind old man.

The face of Mount Sypilus, in its whole extent, is excavated into sepulchres. They are mostly ancient, and form a very singular feature in the scenery. A range of precipices, varying from one to three hundred feet in height, is perforated for twenty miles with these airy depositories for the dead, many of them a hundred feet from the plain. Occasionally they are extended to considerable caves, hewn with great labour in the rock, and probably from their numerous niches, intended as family sepulchres. They are now the convenient eyries of great numbers of eagles, which circle continually around the summits, and poise themselves on the wing along the sides of these lonely mountains, in undisturbed security.

We arrived early in the afternoon at Casabar, a pretty town at the foot of Mount Tmolus. Having eaten a melon, the only thing for which the place is famous, we proposed to go on to Achmet-lee, some three hours farther. The suridjee, however, whose horses were hired by the day, had made up his mind to sleep at Casabar, and so we were at issue. Our stock of Turkish was soon exhausted, and the hajji was coolly unbuckling the girths of the baggage-horse without condescending even to answer our appeal with a look. The Mussulman idlers of the café opposite, took their pipes from their mouths and smiled. The gay caféjee went about his arrangements for our accommodation, quite certain that we were there for the night. I had given up the point myself, when one of my companions, with a look of the most confident triumph, walked up to the suridjee and tapping him on the shoulder, held before his eyes a paper with the seal of the pacha of Smyrna in broad characters at the top. After the astonished Turk had looked at it for a moment, he commenced in good round English, and poured upon him a volume of incoherent rhapsody, slapping the paper violently with his hand and pointing to the road. The effect was instantaneous. The girth was hastily rebuckled, and the frightened suridjee put his hand to his head in token of submission, mounted in the greatest hurry and rode out of the court of the caravanserai. The caféjee made his salaam, and the spectators wished us respectfully a good journey. The magic paper was an old passport, and our friend had calculated securely on the natural dread of the incomprehensible, quite sure that there was not one man in the village that could read, and none short of Smyrna who could understand his English.

The plain between Casabar and Achmet-lee, is quite a realisation of poetry. It is twelve miles of soft, bright greensward, broken only with clumps of luxurious oleanders, an occasional cluster of the "black tents of Kedar" with their flocks about them, and here and there a loose and grazing camel indolently lifting his broad foot from the grass as if he felt the coolness and verdure to its spongy core. One's heart seems to stay behind as he rides onward through such places.

The village of Achmet-lee consists of a coffee-house with a single room. We arrived about sunset, and found the fire-place surrounded by six or seven Turks squatted on their hams, travellers like ourselves, who had arrived before us. There was fortunately a second fire-place, which was soon blazing with faggots of fir and oleander, and with, a pilaw between us, we crooked our tired legs under us on the earthen floor, and made ourselves as comfortable as a total absence of every comfort would permit. The mingled smoke of tobacco and the chimney drove me out of doors as soon as our greasy meal was finished, and the contrast was enough to make one in love with nature. The moon was quite full, and pouring her light down through the transparent and dazzling sky of the East with indescribable splendour. The fires of twenty or thirty caravans were blazing in the fields around, and the low cries of the camels and the hum of voices from the various groups, were mingled with the sound of a stream that came noiselessly down its rocky channel from the nearest spur of Mount Tmolus. I walked up and down the narrow camel-path till midnight; and if the kingly spirits of ancient Lydia did not keep me company in the neighbourhood of their giant graves, it was perhaps because the feet that trod down their ashes came from a world of which Cræsus and Abyattis never heard.

The sin of late rising is seldom chargeable upon an earthen bed, and we were in the saddle by sunrise, breathing an air that, after our smoky cabin, was like a spice-wind from Arabia. Winding round the base of the chain of mountains which we had followed for twenty or thirty miles, we ascended a little, after a brisk trot of two or three hours, and came in sight of the citadel of ancient Sardis, perched like an eagle's nest on the summit of a slender rock. A natural

terrace, perhaps a hundred feet above the plain, expanded from the base of the hill, and this was the commanding site of the capital of Lydia. Dividing us from it ran the classic and "golden-sanded" Pactolus, descending from the mountains in a small, narrow valley, covered with a verdure so fresh, that it requires some power of fancy to realise that a crowded empire ever swarmed on its borders. Crossing the small, bright stream, we rode along the other bank, winding up its ascending curve, and dismounted at the ruins of the temple of Cybele, a heap of gigantic fragments strewn confusedly over the earth, with two majestic columns rising lone and beautiful into the air.

A Dutch artist, who was of our party, spread his drawing-board and pencils upon one of the fallen Ionic capitals, the surdjee tied his horses' heads together, and laid himself at his length upon the grass, and the rest of us ascended the long steep hill to the citadel. With some loss of breath, and a battle with the dogs of a gipsy encampment, hidden so as almost to be invisible among the shrubbery of the hill-side, we stood at last upon a peak, crested with one tottering remnant of a wall, the remains of a castle whose foundations have crumbled beneath it. It looks as if the next rain must send the whole mass into the valley.

It puzzled my unmilitary brain to conceive how Alexander and his Macedonians climbed these airy precipices, if taking the citadel was a part of his conquest of Lydia. The fortifications in the rear have a sheer descent from their solid walls of two or three hundred perpendicular feet, with scarce a vine clinging by the way. I left my companions discussing the question, and walked to the other edge of the hill, overlooking the immense plains below. The tumuli which mark the sepulchres of the kings of Lydia, rose like small hills on the opposite and distant bank of the Hermus. The broad fields, which were once the "wealth of Cræsus," lay still fertile and green along the banks of their historic river. Thyatira and Philadelphia were almost within reach of my eye, and I stood upon Sardis—in the midst of the sites of the Seven Churches. Below lay the path of the myriad armies of Persia, on their march to Greece; here Alexander pitched his tents after the battle of Granicus, wiling away the winter in the lap of captive Lydia; and over the small ruin just discernible on the southern bank of the Pactolus, "the angel of the church of Sardis" brooded with his protecting wings till the few who had "not defiled their garments," were called to "walk in white," in the promised reward of the Apocalypse.

We descended again to the temple of Cybele, and mounting our horses, rode down to the palace of Cræsus. Parts of the outer walls, the bases of the portico, and the marble steps of an inner court, are all that remain of the splendour that Solon was called upon in vain to admire. With the permission of six or seven storks, whose coarse nests were built upon the highest points of the ruins, we selected the broadest of the marble blocks, lying in the deserted area, and spreading our travellers' breakfast upon it, forgot even the kingly builder in our well-earned appetites.

There are three parallel walls remaining of the ancient church of Sardis. They stand on a gentle slope, just above the edge of the Pactolus, and might easily be rebuilt into a small chapel, with only the materials within them. There are many other ruins on the site of the city, but none designated by a name. We loitered about, collecting relics, and indulging our fancies, till the surdjee reminded us of the day's journey before us, and with a drink from the Pactolus, and a farewell look at the beautiful Ionic columns standing on its lonely bank, we put spurs to our horses and galloped once more down into the valley.

Our Turkish saddles grew softer on the third day's journey, and we travelled more at ease. I found the freedom and solitude of the wide and unfenced country growing at every mile more upon my liking. The heart expands as one gives his horse the rein and gallops over these wild

paths without toll-gate or obstacle. I can easily understand the feeling of Ali Bey on his return to Europe from the East.

Our fourth day's journey lay through the valley between Tmolus and Semering—the fairest portion of the dominion of Timour the Tartar. How gracefully shaped were those slopes to the mountains! How bright the rivers! How green the banks! How like a new-created and still unpeopled world it seemed, with every tree and flower and fruit the perfect model of its kind!

Leaving the secluded village of Nymphia nestled in the mountains on our left, as we approached the end of our circuitous journey, we entered early in the afternoon the long plains of Hadjilar, and with tired horses and (*malgré* romance) an agreeable anticipation of Christian beds and supper, we dismounted in Smyrna at sunset.

LETTER XLVII.

Smyrna—Charms of its Society—Hospitality of Foreign Residents—The Marina—The Casino—A narrow
Escape from the Plague—Departure of the Frigate—High Character of the American Navy—A Tribute of
Respect and Gratitude—The Farewell.

What can I say of Smyrna? Its mosques and bazaars scarce deserve description after those of Constantinople. It has neither pictures, scenery, nor any peculiarities of costume or manners. There are no “lions” here. It is only one of the most agreeable places in the world, exactly the sort of thing, that (without compelling private individuals to sit for their portraits),^[19] is the least describable. Of the fortnight of constant pleasure that I have passed here, I do not well know how I can eke out half a page that would amuse you.

The society of Smyrna has some advantages over that of any other city I have seen. It is composed entirely of the families of merchants, who, separated from the Turkish inhabitants, occupy a distinct quarter of the town, are responsible only to their consuls, and having no nobility above, and none but dependants below them, live in a state of cordial republican equality that is not found even in America. They are of all nations, and the principal languages of Europe are spoken by everybody. Hospitality is carried to an extent more like the golden age than these “days of iron;” and, as a necessary result of the free mixture of languages and feelings, there is a degree of information and liberality of sentiment among them, united to a free and joyous tone of manners and habits of living, that is quite extraordinary in men of their care-fraught profession. Our own country, I am proud to say, is most honourably represented. There is no traveller to the East, of any nation, who does not carry away with him from Smyrna, grateful recollections of *one* at least whose hospitality is as open as his gate. This living over warehouses of opium, I am inclined to think, is healthy for the heart.

After having seen the packing of figs, wondered at the enormous burdens carried by the porters, ridden to Bougiar and the castle on the hill, and admired the caravan of the Bey-Oglou, whose camels are the handsomest that come into Smyrna, one has nothing to do but dine, dance, and walk on the Marina. The last is a circumstance the traveller does well not to miss. A long street extends along the bay, lined with the houses of the rich merchants of the town, and for the two hours before sunset every family is to be seen sitting outside its door upon the public pavement, while beaux and belles stroll up and down in all the gaiety of perpetual holiday. They are the most out-of-doors people, the Smyrniotes, that I have ever seen. And one

reason perhaps is, that they have a beauty which has nothing to fear from the daylight. The rich, classic, glowing face of the Greeks, the paler and livelier French, the serious and impassioned Italian, the blooming English, and the shrinking and fragile American, mingle together in this concourse of grace and elegance like the varied flowers in the garden. I would match Smyrna against the world for beauty. And then such sociability, such primitive cordiality of manners as you find among them! It is quite a Utopia. You would think that little republic of merchants, separate from the Christian world on a heathen shore, had commenced *de novo*, from Eden—ignorant as yet of jealousy, envy, suspicion, and the other ingredients with which the old world mingles up its refinements. It is a *very* pleasant place, Smyrna!

The stranger, on his arrival, is immediately introduced to the Casino—a large palace, supported by the subscription of the residents, containing a reading-room, furnished with all the gazettes and reviews of Europe, a ball-room frequently used, a coffee-room whence the delicious mocha is brought to you whenever you enter, billiard-tables, card-rooms, &c. &c. The merchants all are members, and any member can introduce a stranger, and give him all the privileges of the place during his stay in the city. It is a courtesy that is not a little drawn upon. English, French, and American ships-of-war are almost always in the port, and the officers are privileged guests. Every traveller to the East passes by Smyrna, and there are always numbers at the Casino. In fact, the hospitality of this kindest of cities has not the usual demerit of being rarely called upon. It seems to have grown with the demand for it.

Idling away the time very agreeably at Smyrna, waiting for a vessel to go—I care not where. I have offered myself as a passenger in the first ship that sails. I rather lean toward Palestine and Egypt, but there are no vessels for Jaffa or Alexandria. A brig, crowded with hajjis to Jerusalem, sailed on the first day of my arrival at Smyrna, and I was on the point of a hasty embarkation, when my good angel, in the shape of a sudden caprice, sent me off to Sardis. The plague broke out on board immediately on leaving the port, and nearly the whole ship's company perished at sea!

There are plenty of vessels bound to Trieste and the United States, but there would be nothing new to me in Illyria and Lombardy; and much as I love my country, I am more enamoured for the present of my "sandal-shoon." Besides, I have a yearning to the South, and the cold "Bora" of that bellows-like Adriatic, and the cutting winter winds of my native shore, chill me even in the thought. Meantime I breathe an air borrowed by December of May, and sit with my windows open, warming myself in a broad beam of the soft sun of Asia. With such "appliances," even suspense is agreeable.

The commodore sailed this morning for his winter quarters in Minorca. I watched the ship's preparations for departure from the balcony of the hotel, with, a heavy heart. Her sails dropped from the yards, her head turned slowly outward as the anchor brought away, and with a light breeze in her topsails, the gallant frigate moved majestically down the harbour, and in an hour was a speck on the horizon. She had been my home for more than six months. I had seen from her deck, and visited in her boats some of the fairest portions of the world. She had borne me to Sicily, to Illyria, to the isles and shores of Greece, to Marmora and the Bosphorus, and the thousand lovely pictures with which that long summer voyage had stored my memory, and the thousand adventures and still more numerous kindnesses and courtesies, linked with these interesting scenes, crowded on my mind as the noble ship receded from my eye, with an emotion that I could not repress.

There is a “pomp and circumstance” about a man-of-war, which is exceedingly fascinating. Her imposing structure and appearance, the manly and deferential etiquette, the warlike appointment and impressive order upon her decks, the ready and gallantly-manned boat, the stirring music of the band, and the honour and attention with which her officers are received in every port, conspire in keeping awake an excitement, a kind of chivalrous elation, which, it seems to me, would almost make a hero of a man of straw. From the hoarse “seven bells, sir!” with which you are turned out of your hammock in the morning, to the blast of the bugle and the report of the evening gun, it is one succession of elevating sights and sounds, without any of that approach to the ridiculous which accompanies the sublime or the impressive on shore.

From the comparisons I have made between our own and the ships-of-war of other nations, I think we may well be proud of our navy. I had learned in Europe, long before joining the “United States,” that the respect we exact from foreigners is paid more to Americans afloat, than to a continent they think as far off at least as the moon. They *see* our men-of-war, and they know very well what they have done, and from the appearance and character of our officers, what they might do again—and there is a tangibility in the deductions from knowledge and eyesight, which beats books and statistics. I have heard Englishmen deny, one by one, every claim we have to political and moral superiority; but I have found no one illiberal enough to refuse a compliment, and a handsome one, to *Yankee ships*.

I consider myself, I repeat, particularly fortunate to have made a cruise on board an American frigate. It is a chapter of observation in itself, which is worth much to any one. But, in addition to this, it was my good fortune to have happened upon a cruise directed by a mind full of taste and desire for knowledge, and a cruise which had for its principal objects improvement and information. Commodore Patterson knew the ground well, and was familiar with the history and localities of the interesting countries visited by the ship, and every possible facility and encouragement was given by him to all to whom the subjects and places were new. An enlightened and enterprising traveller himself, he was the best of advisers and the best and kindest of guides. I take pleasure in recording almost unlimited obligations to him.

And so, to the gallant ship—to the “warlike world within”—to the docks I have so often promenaded, and the moonlight watches I have so often shared—to the groups of manly faces I have learned to know so well—to the drum-beat and the bugle-call, and the stirring music of the band—to the hammock in which I swung and slept so soundly, and last and nearest my heart, to the gay and hospitable mess with whom for six happy months I have been a guest and a friend, whose feelings I have learned but to honour my country more, and whose society has become to me even a painful want—to all this catalogue of happiness, I am bidding a heavy-hearted farewell. Luck and Heaven’s blessing to ship and company!

[19] A courteous old traveller, of the last century, whose book I have somewhere fallen in with, indulges his recollections of Smyrna with less scruples. “Mrs. B.,” he says, “who has travelled a great deal, is mistress of both French and Italian. The Misses W. are all amiable young ladies. A Miss A., whose name is expressive of the passion she inspires, without being beautiful, possesses a *je ne sais quoi*, which fascinates more than beauty itself. Not to love her, one must never have seen her. And who would not be captivated by the vivacity of Miss B.?” How charming thus to go about the world, describing the fairest of its wonders, instead of stupid mountains and

rivers!

THE END.

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Obvious printer and spelling errors have been corrected.

Inconsistent use of hyphens maintained.

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[The end of *Summer Cruise in the Mediterranean on board an American frigate* by N.P.
(Nathaniel Parker) Willis]