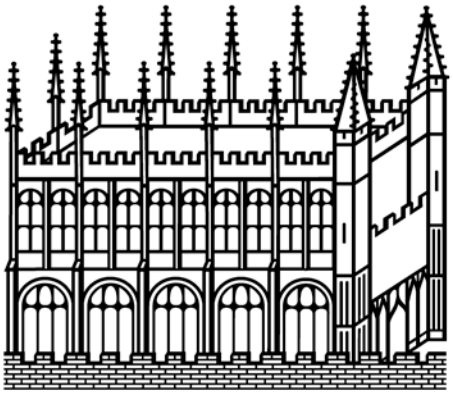


Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

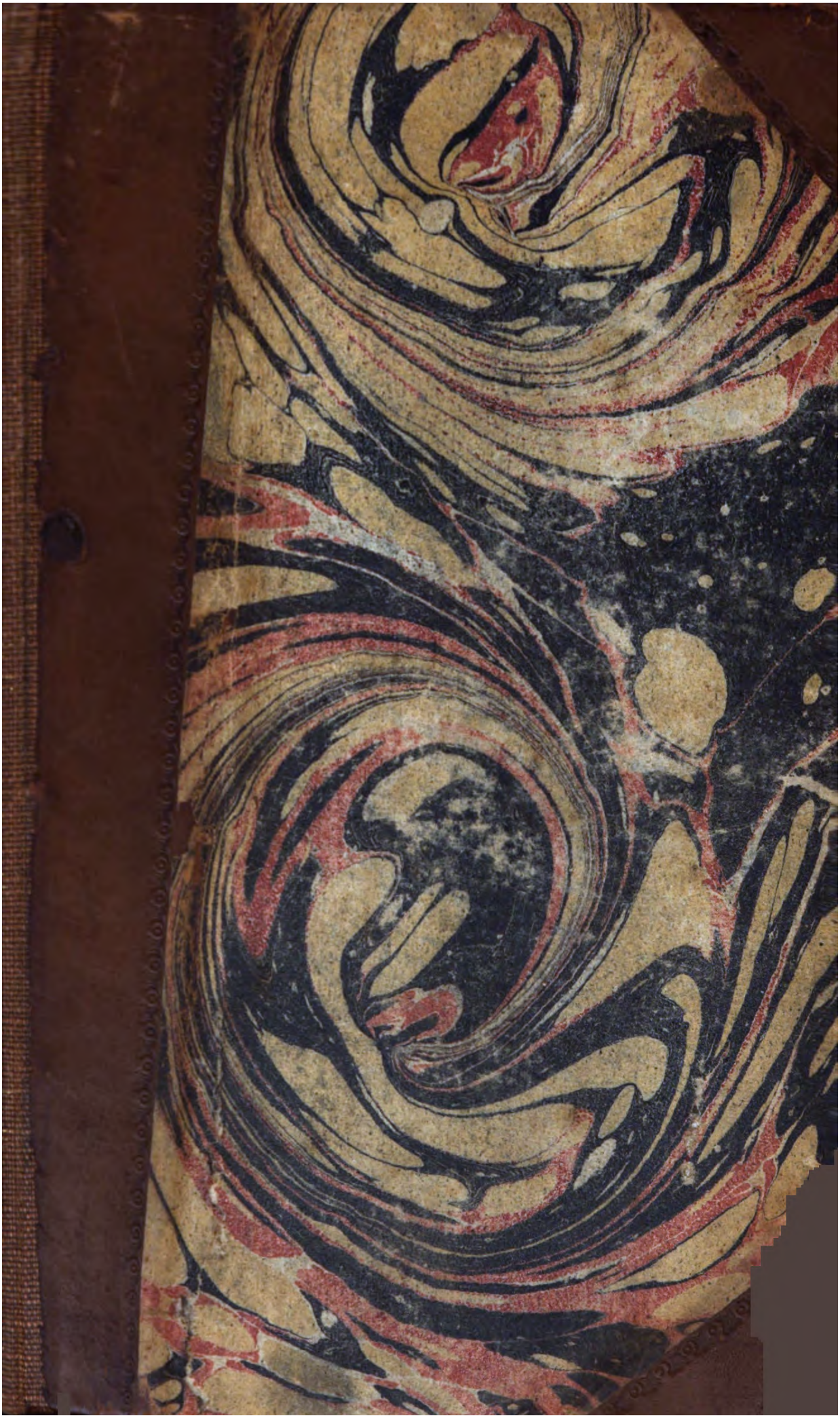
This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

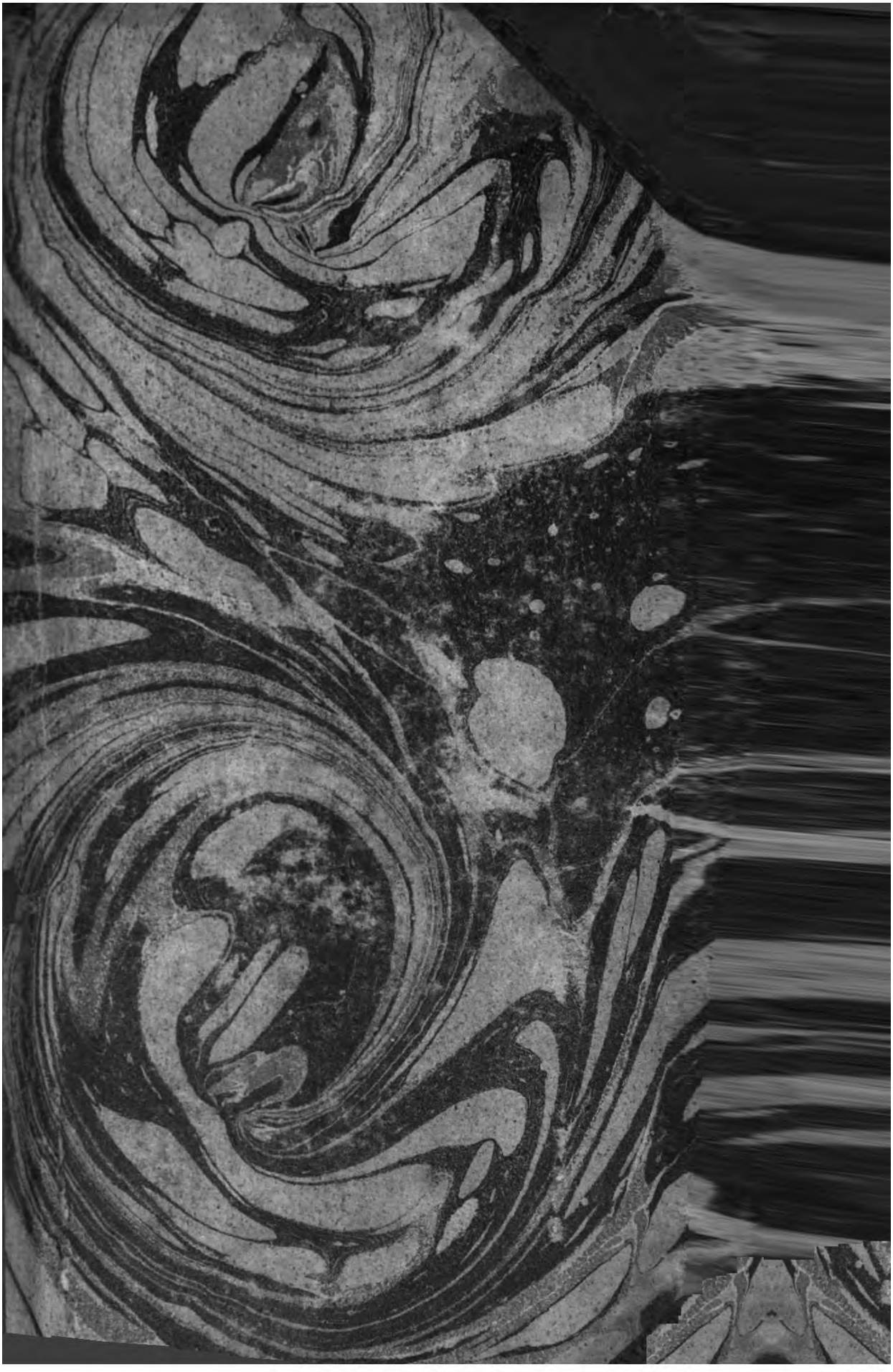
http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.







36.
343.



IMPRESSIONS

OF

ENGLAND.

BY

COUNT EDOUARD DE MELFORT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,
Publisher in Ordinary to His Majesty.
1836.

343.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

CONTENTS

OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

LETTER I.

Introduction . . . . . Page 1

LETTER II.

Nationality of Englishmen—Their habit of order—Their demeanour.—English Liberty.—An English Family. . 6

LETTER III.

English Exclusiveness. — Aristocratic Circles.—Politeness towards Strangers.—The Opera.—The Dandy's Box.—The Crush-room.—Nocturnal Bustle.—Damaged Coach. . 13

LETTER IV.

London in Winter.—A Fog.—London in Spring.—Hour of visiting. — London Squares. — Hyde Park. — The fashionable Drive.— Park Sketches. — A French Distingué. — Count D.— Lord P.—Kensington Gardens.—The Promenade. . 23

LETTER V.

A Foreigner's Impressions.—Early Associations.—Quietness. —Fair Play.—Treatment of Animals.—English Stage-coach.— The Coachman.—Travelling Companions.—Changing Horses. —Return to London. 41

LETTER VI.

Censure.—National Coldness.—Newspaper Details.—English Vanity. — Shyness. — Jeux Folâtres. — Want of Gaiety. — Parties of Pleasure.— Cockney Pic-nic. — English reserve.— Reception of Foreigners. — Continental Soirées. — An English Drawing-room.—English Husband and Wife. . Page 53

LETTER VII.

Grandeur of London.—English Dinners.—An august Visiter. —Lawyers' Dinners.—Scotch Dinner.—Drinking Healths.— A General's Speech.—Courage and Timidity. 69

LETTER VIII.

The Middle Class. — Mr. Jackson's Family. — The Double knock.—Mr. Jackson's Drawing-room.—Introductions.—A Dinner Party. — The Dessert. — Departure of the Ladies.— Music. 78

LETTER IX.

John Bull.—His Character.—English Ladies. — Unmarried Women.—Insensibility to Music.—English Singing.—Native Painters.—Sir Thomas Lawrence.—Water-colour Exhibition. —Posting.—Postilions. 88

LETTER X.

A new subject.—Primogeniture.—Ancient Castles.—Berkeley Castle.—The great Hall.—The Prisoners' Tower.—Edward the Second's Room.—Family Portraits.—A courteous Invitation. — Perpetuity of Property.—Anecdote. — English Luxury. —Support of the Poor. 104

LETTER XI.

Watering Places. — Dining out. — Evening Parties.— Champagne. — Cheltenham.—English Gentry. — Environs of Cheltenham. — Principal Street. —The Promenade. — Archery Society.— Ludicrous Scene. — The Water Drinkers. — Good-night. . . . . Page 121

LETTER XII.

Sunday at Cheltenham. — Mauvaise honte. — Shyness.— An amiable Character.—An Accident.—A Village Clergyman. —Clandestine Kindness. — The Clergyman's Dinner.—Mutual Embarrassment.—Regret. 136

LETTER XIII.

Wales.—Turnpike-gates.—War in Wales.—The first Prince of Wales.—Banks of the Wye.—A Shooting Box.—Inn at Crickhowel.—A Disappointment.—Grand Scenes. . 152

LETTER XIV.

Our Villa.—English Clergymen.—Our new Abode.—Hospitality.—A Landscape.—A magic Word.—The Clergyman's Family.—A Moonlight Ride. 161

LETTER XV.

Assemblage of Sportsmen.—Ascent of the Hills.—Enthusiasm.—A novel Scene.—Infernal Region.—Pleasures of Sporting.—A Shooting Party.—The favourite Pointer.—The Game started. — Grouse. — A Sportman's Luncheon. — Night after Shooting. 169

LETTER XVI.

End of Grouse Shooting.—A new Acquaintance.—Friendship.—Presentiments.—An Accident.—My Wound.—Timely Assistance.—Letter to my Family.—Arrival of my Wife.—Our Interview. . . . . Page 183

LETTER XVII.

Departure from Wales.—Young Female Mendicant.—Law in England.—English Prosperity.—Torquay.—Fishing-boats.—Extensive View.—Lovely Cottage.—Vain attempt. . 196

LETTER XVIII.

Sounds at Daybreak.—View of the Ocean.—Visit to the Dart.—Our Boat.—Dinner.—Right of Fishing.—Dartmouth.—A Surprise.—English Roads. 207

LETTER XIX.

Coast of Devonshire.—Babicombe.—Elegant Cottages.—Sea View.—Teignmouth.—Bishops-Teignton.—Verdant Lanes.—Tradesmen's Carts.—Sequestered Villages.—The Peasantry.—Village Clergyman.—Pleasant Retirement. . . 218

LETTER XX.

English Hospitality.—General M.—Yachting.—Water Excursion.—The General's Boat.—Fair Play.—Angling at Sea.—Luncheon on board. 233

LETTER XXI.

Steam-boat.—Fellow Passengers.—A Comparison.—Illusions.—A Contrast.—Steam-boat at a distance.—The same at hand.—Disorderly Companions. 243

LETTER XXII.

Morning at Sea.—Sunrise.—The Needles.—A fellow Voyager.—A Royal Captain.—Childish Prejudices.—Tom Cringle's Log.—French Soldiers.—Plymouth.—Royal Salute. Page 252

LETTER XXIII.

Desultory Letters.—Ascot Heath.—English Meats.—Luncheon.—Road to the Races.—Lady H.'s Cottage.—Ascot Races.—Betting with Ladies.—General Excitement.—The Winning Post.—End of the Race. 263

LETTER XXIV.

Ascot Heath.—George the Fourth.—A French "Romance."—Marchioness of W.—Windsor Castle.—My Apartment there.—Moonlight effect.—Nocturnal view.—Disenchantment. 276

LETTER XXV.

A Trophy.—King Charles's Beauties.—St. George's Chapel.—French Armour.—Return to Ascot.—Days at the Races. 285

IMPRESSIONS

OF

ENGLAND.

LETTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

My dear Augustus,

You allude in your last to the letters I wrote you from England in 1817, during my first visit to that country. Our military career had then abruptly terminated, and we were both restored to our families. You departed for the South of France; I rejoined my mother in Great Britain, where I not only met her kind welcome, but the courteous hospitality of those relations against whom only a short time before I had been "ranged in battle array."

But those letters, which you are kind enough to say amused and interested you, must have

been necessarily very imperfect. They could only have comprised the feeble sketches of a very young observer. If I remember well, they contained slight pictures of the different ranks of society which fell under my view,—in fact, of everything that I either saw or heard,— but all in a very superficial manner. Besides, I had already lived too much for my actual age,— I had been thrown into too many different scenes; my imagination had been too continually excited; my mind too constantly habituated to the reception of new impressions, for me to be capable of estimating calmly and impartially a country not my own.

Remember also that I had already passed four years at Naples; where, emphatically speaking, my *life* commenced, as if to contradict the Neapolitan adage, "*Vedi Napoli, poi morire.*" Four years under that splendid sky! at a court where pomp, military parades, and festivals of every description, succeeded each other incessantly; where whole nights of loveliness and enjoyment were spent on that unrivalled bay, in the royal barks, gliding rapidly

but silently along to the sound of the most harmonious music! All this acted powerfully on the senses and imagination of a youth of eighteen. — Do I not even now behold that scene of fairy-land! Vesuvius grumbling still, whilst the reflection of her burning lava seems to dispute with the silver light of the resplendent moon an empire over the waves!

I found myself suddenly transported thence to Upper Italy, to the camp on the shores of the Mincio, to the army commanded by Prince Eugène (Beauharnais). I made my two campaigns, gained two ranks, and received from the Emperor himself, in front of my regiment, the then so highly valued cross. All this was gone, all had vanished!—I was, as I said above, in England, and had not yet attained my twenty-second year. I was, I fear, but a poor philosopher to judge of or describe one of the most remarkable countries in the world.

What I here bring forward as an excuse for my small capacity as an observer formerly, is not meant to announce any very wonderful power at present, nor to lead you to expect

anything very preferable in the letters I shall now address to you. But, as you justly say, some years more of life and experience, and a second—and this time a very prolonged sojourn in England—have enabled me better to appreciate all that surrounded me, and also to observe on a larger scale. My share, moreover, of the pains and griefs common to all men, (and they have fallen heavily on me,)—those moral sufferings especially, the effects of which, when profound, are never effaced—these, I say, must help to form the mind and rectify the judgment more even than the years that have passed. They also dispose the mind and feelings to a gentle philanthropy, which makes us consider our fellow-men, and indeed all beings, in a more benevolent, a more generous manner, without, at the same time, diminishing the faculty of distinguishing what is evil, or even of seizing upon what is ridiculous.

Let me premise that I have no set plan—nor will I form one. I will not even promise you to classify my descriptions, or separate my subjects: I shall write under the dictation of my

recollections as they occur. Do not reckon on any political reflections; not only because I profess to have but little knowledge of the matter, but because I almost dread the presence of those who do,—they talk by far too much about it.

I shall not venture on many subjects. Some will be avoided from want of sufficient information; others, because I do not think them compatible with the mere sketches of society as seen by a man of the world, who is that and no more.

In re-perusing this letter, I perceive that I have made a sort of preface. Well, it has, in any case, one merit,—that of not being long.

Adieu! yours ever.

LETTER II.

Nationality of Englishmen—Their habit of order—Their demeanour.—English Liberty.—An English Family.

WHENCE arises that public spirit which exists throughout England? that spirit of common accord which extends from the aristocratical great to the lowest plebeian?—and this in a country where there exists so many modifications of religious and political belief, and such a separation of ranks,—where the scale of different classes and conditions is so extended, and yet so distinctly marked! I mean by spirit of common accord, this: that under whatever aspect, position, character, or education you consider the Englishman, he is always essentially English. However he may be led away by opinion on any subject, fact, or circumstance peculiar to some individual interest, to some

particular portion of society, or to some separate province—whatever strong opposition of sentiments may exist upon secondary causes, all discordance ceases when the general well-being is at stake; then all Englishmen are as one!

If I were to tell you that you would never find upon a road in England, a stone, or any other impediment, I should seem to make a very unimportant observation. It is, nevertheless, true that no Englishman, whether peasant or gentleman, who should see on a road any object, such as broken glass, (which might wound a horse's foot)—a stone left by negligence, or anything dropped accidentally from a cart, but which might cause by night a serious accident—would leave such impediment; he would immediately stoop down, pick it up, and throw it aside. This is not done for his own personal convenience,—he has already seen the danger, and avoided it: he has no particular interest in the passengers who may go that road during the night, but he will do as I say. Well, ascending from this trivial occurrence to the

great and desirable feeling of acting in common accord for the national good, you will find the same union, the same general interest; each individual, according to his social position and rank, forming a link in the chain which supports the entire community.

I asserted also that the difference of rank is distinctly observed. But this is not gained by force, nor by established laws, (at least as far as I know,) nor is it imposed by exactions over ignorance. No; it is caused by a general impulse, by a habit of order, in every individual of each class, however humble his actual position may be.

This union is still more strongly cemented by the numerous bodies which are established in England in every branch of every profession or trade. These assemble to discuss the general interests of their society. There, the character of each individual is placed strongly before his equals, and his services for the general good are recompensed by public thanks, or occasionally by offerings or presents, which are preserved in his family as honourable heir-looms.

If, on the contrary, he has deserved censure, he meets with remonstrance and general reprobation.

I must now speak of that national dignity which, it appears to me, pervades all classes. Let us take an example from one of the lowest. I do not know any country where one is served with so much respect, with so much silent attention, as in England; nor where the distance between master and servant is more strictly marked: and yet this is not accompanied on the part of the latter by any baseness of demeanour, nor is it the effect of compelled servitude; but the servant shows that in his capacity he respects himself, and that familiarity would be no more to his taste than to that of his master.

Proceeding into a class a little higher, and thence gradually ascending, you will find in each situation the same composed behaviour, always proportioned to the rank in society. The English appear to know their respective rights, and the laws which protect them. You may see the possessor of the merest hut

standing in his doorway, and you read in his countenance, and in his whole manner, "An Englishman's house is his castle:"* he knows that no constable, no strength—not even that of the king himself, can force open that door if the master refuses, and that to enter violently a formal act of the law is necessary.

On the Continent, the English are generally accused of arrogance, I think frequently with injustice: the national air of independence in their manner is misunderstood. It should be remembered that every Englishman, however distant he may be from his native country, feels that the protecting hand of England is stretched out over him: he knows that at the first cry of distress his mother-country is there to reply; that in every spot he finds the *envoyés* of his nation ready to protect and support him, compelled by the strict instructions they receive to this effect; and he

* In a moment of enthusiasm, while speaking in Parliament, the famous Lord Chatham exclaimed: "An Englishman's house is his castle! It may be a straw-built shed,—the winds of heaven may whistle through it, the elements may enter it; but the king cannot—the king dares not!"

knows, again, that he, as a simple individual, if he meet with injustice or neglect, can shake an ambassador from his seat by simply sending his just complaint—no matter from what distance—to Parliament, where he is sure to be heard and attended to.

May he not then be pardoned, if, whilst entertaining such thoughts, his head is a little proudly raised ?

If these observations are true as applied to the nation at large, they will be found equally just in reference to any English family taken by chance from any situation in life, excepting, however, the very lowest of all,—a class which all my philanthropy cannot induce me willingly to contemplate closely, however I may pity its members. There will always be in this family a certain dignity of behaviour and conduct according with its position in life. Whether it be that of a farmer, of a manufacturer, of a tradesman, it matters not,—you will find there the most respectful deference in the sons towards their father. The eldest son will be treated by his young brothers with a certain re-

spect also. At the hour of dinner the father will dress himself neatly, his children will do the same, and the meal will pass with suitable decency and reserve. Surely here there is relative dignity, the more remarkable as being of daily occurrence.

My dear Augustus, for I like to continue my old habit of calling you *à l'Anglaise*, I am determined to restrict my observations to England, at least in as far as I am able, as I shall thus avoid all comparison with any other country, particularly with our own.

I here finish my two first letters, considering them as a sufficient introduction to what I have to say ; and I shall now pass on to details, which, whilst I recall them to my memory, will amuse me a second time.

Yours ever : adieu !

LETTER III.

English Exclusiveness. — Aristocratic Circles.—Politeness towards Strangers.—The Opera.—The Dandy's Box.—The Crush-room.—Nocturnal Bustle.—Damaged Coach.

My dear Augustus,

In order to reside, and particularly to travel through England, it is necessary to be rich. This explains why few foreigners remain there. I do not speak of those persons whom business brings to London for a few weeks, and whose observations being necessarily restricted, can be of little worth.

It is a delicate and difficult thing to reach the high society—that of the exclusive aristocracy of England: it is, however, less so for a stranger than for an Englishman who by birth does not belong to this class;—the relations that I have in it opened the way to me. But

if it be difficult to get admitted, yet, when once presented and received, this very character of stranger attracts, if possible, still greater civility and politeness. The manner of the men is in general cold: here the profound bows of the Continent, between men especially, must be laid aside; they might pass for an avowed inferiority. I am far from recommending impertinence; but polite ease, sustained by a little apparent indifference, and readiness to repel any airs of pride, succeed not badly.

I repeat, when once admitted, it is impossible to meet with more courtesy, to receive more polite attention, to enjoy more luxury or more magnificence, than in the aristocratical circles of England. A few days only after my introduction, invitations poured upon me. With my opportunities, a man who had a rage for dancing might have gone to three or four balls and fêtes every evening; and a *gourmand* might daily have tasted of as many excellent dinners. As for me, circumstances and other pursuits soon took me away from this brilliant scene, in which I rarely afterwards appeared.

It has often happened to me on the day I was to dine out, particularly at the mansion of Lord H——, to see a carriage arrive at my door a few minutes before the hour appointed, on purpose to convey me to the house. The coachman always looked as if he had just come out of his dressing-room, and would not for the world have turned his head, which he held fixed and directed towards the ears of his superb horses. Two footmen six feet high, with long gold-headed canes, stood at the carriage-door. The same attention, offered me to return home, was more easy to decline.

Another mark of politeness generally adopted, and particularly towards strangers, is to send Opera tickets. Almost all the boxes in the King's theatre are let. The ladies who take them, and whose names and titles are placed on the door of each box, give two or three hundred pounds to have one during the season (about six months). The little ivory tablet you receive is tied with a ribbon, and enclosed in perfumed paper, with the addition of a few obliging words. This is a true

Aladdin's lamp; it not only opens the doors of the theatre, but those of the boxes of all your acquaintances, in which it is expected that every man of any pretension shall present himself at least for a few minutes to offer his compliments to the ladies, and salute their noble husbands.

If silence was better preserved; if the noise of the opening and shutting of doors, the incessant call of "Box-keeper!" (always in a loud voice and ascending key) did not throw a shade over the *ensemble*,—this Opera would be the perfection of taste, as it is of splendour and greatness. I ought, however, to add, that for some years past the noise has much diminished, and the English appear to know better how to enjoy and appreciate the foreign talents which the prodigious remuneration they give attracts to England. The orchestra particularly has improved in an astonishing manner, and, I do not hesitate to say, is now admirable.

You know how fond I am of music. My sojourn in Naples, where I received my first

impressions of that art, and at an age when emotions are so lively and so easily exerted, has perhaps disposed my nature to a stronger enjoyment of it. There is nothing I can compare to the sensation I felt in London when, quitting the rumbling noise of a rapid carriage, and the cries and confusion of the streets surrounding the Opera house, I found myself suddenly in that large and brilliant theatre, under the influence of the penetrating and majestic harmony of eighty musicians united! All that I can say, and what I am ashamed to tell, is, that tears filled my eyes.

When an opera is performed the night after the queen's drawing-room, all the ladies appear in their court head-dresses: then are the toilets still more brilliant than usual, and the waving and agitation of the feathers and brightness of the diamonds add greatly to the magnificence of the exhibition. When the orchestra begins the national air of "God save the King," three thousand people rise together and listen in a respectful—I had almost said, religious silence. It is impossible

to partake of such a sight without the liveliest emotion.

Since we are here at the Opera, I cannot resist my desire to speak to you of a certain box, deep and spacious, furnished with glasses and sofas, *une baignoire*, situated close to the stage. There you may judge, not of the orchestra—you are too near it, and it is too powerful; not of the admirable voice of Rubini, for he turns his back to the box, which is placed at ten feet within the range of the foot-lights;—but from this box you may judge of and admire the forms and grace of the *danseuses* in the ballet. It belongs to about a dozen of "fashionables" of all ages, and is called the *dandy's box*. During the opera it remains empty; but when the ballet begins, about eleven o'clock, (the time a "fashionable" rises from table on a day that Taglioni dances,) these gentlemen arrive, their minds fatigued and numbed, the consequence doubtless of an epicurean dinner, seasoned by some glasses of the choicest wines. They are, however, soon aroused; the appearance of a first-

rate pretty *danseuse* affects them in an electrical and wonderful manner. They pass suddenly from their state of elegant inertness into one of joy, then into one of admiration; from that into one of enthusiasm, which they express by a clapping of hands which rivals that of the public, whose attention it does not fail to attract. One object they have in view is thus gained; the second is, that their applauses do not escape the grateful ears of her for whom they are intended, and in the charming courtesy of thanks which she makes, a slight and graceful portion may be distinguished which is offered to her particular admirers.

Women as well as men are admitted into the pit. They must be full-dressed, but hats are not allowed—doubtless that the view of those who may be placed behind may not be intercepted. It is perfectly respectable for a lady to go into the pit, but I doubt if there exists a woman of *haut ton* who for any inducement would appear there. In general the dress of the men is neat, but the obligation of appearing there in silk stockings has

been done away with by degrees: this is one of those smaller results of a connexion with the Continent, which, under a thousand forms, have slid into every society in England, sometimes for evil, sometimes for good.

The exit from the Opera is a terrible assemblage of tumult, and confused and clamorous cries. On the great staircase, you hear voices screaming for the possessors of carriages. "The Marchioness of T——'s carriage stops the way!" "Lord D——'s carriage stops the way!" If it is a Russian's carriage, you hear "Prince Shrimplopsicoff's carriage," &c. The criers are not embarrassed to rid themselves of a name which sticks in their throat; and I confess they have often made me laugh heartily. During all this time the carriage-people wait in a room at the top of the staircase, where they are crammed to suffocation: but it is the fashion. There are certainly among the crowd some who have to walk home; but you may guess why they wait, and always to the last.

As for me, I always escaped under the

colonnade down-stairs to see the battle and to enjoy the bustle in all its glory. There you find a great number of men, chiefly Irishmen, who poke their lanterns between your legs to light you to a hackney-coach; for here is the region of hackney-coaches. Then it is, "Your lordship, please your honour, give me a shilling, your honour; it won't do you much harm, your honour, and it will do me much good, your lordship." And then the hundred voices screaming all together, and roaring for all the coachmen at once. These arrive in the same manner, all charging together upon the same door: and then it is, when the noise is at its height, that you may remark the address and coolness of the coachmen in livery, who find a means sooner or later to make their way through a hundred carriages, entangled in such confined spaces, that with an inch less of room it would be impossible for them to move without breaking each other's coach in pieces; —and yet I have rarely heard of any accident occurring. It is true, indeed, that one sometimes meets, in a morning, a carriage, drawn

slowly by one horse, going to the coachmaker, with a large hole in the panel right through the coat of arms or the coronet; the coachman, in his morning *négligé*, walking by its side like a father watching his wounded child. In his air you read that it was not his fault; but that yesterday, coming from the Opera, "a vagabond of a hackney-man," unable to hold his beasts, had given him a *coup de lance* with his vulgar pole.

Good night, my dear friend! Enough of the Opera for this evening: I am going to bed.

LETTER IV.

London in Winter.—A Fog.—London in Spring.—Hour of visiting.—London Squares.—Hyde Park.—The fashionable Drive.—Park Sketches.—A French Distingué.—Count D.—Lord P.—Kensington Gardens.—The Promenade.

It would be curious to hear two travellers talking about London, who might have visited it, the one during spring, the other during winter. Their first mutual exclamation of surprise would very surely be followed by a dispute. I hardly know how to describe this extraordinary difference. In winter, particularly on one of those dismal days when there is no wind, the whole of this vast town is covered with an immense cloud of fog, (rendered still thicker and darker by 300,000 chimneys that emit their coal smoke into the air,) which appears to envelope it with its immovable weight,

and prohibits all enjoyment of daylight to its inhabitants.

It is this cloud of fog also which, at the distance of twenty miles, proclaims to travellers, "This is London." On some days one cannot see distinctly within doors, and when, you look from the street through the windows into the interior of the houses, everything appears perfectly dark. Should you discover, close on the other side of the glass, a face which may be looking at you, it is exactly the resemblance of one of those bodies preserved in a bottle of spirits, being characterised by the same melancholy yellow colour. About two o'clock, lights have already appeared in the shops. There are some streets where they are obliged to have them during the whole day. These streets are dismal and damp, covered with a black liquid mud. There, only merchants, and attorneys' clerks are to be seen, who walk quickly along, dressed in black coats, black trousers, black waistcoats, black hats. The fog is all that time falling in a cold vapour which penetrates and

wets the clothes. Of the faces of those you meet, you see only the tip of a red nose, for large cravats cover the ears and mouth, and the hat is well pulled down upon the eyes. But this is a glorious time for the hackney-coaches, scarcely any other kind of carriage being seen.

You go home: the necessity of augmenting the fires, increases in your rooms the quantity of black dust and smoke arising from the coal; everything is full of it, everything smells of it, and you ought to change your linen two or three times a day, and have your hands constantly in soap and water, if you wish to be clean. In fact, it requires all the indefatigable care of the inhabitants of London to keep their houses even as clean as they are during this long and dull season of the year.

These are the causes, no doubt, which induce the noble and wealthy, and all who have places in the country, to quit London in the winter. They go to seek light and air. I stop here in the sombre side of my picture, and draw the curtain over the cold and dismal time of the year.

I would much rather show you London on a fine spring or summer day, then all brilliant in the light of the sun.

Have you ever walked on more beautiful pavement? Have you ever seen together such a number of equipages rivalling each other in the beauty of the horses and in the splendour of the liveries? These stop in scores at the entrances of those large and sumptuous magazines, in which are exhibited with such profusion, not only the admirable productions of the industry of the country, but those of the whole world! and in which the eager attention of the persons employed, even when the purchase is of the smallest value, is so attractive!

Come with me towards the Park; and let us go through those more tranquil streets, lined with more spacious houses, and now lighted by a clear sky. Within the handsome windows of plate glass we shall perceive baskets of flowers; whilst, without, long boxes of mignonette perfume the air which the passers-by inhale. Here, again, are many of those equipages stopping oc-

casionally at the different doors: the footman's *roll* with the knocker astonishes you, but it is *fashionable;* the three less rapid blows which terminate it, are applied with a redoubled force, which make you fear for the safety of the door, especially if it happen to be the carriage of a duchess which has just driven up. This is the hour of visiting. Take a glance into the vestibule which the first open door discovers: a powdered butler, and several other servants, also powdered and in rich liveries, stand respectfully ranged to let the elegant visitor pass; she, in two or three light steps, has bounded from the carriage over the pavement, her foot appearing to shrink at the necessity of coming in contact with the vulgar stones. We shall see this scene renewed constantly, (under slight shades of difference,) in all the streets inhabited by the wealthy in London.

You see at the end of that street, which is in a right line, (as are all the streets in the west-end of London,) some trees whose green foliage contrasts agreeably with the brown and monotonous hue of the houses. Grosvenor

Square is before us; and as this place is in our way towards the Park, let us pass through it, to judge how salutary and valuable it must be to the population of so large a town to possess many similar spaces where the air freely circulates. In the centre is a garden surrounded by a railing: remark the walks, the shrubs, the flowers, the grass; how well it is all arranged and kept! Each house which composes the square is obliged to contribute to the expense of the garden, and each family has the enjoyment of it.

There are, I believe, twenty or thirty squares in London, one taking precedence of the other, (for here also there are ranks,) according to the quarter where they are situated, and the class of people who inhabit them. Those of the first rank are St. James's and Grosvenor; they owe their estimation doubtless to their being occupied by the high aristocrcay. The size of the square, and of the houses which surround it, and the beauty of the garden, are uninfluential in determining the preference. If you should have a visit to pay, or, still better, if you have *the*

honour of being invited to dine in one of these squares, you are sure, in getting into your carriage, to hear your servant repeat the direction in a peculiarly loud voice to the coachman, in order (you would suppose) that all who may be passing may hear it. The coachman himself, lifting up his head and his elbows still higher, assumes an air of importance and satisfaction which the horses are also *made* to feel! Even to this point is carried the impression and influence of aristocracy in England!

But here we are in "the Park," meaning Hyde Park; for when you speak of either of the others, you must specify the name,—Regent's Park, St. James's Park. That in which we now are, is the general *rendezvous* of those who go in carriages, on horseback, or on foot. In seeing so spacious and extensive a piece of ground, closed in the distance by large and beautiful trees, surrounded by a principal gravel road, which seems to lose itself among them, you are surprised to find that a promenade so attractive is neglected; and that the crowd of carriages, horsemen, and walkers, confine them-

selves to the only side of the Park which is bordered by a street, separated, it is true, from it by an iron railing. The carriages drive up and down this road one after the other, in two, and sometimes three rows, and among them the horsemen walk, trot, and gallop; on the other side of the road are the pedestrians, almost all of whom have their heads turned towards the carriages: this occasions many a droll *shock* between those walking in contrary directions, which shocks are rendered still more amusing (when there is no lady in the case) by each person tranquilly continuing his route without even the apologies and bows which in any other place would ensue; they hardly seem to be sensible of what has taken place, and the head immediately resumes its former observing position.

But here, my dear Augustus, you should have a friend belonging to the country,—a person well acquainted with *this* world, who, with his arm linked in yours, regarding, *en passant*, certain physiognomies in the carriages or on horseback, will recount their histories in your ear; for, like all communities, London has its scandals; and

the praises (certainly well merited) which are bestowed on the morality of the general society in England, cannot in strict justice be applied without exception to the most elevated, where, as in other great capitals, there exist certain countesses, marchionesses, and even duchesses *too celebrated* for such praise. But, at the risk of being called by you too discreet, I will quit this subject, to make such remarks as will better become me.

Do you see that tilbury, at the end of the drive, standing close under the statue of Achilles, which was erected in honour of and dedicated to the talents and military success of a Duke, by the English ladies, and whose too succinct clothing caused at the time of its erection so many clever caricatures and pleasant jokes. This tilbury is, as you see, surrounded by beaux on horseback, smiling and chatting. You may be certain that the two persons in it, (the one, a man still young—the other, a pretty woman)—are people of fashion. The former is probably the son of some noble earl or baron, perhaps an honourable and gallant colonel; (gallant, here,

signifies brave as well as that other signification which it has elsewhere;) he is at last married. I say, you may be certain they are people of fashion; because twenty other gigs of different sorts might stop there without attracting a single soul to look at or greet their occupants.

Another sort of good style is for a cavalier to stop near the low barrier which protects the foot-passengers, and there to let the reins fall over his horse's neck, who, on his part, complaisantly stretches his head across the rail to be caressed by a small gloved hand; she to whom this hand belongs, has the other passed through the arm of her mother or sister (in the latter case, the head of that sister is turned away with an air of indifference): they are talking with *nonchalance* of the ball at the Duke of D.'s, where there were cherries at a guinea a pound; or of the breakfast for to-morrow, which will be delightful,—James Smith has promised to sing! You hear inquiries made amongst the crowd, "Who is that young man?—he with the half-grown moustaches, whose horse Miss B. is patting?" "He is in the Blues," is the reply:

the name is nothing; "He is in the Blues," is enough.

See, here is a group of gentlemen on horseback, all standing still with their horses' heads turned to a common centre, the cane in the air, the end supported on the hip. They are discussing the immensely long speech which the representative of a certain city in Ireland made last night, and which kept them so late from dinner; these are no longer very young, their time of youthful vanity is passed, at present it is that of politics and epicurism.

Now turn, and look at that green carriage, without arms, and the servants out of livery; but, nevertheless, the whole in good taste. It goes slowly: a certain individual on horseback at the door leans his hand on it, and puts his head almost into the very interior; doubtless, to hear what that pale and delicate-looking woman (who appears to be speaking with anxiety and reproach, and who shrinks back as if to avoid notice) is saying. What does not please me in the gentleman is, that he appears to *like* to be thus seen; you will perhaps see him again

to-night in the *dandy's box.* As to all those cabriolets, in which are young men with moustaches, (although I do not think they are all or any of them in the army,) each with a lady by his side, very much dressed, and of a certain equivocal appearance, I confess that I think this is not calculated to embellish the scene.

But here is one of our own countrymen; you know him, I suppose: he is on the dark bay horse, his hat rather low on his eyes, to show, we are to imagine, those few scattered hairs behind. He has certainly rather increased *in embonpoint* during the sixty years that he has been going about the world; yet you would not take him for more than fifty. He is a man *comme il faut*, both by birth and habits, and still has pretensions, as you may perceive by his cheeks, so well sustained by that high, stiffly-starched cravat; and he has made himself somewhat feared by his caustic observations and biting raillery. He has always frequented a portion of the *high* society of Paris and London (this does not always imply the *best*); and has

habitually expended forty or fifty thousand francs a year, without its being known that he ever had any fortune. He is a friend of Prince T. (he who, after having triumphed over nearly a whole century, yet knows how to jest and possess all the pristine strength and freshness of his mind, and—but I do not talk politics). To return to our countryman on the dark bay horse: he still loves the world and its pleasures; particularly that of a good table, which his iron health permits him to enjoy with impunity. It was he who said to me once, on his return from England, where I had met him, to Paris, "Ah! my dear fellow, it is quite another planet!"

But look! here comes *la fleur des pois!* See, he arrives in his tilbury; at his side, a little groom just two feet high (his tiger); this is another of our countrymen; but now an amiable renegade, for he has become a naturalised Englishman. It is the handsome A——d (le Comte de D.), with his cravat so prodigiously well put on, his blooming cheeks, his black whiskers, his hair curling, *naturally* of course.

He has married a young and very pretty person, whose rather celebrated mother-in-law is still handsomer than herself, and who is one of the most agreeable and clever women of her day; thus, in all respects, he has been most lucky. And, besides all this, he is himself the very *apogeum* of elegance, the despair of a number of beaux who cannot, alas! put on a cravat like that! He is likewise a man of talent, and possesses a good figure and *tournure*, as you see; and, to crown all these qualities which form the man of the world, he has acquired the glory, in a country where certain individuals carry the extravagance of the toilet to such an excess, of leaving them all behind.

Speaking of him, recalls to my mind a rather comical meeting that I witnessed some years back in this very Park, and which will give you a notion of the manners of a man of rank and high fashion. D. had just made his first appearance in London: he had arrived, *soit dit en passant*, under the auspices of his brother-in-law, who had formerly held the rank of captain in the English service, and was then returned a

duke and general of the Restoration—that is to say, a high and puissant seigneur. I was in the Park on foot; Lord P. who was in his cabriolet, had drawn up to speak to me; it was late,—almost every one had left the Park, and the being thus alone had thrown a degree of the confidential into our conversation, which perhaps rendered any interruption not so agreeable,—when, all at once, arrived le Comte de D. at full gallop, joyful, and quite out of breath with emotion and pleasure in finding himself in a scene so new to him; and, no doubt, anxious to make the acquaintance of all the fashionables who might fall in his way. On seeing me, he stopped to speak; and, in less than half a minute, was in a lively conversation (entirely on his own side,) with Lord P. who replied to all his compliments on the beauty of his horse and cabriolet, upon the length of that beautiful tail which nearly touched the ground, &c. by very amiable smiles and repeated bows, and by that peculiar laugh, (*ricanement*, peculiar, I might say, to his family,) so impossible to

describe, and which must be heard, or seen rather, before you can comprehend all that it expresses; a laugh, in fact, which imitates conversation, without one word having been said. Lord P. not understanding French, did not comprehend a single word of all that D. was pouring forth; and I, as you may believe, took good care not to undeceive him. I was far too well amused; besides, I had no doubt that the parties were acquainted, for the courtesy of Lord P. was marked, and D. addressed him as "my lord" in speaking to him; therefore I was not a little surprised and diverted when, on D.'s quitting us, Lord P. said in a tone difficult to imitate, "Who is that?"

I have kept you so long a time in this Park, that I will spare you the others; reserving to myself, however, a few words on Kensington Gardens, which adjoin Hyde Park. These are royal property; the palace is inhabited by the Duchess of Kent, and her daughter, the Princess Victoria (heiress presumptive to the crown): the public are not admitted in carriages; the Duke of St. Albans is, I believe, the

only subject (excepting perhaps the members of the Royal Family) who has the right of entering in a carriage. This is, I am told, one of the ancient privileges attached to the title of Grand Falconer to the King, which the ancestors of the duke possessed, and which is transmitted by hereditary succession. What is most remarkable in these gardens is, the size and majesty of the trees, as well as the shade which they spread over the beautiful alleys, formed mostly in right lines, in the ancient style, and *en laisser courre*, (as our ancestors used to say.) This is particularly striking at sunset, which is just the time in the season that the gay world has chosen for the promenade, to the martial sound of the band of the King's Guards. It is also the hour when the citizens and the commonalty retire to dinner and to tea, which does not a little tend to purify the *coup d'œil*.

The *allée* chosen for the walk is the one close to the Park; but here, at least, there is apparently good reason for the choice: the horsemen, whose entrance is forbidden, can ap-

proach the very edge of the ha-ha and railing which separate the Park from the gardens, and thus enjoy the view of this very fashionable promenade, in which the variety of colours, so much liked by the English ladies, comes out so well from the green sward, and the still darker shade of those fine trees. You may judge by the little friendly nods and bows which are exchanged from one side to the other, that the whole forms but one society and that more or less all are acquainted.

Sur ce, mon cher, je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait en sa sainte et digne garde.

LETTER V.

A Foreigner's Impressions.—Early Associations.—Quietness.—Fair Play. Treatment of Animals.—English Stage-coach.—The Coachman. — Travelling Companions. — Changing Horses.—Return to London.

DURING my sojourn in England, I often regretted not having by my side one of those Continental unbelievers who can only admire their own country because they have not seen any other! But it was more particularly a *friend* that I wished for, (which was a proof to me that the impressions I received were not imaginary,)—it was a companion I desired, with whom my pleasure would have been redoubled in observing together so many new objects, so many different manners, and customs, and habits. And then to say, that it is only the distance of seven leagues of water which

appears to effect such a change! Upon the Continent, from whatever point you depart, you may traverse four hundred leagues and find an almost constant resemblance in general appearance, morals, and manners; there, even different languages appear to become amalgamated; for on the frontiers of the different countries a *patois* exists which resembles both languages. Is it possible to resolve this problem by the supposition that it is this watery barrier which interrupts the correspondence and similitude arising from the habits of immediate approximation?

I recur to the expression of our countryman, the friend of Prince T.— "*L'Angleterre est tout-à-fait une autre planète!*" for such, I think, will always be the impression produced on the mind of every impartial and unprejudiced man. I am far from seeking to prove that everything is superior in England,—that there is absolutely nothing in other countries to be preferred; far from it. I do not even wish to establish a comparison: I am only desirous to impart to you the opinions I form of the country whilst

I am in it; and, if possible, to disengage myself from the recollections which, having been personal, might influence me in what I have to say,—for might one not easily fall into error in judging of a country in which the early affections of childhood had not been first implanted? Their remembrance may render the places where they were first felt, superior to any that might afterwards be seen; whilst to those uninterested in them, they in their turn might prove insignificant. Could you judge with impartiality of the beauty of the women in a country new to you, if you had but recently left her you love in another? In my estimation, I never witnessed a scene so admirable as the plain where I received the recompense in front of my regiment, of which I have already boasted in my first letter; and yet it was only a field of corn trodden down by horses' feet, a farm and some huts still burning! If you accuse me of vanity for mentioning this unimportant subject a second time, I will reply that I have only done so because it appeared to me to elucidate my idea,—namely, that the impressions of the mind may

influence the opinions, and even mislead us in our manner of seeing and judging.

What must always strike a stranger who has just arrived in England is, that everything appears to be done, without confusion, without noise, without cries or loss of time in useless words: even when the common people are disputing, it is rarely that you hear them all talking together, however warm their discussions may be; in the ordinary routine of life such a thing never occurs. Another fact to remark is, that whenever a man is thrown down in fighting, his fall will prove an immediate safeguard and protection A man who should strike his fallen adversary, would call down upon himself the indignation of all the spectators, even were they of the very lowest class; the very children would hear the cry of "Shame! shame!" resound in their ears if they were to forget in their battles this general law. Without desiring to make any particular allusion, I have seen elsewhere cowardly and cruel blows given without any mercy to a fallen foe, simply because

he was then without the means of defence. A sudden attack commenced without notice being given, would not pass unpunished by the English people. Have I dreamed all this? and, if not, am I wrong in thinking that such a trait merits notice?

A law exists in England to prevent and punish cruelty to animals,—horses particularly, which, from their number and importance, demand the greatest care. A conviction of former cruelties doubtless caused this law to be enacted; and it is also true that Mr. Martin, the proposer of it to parliament, was at first exposed to all sorts of mockery, and was even caricatured. But the law passed, and its results are manifest. Whether it be from conviction of its utility, or from pure generosity, animals are here not only treated with kindness and particular care, but there are some even to whose share (if I dare so express myself) is added a larger portion of ease and enjoyment than that allotted to them by their Creator. In other countries, you have, like me, perhaps seen certain *voituriers*, or postilions of dili-

gences, whose long and heavily-thonged whip has cruelly sought the same spot at each blow, in order to remove the skin, the perpetrators saying, with a savage laugh, "That is the only way to make the brute go." In another large city, nevertheless celebrated for taste, elegance, arts, and talents of every description, you will meet, in winter, a carman, urging onwards his miserable, overloaded horse, who is still full of courage, but whose iron-bound feet have no hold on the iced pavement, and who at last falls half crushed under the weight of the cart,—you will see, I say, this man take his whip by the smallest part with his two hands, and furiously strike his victim with the butt-end over his eyes, mouth, and nose, until the blood flows! and this accompanied with frightful and blasphemous oaths! The indignation of the observers is, no doubt, at its height; but how, unless they use their own personal strength, redoubled by indignation, can they prevent it? Shall I add, that lately, in travelling on the Continent, I saw the postilion, after having harnessed the horse on which he was to ride, return and tighten the

saddle with such force and violence, that, when I asked him the reason, he replied that the beast was badly wounded in the withers, and that it was to prevent the saddle from moving, and thus augmenting the wound. Unable to believe what I heard, I leapt from the carriage, and, ordering him to take off the saddle, found indeed that the poor animal had a sore of some inches in length and breadth. To my remonstrances the brute of a postilion quietly remarked, "There is no other, he must go." It is unnecessary to say, that I refused to take the poor animal, and that another was borrowed from a neighbouring farm to replace him: I wrote my complaint to the postmaster (whom I had asked for in vain); but, as I quitted the country, I know not if justice was done.

Such pictures can but serve to set forth the wisdom and philanthropy of the law established in England, and to create a regret that it is not put in force everywhere. I confess that, for some days after the above scene, I had this poor horse and his horrible wound constantly before my eyes; and as it is very proba-

ble that, in like circumstances, there are many who would have suffered the same painful sensations that I did, it is obvious that a law similar to that which is enforced in England would be highly beneficial on the Continent, not only to the poor suffering animal, but to us who are exposed to the contemplation of its sufferings.

To help to drive away these unpleasant images from your mind, can I resist asking you to go a few miles with me on the roof of a stage-coach on one of the roads in England? I shall place you there, and take myself my favourite seat on the coach-box, next the coachman. Here he comes, with his face crimsoned with health and continual exposure to the open air; his boots are well blacked, his linen is clean, his hat is brushed, his whole appearance *cossu* and decent; he puts on his gloves, whilst he is giving his directions to the stable-men, who have harnessed his four horses in the space of three minutes, and those harnesses are shiningly clean; he is still standing up arranging his reins, and with a last glance he assures himself

that "all is right." Now he is mounted and seated; he has saluted us with "Good morning, gentlemen." At the sound of a slight shrill whistle, which issues from his lips without their seeming to move, the carriage is borne off without effort; all moves spontaneously together, as if it was one piece. Look at that long and light whip, which, although redoubtable in his hand, will yet very rarely be used, and then more to correct too great ardour, or carelessness, than idleness; on the contrary, look how he gently draws the lash across and across his poor horses, calling each by his name. This is doubtless to let them know that he is there; he even finds the means of caressing and playing with the two nearest to him, by tapping them gently with the end of his whip; you will see how carefully and attentively he will avoid all danger during the whole route. His first and most important thought is, that the lives of ten or twelve persons depend on him. We travel with rapidity: but this advantage is not purchased by cruelty, or oaths; and far from being a pain, it is on the contrary a pleasure to see these fine horses, full

of fire and with their heads raised, seeming, in a manner, to devour their work. Here, again, you recognise the spirit of order and regularity; each carriage on meeting takes the left, and each respectively keeps this side of the road: thus, heavy carriages or waggons always leave an empty space for those who, travelling quicker, have to pass them.

If you remark well your travelling companions on the outside of the coach, you may pretty nearly guess by their appearance to what class they belong. Gentlemen, and even lords, think it no derogation to travel in this manner; but, in general, passengers on the roof of a stage-coach are professional or commercial men, farmers, and shop-keepers, whose behaviour is almost always proper and decent. It would be curious and interesting to keep an account of all the different information which you may collect in seizing opportunities of talking with them. Whether it be on the various branches of industry which they themselves follow, or on other subjects connected with them, you will always find the same good-will in satisfying your

inquiries; and the manner in which they express themselves, and the clearness of their ideas, as well as the knowledge they exhibit, are remarkable,—persons much less ignorant than myself might derive instruction from them.

Frequently, in our progress, we meet a stage-coach, sometimes even two or three, all, like ours, loaded with people; all in excellent order, and all of the same make and appearance, even in coachmen and cattle. We have just changed horses, you see with what promptitude; from some distance we discerned the fresh team already prepared, and waiting our arrival on the side of the road, in order that not a moment might be lost. This arrival is so regular that a delay of ten minutes is quite an event in the place where the stage is expected. It must be added, to the honour of the coachmen, that their moral conduct and probity are put to the proof daily; children, and even young girls, are confided to their care, with the certain conviction that they will be carefully attended to and protected: I have often and often been a spectator of what I assert, and have inwardly applauded

the care and attention, which were rendered still more apparent by the simplicity and frankness which accompanied them.

I shall stop you here in this short journey.—We must let our stage-coach continue its rapid course; we will return to London by another (plenty of them are passing every hour); and then you must listen to some more of my observations on its inhabitants and society; and, after that, we shall set out on our tour through a small portion of the interior of the country.

Adieu, then, once more.

LETTER VI.

Censure.— National Coldness.—Newspaper Details. — English Vanity. — Shyness. — Jeux Folâtres. —Want of Gaiety. — Parties of Pleasure.— Cockney Pic-nic.— English reserve.— Reception of Foreigners.—Continental Soirées.—An English Drawing-room.—English Husband and Wife.

I DO not know why, but to-day I feel inclined to censure, even to be severe; but having the habit of saying or writing what I think at the very moment, I will not stop my correspondence with you on account of this fit of ill-humour or misanthropy, which has just seized me: when, however I shall have returned to my usual state of mind, I will re-peruse my letter, and, should I find it unjust, I will spare you the trouble of reading it.

If, in order to attain pleasure and really to enjoy it, it was only necessary to make continual sacrifices of time and money, then the English would be the gayest people in the

world — the people who best know how to amuse themselves. The persons in different classes who thus run after pleasure is indeed innumerable in England; it is like a determination, a continual desire, a real *entêtement*. Let it cost what it may, gaiety must be had: but, through all these efforts, the coldness and reflectiveness of the national character always pierce; and one might almost suspect that this undeviating constancy only arises from the impossibility of ever attaining the desired end. In the highest, as well as in the least distinguished society, I have always received the same impression: there exists always in every *réunion* a restraint, an indifference too marked (particularly towards those who do not form the same *clique*, and in that case it goes so far as to become rudeness); there is a want of general ease and of general amiability, and this only becomes the more apparent from one's seeing all the trouble which has been taken that every one should be gay, very gay, and very much amused, which, alas! happens but rarely, not to say never.

One might add, on the subject of the fashionable circles, that the principal thing is not precisely to enjoy personally, but to have it believed that you do so; that everybody should know or think you do so, this is the important thing. There is not a brilliant party in London, or at one of the magnificent country seats, or at the mansion of a man of fashion, which is not immediately detailed in the newspapers; even the great dinners are described. After a royal drawing-room, the name and toilet of each lady who appeared is mentioned, one after another,—ribbons, laces, feathers, diamonds, pearls, even to the kind of silk or satin of which the dress was composed, how it was trimmed, with the technical and scientific expressions in French of the Parisian *marchandes de modes*; all is printed in the papers, and sometimes fills two or three of their enormous pages: if the occasion be a fancy or masked ball (where no masks are worn), then the dress of the gentlemen shares the same publicity, even to the form and colour of their inexpressibles; every-

thing being thus exhibited to the face of day, placed under the public eye, and detailed to attract the attention of the millions,—even of those who, banished to the Indies, receive and devour the English papers. There must exist then, I think, more vanity and show, prepared for public effect, than for the pleasure of the moment; besides, it is absolutely *de rigueur* in the supreme *bon-ton* to have an air of indolence, satiety, and nonchalance, which implies that all this is not enough, that show and magnificence are so habitual that they are become quite fatiguing.

I must tell you, that for some years they have adopted in England *dejeuners à la fourchette*, and pic-nics in the country (always spoken or written in French); this leads of course to *jeux folâtres dans les bosquets ou sur le gazon*, and it is in these exhibitions that the men remain particularly in the back-ground. These games in the country demand a forgetfulness of etiquette and formality; they require an ease of manners, a *sans façon* which should always be polite, a childishness which may

still be spiritual; in truth, frank, natural gaiety, is the main-spring of this sort of pleasure: but, my dear Augustus, all this is wanting; you may seek it in vain. Is it reserve, or rather shyness? The men especially— (this last word repeated will make you think that not daring to attack the English ladies face to face, I content myself with a negative accusation *en passant*)—the men then appear, on these occasions, entirely out of their element; and if one of them, bolder than the others, ventures to put himself forward, his conscience probably reproaches him immediately for his fruitless endeavour,—(he has in that the advantage over the Ass of La Fontaine,) —and, to avoid becoming completely ridiculous, he quickly retires into his usual habits. Besides, there exists in these parties, *called* of pleasure, neither *ensemble* nor *entrainement;* they are composed of many separate efforts after gaiety, which lead to very little in the end. See, the master of the villa comes towards you, on the charming lawn where the company is dispersed; he would willingly animate them a

little ; he says, " My dear count, come quickly into the *salon*, and sing your pretty Neapolitan airs to the piano."—" I, my dear friend, sing before all these people ! Before any but my friends ! I never do so." " What do you say ? it is the Duchess of C., it is Lady T., and Lady D., one of your countrywomen, who wish it ; they asked for it even, you cannot refuse."—" I am *desolé* not to be able to do what you are so kind as to ask ; but neither my Neapolitan airs nor myself deserve so much honour, therefore pray excuse me." And you escape, not forgetting to remark to yourself how far the influence of name and rank is carried.

Let us continue then upon the grassy carpet, looking at these *jeux folâtres.* You see the handsome Lady C. S. who is in a graceful attitude as trying a new game just imported from Paris ; she is armed with two little sticks, with which she throws a light hoop, which is to be caught and returned in the same manner by B. the clever author : he has by birth (here so essential), as well as by his talents,

the *entrée* to all these fashionable parties, and doubtless there he studies and seizes the character of his countrymen, which he has so well depicted; but he also,—I ask his pardon,—is an Englishman in the game in which he is so agreeably occupied.

You see all these people here assembled in groups of two, three, or four persons; thus, also, the breakfast has passed; and I repeat, there is no *ensemble*, no unánimity in their wish to enjoy themselves, nothing inspiring: to be sure, you hear occasionally a laugh, but it comes from a *partie quarrée*, where perhaps something ridiculous has been seen or invented about an individual of the neighbouring group. The whole is certainly rich, full of elegant assiduity; but "*la gaieté*," who for one moment had hovered over our heads, attracted by the wishes and the brilliancy of those assembled, has already taken her flight to other climes: ask all those who, fatigued, are getting into their carriages, quitting this fête to go in search of new ones.

And yet what was there wanting that luxury and expense had not collected? No-

thing, absolutely nothing: even the weather was fine, the sun shone in all its brightness; the garden so full of flowers, the lawn so smooth and green, where we vainly laboured to be amused and to be gay, descended slopingly to the Thames, upon which steam-boats were passing and repassing, with their flags displayed, full of people, who, without being fashionable were perhaps more amused; they were going to Richmond (they also on parties of pleasure), and the music heard from these boats seemed to utter a challenge to the picnic as they passed away; and we people of *haut-ton*, it was much if we deigned to let fall a glance upon them whilst passing: a steamboat! it is so common a sight in England; and the people on its deck, so vulgar! *fi-donc!*

The consequence of the publicity given to the diversions of the great world, amongst many others, is, that all classes, according to their ways and means, wish to taste of these enchanting pleasures; the country towns, the watering-places particularly, also possess their newspapers, which publish their gaieties and

fêtes. In London, the little as well as the great, the citizens as well as the exclusives, everybody has his ball, his fête, and his grand dinner; and you will find in the newspapers the quantity of poultry, game, venison, hams, beef, and mutton which were devoured. Even Mrs. Hog of Blackwall must try a *dejeuner à la fourchette*, or pic-nic, with Miss Horsemonger and her younger sister, Miss Eliza, with Mr. John Turtle and Mr. William Puddle, who are to come for them on Sunday, in a glass-coach, to go to Greenwich or Richmond Park, there to spread the rural repast on the fresh grass: it is most certainly a pic-nic, for Mr. John will bring some bottles of British wine,—made from gooseberries or currants,—and Mr. William has promised to bring a cold veal-pie, Miss Horsemonger a fruit-tart, and Mrs. Hog herself is to provide the substantial part of the breakfast. After all, if there exist a little real pleasure or enjoyment in those things, it is in my mind rather at the pic-nic of Mrs. Hog, than elsewhere.

In less crowded parties, even in intimacy,

which never exists amongst the English without a certain reserve, the men bring their usual coldness: their consciousness of not knowing how to amuse themselves or others, appears to take refuge, and conceal itself, under an air of contempt for the talents of society which they do not possess, and of which they try to avenge themselves in persisting to consider them as trivial. Do not forget, my dear Augustus, that my observations are general, and that I do not by any means intend to assert that there are not men in England greatly distinguished by elegance, grace, talent, and all which nature and a fine education know so well how to unite. I only criticise *in the lump;* and, as my satirical humour is not yet gone, let me return to my general observations, only I am now going to change my victims for a moment.

It is said that foreigners are received very favourably in England, and particularly so by the ladies; who, they say, are eager to have them at their parties, and to appear amiable in their eyes. There may be some truth in this; but also it must be considered under two

different points of view. As to the hospitality and even distinction with which they are treated,— I mean those who merit such treatment,— it is universal, and very flattering; but as for particular distinction accorded by the ladies, which certainly would be much more precious, there have been more foreigners than one who have very willingly taken such compliments entirely to themselves, and to their own merits, when, if they had judged the matter with a little less love for dear self, they could have only recognised in this preference, (a passing one, after all,) a desire, very natural in a state of society so monotonous, to be acquainted with something novel in habits and manners; also a wish to be in the fashion, whose despotism has, with great good policy, discovered that a few strangers scattered throughout a drawing-room could only tend to introduce a little of the animation so much wanted. So, if the king of the savages, during his visit to George the Fourth, had only been a little cleaner, he also would have been received, and, I doubt not, have gained as many suffrages. Those who are in the secret of the success

of the Persian ambassador with his long beard, might testify to what I advance: besides, these ladies find in the presence of foreigners an advantage which I am going to explain to you; first, declaring that in this I see rather a reproach against their own countrymen, than a direct compliment to foreigners. The manner in which a man of the world, arriving from the Continent, puts himself at his ease, and not only himself but those he may have to address, let their rank be what it may, is so different from the general habits of the English, that every one must be struck with it, more particularly the women, who, here as everywhere, only want the power, the opportunity rather, to display their wit, amiability, and perhaps even a little coquetry; and *certes* that will not be found in society purely English, where they are all ranged in seats, in a row on one side of the apartment, whilst the men all remain on the other, looking at them, or perhaps turning their backs and talking amongst each other of hunting, shooting, and politics. Surely it is not here that coquetry can be indulged, for there is here no opportunity.

You know as well as I do, that on the other side of the channel it is quite the contrary : there, without formal invitation, you go of an evening to "*faire votre cour aux dames ;*" you have only to ask at the door if Madame de —— is at home ? A " Yes, sir," from the porter shows you that you are on the list of the chosen few whom she kindly receives without ceremony as friends. You find about a dozen people favoured like yourself; there is no separation, no cutting off. Two or three ladies are gathered round the piano, listening to a young man who has seated himself almost without being asked ; he does not even look at the instrument upon which he accompanies himself, but, quite at his ease, his eyes turned to his auditors, he smilingly continues his song. Others are seated round a table, chatting, working, and drawing flowers or caricatures ; the feet are all collected under the table, the elbows even sometimes touch without any great harm being found in it. A flower may perhaps be spoiled, or a caricature not well hit off, because he who is trying to do it is possibly thinking of something else.

Upon the sofa, near the chimney, between two intimate friends, is seated probably the mistress of the house; a gentleman on his knees on a stool before them is telling the news; another behind, leaning over the back of the sofa, is talking of them and himself. Opposite, negligently reclining in a large arm-chair, is a young and pretty woman; she holds a pamphlet in her hand, which she does not read; she listens to two beaux who dispute the happiness of pleasing her, neither, however, doubting his success, until a third arrives, for whom the pamphlet is immediately laid aside. During an evening, you go in this manner into several families, and find always much the same; hundreds of people are, like yourself, thus paying their visits in hundreds of different houses.

From this slight sketch it is easy to imagine that a man who has passed a great part of his life in this manner, and who has acquired these habits, must feel himself in a new sphere when he enters an English drawing-room, where, permit me to say, he produces some-

what the effect of a curious wild beast,—animals much valued by the English. Remember always, Augustus, that I specify no particular society, and that there are many and brilliant exceptions; but, as you know, exceptions strengthen the rule.

To return to the mutual surprise alluded to above: it is certain one gets accustomed to the sight of a new animal, so the acquaintance of this one is quickly made; and you know, too, that the door once open, the foreigner is soon in the salon, and as quickly established on the sofa. He takes care not to join the men in talking politics, or in discussing the subjects of hunting and shooting. His education has strongly impressed on his mind that the hour of the drawing-room is that consecrated to the ladies; he recollects that in his country they have great influence over the situation of a man in the world, that they are either generous friends or implacable enemies. All this is surely sufficient to form a devoted, humble servant, a wholesale admirer of the fair sex; and it is in these invaluable qualities, which the English

ladies know so well how to appreciate, that he finds the advantage which I promised to explain to you. Whilst the husband is at his club eating a dinner which lasts more than three hours, then going to the ballet at the Opera, and after, God knows where, his wife is obliged to shut her doors against visiters, and to take, by way of diverting herself, a cup of tea *tête-à-tête* with the arm-chair of that very husband. Under these circumstances, her complaisance to foreigners, who will not fail to tell her that this custom is a crying barbarism, is neither surprising nor blameable.

Adieu ! dear Augustus, you think, I hope, that after such a long tirade my ill-humour has passed away.

LETTER VII.

Grandeur of London.—English Dinners.—An august Visiter.—Lawyers' Dinners.—Scotch Dinner.—Drinking Healths.—A general's Speech.—Courage and Timidity.

How shall I give you a just idea of the grandeur and immensity of London, which ought not to be called a town, but a province covered with houses; where one has apparently changed post-horses once before having quitted it, and its million and a half of inhabitants; of its innumerable quantity of carriages of every sort and kind, which are for ever arriving, traversing, and leaving it in every direction: of the imposing beauty of the Thames, whose waters are covered for some distance by a quadruple row of vessels, arriving from every part of the world or preparing to return! Is there not grandeur in the simple fact, that each house

(and who could ever count them !) is amply supplied with water, furnished by thousands of pipes which pass and repass at the depth of thirty feet under their foundations ; that the greatest part of the town is hollowed by large subterranean aqueducts which the Thames, swelled by the tide, freshens and keeps clean ; and that during the summer its hundreds of macadamised streets are constantly watered, as well as the roads round it for the distance of ten miles.

Can I make you comprehend the riches of the immense depôts, the numerous magazines, which its ports and celebrated docks contain ! Can I paint the beauty and grandeur of the bridges which span this majestic river, as well as the view which offers itself to your eye in crossing them ! the effect of the hundreds of ships, of steeples, and towers, which on all sides elevate their heads high in the air ; and which, notwithstanding their elevation, are all surpassed and lorded over by the imposing attitude of St. Paul's, whose brilliant gilded cross seems as if it wished to touch the clouds

and place itself far above the reach of man! But, my dear Augustus, I will leave this to better painters than myself; it is too far beyond me, and the idea turns me giddy: so I will return to my remarks on society.

I might almost say I have dined with every class in England. Lord Chesterfield reminds his son, in one of his letters, that it is at table particularly that the gentleman is to be recognised; but may I not apply this very just observation in a more general manner? and add, that the dinners or repasts of the different classes of society are so many trials where their habits and characters are peculiarly displayed?

I have dined in the City of London with a merchant, perhaps one of the least considerable; and the day after I dined with Lord H. in St James's, where, during dessert, a servant announced an august person (since elevated to a rank so high that he can rise no more). He came *sans façon* to drink a glass of claret with his old friend; he deigned to show an interest in the recital of our few campaigns, and inquired about our manœuvres

of cavalry, particularly as to those employed by Napoleon to attack and carry the squares of infantry. I sketched them on the table, forming my squadrons with the dessert knives, whose silver handles (I told him) represented our brave huzzars. His attachment to his own country always appeared in his conversation when England was mentioned; and I think I owed some gracious smiles to the little hesitation with which,—in speaking before him of the commerce of the nation,—I said, that the previous day, after having passed the morning in visiting the quays and docks, I had dined with a friend in the City, who had been showing them to me. This avowal produced a considerable elongation in the faces of two lords, a dandy and a duke, who were present, and who heard me with astonishment: but it did not alter that of my kind relation Lord H.; and his Royal Highness, on the contrary, I am sure, liked me the better for it, for he visibly heard it with pleasure.

I have dined in company with thirty lawyers in their gowns and wigs! The table, arranged

for the meal, was placed in a Gothic vaulted hall, on an elevation to which you ascended by three steps: it is true that during the dinner we had to listen to two Latin songs, of which one began by "Non Nobis, Domine;" but, if there was no great pleasure or amusement in this, I found some interest in joining in a meeting which I knew had been kept up every year for ages back; and also in taking, as do all the guests, a few mouthfuls of beer out of a large silver vase, which had served this purpose from time immemorial. It was passed from hand to hand with an almost religious ceremonial. It was curious also to see the immense heaps of venison, beef, and fish with which the dishes were loaded, and upon which the appetite of the bar exercised itself with calmness and dignity, but in so resolute and determined a manner as to announce that it would not soon be over!

Another time, I was seated at the national banquet of about sixty Scotchmen, and, having some Scotch blood in my veins, I was received with marked courtesy. The repast was sump-

tuous and elegant; there was no Latin song, but occasionally a promenade round the table by a Highlander in the costume of his country, blowing from his huge and expansive chest into his bagpipes, whose well-known sounds, affecting the hearts and ears of the company, impressed on their countenances a still stronger hue of happiness and patriotism. Whether it was illusion, or the effect of a few glasses of champagne, or the voice of Nature which spoke in me, I know not, but I could not help partaking the influence. At the dessert all the toasts given at public dinners were proposed and drunk: the first was "The King!" followed by nine hurras, with a pause for breath between each three rounds. The chairman in a few minutes gave "The health of the Royal Family," which had its three hurras. That of "The Army," "The Navy," and "Scotland," followed, and were each received and saluted in the same manner.

If you will take the trouble of counting, you will see that, as at each health a good glass of wine was drunk, by the time Scotland was duly honoured, we had swallowed down five,

(without speaking of the various libations of champagne and other sorts which during dinner had already taken the same road,) besides screaming hurras twenty-one times! But they did not stop there: one of the company proposed another glass in honour of the "Thistle;" another proposed, as is customary, the health of the chairman; and he, after having returned thanks with an ease and readiness that showed him long used to such doings, all at once, without seating himself, proposed—judge my surprise and alarm—my health! This was followed by applauses which only added to my confusion. It was necessary that I should rise; the hint was given me very charitably by a push of the knee from my right-hand neighbour (the son of Lord S . . . . n). I have forgotten what at last I succeeded in saying, in order to express my thanks in a foreign language, and before people of whom I was acquainted only with the chairman and my friend of the officious knee. All that I can recollect is my embarrassment, which was, however, surpassed by that of my successor,

(a brave and loyal general,) who, when we had added to his health another glass to all those we had already forced down, remained speechless on his legs, after the first and only word of his discourse, which was "Gentlemen! —hem! hem!—Gentlemen!—hem!" and a bow; "Gentlemen!" The last time the word was pronounced in so feeble and agitated a tone of voice, that the chairman saw it was time to come promptly to his aid, and, taking up the speech, attributed the sudden silence of the good general to his gratitude and emotion. Three animated hurras, which followed, seemed to restore his faculties; and he sat down in the midst of the applause, which was doubtless a very pleasing consolation to him.

Let me add a few words on this subject: this very general, who trembled with an emotion so great as to render him incapable of speaking, and this at a dinner only, had often with the same voice, but then strong and sonorous, given the word of command to many regiments during the noise of cannon and the devastating effects of shot and shell, without one pulsation of his

heart being hastened; he had distinguished himself often and often in the Peninsular war by his courage and calmness! Tell me how you explain this: seek the example in yourself; you who, though young in your military capacity, was as brave and firm before the enemy as he of whom I have been speaking; and yet I have seen you turn pale and tremble when the name of a certain lady was announced in a drawing-room! a name which you never dared pronounce yourself!

After this, it would be useless to continue the history of my dinner. I have been guilty of a great blunder; I have awakened remembrances which will cause you to forget all my lawyers and their large wigs, my Scotch banquet, &c. I had better let you recover yourself, and be in quiet for some days.

So farewell.

LETTER VIII.

The Middle Class.—Mr. Jackson's Family.—The double knock.—Mr. Jackson's Drawing-room.—Introductions.—A Dinner Party.—The Dessert.—Departure of the Ladies.—Music.

To-day, on my own authority, I am going to take you with me to dine with a family of which there are thousands in London, inhabiting one of the third or fourth-rate squares, or one of those eternal long lined streets, which are all exactly alike, with houses built of brown bricks, three stories high, three small windows in front, excepting on the ground-floor, where the door fills the place of the third. These are inhabited by merchants, bankers, rich tradesmen, land and fund holders, lawyers, and other professional men. The least affluent of these families spend about a thousand to fifteen hundred per annum; and some of the richest possess incomes of five

or six times that amount. They make a part of that community, so numerous in England, called the Middle Class; where there are so many examples of wealth and of expensive habits, and which you may again and again divide into different ranks.

I will choose one which may be considered as a fair *juste-milieu*: and it is at Mr. Jackson's that we will go to dinner. His house is situated in Baker-street, near the New-road which leads to the City, where he often has business, in attending to which he takes advantage of one of the many omnibuses or stage-coaches constantly going and returning, only paying sixpence for his journey, whilst Mrs. Jackson drives in the Park with two of her daughters: to-morrow she will take the other two. In these families there are generally from four to six, and sometimes even eight or ten children; I have seen as many brought in to dessert by two or three nurses. All the intervals at table are then filled up with little shining heads carefully brushed and the hair separated: this is the moment for the cakes and fruit!

But here we are at Mr. Jackson's door. Though we are in silk-stockings (which are *de rigueur*), we have arrived on foot along the very clean pavement without the least dust upon our fashionably-varnished shoes. I must now show you how a gentleman should knock with the bright brass knocker before us. He must not be guilty of the great roll and noise of a footman announcing a visit in a carriage; neither must he give the one modest knock of a tradesman or messenger; nor the little tap of the milliner's girl; nor even the rapid double knock of the postman, which makes every one start from his seat. To acquire the proper style, demands no little study, I assure you; it is effected by two or three shakings of the knocker, which must then stop short.

You will never at such an hour as the present be kept a moment at the door of a house like Mrs. Jackson's, for a dinner-party makes every one alive and alert; if, on the contrary, you called at the house of a great and rich personage, at whatever hour it might be, there are always three or four lounging and lazy lacqueys in the

hall, who have only to open the door; and custom has given them such sagacity in this respect, that in the difference with which every gentleman knows how to knock, they guess his rank before answering him, and you may thus measure the quickness and civility, or negligence, with which they perform this duty.

Let us now go in to Mrs. Jackson's: the servant conducts us up one flight of stairs; the narrow carpet placed in the middle of the white, clean, stone staircase, tells us where we are to tread in ascending it: here we are in the two everlasting drawing-rooms, opening one into the other; you will find it invariably so in every house of this kind in London. Here the family, full dressed, is assembled; Mrs. Jackson and her four daughters are seated all in a row. On our entrance they rise, and I present you, saying, "Mrs. Jackson, will you allow me to introduce my friend Mr. A;" and then we pass on to the young ladies, to whom, without further ceremony, it is sufficient to name you, first addressing the eldest, "Miss Jackson, Mr. A.—Miss Eliza, Mr. A.—Miss Maria, Mr. A.—Miss Do-

rothy, Mr. A." ; and then to the great son with red hair, " Mr. John Jackson—Mr. A." At each of my introductions, in return for your low bow, they give you a little nod of the head, so as just to touch the upper part of the chest with the chin. After this ceremony, we all sit down, and fall into a profound silence, which will be interrupted rarely by Mrs. Jackson, who will question you on the epoch of your arrival in London, whether you have been to the Opera (this is fashionable), and then upon the weather of yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow : or perhaps you will hear a low-toned voice, which seems to issue from the chest of a young child ; it is that of Miss Maria, who is a head taller than yourself, and who has ventured to ask a question of her mother, to which she has replied by another little assenting bow.

At last hurried steps are heard, and the door opening briskly, Mr. Jackson in person appears, who excuses himself for his delay on account of some business which he says kept him ; he shakes your hands both at once in each of his, and tells you dinner is served ; and then you

offer your arm to Mrs. Jackson, I take that of the timid eldest daughter, and we descend to the ground-floor, to the dining-room, which, like the two drawing-rooms, is everywhere the same, in form, size, and situation. You can hardly fail to observe all the brilliant plate, not only on the table, but also on the sideboard, where trays of every size, goblets, covers, plates, and other objects of the same metal are ranged against the wall: this display puts one in mind of a silversmith's shop. The table is out of all proportion long: each end is occupied; the one by Mr. Jackson, who undertakes to serve the fish and to carve the large joints (such as an immense turbot, and then an enormous piece of roast-beef); the other end by *madame*, who, having placed you on her right and me on her left, begins to serve the soup: she will afterwards ask you to carve the everlasting boiled fowls, *à la sauce blanche*. As to the French *ragouts*, which are ranged lengthwise down the table in covered dishes, be careful and avoid them; I recommend it as a friend. You have accepted soup, and I see that you are astonished to find little co-

telettes, bones, forced-meat balls, &c., swimming about; the Cayenne pepper and other hot spices cause you to make a grimace, whilst they burn your throat: never mind! eat some turbot, you will find it excellent.

You must now bravely "screw your courage to the sticking-place;" you are nailed to that chair for the space of two hours and a half at least, without any chance of conversation, except only a few interrupted words, each person speaking occasionally in a low tone to his or her neighbour. The burly Mr. Crack, to whom Mrs. Jackson introduced us, has as yet only opened his mouth for the purpose of endeavouring to satisfy his extraordinary appetite; this, however, appears to be labour in vain: he is placed in the middle of the table, and fills the place of two persons, whilst he eats enough for four. As to that *soi-disant élégant*,—that little personage placed next to Miss Maria, who cannot turn his head on account of his stiff black stock which keeps it in prison,—you will guess by his ridiculous affectation, and exaggerated politeness to his neigh-

bour, to what sphere he belongs; particularly when, during the dessert, on her asking him the favour to give her an orange, he will take it up between two spoons, one in each hand, his elbows raised and his fingers extended. The only speech which you will have heard him utter was when good Mr. Jackson cried out after emptying his glass, "After all, the climate of England is the best in the world!" and he rejoined, "It is unquestionably true!" Thus pass two hours! However, at last, the cloth is removed, and we continue round the well-rubbed or polished mahogany table. At this point of the entertainment Mr. Jackson makes us a bow, pronouncing at the same time a few indistinct words; we all return his bow. This, after dinner, is a regular custom,—a sort of *agimus tibi gratias*, which is thus said in abridgement.

The table is now covered with crystal, fruit and flowers, and wine decanters: these are first arranged in battle-array before the host; and at his signal, made by pushing the first round, they begin their promenade of the table, one

gentleman sliding them along to the next: the ladies take a little, taste the fruit, and, after having occupied some moments in putting on their white gloves, rise, following the example of Mrs. Jackson; we all do the same, but only to conduct them to the door of the room. Here, however, the force of habit makes you forget the recommendation I had given you,—you try to escape; but a hand retains you by the tail of your coat: it is that of Mr. Jackson, who observes to you that you have still a bottle of claret to finish with him. Mr. Crack too had made a polite effort to rise on the departure of the ladies, but his own weight reseated him; he has now got to the raisins and preserved fruits, &c.

After another mortal hour, a servant enters, and announces that the tea and coffee are taken up stairs: we ascend; Mrs. Jackson advances to us immediately, she asks if we play or sing, and tells us how amiable we should be to do so,— this a request rarely addressed to an Englishman, one is too sure of a reply in the negative. Mrs. Jackson appears very much

astonished that neither you nor I can satisfy her in this respect; and after many protestations in order to convince her, she makes a sign to Miss Dorothy, the great musician of the family, who opens the piano, places her two feet on both pedals, and begins a confused din, under which the instrument itself appears to suffer. When she has finished, you will be much embarrassed to tell me whether it were an adagio, a waltz, or a quadrille which she has favoured us with. But, never mind: like great Mr. Crack, who is seated in his arm-chair digesting his dinner, you cry out "delightful!" This is all that is required.

At length midnight is nearly arrived, and ceremony and restraint, the *nous ne savons que faire*, still reign at Mr. Jackson's: having wished them good-night, let us go!

LETTER IX.

John Bull.—His Character.—English Ladies.—Unmarried Women.—Insensibility to Music.—English Singing.—Native Painters.—Sir Thomas Lawrence.—Water-colour Exhibition.—Posting.—Postilions.

Before you take leave of London, my dear Augustus, you must make acquaintance with a certain person called John Bull, the type of the English people, or rather the real Englishman, whether peasant, tradesman, workman, farmer, innkeeper, &c. He is of tall stature and strong-built frame; his voice is high and peculiar, as if entirely from the head; his air cold and indifferent: he is rough, sometimes rude, and always without ceremony. Short breeches, grey stockings, high-laced shoes, a pot of beer, and a long pipe, are the attributes by which he may generally be recognised:

these, nevertheless, do not exclude good qualities, and he really possesses many. He is moral, religious, and kind, I believe, in the main. Without the theatrical pride of the Spaniard, he possesses one, peculiar to him, which is more firmly rooted ; he appears to know his own value, and that he has rights of which nothing can deprive him except his own demerit. He knows and respects the laws, and when he obeys a constable, it is because he is one of the people, and he himself may become such in his turn; but he does not like the armed force (soldiers off duty are always without their arms in England). John Bull thinks much less of military glory, which he calls *stuff*, than of the taxes which he pays to keep up the army. He values much more a manufacturer, a sailor, or an industrious labourer, than a grenadier, hussar, or even a general. He rarely sings the pleasures of love; but he knows how to make it, I have no doubt: ask those pretty rosy Betties, Jennies, and Mollies, if I am not right? Neither does he sing the pleasures of drinking, but he drinks deep and long. He is very neat

in his person; and in general, in these classes, the men are better dressed, and have a better air, than the women: it is just the contrary in some other countries that we know, where the women possess the superior mien and appearance.

To finish my sketch: John Bull is calm; he likes simplicity, and goes straight to his point, without losing his time in useless words; he never insults others, nor will he suffer himself to be insulted either by word or blow; and no gentleman, however great he may be, dare strike either with hand or cane a common man in England, without exposing himself to a severe chastisement.

The English ladies deserve credit for the use they have made of the good intelligence—I might almost say, friendship—which has existed between their country and the Continent for the last few years, in their improved taste and elegant appearance. It is now rare indeed to see beauty entirely defaced as it used to be, and all its charm destroyed by awkwardness, particularly by a ridiculous style of dress. The elderly

ladies, however, seem to stand more rigorously to their ancient habits; and, instead of adopting a graver style of dress, both in form and colour, —a neatness and freshness suitable to their age, and thus still preserving the power to please,— on the contrary wear at sixty, turbans, feathers, sashes and bands, &c. which display more fully their age, and are a virtual mockery on their pretensions. What would you have said, if, twelve or fifteen years ago, you had met in England a hat with pink feathers, a light green satin spencer, white gloves, and light buff-coloured shoes, all carried out to walk by a grandmother, her face plastered with red and white! But such things no longer exist, except perhaps in some country corner far distant from the capital.

Young women in England are introduced into society about the age of seventeen: from that time until their marriage, which rarely takes place before they have attained the age of twenty-four or twenty-five, they enjoy their liberty and the pleasures of the world; and what cannot but inspire an advantageous opinion of the

character and morality of a portion of the young Englishmen is, the confidence which is placed in them in according them the opportunity of conversing alone, and even walking alone, with young girls; a liberty which, without perhaps ever sinning against propriety, cannot fail to astonish a foreigner accustomed to the reserve and great timidity of unmarried women on the Continent, — a timidity which sometimes approaches to the ridiculous at a ball. In England, after having danced with a young lady, you do not offer her your hand in order to reconduct her ceremoniously to her mother, and there to receive her courtesy of thanks; but it is your arm that you present, which she takes without hesitation. She then walks about with you through all the different rooms, even into that which contains the refreshments; and, in fact, remains with you until another cavalier offers his hand to replace you.

I ought to add here, that in the upper classes they begin to imitate in this respect the reserve of the Continent. It would perhaps be no harm if the imitation stopped there; but

why should it be carried to another more important point? Listen, and judge if it is not to be regretted that it should! I will suppose you to be in the country, in one of those romantic retreats of which there are so many in England, and where all that renders life agreeable is so well prepared for you that you have only to resign yourself to amusement. I imagine you there walking in the solitary park early in the morning, before the dew is off the grass: you unexpectedly meet the daughter of your host, of him who has received you under his hospitable roof. Instead of avoiding you, it is she who advances towards you; her walk, and the warmth of the now risen sun, have spread over her cheeks a tint like that of the newly-gathered rose which she carries in her hand; the blue ribbon of her straw-bonnet is untied, and her dress is of the simplest kind. The thick silk handkerchief passed round and round her throat, leads you to guess that she has been even earlier than yourself, and found it necessary at first to protect herself from the cold of the morning. Her *chaussure*

is equally simple, it is a thick leather shoe which entirely covers the foot. My dear Augustus, it is not with a restrained bow, in which you discover the embarrassment of being met alone, that you are greeted, but with a smile as pure as the balmy morning air. With an extended hand she offers you her morning salutation: a moment after, you are the companion of her walk (she would have thought it extraordinary if you had asked permission); and you find yourself at the extremity of the park alone with her, alone with this young girl of eighteen! She is beautiful! more than beautiful! and yet you feel as if you were with your sister! In her manner, in her words, there is so much frankness, so much simplicity; she looks at you in speaking so openly, so naturally, that I repeat it, Augustus, you see in her only a sister; any other sentiment, however passing, would appear to you an insult to yourself!

But now change the situation: suppose the existence of another sentiment, of a mutual and allowed affection; then would you not find a

most valuable privilege in the possibility thus offered to two beings mutually to know and appreciate each other before that indissoluble union for life? to have time sufficient, licence granted, and without restraint? Think of all the charm that such moments must possess; how happy must be their influence and their after-recollection to both! and then, my dear brother in arms, you will perhaps agree with me, that it would be matter of regret if England should imitate in this the habits of the Continent, and, from a new caprice of fashion, restrict this liberty, which, when pure and innocent, can only serve to embellish her who enjoys it by drawing out those many valuable qualities which reserve teaches her to conceal: it will indeed be one of the loveliest flowers which the English ladies will themselves have torn from their heads!

Here I stop, for I should talk for whole hours, I believe, upon the subject; but I will spare you; besides, I have no more room, as I wish to finish with London in this letter, and go with you into the country: so I pass

from a subject where I was all heart, to one where it entirely fails me,—I mean to English music! It is true, I have vaunted the many other qualities which the English possess, sufficiently to be allowed to say that that nation is perhaps the least musical that I know. There are certainly some distinguished performers, and occasionally great talent to be met with in society; but the mass "knows nothing about it." The men in general do not comprehend or feel it; harmony has no power over their nerves; for the most part, they look upon a musician as a secondary sort of being, but they do not the less go to the Opera to cry "Brava, brava!" drawling out the first syllable of this word to a great length: and why? because it is good style to do so!

In fact, there does not exist a single composer—at least as far as I know—in all great Britain, excepting perhaps a Mr. Bishop; who is not without a certain talent, not for composing, but for arranging, for putting together the music he borrows from other nations, for a species of little opera or vaude-

ville, which should be called Anglo-Franco-Germano-Italiano; like a *salade en Macedoine*, where all the ingredients are so mixed together that you do not know what you are eating. In Mr. Bishop's works may be detected many passages which seem like ancient acquaintances, to whom you are just going to give a name, when a stranger arriving, *à l'Anglaise*, puts your memory at fault.

I could always anticipate the end of his duos, when sung on the stage, by the manœuvre of the two singers, who at this moment generally retreat gradually each towards his or her respective side-scene; so that the unfailing shake which finishes every English air, the applauses, and the bow or courtesy, fall exactly at the instant when there is nothing to be seen but the arms and head, the rest of the person having disappeared behind the scenes.

Now, is it not remarkable that the most valuable galleries of pictures known in the world should exist in that very country where, considering its great resources and general liber-

ality, painters are the most neglected? These galleries for the most part belong to individuals, and are composed principally of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the old masters, and of chosen bits of the foreign schools; whilst the work of an English artist can scarcely find a modest place in them. If of the many thousand guineas given for old pictures, of which some are certainly very fine, but others so old and so dark that it is more than difficult to discover in what their great value consists,—if, I say, a part of these enormous sums were expended in supporting and protecting native talent, there is no doubt that this art would soon receive an impulse towards a more elevated order; for it is not talent that is wanting. Without speaking of many other artists, can there be anything more *spirituel*, more natural, than the charming productions of Wilkie, Rippinggale, &c. &c.? It is true they are all fancy pieces, or *tableaux de genre* for the drawing-room or boudoir; but Martin, Haydon, Etty, &c. have they ever received the least

encouragement in their efforts to reach, in historical pictures, that point which their great talent promised? Shall I add, that one of these very distinguished artists was, a few years ago, in the greatest state of want? and that one of his pictures was sold by subscription, a few persons charitably interesting themselves in him, in order to procure him bread! And this in a country where more than one noble lord gives, without hesitation, as much as a thousand guineas for a Murillo, or a simple head by Rembrandt! But it is the fashion; and, as I must again and again repeat, before its magic power everything bows down, everything succumbs in England!

The little encouragement given to English painters compels them to paint portraits, nothing but portraits, as the only means left to attain some degree of celebrity; and what is still more essential, but not so glorious, some degree of fortune. Thus it happens very frequently, when you pay a visit, that, when the servant leaves

you in the drawing-room whilst he goes to let his master know that you are there, you make acquaintance with every member of the family without passing through the introductions and usual compliments; their portraits being all there staring you in the face.

In Sir Thomas Lawrence, England has lost one of the greatest artists she ever possessed in this style; who, to his superiority as a painter, and his truth and purity of colouring, which proclaimed a pencil that never doubted or hesitated, added a quality quite peculiar to himself, that of giving to his likenesses an air of distinction and nobleness which could not fail to please excessively in England, and to make every one run after him; his secret was, to lengthen the neck, diminish the head, and widen the shoulders, as might be needed; three things which are generally found together in his portraits, and but rarely in nature. He painted almost exclusively great people, or their children, "as they were to pass to posterity."

It is easy now to understand why the nation-

al exhibition in oils is so insignificant; and when I repeat that it is rather the fault of the nation than that of the artists, I think I am only doing justice to the latter. So I go on with pleasure to another annual exhibition, that of the water colours, in which the English artists are eminently superior. The touch, the grace, and effect of these drawings are incomparable; and their variety is astonishing. In my opinion, one of the first of these artists is Copley Fielding; some of his works make you doubt if oil could ever attain so great a degree of perfection: his pencil seems to give reality to air and space. In his effects of sun-set, and in his sea-views particularly, his power is sometimes magical; I have stood in admiration before pieces of his, where one really saw through a light fog twenty miles of distance. One was tempted to take a telescope to try to discover upon this distant horizon the vessel which the naked eye could not distinguish.

But enough of London: let us quit it to run over verdant England, her meadows, and

charming villages; to see her beautiful trees, her cottages covered with roses and jasmine, and, not least, my favourite roads. We will post it; it will be more agreeable and convenient. Our post-boys! they look as if they had been made expressly for that purpose, with their little light stuff striped jackets, and their grey hats. "How polite they are, and how nice they look!" said the Countess Al—— de N. when she came into England from France.

Now we arrive at the first stage: every one in this country may keep post-horses by taking out a licence, for which he pays a certain sum. These establishments are all the better served from being so numerous, as self-love and interest are always in action. As soon as we shall be perceived from a distance, the bells of the different inns will give the signal for the horses to be held in readiness. In the twinkling of an eye the little postilions are mounted and ready before their house; and those that you do not

take, put their hands politely to their hats as you pass. In this rank in England the hat is never taken off to bow.

A pleasant journey to you, Augustus: I shall soon rejoin you.

LETTER X.

A new subject.—Primogeniture.—Ancient Castles.—Berkeley Castle.—The great Hall.—The Prisoner's Tower.—Edward the Second's Room.—Family Portraits.—A courteous Invitation. — Perpetuity of Property. — Anecdote. — English Luxury.—Support of the Poor.

We have quitted London and its environs, and I now arrive at a subject which I approach with hesitation. It is a delicate one to me, as I had promised myself only to speak of the habits of society, and of the every-day life of the English, avoiding anything which had connexion with the politics or the constitution of the country. Such subjects appear to me too serious for letters of this kind, and perhaps to treat of them is beyond my ability; but as I am in some sort picking England to pieces, would it be just to pass unnoticed one of the finest gems of her crown? Can I be

silent upon what distinguishes her from every other country ?—I mean the number, grandeur, and antiquity of her estates ! The religious respect attached to these recalls the remembrance of family annals, tragical as well as glorious. The national pride to preserve them, and the constant care and improvement which from time to time they receive, are highly honourable to the nation.

But to arrive at the primary cause, at the basis upon which all this may be founded, there is but one step to take,—" succession by right of primogeniture." Supposing then, in order to avoid all embarrassment or difficulty, that I have no opinion on this subject of political economy, upon which the two most powerful nations of this century are at issue, (which in itself would be sufficient to impose silence on me,) there remains nothing for me but to depict, as well as I can, what I have felt.

I confess, that I have been always surprised and affected when contemplating those ancient castles in England, each of which possesses its antique legend ; whose massive walls have re-

ceived, from the long succession of years and seasons, many varied tints, grave and melancholy, which all the subtilty of art, and all the power of gold, in vain seek to imitate; where the most careful vigilance discovers and cements the smallest stone which the course of time or the violence of the elements may have shaken. I again and again admired those majestic trees which age alone has the power to destroy; which, grouped or isolated in the extent of a park, beautiful in grandeur and silence, lend their shades to herds of deer, who, not recognising in you the person whom daily care has rendered them familiar with, and feeling themselves interrupted in their tranquil domain, suddenly raise their startled heads at your approach, and, looking at you fixedly for a moment, strike their feet against the ground and bound elastically away!

The interior of the castle, without having lost any of its ancient character, is far from saddening you by an air of abandonment and desertion, or want of life; it is, on the contrary, renewed and embellished by all that the

taste and luxury of the present day can add to the grandeur of the feudal time. Whether the proprietor be there or not, whether he be on the Continent or in the Indies, the same order is established and maintained, the same continued attention observed; his immense fortune gives him the means of keeping servants of all kinds dedicated to the various occupations which such a property render necessary, and who never quit it.

I will take one from among those I have visited, to give you an idea of them; it shall be Berkeley Castle, belonging to a peer of the realm, descended from a long line of ancestors. This castle is not, when compared with some others, one of the most considerable, either in its actual size, or in the estate which belongs to it; but it is one of the most interesting, from the historical recollections attached to it. The castle is in the county of Gloucester, situated on a height; the road to it, winding and ascending, passes through a picturesque village: in one of its turns, you suddenly find yourself in view of a gothic arched gateway, surmounted by the

carved coat of arms of the Earls of Berkeley, and shaded on each side by large trees. The internal court is a square formed of buildings with gothic doors and windows: a part of it, however, juts out more than the rest, and is terminated by a tower called, if I remember rightly, "the Prisoner's Tower." In front of the principal entrance is the door of the great hall; its roof is painted, its high walls are ornamented by all kinds of ancient armour—lances, long swords, halberts, gauntlets, cuirasses, helmets with visors; each one of these pieces has its memorable history, and the *ensemble* causes the heart to beat. An enormous chimney, still furnished with its dogs in iron, where thirty people might warm themselves with ease, reminds you of the meals of the vassals when the ancient lords presided.

Here you find the housekeeper,* who knows by heart the chronicles of the castle, so often

* One of the old and faithful family servants, belonging to another noble family, is said to have left by will, not long since, all her money, (some thousands of guineas,) to the eldest son of her master. It had been all gained by showing his ancient and beautiful castle in Warwickshire.

repeated; she reckons on the generosity of the visitors, and receives you in a very polite and attentive manner, particularly if you arrive in a carriage. She shows the place in all its details: the master, as you think, is absent; and it is to this liberality, almost universal in England, that you owe the pleasure of visiting so many beautiful places: the permission is rarely refused.

Following then, and listening to our conductress, she shows us a bed-chamber still furnished with delicate and curious work from the needle of a German princess, a Margravine, I think, and of royal blood,—who slept here a hundred years ago. Upon the door of another room is written "Queen Anne's bed-room," where that princess reposed. There is a third apartment; but this is the Prisoner's Tower, lighted by a false window near the bed: and here our conductress lifted up a trap-door; and having prepared herself with a lantern, she attached it to a long cord, and let it slowly down a depth of more than sixty feet, showing its dark and mouldy sides and bottom. It

was here that felons and traitors were formerly put to perish in misery!

You cross the internal court, and gain another wing of the building, where you see, still half furnished, the room where the unfortunate Edward the Second was so horribly mutilated and assassinated by order of his royal spouse, Isabella (one of our amiable countrywomen), and her lover Mortimer. The gothic bed upon which they pretend that the abominable crime was committed, is still there. A sofa and a few chairs of ancient form, covered with a coarse kind of stuff, and here and there with a few remains of gold and silk, still ornament this dismal place.

The mind feels relieved in quitting this tower, and visiting the chapel of the castle, which joins the principal suite of apartments. This is adorned with ancient carved and gilded wood, and a gothic lamp is suspended to the vault by a heavy chain. In front of the altar is the pew of the noble family, furnished with its old cushioned seats, and decorated in the front with the arms and coronet of the Berkeleys.

The castle it surmounted by a platform in lead, which covers the building in all its irregularity. It has battlements which were formerly defended by cannon, to chastise the vassals, or to repulse the attacks of some jealous aggressing baron. From this elevation, the view of the park and its environs is indeed admirable. Upon our questioning the guide as to the possessor of another building, whose beauty we admired from thence, and whose upper part, which we saw through the trees, looked very new for the scene which surrounds it, the good lady told us that it was the stables which his lordship had lately built.

At last we descended to view the part usually occupied by the lord and master, where the comforts and elegance of the day fraternise with these remains of ancient splendour. Two large drawing-rooms are filled with full-length portraits, representing the ancestors of the family; their names, marriages, and dates of their birth and death, are inscribed on them: some of the costumes are curious and interesting. As you approach the sanctuary where his lordship sleeps,

the paintings and furniture change in style and character; here are cabinet pictures by still living artists, the touch and composition of which are full of spirit and talent. These apartments indicate the owner to be completely a man of the world; one who loves its pleasures of every description, and whose fortune permits him to enjoy them. I cannot but recollect the courteous invitation he gave me, and my regret that I was unable to accept it, to pass a few days at the castle, the more so as some of our mutual friends were visiting there, and, among other agreeable perspectives, I had before me the temptation of killing fifty couples of pheasants in the space of a few hours. You will here recognise your former sporting friend; and it may perhaps remind you of our first youthful excursion, when our exploits served more to frighten than to hurt the poor little birds or rabbits that we met with. But England has spoiled me for the pleasures of shooting; and, since I have left that country, my Manton reposes in its case.

If you reflect upon the number of mansions,

as good as, or even superior to, the one I have been trying to describe, as well as on the thousands of others belonging to every different class, and which cover, one may say, the whole country, and make of it a never-ending park, do you not think the words "it is for ever," added to the picture, carry with them an idea of stability, of grandeur, and of strength, which is always prepared to resist all endeavours to overthrow order and social tranquillity? By its "for ever," I mean that in England, where today a property exists which, notwithstanding all that may be said, will, almost without exception, prove a shelter and support to the whole of the family, and which is much more likely to create in the breast that indefinable sentiment called love of country, than many other things which sound finer, you may return years afterwards, and you will neither find the house or castle pulled down, nor the materials sold to build farms and cottages, which in another twenty years will all be changed into three or four huts inhabited by paupers: you will not find the appertaining fields and

woods divided and subdivided to become in the same space of time pieces of half-cultivated ground, gradually diminishing in value, until some *parvenu* or stock-broker, having made his fortune, purchases the whole to rebuild a villa or mansion, with which he will not know what to do, being destitute of any society in the neighbourhood, unless indeed one of his companions, equally lucky as himself, should also make his fortune, which is not very probable, or at least not very easy, as generally speaking one only becomes very rich at the expense of the others. As the new master must die in his turn, like the rest of the world, the property is resold, again divided, and the same history recommences.

But in England you will see the same house, the same castle again; still full of activity and life, still in the same flourishing condition: and if after many long years you return, you will find perhaps a son who has succeeded to his father; and not only he, but the children of the peasants, workmen, and farmers, who were formerly employed upon the property, will also

have inherited the different employments which gave bread, ease, and comfort to their parents. Look at them, look at their forms, their habitations, their cottages; they are still the same, still ornamented with flowers, still as neat and as clean. The general appearance announces, as it did in other days, the same ease of circumstances and proportional happiness.

It is very probable that, in my ignorance as to political economy, I am unfit to pronounce which is the preferable side of this question for the general good; (the division of property and its perpetual maintenance, I mean;) but as to the individual good, if so it must be termed, of all those who, under the influence of this perpetual support, enjoy in England a lasting tranquillity, with their future means of existence assured to them, which in itself always serves to render a present benefit more valuable, you will permit me to say that this individual good exists, for I have seen it. In speaking of all those who live under this perpetual maintenance, I allude, not only to the thousands who possess such property, but to

the much greater number, upon whom are the results of this continuity spread. In Scotland, where property is generally entailed, agriculture has attained a high point of perfection; and it is generally allowed that the *cadets de famille*, thrown into the world without any other resource than what arises from a good education, end almost always by being richer than the eldest son: there also exists, in a remarkable degree, the desire of resting for ever by the side of the ashes of their forefathers.

I will give you an example of this: a Scotchman, ruined by a series of misfortunes, was forced to sell the inheritance of his fathers, and then departed for the East Indies; after the assiduous labour of many years, he succeeded in re-establishing his fortune, and his first care on arriving in Great Britain was to go in search of the person who had bought his estate. This was the good Duke of B., the father of the present duke, the richest landholder in Scotland. The former proposed to him to repurchase the estate, offering double the sum for which it had been sold; the duke replied, that although he

particularly wished to retain this property, which was situated exactly in the middle of his own possessions, and though he had bought it for that reason, yet he could not refuse to agree to a desire so noble and so natural, and that if he would repay the sum which had been given for it, he should again become its possessor. Each of these two truly noble men now repose by the side of their ancestors.

I have heard the luxury in which many families live in England condemned: the properties are, it is said, too large; the advantages and privileges which result from them too marked, &c. It is very true that there are noble families, and others untitled, who are not the less immensely rich, who live in a splendour and luxury which, on the Continent, would not be met with at the courts of princes, and even of certain kings; and this particularly at their residences in the country. One must have passed some time with them, to form an idea not only of the luxury but of the continued and studied refinements which succeed to each other. It is indeed true that there are seats where not less

than eight to ten thousand pounds are expended a year only for the keeping up of the hot-houses, in order to secure the most rare and costly fruits that the earth has ever produced in succession. To descend to what is more modest, I may cite, that, after a day's shooting at Lord M.'s in Hertfordshire, we were seated at a table in a room with fifty wax-lights, a dozen servants in handsome liveries, besides two valets-de-chambre and a butler,—and all this for the service of *sa seigneurie*, the clergyman, another person, and myself; and certainly nothing unusual was done in honour of us, for every day it was the same there, as in many other country seats and in other families,—a simple dinner *tout-à-fait sans façon!*

If, then, anything may be said against this excess of luxury, principally by those who have not the means of procuring it, and who, if they were in possession of it themselves, would no longer condemn it,—if they speak of the poor, who, without always being thrust before you, still do not fail to exist, and in great numbers—still, before you judge, my dear Augustus, take

into consideration the immense sacrifices which the rich have imposed on themselves for the support of the poor, perhaps to plead in excuse for this very luxury with which they are reproached, besides the tax of eight millions raised by poor-rates (a sum which surpasses the entire revenue of more than one Continental state). A still greater amount is distributed, and with cheerfulness, for the support of this unfortunate class; not only by subscriptions which are constantly renewed, even in the most inconsiderable towns and in villages, with anxious solicitude, forgetful of fatigue, but, what is most praiseworthy, by women of rank and education, who feel a generous interest in descending into all the details of the distribution of food, clothing, linen, flannel, medicine even, of which they have made a point of informing themselves sufficiently to enable them to complete their power of being useful to their miserable fellow-creatures.

There may exist some abuses (and where do they not exist?) in the administration of the parishes relative to their duties towards the

paupers which each is obliged to maintain and succour; but the general effort to protect and assist poverty and misery, is everywhere evident: and when I think of all that I have seen in this respect in England, of all that my own experience has made me acquainted with, I cannot but repeat to myself, "Yes; I have ample reason to admire this nation!"

After all, a man (however expensive his habits may be) cannot *de facto* disburse for himself alone such immense incomes as many possess; these expenses lead to the support and well-being of a number of people who depend on them, and of many others not immediately dependent: and I should like to know if there be a better manner of enjoying a large fortune than that of succouring the poor and miserable, and then nobly and grandly expending the rest?

I wish, my dear Augustus, that you had the opportunity of doing all this, for I am sure you also would make a good use of it.

Adieu; you will perhaps some day be of my opinion.

LETTER XI.

Watering-places. — Dining out. — Evening Parties. — Champagne.—Cheltenham.—English Gentry.—Environs of Cheltenham.— Principal Street.—The Promenade.—Archery Society.— Ludicrous Scene. — The Water Drinkers. — Good-night.

AUGUSTUS,

TO-DAY I intend to give you some idea of one of the watering-places in England,—places which are visited, or supposed to be visited, for the purpose of drinking the waters, although the greater number of the visitors go there for any reason rather than that. Some, being entirely without fortune, resort to such places to endeavour by a most particular amiability to form a connexion by marriage which may repair this disadvantage, regarded in England with repugnance if not with contempt, as the most insupportable of all defects: prudent mothers try to rid themselves, by the same means, of one or

two of the half-dozen daughters they have brought with them. Others again—and these are the most assiduous visitors—are there to satisfy their decided taste for "dining out," and for frequenting evening parties and balls where there are plenty of refreshments or good suppers; "and a noble supper it was!" they cry, on greeting each other on the morrow. If, indeed, any real benefit is to be derived from drinking the waters (so much vaunted in each place which produces them) by those who suffer under impaired health, it is curious to see how much pains are taken to neutralize this benefit; not only by the custom of passing the greatest part of the night dancing in stifling hot rooms too small for the number of people assembled in them, but also by the intemperate dinners, which are every day repeated; by the quantity of wine of every sort that is drunk, particularly of a kind called champagne, (which in itself is enough to annul the influence of the waters, and of the doctors who recommend them,) whose production is attributed, with implicit faith and assurance, to a distant country,

which has no reason, I believe, to reproach itself on account of such a composition: but its questionable parentage is of no consequence; the "lively and delightful explosion" of the cork, flying out and sticking to the ceiling, suffices to bestow the title of *champagne*, and then each person vies with the other to do it honour by drinking as much as possible, in which the ladies, allowing themselves to yield to general enthusiasm, according to their capacities, rival the gentlemen.

I remember well a certain lady, of nearly six feet in height, near whom I found myself placed at one of these dinners, who said, on my asking her to take a glass of the said champagne—(it was doubtless in a moment of enthusiasm)—"Indeed I am so fond of this charming wine, that, if once I take it, I cannot take any other!" This was to "give me a hint," as they say in England, not to forget, during dinner, this, her peculiar taste. As to the constancy she had promised, she kept her word; for, after having exhausted my good-will, she accepted that of other guests more *amateur*

than I am. I have since learnt that she died suddenly of an apoplectic attack. Until I heard this, I confess I always "owed her a grudge," not for her fancy for champagne, but for some tall feathers of different colours which she had on her head, and which, during this long dinner, were tickling my head and face so as to oblige me continually to lean on the other side, to allow her greater space,—this necessity becoming more obvious each time that she had to exchange bows or noddings at every glass she took: my patience was still more tried, as I saw that this amused a certain lord opposite to us, with whom I was no favourite, I believe, because I never would bow to him the first when we met. You may believe that my ill-will for the poor lady was extinguished on hearing her misfortune; but, as to his lordship of D., I did not change my system of reserve.

One word more on these dinners: you know, perhaps, that it is not here as elsewhere, where it is only at the sign of the master of the house that the *sommelier* and *le maître d'hôtel*

pass round the table offering the different wines to the guests. Here, on the contrary, each guest, more thirsty perhaps from this power, disposes at his own will and pleasure of the cellar of his host; knowing there is always some one near him ready to consent to a challenge so agreeable as a glass of wine, and which he can scarcely take alone.

At present, I shall only speak of one of these places where I passed some time, and of which I retain, notwithstanding any apparent dash of satire in what I have just said, not only many agreeable recollections, but feelings of regret mixed with gratitude;—I mean, Cheltenham. Here it is impossible to trace the supreme fashion which we have left in London; and although some of its phœnixes occasionally deign to appear in this town, it is always like those meteors which only shine for an instant, but leave a brightness which is still contemplated after their appearance. For these, the most general rendezvous is Brighton, at the time the court is there. But do not conclude from this that at Cheltenham there

is neither good company, nor *gens comme il faut*, distinguished by birth and fortune. On the contrary, all of this is to be found; but people of a different stamp at the same time, which is of course to be expected in a place so frequented, and where visitors succeed to each other with such rapidity during the season. Here also are met a portion of that class so interesting in England,—the class which in my opinion should be called the first,—"the Gentry."* These live much in the country, in or near the provincial towns; and the most respectable are those who inhabit their own country residences, whose lives, calm and regular, are completely consecrated to their duties and family occupations, and whose simple but dignified manners inspire respect and beget a desire to be admitted into their circle. It is also to them that belongs the fame of that morality

* This class comprehends all who live on their incomes, whether arising from honourable professional employments, or from landed and funded properties: some of them are nearly allied to the nobility; others look upon themselves as more noble than the noble, boasting a more pure and ancient line of ancestors, &c.

and religious principle of which the English are so proud, and I think with justice; as this uncorrupted class forms in itself a large part of the population of England.

The environs of Cheltenham, particularly on the London side, (from which place it is distant about a hundred miles,) present the same picture of prosperity, wealth, taste, and neatness, that you find in those of almost every town in England. They are studded with cottages ornamented with flowers and creeping plants, which separate to give light to the little windows, which are thus set in a frame of verdure. Here are seen also those pretty country-houses, with their gardens and park-like grounds, so fresh and green, encompassed by palings always kept in good order, with gates newly painted; amidst all this, a road, sometimes winding in a picturesque and graceful manner, is seen, always smooth as a floor, upon which the carriages, stage-coaches, &c. appear to glide, or rather fly, almost without noise. The road has also two footpaths, made narrow, not to take too much of the precious earth

along which they run. These are bordered and supported by grass, and there the pedestrians travel in tranquillity, protected from the carriages, along a perfumed hedge formed of the hawthorn intertwined with honeysuckles and wild roses: all this is found in the environs of Cheltenham; there is something besides, which, upon arriving, seems to announce that you approach a place of amusement, for everything appears prepared to attract and keep you there. At a few miles' distance you have already met several horsemen and carriages, the people in which, seeking to meet your eye, seem to say "Who is that?—Is that any one whom we know?—Does this arrival promise us some more *soirées*, some more parties?" And then follows that second searching look upon the panels of your carriage, to see the arms, in order to judge of your rank.

You are soon in the principal street. At first, it is wide and spacious, formed of white shining houses with blue or green verandahs, the windows provided with light tents of

striped stuff of different colours to shade the apartments from the too strong rays of the sun. The street becomes narrower towards the middle of the town, where are situated the principal church, the libraries, the different hotels, the bankers, and shops and magazines of every kind. There also finishes the long avenue of trees and elegant houses which leads to the park, or rather to the different large gardens called walks, where flow the beneficent springs from which the sick, or those who fancy themselves so, come to draw their salutary influence. Spacious rooms have been built over them in form of rotundas or temples—(in summer, public balls are held there, sometimes by daylight): in the gardens there are also bazaars filled with all sorts of objects of fancy.

But, my friend, if you arrive, as I did, *en famille*, at Cheltenham, you must choose one of these middling-sized houses, where you find throughout good soft carpets, and where everything is complete and ready to receive you. There you have no trouble to arrange with the proprietor, no long explanatory meetings

and speeches, no lease full of impositions upon the tenant, no signatures to be exchanged; all that is necessary is to know the price, and, if it suits you, to reply that you will give it: you are immediately established master of it, and the servant who keeps it. As to acquaintances, they are not difficult to make.

The disorder of your toilet being repaired, and your lady under your arm, you issue out, and appear on the promenade: ten minutes are more than enough to recognise two or three persons whom you have already met in other places. Without losing any time, you are introduced to half the people on the walk; and a few minutes afterwards you find yourself invited for the very same evening to tea, to a piano-dance at Mrs. B.'s. To-morrow it will be to Mrs. St. G.'s, when the Miss F.'s are to sing their fine Italian airs. At these two *soirées* you will be engaged to half a dozen others; then to dinners, balls, parties of pleasure into the country, to pic-nics with the various persons whose acquaintance you have already made.

At Cheltenham, as well as in all other places, every one hurries to obey the imperious mandate of the goddess Fashion,—she who in England possesses more power to move and direct the multitude than the King and his assembled parliament; consequently, as it is (or was) the fashion to shoot with the long bow, of course, a place like this must also possess an archery society, composed of ladies, married and single, and of gentlemen. You are soon entreated to make one of them: then pray go and see them on the archery-ground; the quiver on the shoulder, the band tight round the waist; the left foot advanced, the weight of the body thrown on the right leg; the elbow of the right arm, which directs the arrow, elegantly raised up to the level of the ear; the left hand holding the bow, stretched out horizontally; the head well raised, turned to the mark, and the body presented to it *en profil*. Well, what do you think of this position; must it not be a most graceful one?

But now, only reflect for an instant, and tell me if it is not more than probable that,

among twenty or thirty persons whom the influence of fashion has assembled by chance, without reference to age, the greater number of whom could neither be prepared nor formed for a like exhibition, some from want of habit, others from want of suppleness and ease, many from the national *mauvaise honte* (of which we will talk hereafter),—will you not find it more than probable that many a *ridicule* would slide into such a meeting? Sometimes the corpulency of one of the archers would only permit him to wear his *ceinture* round the chest, his arms too short to allow him to stretch his bow well. After him would step forward a lady, no longer in the prime of youth, who from near-sightedness not being able to distinguish the target, (although it was seven or eight feet in circumference,) and the provoking impossibility of holding her eye-glass, was obliged to appear in spectacles, which could not fail to destroy the illusion of certain spectators, who wished to imagine their ladies real downright Amazons. After her, a young miss would ad-

vance, long and thin, who had, by coaxing and entreaties, induced mamma to let her have a bow also, and to be one of the company; but, when arrived, frightened at thus finding herself so much exposed to view, she becomes quite confused, and retires shamefacedly behind the others, thus giving up her turn. Then comes a tall, vigorous, impetuous young Scotchman, full of warlike and romantic notions brought from his mountains; and so eager is his ardour to pull his bow, that he did not even aim at the target, and the spectators, again losing their illusions, fled in every direction the moment that he raised his arm.

Ask Prince Kofflo—y what he thinks of an archery meeting? One day being on the left of the archers, believing himself in perfect safety, and wishing to judge of the grace and address of the ladies, of whom he is the gallant and constant admirer, he received an arrow suddenly upon his not small rotundity; it was fortunately pointless, and sent by a female hand,

and on striking him it only rebounded harmlessly.*

Every morning all the water-drinkers, *en negligée*, each with a bouquet of violets in the hand, walk in a favourite *allée*, whilst the band, to whose music they danced the night before, and who will again set them jumping the same evening, (for in England they jump in dancing a great deal, as you know,) play the choicest airs. Here they talk of the past ball, of the fatigues which so fine a morning already begins to dissipate so pleasantly; then of the wonderful effects of the waters at the moment when they have just swallowed a glass, which causes many an effort to hide the grimaces which the detestable taste has left in the mouth. Again, at two o'clock, there is another toilet for the promenade and the drives. At six in the evening they return, and make another for the dinners or *soirées*, and at last they reach home at two o'clock in the morning.

* A punster remarked that his highness had *a-n arrow* escape.

Although it is not so late at present, I am going to do the same, crying "enough for to-day." I will send you another letter on this subject; and so give you time to rest, and myself also. Farewell! *tout à vous.*

LETTER XII.

Sunday at Cheltenham. — Mauvaise honte. — Shyness. — An amiable Character.—An Accident.—A Village Clergyman.—Clandestine kindness. — The Clergyman's Dinner. — Mutual Embarrassment.—Regret.

My dear Augustus,

In my last letter I left you at Cheltenham, where everybody is seeking amusement; where time, money, and health are all expended in running after pleasure; and where a smiling face is put on to greet those who are pitilessly abused the moment their back is turned. But this activity, this worldly life, which never changes during the six days of the week, ceases on Saturday at midnight, as by the wand of the enchanter who cries "Disappear!" and all is over. On the morrow, Sunday, you would not believe you were in the same place, or among the same people. The streets are half deserted,

and quite silent; the public places, the shops, the libraries, all are shut, doors and windows; every face has become serious and thoughtful; nothing is heard but the bells of the churches and chapels, announcing the hour of prayer, all differing perhaps, but all addressed to the same Creator. Their sound is calm and grave, and stops the instant that prayers begin; then the silence is no longer an ordinary one, it is like a complete suspension of existence! The only impressive sound that you hear is the voice of the minister of God, as you pass by the church, which, in solemn and peaceful accents, vibrates through the interior; or else it may be the melancholy and affecting swell of the sonorous organ, accompanying the voice of children who are singing hymns addressed to their Maker. My dear Augustus, what adds to the impression that one receives at such a moment, (you will feel that I speak from experience,) is the idea that in the sacred place of worship whence issue these voices of prayers, and songs of gratitude and praise, all is addressed to God in the most simple manner, so much

better suited to the feeble creature in presence of his Creator, than when surrounded by pomp, incense, and pretended greatness.

Thus, Sunday, instead of being (as it is in a country you and I are well acquainted with) a day of pleasure and amusement, when the common people seek to forget their pains and sometimes even their misery, becomes here a day of seriousness and prayer, during which the only recreation which the women permit themselves is an almost silent walk, scarcely enlivened by a smile, whilst the men (I speak of the working classes) remain together drinking, smoking, and talking, and this generally within doors. On this great discrepancy I will leave you to judge for yourself. I will only add, that I have seen more than one country, where on the Sunday, after having been to church, people did not the less divert themselves in dancing, &c., trying to forget as much as possible the pains, fatigues, and privations of the week in innocent joy and pleasure; I have prayed with them in church, and I have afterwards felt how natural were

these joyous recreations, this cordial gaiety, which cannot be accused of impiety, as it is generally without excess. Shall I add that I have more than once danced at a village fête on a Sunday, and that I have known many others take pleasure in such meetings; and can I then cast blame on them? Well, you will say that I am a "*bien bonne ame.*" When we return to England, to the Sunday in Cheltenham passed so differently, I shall then also find no fault. The sudden transition may at first cause this day to appear sad and melancholy in the eyes of a stranger, but he will soon be sensible of many compensations; he will remark the comfort, the neatness, the good order in the interior of the habitations of the cottagers. The children are dressed in their best clothes. The bright and green country, and those pretty paths crossing the meadows enamelled with flowers, or running along the perfumed hedges which surround them, where the people walk, enjoying themselves so tranquilly; all this has undergone no moral change: it is all as beautiful, as agreeable on the

Sunday as on any other day; and even more so, as on that day the labouring classes have time and opportunity to enjoy them.

After having seen this, you will not resist, more than I did, the general impression; and you will even feel internally satisfied in partaking it. You will say with the whole nation "the Sunday is the Lord's Day," and you will pass the whole of it as such. On Monday morning, all the activity of worldly life recommences with more vivacity than ever: Dissipation, and her train of pleasures, appears only to have been put aside for an instant that she may take possession of the mind with greater strength and ardour. I remember especially one Saturday night, when she defended her posts foot by foot until nearly one in the morning; but the next day at church, during the sermon, reproaches fell from the pulpit upon the heads of the guilty; and that Sunday was one of the most repentant and lugubrious of any that I witnessed.

Whilst I was at Cheltenham, I had many opportunities of studying in a close manner

the different characteristics of English society; one of which is to be almost universally found, —I allude to what is called shyness. *Mauvaise honte* renders but a very imperfect meaning of this word: one may say of a man, "he is shy;" but to say "he is *honteux*," which is the only word that I know of to translate it, may give you the idea of something ignoble or base, whilst the character that I wish to paint is one which inspires me with great interest, and is just the contrary. *Mauvaise honte* betrays itself in different ways in England. In a room full of company there are many women who dare not move from a sofa, upon which they condemn themselves to pass whole hours; and if at last one of them ventures to cross the room, it is with an embarrassment and awkwardness which shows itself at every step, and which she would not perhaps exhibit if a fewer number of eyes or none at all were on her. The greater number of the men too, from the same reason, remain nailed to the wall, half hidden by a curtain, or else they never venture much beyond the door of the

drawing-room. But what I wish to depict is, the perpetual shyness in intimacy, in the family circle as well as in society, in a good, generous, amiable man; one who possessed the greatest simplicity of manners and habits, and whose modesty reached the point of fear, and this joined to the highest qualities of the heart and mind; for in himself he possessed qualities sufficient to have rendered many persons vain if they had been divided amongst them.

A propos to vanity, I am going to give you an example in myself, for I am very proud of having been distinguished by, and I think of having inspired a true affection in him to whom I here allude; and although he never breathed a word to me himself of his sentiments, (the very idea would have given him a fever,) yet his actions towards me, his kindness, (*fuyante* I may call it, which he tried to conceal immediately he had done anything to please or serve me,) all proved it to me, so that I can never forget it. And Providence seemed not willing to unite in one being so

many valuable qualities without giving him a companion capable to appreciate them; one who possesses herself, not only the most amiable virtues, but beauty, grace, elegant ease, politeness of manner and attention to her friends, which I might call exquisite without the least exaggeration. As for him, in the midst of all the luxury and refinements of a charming residence in the country, where taste and expense disputed the *pas*, and which was ever consecrated to hospitality; possessing four pretty children, in whose superior manners the care of a tender mother was already seen; loved, esteemed, and blessed by every one around him for all the good he did, he was only the more modest, the more shy: he feared more being surprised performing a good or generous action, than most others would in committing a bad one. I saw him one day in his library, where he had collected together at great expense and with great care all the best works in English, French, Italian, &c. all printed and bound in England; this was his kingdom, his most valued possession after his wife and

children. He was occupied in showing me some that were curious and admirable in type and binding, when one of his little girls entered with a message from her mother. With childish eagerness, she also wished to show me a "beautiful book," and climbing, unperceived by her father, on the mahogany steps, she tried to reach a magnificent volume, which, being too heavy for her little hands, fell with a noise that must have gone to the heart of the careful owner. He turned with unwonted quickness and picked it up, and on seeing the gilding knocked off, and the morocco binding broken, he exclaimed with great emotion, but without the least anger, "Jeannie! look what you have done!" The poor child, who had remained stupified on the top of the little steps descended sobbing, and quitted the library without being able to utter a single word. After following her with his eyes, and going to and returning from the door, at last he went out also: a moment afterwards I heard him call her with a tone that a father, such as he was, alone could possess, saying,

"Jeanie! will you not come to your papa?" He would undoubtedly have given many guineas that this misfortune should not have happened to his book; but the grief of his poor child pained him much more.

Another time we were to dine with the clergyman of the village, one of the prettiest in the environs of Cheltenham, near which was my friend's house. He had himself embellished and adorned the church, and it was particularly in this village that he did so much good. The clergyman was a man as much distinguished for his literary acquirements, as for his manners and exemplary conduct. He was not rich; but what many others would have called poverty he did not consider as such, and in him it was elevated and sustained by a behaviour always dignified. Do you not think that on a like occasion, (such as the invitation that I had from this clergyman,) one is more beholden, and indeed has more pleasure in being punctual to the hour indicated, than if the entertainment were at the table of a great duke?

I was flattered and pleased by the invitation;

so I presented myself at the worthy minister's cottage-door even before the time mentioned. The maid-servant, making excuses for her master, who, she said, was dressing himself, showed me into a small room on the ground-floor, communicating with another by folding doors, which were open. The one into which I entered appeared to serve as a drawing-room as well as study; a book-case filled with choice books, and a table covered with books and manuscripts, clearly announced its double use. The chimney-piece, as well as a window looking into the very pretty little garden, was ornamented with flowers: the furniture was plain, but exquisitely clean. I perceived in the other room the table laid for four persons, the linen of the purest whiteness. Near the table, brilliant with a small but sufficient quantity of plate and crystal, stood the dumb waiter (a table with shelves, which we call, I think, *une servante*): this was a frank avowal, made beforehand, that we should have to help ourselves during dinner.

I waited sitting in the minister's great chair,

in which he was wont to reflect on all his duties towards his parishioners, and where he composed his sermons, which always breathed a religion full of tolerance and encouragement. It appeared to me as if the calm and tranquillity which I had felt on entering the retreat were augmented, and I breathed more freely. This arm-chair even, in which I was so comfortably seated, exercised an influence upon my whole being; I had never experienced the same sensation. I felt in myself the desire of becoming better, (you will say there is room for improvement,) and, plunged in reflections which became more and more humble,—I began to doubt even if I were worthy of remaining in the seat I occupied,—when the door of the dining-room opened very gently, and the head of the kind father of little Jeanie appeared, looking cautiously round to be sure that no one was in the room. He entered without perceiving me, and drawing from his pocket a bottle,—which I quickly recognised by the form and colour as one of his excellent bottles of hock,—he placed it care-

fully on the sideboard amongst two or three others, probably of a less expensive kind, which were already prepared for dinner. He retired very quickly, as if he had just committed a disgraceful action, and I saw him immediately appear in the garden to see how the flowers were going on—flowers that he had also taken from his greenhouse to give to his friend. I took especial care not to interrupt him during his visit to the dining-room: I guessed the reason of this delicate and kind manner of giving, in order to avoid the thanks which must of course be offered for a present ostensibly made, however trifling in value it might be; and, at the same time, he gratified his habit of retiring the moment that he had performed a kind action.

The dinner was quite in accordance with the style of the habitation and the character of our host. Everything was simple, and the honours were done with a hospitality and sincerity which greatly increased our appetite. We even proceeded to acts of epicurism; for the

good minister caused to be brought to table a hot plate with its lamp, and placed in it with his own hands several tempting slices of a very tender wild duck, squeezing a fresh lemon with some Cayenne pepper over them, whilst the light vapour of the flame of the lamp produced a pleasant bubbling; he then offered us a specimen, as he termed it laughingly, of his talent in exciting the appetite. It was found excellent, and eaten with a great many compliments and thanks. And he too had a good share of "shyness," but in another manner. Clever as he was, he always appeared greatly embarrassed when in the society of ladies. He then never seemed to know what to do with his arms or legs, how to hold himself whether standing or sitting. Even his replies and his whole conversation partook of this *mauvaise honte.*

You may suppose that when the bottle of hock made its appearance, the shyness of my two friends was put to a sad trial. The fourth at table being almost a stranger, his presence in-

creased their mutual embarrassment. It was easy to see on the frank and open features of the clergyman an extreme desire to declare that his modest cellar could not have produced such wine; but then he must spare the friend he knew so well, and on whose face was easily discerned the fear of being accused. These few moments of interior combat between two hearts full of probity and goodness, and who so valued and loved each other, finished by a smile exchanged between them; and I, who unknown to them was in the secret, was truly touched by this little scene, which the discretion I had exercised enabled me to enjoy. You may judge if the friendship of two such men must not have been most precious to me.

I spoke in my first letter of the pains and griefs to which we all, alas! are subject. The good and generous man of whose character I have tried to give you a slight sketch has since been cruelly afflicted; his friend, too, from sympathy, I believe, has quitted his

cottage, his pretty garden, his holy and quiet retreat! This is sufficient to explain the regret which I feel when I think of Cheltenham, and which now stops me in the description of its fêtes and pleasures! Adieu.

LETTER XIII.

Wales.—Turnpike-gates.—War in Wales.—The first Prince of Wales.—Banks of the Wye.—A Shooting Box.—Inn at Crickhowel.—A Disappointment.—Grand Scenes.

My Friend,

I cannot give you any very ample description of the Principality of Wales, for I have seen but a very small part of it; but even that may give you some idea of it, and perhaps will interest you, as it will contain a history of all that happened to me during the short visit that I made to this part of Great Britain, so famous in her history.

I will begin by premising, (and thus indirectly praising the admirable English roads,) that a phaeton containing four persons, all comfortably at their ease—with all the necessary baggage,

even to a great patent varnished bonnet-box for madame, and the gun-case for monsieur, &c.—has run over nearly a thousand miles at different times, and going very fast, without the smallest repair having been needed—not even as much as tightening a screw. Consequently, when I hear it said that the turnpikes which are constantly to be paid in this country render travelling very expensive, I reply, that it is judging like the old French *émigré*, who found England uninhabitable because "there were," he said, "twenty-four religions and only one sauce, no ripe fruit but roasted apples, and that each man ruined his health in drinking to the health of others." It is as well judged as this: for if you consider that the money received at the turnpike-gates is the remuneration made for the keeping up of the roads, and if you put ten of these gates for every hundred miles, and count what you have to pay, you will find it, I think, more economical as well as more agreeable to expend ten shillings thus, than have to wait, as you do in countries without turnpikes, whilst your carriage, which has been broken by its passage over

abominable roads, is clumsily and expensively mended.

We took our departure from Cheltenham for the romantic country of the ancient Welsh bards, whose extemporary odes and warlike songs, accompanied by their harps, in former days animated the courage of their countrymen to defend their territory against the attacks of the English stranger who wished to conquer it. The history of England, so fertile in actions of this kind, and in intestine wars, relates many noble deeds of courage and of furious combats which took place in those ancient half-barbarous times between the valorous Welsh and the troops of Edward the First, as well as the destruction of their castles, whose scattered ruins, almost covered with earth and heath, are scarcely to be traced. The conqueror ordered the death of the bards, whom he accused as the principal cause of the heroical resistance he had experienced; and even in the present day you hear their sad fate and the regrets of the country sung in ballads, still accompanied by the ancient double-stringed harp, which they have preserved with care.

To make his conquest secure, King Edward caused his queen to go to the castle of Carnarvon, in the bosom of the country, in order to give birth to her child;—the Welsh, even after their defeat, having sworn that they would never obey a prince but one who was born in their country and who could speak their language. Edward then showed them his new-born child, and told them their conditions were fulfilled. This prince was afterwards the unfortunate Edward the Second, whose cruel fate I have related to you in speaking of Berkeley Castle. From this in some degree forced birth may be dated the title of Prince of Wales, since assumed by the eldest son of the King of England as heir apparent to the crown.

For more than twenty miles we followed the course of a river called the Wye, which we first crossed at Ross. Here is the richest of all picturesque views, combined with accidental effects, augmenting the beauty and grandeur of the pictures, which succeed each other incessantly. Sometimes the rocky heights, covered with forests or immense detached trees, appear to lean forward; and here and there, amidst green of every

shade, we discerned the pure whiteness of the country-houses. Then these hills disappeared suddenly.—At one of the bends of the river we perceived the ruins of the ancient castle of Goderich, near which the present proprietor is elevating a new building. The image of this mixture of past and present was faithfully depicted in the deep transparent waters of the Wye, even to the pride which the new towers seemed to take in elevating themselves on the ruins of the ancient. The effect of light and shade successively passing over our route, and over the river; the coolness that the latter deliciously imparted to us on a beautiful summer's evening, and in an open carriage on an excellent road; the general silence and calm of so many imposing and lovely scenes, only interrupted by our exclamations of surprise and admiration;—all this, my dear Augustus, I cannot well describe, but it is ineffaceably imprinted on my memory.

We were going into Brecknockshire, only for a few months; afterwards we were to visit the interior of the country, particularly the north,

which we had heard celebrated for the beauty of its views, its mountains, and its lakes. But, as says the proverb, "Man proposes, and God disposes." Not only did we meet with several disappointments in Brecknockshire, but they finished with a real catastrophe which entirely put an end to all our projected excursions. I had been taken, I confess rather foolishly, by the description that a gentleman in London had given me of a small property belonging to his brother. It was a shooting-box, "with a right of shooting over about twenty miles of land full of game; the house furnished comfortably, and situated in a delightful valley, with a stream running through it, good garden, &c." In fine, it was, in description, a perfect Elysium. During the first few miles after having really entered Wales, we began to perceive a difference in the character and habits of the people: there was no longer that striking cleanliness, that universal care. We stopped at a small town called Crickhowel: the shooting-box, from what I had heard, was in its neighbourhood.

We alighted at the only inn in the place, and very different it was from all those we had met with since our first departure from London; and after a dinner composed of a number of little dark fish full of bones, and of an old cock which the landlady called a superb chicken, I made a few inquiries about our future residence before I went to the man of business with whom I was to treat. At my first question she stared at me as if she doubted whether she had heard aright; and when I assured her that I came expressly from such a distance to take this house of Mr. M. she exclaimed, "Bless your soul, sir, you cannot live there—it is in such a state." Then she added, that there was no kind of inhabitant within eight miles; that it was a real desert; that no one lived in the house; and that a farmer's boy went occasionally to cut the vegetables, &c.

To satisfy myself of the truth of this description, which I doubted, I asked her to let me have one of her two post-horses, and immediately set out in the direction indicated in quest of the residence of Mr. M.—I will spare you the description, my dear Augustus; you

shall only hear, that after two hours of impatience and fatigue, for eight miles, over a road cut on the side of a barren mountain, and without meeting one living thing, excepting some plovers which passed over my head, saluting me with their plaintive cry, my horse walking or rather rolling over large stones, or into ruts, we both arrived at the " shooting-box :" and a pretty place it was ! One never repents of having been discreet, and so I repeat I will spare all description of this house. I quickly retraced my steps, taking only a little hay, which my travelling companion willingly took charge of, devouring it with great avidity. The farmer's boy of whom my hostess had spoken, quickened by the hope of a *pour-boire*, had easily found him something to restore his courage and strength ; and the good humour that the poor animal testified at length inspired me.

On my return I passed by the same places, looking at them with a better disposed eye. The solitude; the height of the hills, piled one on the other ; the herbage or short dark heath which covered them as far as the eye could reach ;

even the half-wild sheep, which I contrived to see this time, and which fled at the sound of the horses' hoofs over the stones which resounded in the stillness of these mountains;—this *ensemble* appeared to me imbued with melancholy but impressive grandeur. And as to the dear "shooting-box," I more than once regretted that I had not recollected in time the crow in the fable, which

——"jura, mais un peu tard,
Qu'on ne l'y prendrait plus!"

Adieu, my dear Augustus: the continuation in my next.

LETTER XIV.

Our Villa.—English Clergymen.—Our new Abode.—Hospitality.—A Landscape.—A magic Word.—The Clergyman's Family.—A Moonlight Ride.

We returned to our inn at Crickhowel, where we were necessarily obliged to pass some days before we were able to establish ourselves in a very pretty little villa at about six miles' distance, belonging to a clergyman who resided in the neighbourhood. To tell you how we procured this compensation for our disappointment would be useless; therefore I will only say that we took possession—and many were the attentions and kindnesses we received from the reverend owner. You will not be surprised at the great preference and even respect which shows itself in everything that I say

of this class so honourable in England, when I add that in whatever place I have been, and under whatever circumstances, I have always received the same impressions—always found (at least almost always) amongst those who compose it the same simplicity of manners, the same belief in divine mercy, the same regularity of conduct, much charity, and generally much learning without the least pedantry; and in even the curates of small and poor villages, always the behaviour of men whose superiority commanded respect. When you reach the end of my letters on England—when you become acquainted with another, the latest clergyman that I knew;—he who at seventy years of age, after a reproachless life, reinspired my sinking courage, and supported a heart broken by the most cruel of misfortunes; and this with such kindness, with words so full of religious and consoling philosophy, without which existence at that time would have become a burthen to me;—then, when I shall speak more fully of him, when I shall endeavour to depict his venera-

ble character, you will judge if such affectionate remembrance and such esteem as I feel have not been merited.

Our villa was situated on the ascent of one of those mountainous chains which traverse this country in every direction, and was about half a mile from the high road to Brecknock (the chief town of the county), upon a cross road, at its point of meeting with the high road. A few houses assumed the dignity of a village, and was called Bwlch—(try to pronounce that word, it is pure Welsh, and signifies, I believe, passage or bridge). About a mile beyond our house on the right was a large lake, bordered by woods and scattered farms; and it was there that I promised myself much sport.

Some days after our installation in our new abode, the Reverend Mr. D. our landlord, arrived with his wife to make us a visit, and to entreat us in the most hospitable and pressing manner to dine with them, saying their carriage was there, and that it should take us

back in the evening. We had three or four miles to go; and during our route, whilst I was seated at the side of the minister, he told me with the greatest simplicity that his horses did the work of his little farm and of the fields which surrounded his cottage, thus combining the useful with the agreeable. They also served to take his wife and children out airing, and, as I saw, to fetch a friend who might favour them by partaking in their family dinner: and this hospitality was offered to us on our second meeting.

I do not think, during the whole of our drive, we ever went a hundred yards in a straight line. The road was good, and appeared planned from fancy, alternately turning from the right and the left, ascending and descending, passing through woods and masses of rock, amongst which were often seen the red-tiled roofs of the humble cottage. After a rapid descent bordered and shaded by high trees, we came upon the pretty river Usk, and crossed it by a bridge.—Ah! why were you

not there, my dear Augustus, with your sketch-book and pencil!—The limpid and tranquil stream made itself a passage, gently murmuring through the rocks, tinted with various colours, purple, red, and blue, and covered with flowering plants, whose large leaves, supported by their long and slender stems, floated upon the surface of the river and partook of its undulations. The principal point in your picture would be the clergyman's carriage slowly and prudently passing over the old stone bridge.

On our arrival, the minister introduced one of his friends to us, Mr. H, who during dinner excited my curiosity greatly by speaking of the immense iron-works which were situated in the neighbourhood, and of which he himself was in great part the proprietor. He had besides spoken of the famous grouse-shooting, the time for which was close approaching. This was, as you know, touching a very sensible chord in my breast. The sport was to begin in a few days, upon the heights of these very hills, and along their never-ending heaths

and plains. My informant added, however, with an air which appeared to compassionate me, that the ground belonged exclusively to the Duke of B——, and that a permission signed by him was indispensable for those who wished to enjoy the amusement of shooting over them. I replied, that as I knew Lord W. (the duke's son), I had no doubt, if I wrote to him, that he would instantly send me the necessary permission.—You might have perceived, my dear Augustus, the effect that a single word produces in England which intimates that the speaker has connexion, however slight, or even acquaintance, with rank and title: I am nevertheless far from imputing to this motive the hospitality which I received a few days afterwards from the gentleman in question; I do not doubt that even without the name that I had just pronounced he would have invited me to his residence upon the summit almost of these hills: but still I fancied that from that moment, and ever afterwards, greater attention was offered to me.

I wrote to London on the morrow, and received my permission by return of post, with all the courtesy so invariably manifested in the higher class of Englishmen. The permission embraced the whole of the time that this shooting lasts: I will give you all its details in my next letter.

After dinner we all met in the neat little drawing-room, when we had the pleasure of hearing Mrs. D. play and sing, which she did with much taste: she possessed a very pretty voice, to which was added the charm of much personal attraction and great amiability. The Reverend Mr. D. was a descendant of an old Welsh family, which had formerly been very wealthy, and possessed a good deal of landed property in the very part in which Mr. D. now occupied only a modest cottage. During the evening he gave me many interesting particulars of the habits and peculiar customs of the ancient Welsh. It was impossible not to feel grateful for the unmerited kindness and politeness we had received; so

taking leave, we offered our sincere acknowledgments, resumed our places in the carriage at eleven o'clock at night, and enjoyed by moonlight the new beauty imparted to the landscape.

LETTER XV.

Assemblage of Sportsmen.—Ascent of the Hills.—Enthusiasm.—A novel Scene.—Infernal Region.—Pleasures of Sporting.—A Shooting Party.—The favourite Pointer.—The Game started.—Grouse.—A Sportman's Luncheon.—Night after Shooting.

EVERYTHING was arranged beforehand for our party of grouse-shooting. Mr. H.'s house was situated just in the very middle of the moors over which we were to shoot. Increasing in kindness every time I saw him, he offered me a bed, and pressed me to go the evening before the great day, (the 12th of August,) to be ready by dawn to begin the work of destruction. For some days past the little inn at Crickhowel had been filled with sportsmen, coming from sixty and even a hundred miles' distance to take their share in this pleasure; and as in Wales, as well as in England, all know

how to turn to advantage every opportunity of making money, the good landlady, my guardian friend, had increased her demands tenfold, and asked a guinea a day for a lodging; and such a bed! such a room! — there was, indeed, quite a commotion in the whole neighbourhood.

On the evening of the 11th August, I set out for Mr. H.'s on horseback, accompanied by a guide, who carried my warlike ammunition. We had to pass very near the residence of Mr. D. on whom I called to present my respects, and to receive his friendly wishes for "good sport;" and then we began our ascent of the hills just under which his house is situated. The sun was sinking below the horizon, the day was closing in, and as we continued to climb by rugged and winding paths, we found vegetation decreasing at every step: when we had gained about half the ascent, not a tree was to be seen, nothing but a few brambles intermingled with tufts of heath. At last, when we had attained the summit, I again turned round, as I had done at least twenty times during our route, to take a

glance at the country extended at my feet: the great height gave us the command of an extent of country bounded only by the horizon. I could then well imagine the enthusiasm of a poet; and under the inspiration of the moment, even I, who have never composed a line of poetry in my life, might have sent you an ode composed on this "dizzy height." The magnificent scene presented itself to the eye through a rosy-tinted vapour, whose colour was freshly caught from the sun, now set in a brilliant, golden cloud. Perhaps I should have tried to give expression to that inward emotion which makes the pulsations of the heart increase in rapidity as nature appears under its grandest aspect, causing an almost involuntary shudder at the idea that the Creator is there! that you are really in his presence.

It must, indeed, have been very fine, very imposing, for I had at that moment forgotten the sport, the grouse, and even my poor guide; who, leaning on his staff, was far from partaking my enthusiasm, and who quietly observed to me, that it was late, and that if night came

on before we had got into the beaten track, he could not answer but that we should fall into one of the many quagmires that were spread over the expanse now before us, and that I must attentively follow in his footsteps. We had still about half a mile to mount, but the ascent was no longer very steep.

On gaining this last height, a perfectly novel scene offered itself to my view. It was now almost dark. The smiling, brilliant horizon, where I had seen the sun set so gloriously, was no longer discernible; but now before me was a sky red with the reflection of fire—a mile or two before us was a village in flames! —at least, so I imagined, until I was undeceived by my guide replying to my exclamation, with an air of indifference, "The iron-works, sir, that 's all,—they belong to Mr. H." It was so in fact; and from the mouths of immense forges and furnaces, and from the chimneys of enormous steam-engines, issued the flames and rolling masses of smoke which thus lighted up the whole sky, and the space which was between us and the village, with an appearance of

fire. We continued to advance; and, on approaching nearer, the light was so brilliant, that although it was now quite night, we could perfectly distinguish the nature of the ground over which we were walking.

We now rejoined the high road, and soon arrived at our destination. Fancy yourself at such an hour in the very heart of all these burning furnaces, and amidst numbers of buildings whose interiors seemed on fire, through which you could distinguish figures moving about, quite red with the brightness of the flame, and more resembling demons than anything else. Imagine the regular noise of the steam-engines, the roaring of the enormous bellows which they put in motion, whose powerful action seemed to make the air tremble, and which put me in mind of Vesuvius grumbling and threatening an eruption!

In about another quarter of an hour, having left behind us this representation of the infernal regions, I found myself in a charming, quiet habitation, seated in the dining-room between Mr. H. and a friend of his, also a sportsman,

having before me two cold chickens, a *ternue de Nerac*, and in my hand a glass of hock! If ever I publish my memoirs, I shall call that day, the day of contrasts. I am writing to as real a sportsman as I am myself—to one who has often partaken with me of its emotions and pleasures; I shall therefore spare you none of its details,—I shall endeavour to transport you quite close to me, to give you a shot at one of those superb birds, and join in all that took place for this desired end.

Explain to me, if you can, why one never grows too old for this recreation;—why does the expectation, the desire, the success, cause always the same intense pleasure? Philosophers tell us that we tire of everything—of honours, riches, glory; that an uniformly happy life becomes insipid; that one tires even of loving! But they did not comprise the pleasure of a sportsman in this enumeration; and if they had dared to do so, I would have presented myself as their champion, "*à l'outrance envers et contre tous.*" When we are going out shooting on the morrow, we can think of no other subject

the evening before, and are as much engrossed by it at forty years of age, as at thirty or twenty. On retiring to one's room, one looks with complacency at the great shooting-jacket, the leathern gaiters, the strong shoes, the coloured neckcloth, which are all spread out upon the arm-chair near the bed, prepared for the morning; one takes a glance at the gun-case which is already open, the spring of the powder-flask is tried, and the double-barrelled Manton inspected; and when at last in bed, it is only after two hours' restless turning about, thinking or half dreaming of dogs pointing—of hares, pheasants, partridges getting up, that one falls asleep to awake an hour or two before the usual time, when on darting out of bed and rushing to the window one exclaims, "Fine weather, delightful! Why does not the servant come with the hot water? how lazy those rascals are!" forgetting that it is only yet five o'clock, and that those "rascals" are still reposing, for *they* rise to labour instead of to go out shooting.

Well, now, then you shall be a spectator of

our excursion. Here we are, five of us, walking in a line, with an interval of fifty paces between us, and advancing slowly over these extensive moors, where not a single tree is to be seen: they are divided by valleys and hills, and entirely covered with heath, excepting in those places where masses of rock show their irregular, barren forms. There are, perhaps, a dozen parties such as ours scattered about: we hear occasionally in the distance their shots, repeated by the echoes from the valleys; but we rarely meet any of them, as the space we are traversing is very great. We are escorted by several horsemen, who are upon the neighbouring elevations: their occupation is to reply to the cry of "mark! mark!" by keeping in view any bird which may have escaped a shot, or which may have risen without having been shot at, and marking the spot where it may have taken refuge.

Mr. H. has brought his two brace of pointers into the field. All four are exactly alike, of a jet black; they are slight and high in form,

and each muscle and tendon is strongly marked in their rapid motions. Although all are excellent, Mirza is her master's favourite; she generally takes the lead, and it is on her that her three companions seem to have the greatest reliance. See! the very instant that their subtle sense of smelling has seized the slight odour which they follow with so much ardour, their step has become suddenly slow and measured, exhibiting their suppleness and caution: it is like the velvety pace of a cat advancing on her prey. Mirza stops abruptly; her head is raised, her long muscular tail becomes stiff and stretches out horizontally; it is no longer a living creature that you see, but the emblem of immobility. The other three dogs stop also as if struck by an electric power, and all remain equally motionless, with their eyes fixed on her. We maintain the same profound silence, and nothing is heard but the keeper's or master's "*take heed, take heed,*" pronounced slowly and in a low voice. A sign is made to me to approach; for Mr. H. in his undeviating courte-

sy, offers to me as a stranger the chance of the first bird that the dogs have found.

As I had never yet seen this species of game, I was boiling with impatience to see it rise. Mirza's head indicated on which side it was, with ten others, perhaps, all lying squatted down under the heath at some paces from me. I was so near Mirza, that I could see her eye, which, though fixed, seemed to emit sparks of fire. The almost imperceptible movement of the nostrils showed how acutely sensible they were to the smell which the air brought them: the organ of destruction showed itself in all its characteristics on this head. All at once a rustling sound like that of a cannon-ball passing is heard; it is the grouse taking wing, uttering her cry of distress,—a short low note, repeated two or three times; then the shot,—the bird falls, and the four dogs disappear in the furze. Not a word is pronounced, no one moves, for the least motion might make the other grouse rise before I could reload my gun; and these admirable dogs had learned and understood the lesson,

for they were all lying flat and without motion on the earth. You may conceive that it was with some difficulty I conquered my impatience (pleased and proud as I was of not having missed my first bird) to possess in my own hands, to see with my own eyes, this sort of game, so celebrated in the chronicles of sporting in England! But there was also a kind of pleasure in submitting oneself to the rules of a shooting-party thus directed; so I waited until it was permitted me to satisfy my longing. At present I will only mention that it is the gamekeeper who picks up the game, while one reloads.

This scene was repeated twenty times during the day, not only for the single birds, but for packs also; which, in rising from under the dog's feet, received the successive shots of the whole party, leaving frequently half a dozen birds on the ground. The grouse is about twice the size of a partridge: it resembles greatly the *gelinotte* of the German forests; but the plumage is thicker and much darker—the legs

also are covered with feathers. The very wild character of this bird—the noise and rapidity of its flight—the height of the regions it inhabits, and where it must be sought, render this shooting very interesting and peculiar.

You know what an appetite such a day as I have described produces; therefore, notwithstanding the ardour with which we followed our sport, it was with no small pleasure that we listened to Mr. H.'s proposal to stop for our luncheon. We had been followed at a little distance by a led-horse, loaded not only with powder and shot in case of need, but with those other provisions so necessary after seven or eight hours' hard walking over prickly furze and bogs, in which we sometimes sank knee-deep. I had observed the disappearance of this horse and the man who led it about half an hour before with inquietude; but Mr. H.'s speech reassured me. The place of rendezvous was a hut most romantically situated on a steep descent into one of the valleys of which I have before spoken: it was used as a shelter for the duke's gamekeepers when surprised by storms, and for

warmth in winter. It was in this place that the provisions were deposited; and in order to get in, we were obliged, with our guns over our shoulders, to descend one at a time a staircase roughly hewn out of the rock. This was not unlike a scene in a melodrama.

The brilliant brushwood fire that we found in the hut was highly welcome, as it served to dry our clothes, our shoes and boots, &c. I particularly stood in need of it, for I had twice refreshed myself very involuntarily in two of the bogs, with which my guide the night before had threatened me. You would have laughed to see us, bare-legged, with our toes stuck up in the air to avoid any contact with the cold hard stones with which the hut was paved, seated round a clumsy table, eating without plates, spoons or forks, armed only with knives, and drinking beer out of an earthen jug which passed round the table. A few drops of excellent whisky (whose genial influence reached even to our feet) completed our repast; and with renewed strength and spirit we continued our sport until sunset.

Adieu, my dear Augustus. If the expectation of pleasure deprives one of seven hours' rest the night before the opening of grouse-shooting, surely the compensation follows on the night after, for I never slept so soundly in my life.

LETTER XVI.

End of Grouse Shooting.—A new Acquaintance.—Friendship.—Presentiments.—An Accident.—My Wound.—Timely Assistance.—Letter to my Family.—Arrival of my Wife.—Our Interview.

"WHAT!" you cry, "another letter on Wales!" But, my friend, since I took you there, I have only spoken of magnificent views, interesting remembrances, agreeable repasts, and the pleasures of shooting. Now I have the sombre side of the picture to show you,—justice must be done; so I resume the course of my history.

After returning several times to these mountain heights, always finding there my friend Mr. H., his kindness, and his black dogs, the grouse-shooting ended, as all things in this world

must do. Still the thought that the 1st of September was approaching, with its hares and its partridges, was some consolation to me. Besides, I had lately made an agreeable acquaintance. I had gone one morning to the lake, situated about a mile from our little villa, and, getting into a fisherman's boat, made him row me to the middle of the water to enjoy the view of the hills which surrounded it. On remarking a little sailing-boat which was tacking about not far from us, I asked the fisherman to whom it belonged. He replied, to Mr. P. the son of Sir W. P. a young man of twenty-seven or twenty-eight years of age at the utmost, who had established himself a few months previously in a house upon the borders of the lake, where he lived in complete retirement, avoiding all acquaintance, and had only two servants with him. He added, that he thought he must be an invalid; for although he seemed to be very fond of fishing and sailing, still he was often a fortnight without quitting his house.

In this account there was enough to excite curiosity and even interest: I immediately wished to see him and to be acquainted with him; and it was with pleasure that I perceived the little bark approaching us, its large sails outspread, and indicating by the manner it was managed the experienced hands of a master. He came right upon our boat, and in an instant we were side by side. Bowing politely, he said, that as soon as he had heard of our arrival, he should immediately have called to offer his respects and services, had he not been prevented by indisposition; and that he hoped I would excuse the present unceremonious manner of introducing himself. I replied, that he could not have chosen a more amiable or agreeable one, particularly for a foreigner. In another minute he invited me into his boat; and leaping in, I dismissed my fisherman and his histories. Taking advantage of the wind which was beginning to rise, he again set sail, and we glided rapidly over the lake, sometimes leaning to one side, sometimes to

the other, according as we took the breeze or changed our direction.

I was quickly aware that I was in good society. My companion was pale; but his was not that pallidness which is the result of dissipation,—which certain men are proud of possessing, and which is attributed to this cause wrongfully in others, whilst it is simply the effect of delicate health or moral suffering. (You smile, and I know the reason of that smile.) My new acquaintance was in ill health; in this respect my fisherman had told me the truth; and this also was the cause of his having retired from the navy.

Mr. P. was one of the few that I have met with who immediately inspired me with a feeling of confidence and ease,—with whom I felt a sympathy of taste, of feeling, and opinion, and who appeared to be actuated by the same motives and sentiments. These are the secret ties which more than any other attract and attach, giving birth to an affection which is more real than one formed perhaps

from the performance of great services or sacrifices, but unsustained by such characteristics. Shall I go farther,—shall I say that there are many persons who appear as if they were ready to die for you, and really would do so; and yet that for them nothing but gratitude is felt? You cannot make them your friends, for friendship disdains payment—it will neither be bought nor sold. A more satirical pen than mine might perhaps add, that it is in this point that friendship differs from and is superior to love.

When Mr. P. and I parted, we fixed our next meeting for the 1st of September, when we were to begin shooting together over his ground and my own. I went home, and after giving an account *à qui de droit* of the agreeable acquaintance that I had just made, and of his kind offer of lending us the small but select collection of books which he had with him in his retirement, I went into the garden to finish the work I had commenced there,—doubly interesting to me, from its exercising the vulgar taste which you know I

possess for gardening and carpentering, as well as serving as a security for my children; for I was busy erecting a rustic barrier at the edge of a ditch into which they might have fallen.

Am I a fatalist or not? If I have more than once laughed and shrugged up my shoulders at the idea of some misfortune falling on me, I have more than once been surprised in the very midst of that smile by a sudden *serrement du cœur* which is inexplicable. Is it not this which we call a presentiment, if something unfortunate happens afterwards? Whilst working at my railing in the garden, I had to cut off a knot in the wood; in doing which I opened my arm with my knife so as to lay bare all the tendons of my left wrist. Fortunately the cut ran in their direction; and although deep and bleeding copiously, I managed to wrap it in my handkerchief, and stop the blood, until the servant, who was sent off in a great hurry, returned with a surgeon from Brecknock. He dressed the wound, little

imagining that he would soon have to render me much more serious services. Would you believe it? four days after, I was shooting again with my arm in a sling, and using only my right hand. Although my wound was not quite healed, it no longer gave me pain; and yet in dressing myself in the morning I had felt some darting stings, followed by the sudden *serrement du cœur* at which I had smiled and shrugged my shoulders; also the same sensation when I passed through the garden-gate, pushing it close with the elbow of the wounded arm. Your old friend Palma, my faithful pointer, instead of her usual frisks at the sight of her master with a gun in his hand, followed with her eyes sadly fixed on me. I am far from pretending to have foreseen what happened to me, but of this I am certain,—that I did not feel that elasticity of limb or vigour of mind that I usually experience in the early morning air, and particularly when I am going out shooting. Mr. P. had had the kindness to call on me the day after my slight accident,

and had assured me he would not go out until I was able to partake of the sport with him: he was surprised at my arrival, and laughingly praising what he called my resolution,—rather, my mania for shooting,—he quickly prepared to accompany me.

In this Principality, as well as in England, the fields are divided by hedges and shut in by gates. Every five minutes you are obliged to push through the first, or to pass over the second, which are generally fastened. Until now, Mr. P. had always had the kindness to take my gun whilst I made my passage either through the hedge or over the gate, on account of my arm, which was in a sling. At last we arrived at a five-barred gate, over which he had passed the first. Not liking to impose on his good nature, I refused his reiterated offer of holding my gun, and passed it over the gate, resting the butt-end on the ground. It was uncocked. How it happened I know not,—whether in putting my foot on the first bar, half my body leaning over, I

touched one of the triggers which falls on the cap, or how, I know not,—but it went off. I fell back stunned: the only sensation I felt was a sort of buzzing in the head. Palma, who on my falling sprang on me, restored me to recollection by her repeated caresses. I rose and looked to discover where I was wounded. The blood was streaming from the right shoulder: the muzzle of the gun had been so near me at the time of explosion, that the shot had passed like a ball through my arm; the edges of the horrible hole which I perceived in my jacket were burnt as if by fire and were still smoking! I tried to move—to lift the arm; I felt that I had the power of doing so: I forgot all danger, I thought only of the mercy of God in preserving me to my wife and children.

Mr. P. remained motionless, as pale as death. I entreated him to run to his own house, and send some one on horseback for the surgeon from Brecknock (eight miles off); for suddenly the idea came over me that I should die of hemorrhage, the blood flowed with such violence. He

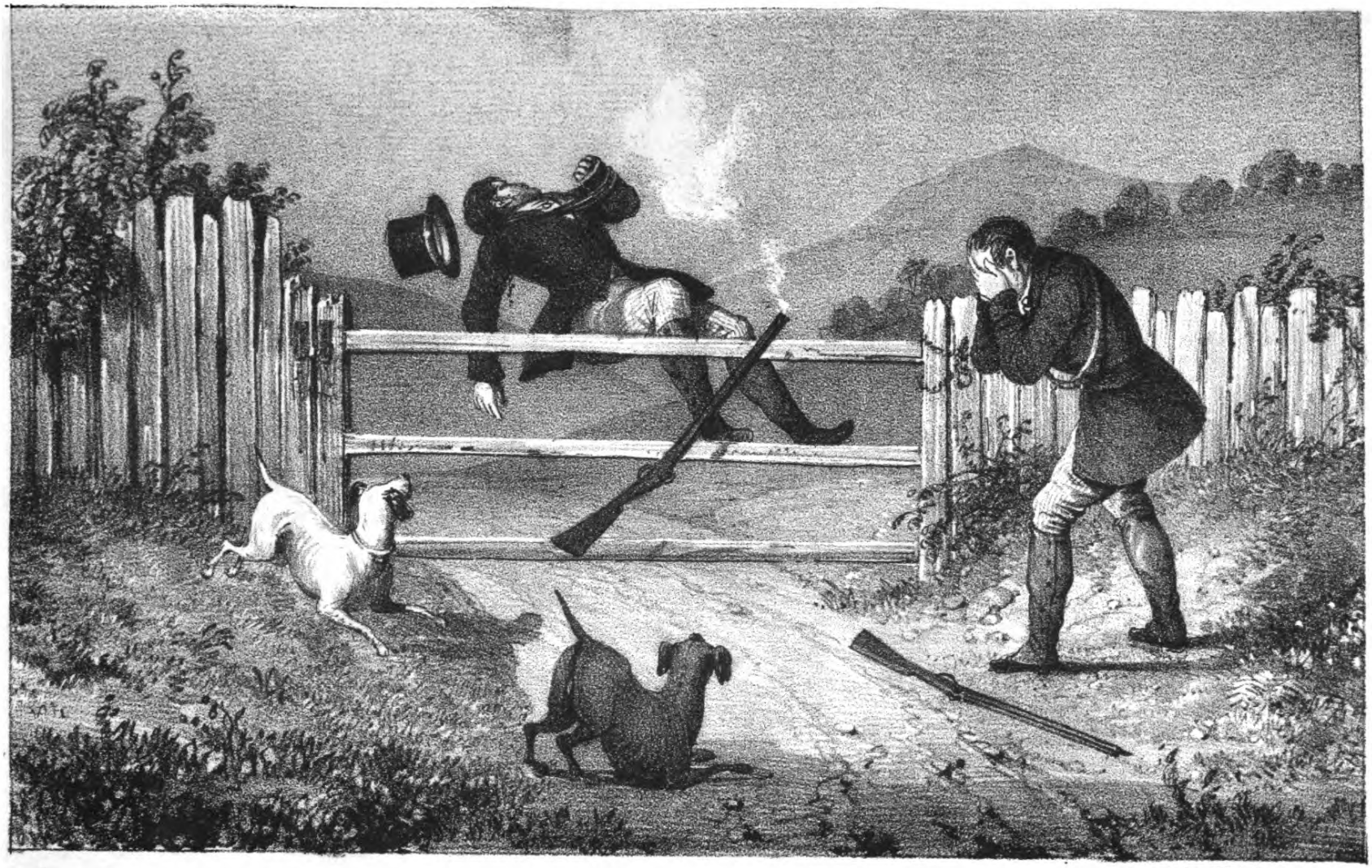
was thus obliged to leave me alone; and telling me that he would immediately send some one to my assistance, he departed at full speed. I heard him screaming and hallooing to the different labourers he saw in the neighbouring fields; but none appeared to understand his wishes, for none came to my aid. I had to climb over the fatal gate and then to walk about half a mile before I could reach Mr. P.'s house. I got on as well as I could; I felt myself weaker at every step, but still my courage did not fail me. In passing through two or three farms, some women who perceived me immedately took to flight, screaming loudly from fear. My weakness increased rapidly; I lost so much blood, that I had no longer the strength necessary to pursue my way; when fortunately, at a small distance from these farms, a man who was working on a hay-rick, near which I was staggering, saw me, and immediately sliding himself down from the height, came to me, for he had been a soldier, he said, and "the sight of blood did not frighten him."

Aided by this good fellow, I was able to continue my route; but when within a few hundred steps of Mr. P.'s gate, (where I met the gardener, who was just coming to me,) everything seemed to turn round, and I fainted. It was only after two hours of stupor that I was restored to recollection. I found myself upon Mr. P.'s bed; his good old housekeeper was by my side,—joyfully did she tell me that the blood had at last ceased to flow! I entreated her to give me the means of writing a few words to send home, for there turned my first thought. An accident of this kind is always related with so much exaggeration, that I feared a report, perhaps of my death, might reach my family. Thanks to God! I was able to write a few lines, and I declared on my honour it was with the wounded arm that I wrote!

The surgeon arrived about three hours after the accident; I will not enter into a detail of all that ensued: suffice it to say, that the surgeon, on examining the wound with his pitiless finger, (for such I could not help feeling it,) expressed

great surprise at the direction which the charge had taken; he called it almost miraculous; for had it deviated but by a quarter of an inch higher, it must either have broken the joint of the shoulder or its socket; or else, if lower, it would have cut through the principal artery, and death must have followed in a few minutes, unless surgical assistance could have been instantly procured! After my imprudence, did I merit this protection?

Soon was heard the noise of carriage-wheels; you guess who arrived; my wife came to seek me, and you may imagine also what were my emotions at this moment! What a shock, what agony, must she have experienced! and now to meet me in this state! The profound gratitude with which my heart was filled towards God for my preservation, and which I felt the stronger from the firm conviction that my life was precious to her who thus hastened to me, all this was enough to agitate the firmest heart, and mine beat so that I could hardly breathe! However, everything had been arranged so as to remove as much as



Printed by C. Hullmandel.

"Whether, in putting my foot on the first bar, I touched one of the triggers, I know not but the gun went off: I fell back stunned." Vol 1. P 191

London, Published by R. Bentley, New Burlington St. Oct.r 1832

possible all appearance of immediate danger; I had quitted Mr. P.'s room, my wound had been dressed, my kind host had furnished me with clean linen, not a spot of blood even, to alarm, and I was seated on the sofa, when the door opened! My letter had been in time: one of those fortunate inspirations, produced alone by real and true affection, had caused me to write it, and enabled me to disregard, whilst I wrote, the acute pain caused by the motion of my hand.

Adieu!

LETTER XVII.

Departure from Wales.—Young Female Mendicant.—Law in England.—English Prosperity.—Torquay.—Fishing-boats.—Extensive View.—Lovely Cottage.—Vain attempt.

After reading the contents of my last letter, you will not be astonished to find me speaking of our departure from Brecknockshire. My determination, however, did not arise from any apprehensions about the cure of my wound, or in consequence of any want of talent in the young surgeon who attended me: on the contrary, I can speak with gratitude and praise of the care and attention I received from Mr. Pendrill, the only person whose name I shall mention in full in these letters, and that from the melancholy reason that he is no more; for I have since learnt, and with great regret, that

this unfortunate young man was killed by a fall from his horse as he was going one night to the assistance of a poor man who had wounded himself. Such are the decrees of Providence! He lost his life by an act of generosity whilst performing the duties of his calling, whilst I——

Family reasons, which it is needless to mention, caused us to quit Wales; we made the tour round by Cheltenham, but our final object was to reach Devonshire, which I would name the Garden of England, as Italy is called that of Europe.

Soon after my wound, when I had permission to get out again into the garden, my arm and shoulder still wrapped up in I know not how many bandages, I perceived a young girl of the most wretched appearance who was just entering the house-door; the rooms on the ground-floor all opened to the garden by windows down to the ground; she asked charity, and as I had no change in my pocket, I went in to get some food, she looked so poor

and miserable! When I returned, she had disappeared; a few hours afterwards, a silver spoon was missed from the little travelling plate-box standing in one of the rooms. I immediately suspected that it had been taken by this young beggar, for whom I had experienced so much compassion: one of our servants offered to try to obtain some information about it; and ascertained that the spoon had already been sold, or rather pawned, to an old woman of no very brilliant reputation. I wrote to the gentleman who acted as magistrate, giving him all the necessary particulars; his reply was, that the case was a serious one, and that to recover the stolen goods, I must make a formal accusation, which if proved would hang the girl, and cost me twenty or twenty-five pounds. I would much rather have given this sum to save any poor wretch from the gallows: and regretting to learn that it is not always the public authority which pursues crime in England, but that it is the sufferer who must pay for the judicial act which ought to protect him, I willingly gave

up my silver spoon, feeling even thankful for the moderation of the poor thief, who might just as easily have carried off the box itself, or all its contents, as the single spoon.

It now becomes a debt of gratitude to mention once more my friends, Mr. P. and the good clergyman. You may suppose the apologies and thanks I had to make to the first, for the fright, fatigue, and inconvenience I had caused him in his quiet retreat, and also for all those kind attentions which had never relaxed during my convalescence. Mr. D. had also been most attentive at my departure, he prayed God to bless me; and, heartily shaking hands with both of them, I took my departure.

The distance from Cheltenham into Devonshire is about one hundred and sixty miles, crossing the whole of the counties of Gloucester and Somerset. It was at about thirty miles from Cheltenham that we stopped to visit Berkeley Castle, in which I have already conducted you from chamber to chamber; and from the height of whose platform we enjoyed a view of ex-

quisite beauty: we saw the Severn, the widest river in England, emptying itself into the Bristol Channel; we had not long before been travelling on its banks. It was no longer the romantic and wild scenery of Wales, where Nature alone exhibits her power and beauty; we were again in England, with all her riches, her smiling verdure, and her astonishing activity. Again we passed her thousands of habitations, her country-seats, her farms, her villages; again, at each step, we observed her admirable works of industry—all that art or science invents or improves, each day discovering some new power in invention. Here, a bridge suspended in air! Farther, an arched road passing under a hill! or the hill itself has disappeared; it is actually cut down by labour, and the enormous masses of earth gained from it have been transported into the valley to elevate the road, which descended too steeply! Here is a canal; there a railway!

I stop myself, my dear Augustus, just in the midst of my fine description, and do you know

why ? — Because I caught myself laughing at my own words. I fear I may have allowed myself to be carried away by the warmth of my admiration; not that all that I have described, and much more, does not really exist in England, but it struck me that perhaps it may not all be exactly united on this very road that I have just described. Nevertheless, having met with and admired it all a hundred times in my different tours through England, my admiration and pleasurable recollections remain well-founded and unalterable: and if, in my enthusiasm, I have placed a bridge or a railway upon one road, which belongs to another, it is more than probable that on this very road which I have so embellished I have neglected to mention, or perhaps passed without seeing, or even being aware of their existence, objects still more curious or important; so that, if I deserve a reproach on this subject, it is not that of exaggeration in favour of this country, but rather of ignorance of her numerous advantages and resources!

Devonshire is situated between the Bristol and the English Channels; and it was to the shore of the latter that we bent our steps, to a little town called Torquay, hidden amongst high rocks, at the centre of a bay called Torbay. You know that, in all places of this kind in England, one is almost always sure of finding a ready-furnished house to let, either in the town or in its immediate environs; therefore, in two or three days, we were again installed in the prettiest dwelling imaginable, situated about two hundred feet above the level of the sea, upon the rock or hill behind which I told you Torquay has sheltered itself from the storm and tempest. There we found everything necessary for a comfortable small establishment in a country-house, or rather I should call it a *pavillon*, for it was all on one floor, no staircase whatever: it had a pretty garden filled with flowers, its walls covered with fruit-trees. The walk, or short drive, from the gate up to the house, is bordered with beds filled with a profusion of roses and carnations; the hall, ornamented with flowers in pots,

was paved in marble; the windows of the two sitting-rooms opened to the lawn, at the end of which was a precipice, or rather very steep slope, which descended to the sea; a hedge, placed some feet lower down, (but which did not interrupt the view,) protected the garden on this side.

The view commanded the greater part of the bay, (five miles in width,) and the hills which surround it. On the opposite side we could see Brixham harbour, from which place, every day, numerous boats loaded with fish depart for London, to supply its fifteen hundred thousand stomachs. The imperious wants of that immense city have established almost an exclusive right to the fishing all along this coast, called the southern; which comprehends, besides Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Hampshire, Sussex, and Kent, situated to the left of Devonshire, and Cornwall to the right, at whose extremity is the Lizard's Point, the promontory so well known by the English sailor, and to which he turns his last look, and makes his

last farewell, when sailing for another world. As to this right of fishing, as I may call it, exercised by London, I have termed it exclusive, because we, the inhabitants of Devonshire, under whose feet (I might say under whose noses) almost all these fish were taken, could with difficulty procure any choice for our tables!

I now return to my lawn, so fresh and green! the source of such enjoyment to the children in their races; from thence, leaving Brixham to the left, and following with the eye the rounded shores of the bay, you perceive the pretty village of Paynton, and nearer Torquay, coming out from its fine back-ground of large trees, Tor Abbey, the seat of Mr. Carey, of an old Roman Catholic family. (A chapel consecrated to this belief is regularly served there every Sunday.) I told you that we were about two hundred feet above the sea; but behind us the hill rose considerably higher, and was crowned by the pleasure-grounds of a lovely cottage which a lady had built a few years previously.

Her first intention had been to secure herself a very simple retirement in the middle of a small garden; but she had altered, and increased, and purchased, until she had expended a very large sum of money. Even in England I have rarely seen any place more complete, more perfectly furnished, and in better keeping than this place. Midway up the ascent, the cottage, for so she modestly designated it, with its thatched roof, contained apartments of the greatest elegance; it was built in the ancient style of Elizabeth's reign, and seven or eight gardeners were daily employed in the little garden, now grown almost into the size of a park. The house was surmounted, on the highest point of the hill, by a sort of meadow or lawn, which she liberally left open to whoever wished to enjoy the admirable spectacle which presented itself from thence to the delighted eye in every direction; it commanded not only the view of the lovely bay entirely, but also, to the left, the ocean, and a length of coast for twenty miles.

It was from this spot, my dear Augustus, that often with a telescope I sought to descry France in the distance! It was excusable to dream for a moment that I might perhaps distinguish the port of Cherbourg, which is the nearest point to England in this part. Adieu! my friend.

LETTER XVIII.

Sounds at Daybreak.—View of the Ocean.—Visit to the Dart.—Our Boat.—Dinner.—Right of Fishing.—Dartmouth.—A Surprise.—English Roads.

You will recollect that you left me near Torquay, perched like a sea-gull on the summit of one of the rocks which surround it. A magnificent bay extended at my feet, and this in the county the most celebrated for its picturesque sites, its mild climate, and pure atmosphere; and so you will be able to form some idea of the many occasions I had of enjoying Nature in all her splendour. How often have I been awakened at break of day by the song, or rather the cadenced cry, of the sailor whilst weighing the anchor, hoisting the yard, or

spreading the sail! The window of my bedroom commanded a view of the bay: whenever I heard these sounds, I ran to open it, to breathe the fresh and balmy morning air, and to turn my eyes to the point whence these half-harmonious sounds proceeded. Sometimes they came from a merchant-brig making ready for departure; sometimes from the yacht of a young lord, who does not spend less than ten or fifteen hundred pounds a-year to indulge this fancy, and who perhaps had arrived the night before, and was already preparing to be off again. At other times, instead of the cries of the sailors, I was aroused by the sound of a bagpipe coming from the same direction. In this case the yacht belonged to a Scotchman, and the preparations for departure were concluded to the sound of his national instrument. From my window I could perceive the costume of the highlander, who, walking the deck with measured steps, awoke the echoes of the surrounding hills, and made them resound with his martial or plaintive tones: I could

even plainly distinguish the quickness of every naval manœuvre.

Half an hour later I had climbed the hill behind us (the lady's); and pushing on to the extremity of the upper plain above her grounds, and in another direction, I would find myself at twice the former elevation, on the edge of a cliff commanding a view of the wide ocean. Already the yacht had gained some miles on its way, already she had reached the open sea, already spread all her sails, and her elegant form was balancing on the vast and restless element! There is something sad as well as sublime in the enjoyment of such a spectacle. Is it the impression made by the grandeur of the ocean, the recollection of its terrible power during the tempest, the ravages which its anger can produce, mingled with the idea of its occasional tranquillity, when, as now, lighted by a brilliant sun, it rolls its majestic waves upon the shore, spreads, and then withdraws them to its own bosom? Or was it, perhaps, the feeling of my own weakness, of my own insignificance,

when compared with all this splendour, that caused the melancholy which blended with my admiration?

But soon we commenced more distant excursions, sometimes on horseback, sometimes in a carriage, and often on foot. One of our first, and one of the longest, was a visit to the Dart, a pretty river which gives its name to Dartmouth, a town situated at its mouth, beyond and to the right of Torbay. Therefore we were obliged to pass by Torquay, then behind Tor Abbey, (pardon all these Tors,) through the pretty little village of Tor which joins it. The road then turns to the right; and we continued it as far as Totness, a small town on the Dart, about sixteen or eighteen miles from its mouth. Our plan was to take a boat there, in order to descend this pretty river to Dartmouth, to which place I sent the carriage by a shorter road to meet us.

Do not fear a long and romantic description of all that we saw in our descent of the river. You must be contented with a simple

party of pleasure, composed of two little girls, the eldest scarcely four years old; their nurse, who held the youngest on her knee almost all the time; their mamma and papa; and, in addition, two boatmen: these few persons were placed in a spacious boat with a single mast and sail, which was occasionally filled by the wind when the numerous sinuosities of the river allowed it to find a passage through the wall of rocks, or the high trees, which border its shores. At times the two boatmen aided our progress by means of their long poles, which easily reached the bottom of this clear stream, down which the current took us swiftly and tranquilly along.

Half an hour sufficed to leave far behind us Totness and its inhabitants; and, having gained the peaceful solitude of this charming river, we spread a clean napkin, and the cold provisions which had been prudently brought with us in the carriage. Our boatmen, but little accustomed to being invited to dinner by a gentleman, and especially by a lady, were offered a share of

ours; a glass or two of Madeira imparted an additional expression of pleasure to their countenances, and these good fellows became more and more anxious to satisfy our curiosity about the country and its inhabitants, as we passed by the villas, the pleasure-grounds and lawns of which run sloping down to the river, rivalling each other in the taste and care with which they are laid out and kept up.

Some miles lower down, we perceived a boat fastened, and covered with nets; a man was seated in it, with his head leaning on his arms. Just at this place the river is narrower, the current more rapid, and the large trees, spreading their branches far over, almost entirely shade it. As we passed near the man, one of our boatmen called out, "Hollo, John, what is the matter? You look glum, my man."—"The devil take the river!" replied John; "I have caught but two fish this week, and to-morrow is pay-day." Saying "good day," with a wish for better luck, our boatman explained to us that the two fish of his friend

referred to two salmon, for which this river is celebrated; and that this poor fellow had hired the right of fishing of a colonel and M.P., (I think,) through whose property our boat was at that moment passing, for the sum of twenty guineas for the season, which he had to pay quarterly; and that with this honourable gentleman there was no remission,—"the rent or the gaol" had been the reply to poor John's application for a diminution of payment on account of the few salmon which the river had afforded that year.

My friend, I will leave you to make your own observations on this little history; out of which, if you choose, you may also fish a few new ideas. I will only add, that we regretted the jokes we had made upon the apparent ill-humour of the poor fisherman, particularly when we learnt that he had a numerous family to support.

Our course continued agreeable and interesting the whole way to Dartmouth. After having taken a view of the town and

its environs from a neighbouring height, which also commands a view of the sea in the opposite direction, I left my little company resting themselves, whilst I went in search of the carriage at the place of rendezvous given to the post-boy. Finding he had not arrived, I decided upon walking forward to meet him, little suspecting that he would have followed so rigidly my instructions of *walking* his horses round to meet us. At some distance from the town I saw a man standing near a cart loaded with planks, half upset into a ditch which was on one side of the road. Upon approaching nearer, I found that he was far advanced in years, and quite incapable of getting out of this hobble without assistance; I offered him mine, which he accepted civilly, but without any very apparent thankfulness. I advised him to take the planks out one by one from the cart, as the load was too heavy to move as it was; and, taking off my jacket, we both of us set bravely to work. As

soon as the horse felt himself more free, (it was a courageous little beast,) he made of his own accord an effort which at one pull dragged the cart out of the ditch; we then had to reload it, and just as we had replaced the last plank, and I was seated on the bank to take breath and to wipe my forehead, (for the exercise had been rather more than I had bargained for,) the noise of wheels were heard, the carriage drove up, and the post-boy perceiving me stopped, putting his hand to his hat. Immediately the man of the cart advanced, and, looking at me with the greatest astonishment, exclaimed, "What, sir, is this your carriage?"—"Yes, my good fellow, it is."—"And those arms painted on it, are they yours?"—"To be sure they are." "God bless you then, sir; I never thought a gentleman would help, in such a way, a poor old man like me."

After I had left him, I understood his surprise better, when I reflected how little con-

sistency there must have appeared in his eyes between the carriage and my dress when I offered to aid him. My jacket was an old shooting-garment which had seen its best days; and besides, as I had frequently quitted the boat during our row to examine the shore more nearly, a black layer of mud covered my legs, so that it is probable, had the post-boy delayed his arrival a few minutes longer, instead of the blessing, I should have received a shake of the hand, and a simple "Thank you, my friend," which would have amused me still more.

Now, if I have tolerably explained to you the direction we followed in our excursion, you will understand that we were on the right of Torbay, and were to take a different road before we could find again our penates. In a country where there are eight thousand leagues of excellent roads, crossing each other in every direction, one is never embarrassed on such an occasion. So we kept along the coast, following the line of hills all around

Torbay; and thus regained Torquay and our nest on the rock. *So much for the roads in England!*

I will leave you to translate that for yourself into French.

So, farewell.

LETTER XIX.

Coast of Devonshire.—Babicombe.—Elegant Cottages.—Sea View.—Teignmouth.—Bishops-Teignton.—Verdant Lanes.—Tradesmen's Carts.—Sequestered Villages.—The Peasantry.—Village Clergymen.—Pleasant Retirement.

In my last letter, I described a small portion of the country to the right of Torbay; to-day you will, if you please, accompany me to the left. The whole of this coast is composed of bays of different dimensions, of promontories, and of masses of rocks, advancing boldly into the ocean, forming in many places arches and spacious caverns supported by pillars. The noise of the waves breaking through and over them is exactly like the sound of distant cannon at sea. I often swam towards some that were near us, and my appearance only disturbed the divers or the sea-gulls, which quick-

ly spread their white curving wings, departed for a surer retreat, or fled off to sea.

About two miles from Torquay stands Babicombe. The bay so called is famous for its quarries, whence comes the marble so profusely used in the county of Devon, and of which many ornamental pieces are made. I cannot call Babicombe itself a village exactly, for it contains scarcely any but fancy cottages, belonging for the most part to people of fortune, who, I believe, only inhabit them during the fine season. But in this combination of charming little dwellings, perched about here and there, some absolutely like swallows' nests, you will observe in perfection the taste of the English for inhabiting picturesque situations; always contriving to add to what Nature has already done for their embellishment. Each of these small habitations, so retired, so tranquil, has a well-kept garden cut in terraces. These communicate one with the other by gates which are always left unlocked during the day; so that you may get to the shore

by going through them, and alternately turning to the right and left, thus easing the steepness of the descent. There is, besides, a road which leads down to the beach and to the little inn on the shore.

In approaching these *elegant huts*, it was impossible to prevent the eye (in such a case a little intrusively inclined) from wandering to contemplate the comforts assembled in the interior, through the open windows, or through the plate-glass sometimes mixed with coloured panes. Then you saw every elegance,—the silk hangings, the table laid out with neatness and even richness; and this too amidst cliffs and rocks on the sea-shore, far from large towns, or indeed from any habitation whatever, and in the profoundest tranquillity.

We went one day in that direction, about fifteen miles, to a place called Teignmouth, (you will guess from its name that it is situated at the mouth of the river Teign.) This time we travelled on horseback, keeping the road by the sea-

shore. Sometimes it ascended to the top of the hill, sometimes it descended into the very waves which were breaking at our feet. You already know that this shore is on the English Channel (the thoroughfare of all the vessels departing for the two Indies, and consequently for many other countries); therefore, near the coasts, or in the distance, there is always something interesting to see on the blue bosom of the ocean. Sometimes it is a vessel which the deceptive *mirage* elevates above the horizon, whilst the great distance gives its sails a vaporous appearance. Nearer the coast is the Government schooner, the British flag and signals displayed, cruising about like a bird of prey, in order to surprise and seize the smuggling vessels. Further on, you see the more modest barks of the fishermen, with their brown thick sails, dancing over the waves.

If the wind fall, and the sea become calm, reflecting on its glassy bosom the pure blue sky, then appears, perhaps, a ship of war with unspread sails, but with masts and rigging, whose

dark lines are clearly discerned on the bright horizon. It advances, towed by a steam-vessel; which, proud of thus dragging in triumph so redoubtable a mass, thrice its own size, appears insolently to trace the way which she has to follow by clouds of thick smoke, which seem to wait for the majestic ship in order to darken her passage.

Teignmouth is one of the numerous watering-places with which the southern coast is in a manner covered: I may say, without exaggeration, that along this great extent of sea-shore, you meet, every twelve or fifteen miles, with one of these small towns, and in each a repetition of the same conveniences that you have just left behind you;—everywhere neat and elegant hotels, and in the town everything that luxury could desire, or money procure; post-horses always ready, and even riding-horses; (thus we were mounted on our present excursion;) and not the *honteux locates*, but spirited animals, which certainly might have put to the blush many a steed in the *Bois de Boulogne*.

Just on arriving at Teignmouth, the road, after having attained the summit of the hill, suddenly changes its direction and turns to the left, to avoid the precipice, at the bottom of which the Teign empties itself into the sea. On the opposite bank, you perceive the town in perspective in a line with the shore along which you have just come, and which is interrupted by the river; you see its rows of houses and its promenade on the beach, where the waves are breaking. Then the road re-descends for about a quarter of a mile, passing through clumps of trees, and by some pretty farm-houses; and, when on a level with the river, again winds to the right over a very handsome bridge which crosses it.

Here we must stop: first, because there is always something to pay in England, as well as everywhere else, when you pass over a bridge built by speculation; with this difference, indeed, that there they are to be found in every direction, whilst in other countries they are of rare occurrence. But we stop for another reason

also; for at the end of the bridge, the road is divided into two branches, the right leading to Teignmouth, where, no doubt, you think I am going to take you; but you are mistaken, for it is the left we shall choose. So, satisfy yourself with the view of the town as I have given it from the top of my precipice; adding to the picture the lively colours of the parasols of some gay ladies, who were walking on the parade by the sea-side at the moment we were stopping to look at it.

Teignmouth had been, in one point of view, the object of our excursion; but there was a greater attraction in its neighbourhood for us, particularly for my companion: it was one of those wishes of the heart, one of those promptings of sentiment so difficult to resist, that of visiting the place which has been inhabited by one dearly loved, in order to seek recollections in which more of pain than pleasure is generally to be found. We came merely to take a glance at the retired spot where a sister, a cherished sister, a companion of childhood,—one with whom

the griefs and joys of that happy age had been participated,—had passed the first years of her marriage.

Bishops-Teignton, where this residence is situated, is one of those villages like which nothing is to be found on the Continent, and of which it is impossible to form a just idea; certainly not from those vapid pieces of poetry or those ridiculous novels, where the author puzzles his brain to describe charming cottages, adoring shepherds and shepherdesses, &c. Assuredly it requires a great warmth of imagination to be able to sing the loves of a village filled with manure, pigs running at liberty, and many other things which I dare not mention. But here, without fancy or poetry, I have simply to speak the truth.

Therefore we will, if you please, go together to Bishops-Teignton, taking that pretty road to the left, which disappears under the continual arch of verdure formed by the hedges on each side. I must here observe, that the county of Devon is remarkable from this peculiarity of

its covered roads, called lanes, by which the farms and villages have an easy and uninterrupted communication with each other. I have often traversed many miles thus, completely sheltered from the sun, under the impenetrable arbour which the hedges, smelling deliciously all the while, formed over our heads. Once, in particular, I recollect, when we were riding through the by-roads beyond Tor-Abbey, being more than an hour before we could find our way, having completely lost ourselves in one of these charming lanes.

Proceeding along the present, you will remark others crossing it; they are all in a good state of repair, all passable for carriages: and after half an hour's ride under the shelter of hawthorn and wild roses, we come into a wider road, bordered by shady and high trees. Casting your eyes behind the hedges which enclose it, you will see that the meadows, enamelled by flowers, are also all surrounded in the same manner; we are indeed in the very heart of *Verdant England!*

Now, look at that light two-wheeled cart on springs with one horse, going at an easy rapid trot; the driver, seated on a bench, touches his hat as he passes us. You will see many similar conveyances coming and going; and as at this moment I act the part of your cicerone, it is my business to tell you that these little carriages transport the daily provisions to all the country-houses in the environs; that they probably come from Teignmouth or some neighbouring town, and that the young men who are driving, and who bow to you so respectfully, are the different bakers', grocers', and butchers' boys, or perhaps even the masters themselves. Such people know in Devonshire, as well as in all other parts of England, how to profit by the advantages which the great number of good roads offers them, in order to extend their business, and to serve with ease to themselves the families who employ them; going about in this manner in every direction to receive orders, and even to execute them, in the same morning; and this in general with precision, *and without*

loss of time,—which appears to be the motto of the English people.

At one of the many turnings that we have taken, when we might rather have imagined ourselves in a park than in a cross-road, we perceive the entry of Bishops-Teignton. It comes on us by surprise, as indeed do most of the villages in England, when in the interior of the country, and far from the high-roads. They are like a bird's nest hidden in a bush, sheltered and tranquil. Nevertheless, the double row of fine trees is not interrupted, nor does the road cease its sinuous windings; so that, in seeing the first houses half hidden by the trees, the idea strikes you that the road was not made in order to reach the village, but that the village was attracted by its beauty, and had grouped itself on it and about it to enjoy its advantages.

Here, my dear Augustus, you will vainly look for negligence or dirt: you will find no abominable muddy gutter, no bank of manure heaped against the cottages, no broken panes

of glass in the windows filled up with dirty paper; no mass of stones, rubbish, and filth, upon which half-clothed and dirty-faced children are playing and rolling: you will find nothing of this. But cast your eye in passing into the interior of those pretty *chaumières;* observe (and hear me repeat, alas! what I so wish to see in the villages of my own country) the attractive neatness, the little windows ornamented with pots of flowers, the bright casement, the plain, but white curtain. The furniture is common, it is true; but does it not give you pleasure to see the order and care in which it is placed and kept? Every one has his little garden of some feet in size, surrounded with a fence, and with its little pathway often gravelled which leads to the door. A few houses of a superior appearance are intermixed with these humble dwellings, whose gardens are larger, and border the road which runs through the village. These furnish a still further proof of the attraction of the place, since people of some fortune choose it

as a residence, and pass their lives there. And this necessarily supposes a degree of education, good conduct, and morality, in the peasantry amongst whom such persons establish themselves.

Another advantage, which in my opinion cannot but result from this mixture of different ranks and fortunes, is the varied employments for the poor peasants, and the more certain assistance for those who may fall into indigence. You already know the generosity and extent of this assistance, if you remember the contents of one of my first letters where I spoke on this subject.

In the mean time we have left our horses at the little inn, whose neat and prepossessing appearance also struck you as we passed. Whilst going through the village, we met a gentleman, to whom every one bowed on passing; the women slightly courtesying, the men touching their caps or hats. You imagine it to be some great personage or rich landed proprietor; but here I have more experience

than you; under that simple dress, by that open countenance, those calm features, where the peace of a good conscience is so truly imprinted, I recognise the clergyman. I also have made way to let him pass; and, without asking myself why, I have imitated those countrymen in touching my hat as he went by.

Here I stop; for after having traversed the village, I will take you no further. The spot which we went to visit could only interest ourselves. I will add that it was very similar to many others I have met with in England, where the rich and the luxurious come to repose themselves after the fatigues of society. There were at least half a dozen houses of the same description in the neighbourhood of Bishops-Teignton. You will perhaps think I am joking when I tell you that behind a village hidden far in the country, and distant from the noise of the world, you will discover, when you least expect it, under a clump of thick trees, or behind a high hedge,

a cottage in the middle of a delicious garden: you ring, the door is opened by a powdered, silk-stockinged butler. The excellent dinner is served by domestics in handsome liveries; there are carriages, riding-horses, &c.; in fact, all the luxury and enjoyment which some thousands of pounds a year can procure for those who like to expend them in a cottage, whilst reposing from the fatigues of the gay world.

Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER XX.

English Hospitality.—General M.—Yachting.—Water Excursion.—The General's Boat.—Fair Play.—Angling at Sea.—Luncheon on board.

My dear Augustus,

I have often mentioned the hospitality and kindness I have received during my different visits to England. In doing so, I render but a small portion of the debt of gratitude I owe. I have felt these distinctions the more from their being purely disinterested; for thanks have been all that I could give in exchange, and my only claim was that of a foreigner, being without any establishment or the least display of wealth; which (according to general opinion) are what attract the most attention from the English.

For instance, what good have I ever done, what service had I ever been able to render, to General M., who happened to be at Torquay at the same time we were, who with the most obliging attention came in search of us even to the top of our hill? And what in return had I to offer for his many kindnesses? Nothing but an arm-chair when he came to see us. I knew too well the decorum to be observed between gentlemen, particularly towards a man advanced in years, to venture to ask him to remain and partake of our dinner *sans façon*. This is rarely done in England.

Besides the very decided taste of the English, for fox-hunting, shooting, fishing, horse-racing, and many other sports less elegant,*

* I may say *vulgar* and cruel, such as boxing-matches, dog-fighting, bear and bull-baiting, combats between dogs and ferrets, cock-fighting, in which the spurs are armed with sharp iron. All these games induce betting in proportion to the class of fanciers and spectators, and is as ruinous to them as that made by higher classes.

there is one which I cannot pass in silence, for it appears to me quite characteristic of the country: it is that of going to sea for pleasure,—"yachting." This is one of the amusements of the upper class, and is considered very good style; but for this pursuit a large fortune is indispensable. Not only all pleasures of this kind are carried very far, and conducted on a very handsome scale amongst the rich, but they are all taxed highly, as is everything appertaining to luxury or fancy in England.

General M. went to Torquay every year during three summer months, in order to indulge himself in this pursuit: yet he had nothing about him which gave the least indication of such a taste; at first sight you would never have thought he was a partaker in the gay life of which I have spoken. On the contrary, his dress and demeanour were simple, and his manners slightly reserved; everything in him rather announced the philosopher

than the fashionable sailor: at least, so he appeared to me in the excursions I had the pleasure of making with him in his boat.

His sloop,—for it did not amount in consequence to a yacht,—was renowned on the coasts for its elegant form, and for its fast sailing. The crew consisted of only four sailors and a boatswain, upon whom the entire management of the vessel devolved. The general took no part in it; he remained, on the contrary, comfortably seated in his arm-chair, with his newspapers, books, and telescope close to him: and, far from talking to me, as one might have expected, of ships, sails, winds, and tides, his conversation turned entirely upon literature, the arts and sciences, the resources of the country, &c.

One day he invited us to take a sail, and to lunch with him on board his boat; but the person for whom the party had been arranged was obliged to relinquish it on account of indisposition, so I arrived at the rendezvous with only my eldest child. The general, reckoning on the presence of a lady, had made some gallant

preparations; the sloop, still in port, had her colours and flags flying; the arm-chair this time was placed upon a carpet which covered the hind part of the vessel; and I remarked that there was an additional cushion on it. The sailors were in their white trousers, their many-buttoned blue jackets, and plaited straw hats.

Although the general appeared disappointed on seeing me arrive alone, he did not receive less kindly the compliments and excuses with which I was charged. He immediately took possession of my little girl; and, placing her in the arm-chair, he declared she should represent her mamma, and have all the honours of the day. He produced a box of bonbons, which quickly purchased her good graces. We soon left Torquay behind us; the bark at first was directed towards the centre of the bay, where, meeting a more constant wind, we veered to the left, and went out to sea. On passing before our rock, although we were at some distance, we could perceive the waving of a white

handkerchief on the lawn, in answer to the salutations we had made with our signals. What added to the interest of this scene for me, was the impatience, the anxiety, with which my little girl looked in the direction pointed out to her to see her mother, and her scream of delight when she perceived her. We were about doubling one of the high capes which advance just here into the sea; so we soon lost sight of the lawn.

A little while after this, the general, when speaking of the advantages which this bay offers during winter to the vessels continually passing, alluded to the time of war with France; when, he said, the English squadron cruising in the channel, and composed sometimes of twenty-five or thirty vessels, would come into this very bay for shelter against contrary winds and violent storms. "The spectacle," added the general, "of such a force was, doubtless, very fine as well as re-assuring; for you perhaps know" (this was said with a smile) "that there are few Englishmen whose hearts do not

swell with pride and pleasure when contemplating the majesty of a man-of-war; notwithstanding, I believe that the greatest part now prefer to see in place of those thirty ships of war, the two or three hundred fishing-smacks which, at this moment, so peaceably animate the scene around us, and proclaim by their number a state of tranquillity equally advantageous to the two countries."

Whilst he was thus speaking, we had quitted the bay and gained the open sea. There, setting full sails, our little vessel shot away with such rapidity that she seemed to fly over the surface of the waves. The general, hearing my exclamation of surprise, said that his boat was considered so good a sailer that they refused to admit her to try at the regatta which was held yearly at Torquay; at least, without he consented only to use a part of his sails, which he had always declined, as he said, "It would have been unfair for such a noble boat." By this expression the general did not mean to complain of the

decision taken with regard to his boat; he even thought it was just to a certain point. And in this I find a very original idea; and one, in my opinion, *very English*, that of endowing an inanimate, although perfectly finished object, with a species of sensibility, so as to fear to expose it to a disadvantage or unjust humiliation which might wound *its feelings*, as well as those of its owner!

This diminution of sails exacted in a boat-race for a boat whose sailing is acknowledged as superior, puts me in mind of the augmentation of weight imposed in horse-races upon horses whose superiority in speed, or strength of lungs on hilly ground, for instance, had gained the prize in former trials. In both of these cases, as in many others, is seen the care of the English to equalize as much as possible in every sport the rival strength and chances of success, and by these means to augment their own emotion and pleasure by the doubt which is often prolonged to the very last instant of the contest. But we will talk more upon

this subject when we make our appearance together on the turf of Newmarket.

I return to our excursion; the rapidity of our progress did not prevent our fishing; we were abundantly successful. No sooner did we drop our long lines with hooks into the sea at the stern of the vessel, than we saw them seized, stretched out and violently shaken, just as if the fish, who were taken, themselves gave the signal of their impatience to come on board. At one time it occurred so often, and so comically, that I could not restrain a hearty laugh, in which all the crew joined, and which even deranged the general's gravity.

My little girl was deprived of this amusement, which would have diverted her greatly, for the regular and gentle undulation of the waves had put her to sleep. She was lying on the deck where the men had arranged a bed with the cushions of the chair, and one of those large jackets of thick woollen with which they cover themselves on cold wet nights. It was impossible — at least for

me—not to be touched by the gentleness with which they deposited her on this bed of their own invention. During her slumber (which lasted two hours), all their care was to avoid, in their different manœuvres, hurting her, or even disturbing her repose in the slightest manner; so, when the general's back was turned, I seized the opportunity of begging them to drink to the health of their little *protegée*.

As to the luncheon, it had been prepared in such a way as to confirm me in my opinion that General M. combined a little of the epicure with the philosopher. Adieu, my dear friend.

Again, good-b'ye!

LETTER XXI.

Steam-boat.—Fellow Passengers.—A Comparison.—Illusions.—A Contrast.—Steam-boat at a distance.—The same at hand.—Disorderly Companions.

My dear Augustus,

Business called me to London for a short time. A steam-boat plying between Portsmouth and Plymouth* passed three times a week, regularly entered the bay, and even came within a few hundred yards of the little port of Torquay, to take up passengers or goods. It was in this vessel that I proposed to go to Portsmouth, and take the stage or mail thence to London. I had passed at least

* The first of these ports is situated to the left, and the other to the right of Torbay. The distance between them is about one hundred and fifty miles.

fifteen or sixteen times between Dover and Calais, or Boulogne, also between Brighton and Dieppe ; but always in much smaller vessels, and what I might designate vessels *de bonne compagnie*, in comparison with the one now in question. It was, as they say in England, " quite another affair." On going on board, I found myself in company with from four to five hundred persons, generally seamen, going to rejoin their ships at Portsmouth, soldiers of every description, drummers, women who follow the camp, children, &c. Here, my good friend, there was no longer the obliging, attentive (and well-paid) steward ; such I had always met with in the boats I was accustomed to, where everything was so well calculated to add to the comfort of the passengers. From the moment that I put my foot on the Plymouth boat, I saw that I must make up my mind to pass the night on deck, in preference to descending by a sort of ladder into an obscure gulf whence proceeded clouds of tobacco-smoke, mixed with a horrible smell of

cooking; and, in such a hole, to go to bed upon a mattress by the side of the first chance companion who might offer.

I nevertheless remarked, that at the further extremity of the deck, behind and near the helmsman, there appeared a sort of retreat to which a few people of better appearance and quieter manners had retired. I also took refuge there; and once seated with my cloak drawn up to my eyes, I resolved on not moving or speaking until the morrow.

How many things there are in this world which are injured by being seen too closely or too fully! How much does their beauty or deformity depend on the point of view from which they are seen, and on the disposition of mind of him who contemplates them! It may appear absurd to make a comparison between a steam-boat and an opera-dancer; yet I think it may be done, and with some plausibility.

At the opera, in a box in company with pretty women, and under the influence of all

the illusions which are produced by brilliant toilettes, perfumes, delicious music, and the reunion of persons prepared and adorned with the nicest care, morally as well as physically, you no longer see, at least during some hours, the negligence, the coarseness, the vice, the misery, the brutality which render men more brutal than the beasts themselves. No, all this has disappeared; here we are purified, varnished, prepared "to be exquisitely polite" to each other,—it is indeed the very cream, the essence of humanity. You see nought but gracious smiles, you hear nought but compliments and flattering words, &c. Then, in the midst of this purified sphere, descends from the clouds, or issues from the centre of a bower, preceded by harmonious sounds, the dancer, a sylph-like being: her graceful and touching gestures speak; they express her despair, her melancholy, her tender recollections. They are so true to nature, they accord so well with the harmony of the orchestra, that you feel yourself moved, nay,

deeply affected, so much so as to be ashamed that your fair companions should witness your emotion; you therefore prefer appearing so little refined as to use a handkerchief (let it be a white silk one perfumed) for another purpose, rather than to dry the tear which has started to your eye.

But now the ballet is over: the curtain falls in the midst of applause upon the happy couple; for the heroine has recovered her lover, whom a remaining feeling of illusion makes you almost envy, "*Mauvais sujet que vous êtes.*" Now arm yourself with all your stoicism, and come: pass through the little door at the end of that dark passage; slip behind, taking care not to touch the side-scenes covered as they are with dirty, greasy painting, which at a distance you took for bowers, temples, limpid fountains, &c. Approach, look well at her, there she is!—"Where?" you cry.—Why, there, talking to Lord B. It is she—it is the charming creature who so delighted you a few minutes ago! Alas! now she

is motionless, without any other music than the yells of the workmen, without distance, without magic! She is chatting like any other woman. The thick coat of rouge which is spread over her cheeks, makes the paleness of her worn countenance but the more apparent. Those enchanting motions were only accomplished by great efforts, which studied grace concealed then, but which you divine at present, from her agitated breathing, from these swelled muscles of the neck, from her red and irritated skin! Ah! where is the innocence, the modesty, she depicted so well? Gone! gone! Farewell then to the sweet illusion! — farewell to the sudden tear! This time, if you take out your perfumed handkerchief, it is to overpower the smell of the lamps, it is to preserve your eyes from the clouds of dust which fly round you.

Now let us pass on to my steam-boat, — you see I am anxious to support my comparison. Look at it as I first saw it from the rocks above

Torquay. I was resting myself on one of those retired seats which Nature often prepares with apparent coquetry in solitary places, inviting you to repose, and admire in tranquillity and at your ease. Mine was a bank covered with moss, formed as if expressly in the rock, and upon the edge of a precipice, two hundred feet under which the sea was roaring. It was at sunset, and after a violent summer-storm; but all was now still, the waves alone were agitated. Just then appeared the steam-boat, arriving from Plymouth, and doubling Brixham Point to enter the bay. Without the least breath of wind, without oar or sail, she advanced rapidly over the waves, which she seemed to thrust behind her.

Here is the great difference, my dear Augustus, between this scene and that of the opera: there was no illusion, all that I saw was real, it was the triumph of art; one of the striking examples of obstacles surmounted, formerly thought physically insurmountable, but which man daily learns to overcome; and, in admir-

ing this, it was without illusion. But the comparison holds good when I speak of the distance from which I contemplated this spectacle, of the effect which that distance produced on the vessel seen *en masse*, and whose dark form was illuminated by the rays of the setting sun. The least imaginative being must have found interest in this picture, must have felt its grandeur!

Now let us change the scene for the fourth time: look at me on a later day on board this vessel, seated in a corner, rolled up in my mantle, for it rains, and the wind is cold. I am now occupied in viewing nearer this machine, this assemblage of objects, every part of which is blackened by smoke and coal-dust; the masts, the ropes, the deck, and the sailors who are employed on it,—their hands, their faces, everything is imbued with this dirty hue; and that crowd of people huddled together on the deck, the same who—when I saw them at a distance gliding over the waters as if by a supernatural power—had seemed to me like beings of a

superior order, whom the very elements obeyed, how miserably changed do they now appear! The greatest number, even the women, drinking, smoking, swearing, half-drunk with grog and brandy.

I here quit my comparison. Adieu! If ever chance should lead you to Torquay, be satisfied with the sight of the steam-boat from a distance.

LETTER XXII.

Morning at Sea.—Sunrise.—The Needles.—A fellow Voyager.—A Royal Captain.—Childish Prejudices.—Tom Cringle's Log.—French Soldiers.—Plymouth.—Royal Salute.

My dear Friend,

At daybreak you would still have found me crouched like a hare on its form; I had neither moved nor closed my eyes during the whole night. We were stopped for two hours, enjoying all the pleasure of rolling about in that abominable swinging motion produced by "the slow swelling of a silent sea." The paddles were motionless, and the whistling of the steam as it escaped from the safety-valve was the only sound to be heard. My too numerous travelling companions, principally those on the

other end of the deck, were all asleep. Their copious libations and tremendous noise had at last been followed by drowsiness and fatigue: at least, so I supposed, for see them I could not, owing to the thick fog which had so increased towards morning as to render it absolutely impossible to discern any object, even at the distance of a yard.

For this reason the captain had stopped his course, fearing for his own vessel, as well as wishing to avoid the risk of running down any small fishing or other boat, for we were now very near the coast. My dear Augustus, never did I salute the rising sun with so much fervour, with such joy and gratitude! Never for me had this beneficent luminary operated so prompt, so admirable a change! Its first appearance above the horizon was that of a globe of fire obscured by the damp vapour surrounding us, which was soon dissipated by its vivifying and warming light; when suddenly, on our left, we saw the shore of Hampshire in all the brightness of sunshine. Before us was the Isle of

Wight, with its celebrated rocks,—the Needles, — whose varied and picturesque form, and brilliant whiteness, now illuminated by the rays of the sun, were so beautifully contrasted with the blue of the sea. Some of them appeared like the remains of castles, their battlements and towers still rising above the floods; others, boldly elevating their pointed shafts in the air, looked like the steeples and spires of gothic churches.

Notwithstanding the sombre aspect of the deck of our vessel, the sun's rays soon produced a happy influence. The sleepers, male and female, began to rub their eyes; then half-open them; they afterwards stretched out their arms and legs, with the pretty yawns and contortions which accompany an awakening in the open air.

Many individuals now came on deck from below, climbing up from the hole, into which, thank God! I had happily abstained from descending the evening before. Then commenced certain duties of the toilette, upon which, out of consideration for you, I will draw the curtain.

In the midst of all this bustle, the powerful engine was again put into action; the wheels began once more to strike the surface of the water, covering it with white foam. In a few minutes we had regained all our former swiftness of motion, and the ship took the direction of the passage formed by the Isle of Wight and the coast of Hampshire, through which we had to go in order to reach Portsmouth.

I have already alluded to some persons on board, of apparently quieter manners, amidst whom I had taken refuge during the night. Among the rest, I remarked a tall man with a wooden leg, who appeared to be about fifty-five or sixty years of age. His countenance was frank and open, his manners agreeable: I listened with interest to some observations he made, during the long hours of darkness we had passed together, upon the condition of the naval force of England.

In the morning, after having mutually regarded each other several times whilst we were walking our corner of the deck, and having read in each other's countenance that an

advance on either part would not be ill received, I ventured the first, and we were soon seated by each other. He told me that he was going to London to perform a duty of which he was very proud, that of "paying his respects to his former captain." He pronounced these words with so marked an air of deference, and with an expression in his face of so much satisfaction, that, not knowing to what reason I might attribute this, I looked at him with surprise, particularly as a short time previously I had heard one of the passengers address him as "Sir James." This bespoke him a knight at the least; and supposing it probable that he was commander of a frigate himself, I could not comprehend this prodigious respect testified for a comrade. But he explained to me that his former captain "was no less a personage than the King of England himself." He had had the honour of serving under the Duke of Clarence when he was in actual service in the navy. To this sort of confidential conversation he added some anecdotes, every one

in honour of his ancient commandant; and the emotion he seemed to feel in relating them, was a sincere and affecting testimony of the profound attachment of this mutilated old veteran towards him, (now King of Great Britain,) who, when in the royal navy, "was so kind to every one under his command," and it was before him that he was now going to appear.

How altered must I seem to you! How changed my opinions relative to the English! Do you remember, my dear friend, our juvenile ideas, our childish prejudices? mine, particularly, for they were stronger than yours? The sort of hatred and unreasonable jealousy which fermented in our youthful breasts was, no doubt, the result of inexperience and habit; yet you would have found the same thing in England among young lads like ourselves, who never spoke of their contemporaries of France without the wild assertion and belief that one English boy was equal to three French. But were we not the same? Did I not myself

Thus, then, from the magnificent spectacle which I accidentally witnessed at Portsmouth, in the year 1830, upon the accession of William the Fourth to the throne, I shall take a retrospective view, and give you the history of a gay visit that I made some years before to Ascot Heath. This place is one of the most celebrated in England for its races, and particularly for the "good company" which assemble there. I will also make use of this opportunity to endeavour to give you some further insight into English society in general, more particularly into that set in which I found myself during the three days that these races lasted.

The Countess of H. possessed a cottage in the neighbourhood of Ascot Heath. During the short period of the races, this pretty residence was the rendezvous of many of the first-rate fashionables. They met there, not only because of the mutual attraction existing between people leading the same sort of life, but from another and a

ration of a country that, I confess, I formerly hated with all my heart. On this subject I cannot refrain from citing a few lines of a book I have lately been reading,—"Tom Cringle's Log—" one of the most interesting works I ever met with. It is a history of the adventures of a young naval officer during several cruises, and who in time obtains the command of the brig or schooner in which he has served. The work offers an endless succession of characteristic scenes, sometimes gay or affecting, sometimes terrible. They are depicted with a mixture of profound sensibility, and stoical indifference at the approach of danger or at the stern command of duty: in truth, the production is full of the energy and indomitable spirit of a stout-hearted sailor.

But let him speak for himself, when he is taken prisoner by some French soldiers under the orders of Marechal Davoust. I seize with avidity such a support for my opinions.

"Somehow or other I had drunk deep of that John-Bull prejudice which delights to disparage

of all sorts, &c.; sufficient of it indeed to attract visitors in plenty, in whatever part of the world it might have been spread. Tea, the national tea, appeared to reign supreme over all the rest; the pretty china cups, whether of India, Sevres, or Wedgwood, ever filling as they were emptied.

In London, the windows of the drawing-room where the luncheon was spread, looked out upon St. James's Park. The chosen few from the passers-by were invited to enter by a sign from the windows; those who were intimates entered without invitation; and I have seen a dozen and more arrive in the space of an hour, to offer their homage to her ladyship, and also to partake of her hospitality.

But to return to the races: whether they take place at Epsom or Ascot, London feels their influence throughout the whole of its immense extent. The part situated in the direction, and particularly on the direct road, offers an incomparable scene of activity and

bustle : equipages are there of every sort and description ; for the magnificent is mixed up with the mediocre, the shabby, and even the ludicrous. And how should it not be so ? It is the national pleasure, the delight of the country, and the very lowest Englishman wishes to enjoy his part.

But besides the vast number of private equipages,—drawn by beautiful horses, and ridden by postilions dressed in little coloured silk jackets, grey hats, with the bouquet in the buttonhole, as well as the rose at the horse's ear, and which are passing at each moment,—there are at the same time stage-coaches filled with people inside and out, gigs, cars, even to the modest cart, all following the same route. The innumerable post-horses which London contains, are all put into requisition, and are engaged by the day at ten guineas and even upwards the pair, including postilions who rival those of the nobility in their appearance.

It was on the edge of the green plain

where the gay tents and stands were erected for viewing the races, that Lady H.'s cottage was situated; hidden, however, behind some trees which surround the plain. I was invited to spend the three days of the races there, and you will easily believe that I did not fail to be punctual both to the day and hour indicated. Several carriages, drawn up in the shaded alley which led to the door, forewarned me that the company was already assembled.

Notwithstanding my desire to make you acquainted with individuals and their manners, whenever I have an opportunity, I cannot but hesitate when I reflect upon the delicate ground on which I am treading, when I treat of persons not only enjoying the highest consideration in England, but who have been kind and attentive to me. This last feeling alone would secure my discretion; and when I add, that our hostess on this occasion is no more, and that her noble husband, who was universally loved and respected, has followed

her to the grave, regretted by all who knew him, you will think how natural is my reserve when it extends to every member of their family, and even to all who composed this brilliant party at the cottage on Ascot Heath. At least a score persons were scattered about in different parts of the garden, which, on the opposite side of the house from the entry, was sufficiently spacious. Others were in the dining-room agreeably occupied in enjoying the repast of which I spoke above. At that time of my life, I also possessed an appetite that was none of the smallest; so you may judge if, after a very amiable reception from Lady H., I did not readily attend to her recommendation of laying "in a stock of strength for the races." The hour for their commencement soon arrived, the carriages were announced, and we all departed.

How shall I convey to you any just idea of the spectacle which Ascot Heath presents on such a day? how attempt to number the

carriages placed in rows three deep all along the ropes which enclose the race-ground, and which extend from the starting-post to some distance, and again at the winning-post, the spot where thousands are lost and won by a neck-length of a horse,—nay, even by the length of the end of his nose, should he by a prodigious effort pass his rivals at the last nick of time? These carriages are generally open, and filled with elegantly-dressed women. The variety of colours in their dresses, as well as that of their parasols, green, blue, lilac, &c. adds to the beauty of the scene. Neither can I calculate the number of people on foot, who in triple and quadruple ranks, fill up the space left between the carriages and the ropes, and this for the distance of half a mile on each side: but amongst these there are many whom it is impossible to restrain, and who, carried away by their extreme anxiety to see the horses better, and particularly to witness their arrival at the winning-post, venture upon the sacred ground; and there you may judge of

the excitement which this pleasure produces in the English people. Every notion of that relative dignity which I have so vaunted is, for the moment, entirely superseded! The keepers on horseback,—and, if I recollect rightly, in the royal livery,—who are employed to preserve the ground unobstructed, then charge upon the intruders, and gallop along the sides of the ropes to force them back, striking them with their hunting-whips, and a general *déroute* ensues. This, as you may suppose, causes many a fall, and many a ludicrous adventure, which produce shouts of laughter from the bystanders. As soon as the sound of the bell, which is suspended at the stand of the judges and umpires, is heard giving the joyous signal that the races are about to commence, this general eagerness redoubles: pushes and blows are given and taken in plenty; but, as soon as the horses appear, everything else is forgotten.

The jockeys are mounted; and nothing can be more graceful than their method of break-

ing them, by giving them beforehand a gentle gallop, — as we say at tennis, *peloter avant partir*. They went and returned in this manner, in a gentle canter upon the smooth elastic turf, so that the ear could hardly distinguish the sound of their light and graceful steps; and when they passed before the different stands occupied by the fashionable ladies, the latter would immediately select a favourite. Lady Georgina bets a pair of gloves with Lord D. in favour of the "pretty pink jockey," whilst my lord bets on the "claret-coloured cap." Lady H.'s party had taken places in one of these galleries; and, not to be singular, I also bet my pair of gloves with one of the ladies.

But the second signal, which makes every heart beat, is given; the horses are ranged in a line, their eyes full of fire, their nostrils dilated. They appear to devour the space which they are going to fly over. The word "off!" is pronounced, and off they spring together, as if thrust forward by the same impulse. Then a general upset takes place amongst

the spectators; all their ideas, all their faculties, are contentrated in one,—"that the race has begun!" If the course is complete, and the horses have to make the great circle which surrounds the plain, then the latter is traversed in every direction by the numerous horsemen; who, being for the most part interested in the result of the contest, put their horses to their utmost speed, in order to see the rapid progress made by this mixed assemblage of blue, green, and purple, looking like a flight of pigeons which just skim the ground.

But soon one round is performed; for, instead of lessening, the rapidity of the racers increases. The general anxiety becomes intense; every eye is eagerly fixed on the direction in which they will re-appear. "There they are!" is repeated by thousands of voices. At this critical moment the ground-keepers charge, the lashes increase in force and violence; and those who are so beaten and pushed about are no longer cold and reserved Englishmen, but a set of madmen, so excited by emotion and

pleasure, as to expose themselves by hundreds to the risk of being trampled on.

But here they are, those admirable creatures! they near the post! the jockeys bend forwards almost flat on their horses' necks, in order to offer as little resistance as possible to the air; and in the midst of the clamours of encouragement which are resounding in their ears, they preserve their coolness, and their command over their horses, even until a few hundred paces from the point where victory will no longer be uncertain. Then commence the incredible efforts of these noble animals! They must be seen to be believed; those astonishing leaps, those springs which those who mount them know how to provoke, seeming almost to lift them from the earth with supernatural strength. The impulse is so great, that, when the point is gained and passed like a flash of lightning, they sometimes run half a mile before they are able to stop.

For my part, I lost my pair of gloves, and

the very pretty Lady Georgina won hers; and this scene, which has taken so long to describe, did not in reality last longer than a few minutes.

Adieu!

LETTER XXIV.

Ascot Heath.—George the Fourth.—A French "Romance."—Marchioness of W.—Windsor Castle. — My Apartment there.—Moonlight effect. — Nocturnal view. — Disenchantment.

Well, here I am still on Ascot Heath. The interesting spectacle I tried to describe in my last letter, was repeated several times on that day, and on the following. Between each race the *beau monde* descended from the galleries to promenade on the turf: here, my natural inquisitiveness on such matters made me look for the marks of the horses' feet on it, to measure some of the tremendous springs that ensured the victory; and I found one twenty-two of my feet in length.

What increased greatly the interest of this

meeting was the presence of George the Fourth. (He almost always attended those races, being so near to Windsor.) During the intervals between the races, he was sometimes on horseback, accompanied by his brother the Duke of York, and went slowly through the crowd, now become as quiet and calm as ever. Every one bowed respectfully as he passed; and although the King was then without ceremony or suite, and dressed like every one else, yet the Duke of York kept carefully a pace or two behind him, and when he spoke to him would occasionally touch his hat. I cannot help mentioning this circumstance, as it returned forcibly to my memory not many months ago, when I saw on the Continent another King walking arm-in-arm with his brother-in-law, the latter a Prince Royal also of a powerful country. They were re-entering the palace, on returning from the park, where his Majesty had given a dinner to his soldiers.

Several of the morning visitors at the Countess of H.'s had been invited to dinner;

after which meal the company retired to the drawing-room. The windows opened on the lawn; it was a lovely summer evening, and the flowers from the garden, and those in the stands in the room, shed a delicious odour through the whole house. The tranquillity which reigned there had acquired new charms after so fatiguing a day; and some of the ladies were seated close to the windows, resting themselves and enjoying the fresh air. I was talking to a son of Lady H. (one of those very cousins of whom I spoke to you in my first letter),—we were speaking of France: suddenly I heard the sound of a piano issuing from the neighbouring room, followed by a pretty female voice, which began a French air; so well pronounced, and so well accompanied, that in the greatest surprise I rose from my seat, believing myself once more in a certain chateau which you and I know so well, where I had so often heard this very *romance*, and where I had myself learnt it.

The scent of a simple flower recalls many an endeared remembrance; but that which music awakens, particularly if it be the music of a soft and plaintive voice, is still more full of charm. Such influences are vague, uncertain, inexplicable; yet the emotion they produce is real, and by its power I found myself transported, I hardly knew how, into the room whence came the sweet voice.

The singer was the Marchioness of W., to whom I had been introduced in the morning. She smilingly said that I must not think she sang in order to attract me; but that, from what her friend Lady C. S. had told her of my love of music, they had both been certain I should come to the room on hearing the first words of the air. Why is it that almost every one to whom I venture to allude more particularly than to another, I am afterwards obliged to mention as the victim of some sad or melancholy change? She, who sung so sweetly! then young, beautiful, and

accomplished, with every advantage of situation, rank, and fortune; she, for whom life appeared only to promise pleasure and triumph, was soon after marked by Death for his prey, and this in the midst of preparation for a fête.

From the description I have given you of Lady H.'s little cottage, you will suppose that it could not contain the whole of the large family which met there during the three days; so we, young men, (that is to say, two of her sons, my brother, and myself,) were sent two miles off to sleep in Windsor Castle, of which place Lord H. was governor, and where he had apartments. We departed at night; our route was by the superb alley which runs through Windsor Forest. The royal castle had not then been embellished with all the magnificence that George the Fourth has since lavished on it. This expense was defrayed, if I am not mistaken, by the grant of an enormous sum, torn, with great difficulty, from the House of Commons, and which pro-

duced an universal grumbling through all the three kingdoms.

My brother and myself (after agreeing to visit everything in detail the next morning before we went to the races) were conducted to our sleeping-rooms. That which fell to my lot was situated in one of the angles of the castle, which is erected upon a platform on elevated ground, and commands a superb and extensive view of the country that surrounds it. Immediately on entering my apartment I began to examine it. The furniture was of ancient fashion, but in good preservation; the walls were hung with old damask, and decorated with cabinet pictures of the Flemish school. There was also a portrait of Queen Charlotte, the wife of George the Third; and I fancied that I found in this picture an expression of simplicity mingled with severity, which confirms what is related of this princess. The hearth was furnished with old gilt *chenets* with sphynxes' heads; the chimney-piece, of black marble, supported a time-piece

of beautiful workmanship, although of ancient date, and two candelabres of crystal; the carpet was faded, but still thick and soft.

My bed was in a little closet opening into this room. The window was a small gothic casement with coloured glass. When in bed, and my candle extinguished, the moon, which was shining resplendently, penetrated into my little retreat, and repeated the varied colours of the windows upon my curtains and on the floor. The effect was really extraordinary. It was late, and the perfect silence which reigned throughout the castle gave an almost solemn feeling to the moment. This happened at a period of my life when I had illusions that I still cherished; and, instead of sleeping, I abandoned myself to them.

What would I not have given to hear again the voice of Lady W. gently breaking the silence with that melody whose words still vibrated on my ear! Nothing would then have been wanting to render this scene completely romantic. My memory would have strayed

to the spot where I first heard that air: I thought of my friends in France; of that time of my existence when, my childhood scarcely passed, *je voyois tout en beau dans la vie! tout me paroissoit couleur de rose!* But after many agreeable reflections, in most of which I had an advantageous part, Dame Nature spoke; the want of sleep — to which, however romantic one may be, one must yield — began to make itself felt. I rose, to contemplate for the last time the beautiful planet which had awakened so many varied sensations; I opened the window; the pale light of the moon was shed over the massive tower of the castle, over the town and the country, where I could distinguish the silver windings of the Thames through the fog which now began to rise. All this appeared very fine at first; but besides the fog, which all rivers exhale at this hour, there is one which covers all England at night; it is, indeed, the cause of its renowned verdure, of its fresh vegetation, and also of the severe colds to persons who expose themselves to it. I

was on the point of forgetting this, when the damp, which I felt *in my somewhat light déshabillé*, charitably recalled it to my memory ; so, shutting the window, and drawing the thick curtain hanging by it, I returned shivering and disenchanted to my bed.

So, *bon soir !*

LETTER XXV.

A Trophy.—King Charles's Beauties.—St. George's Chapel.—French Armour.—Return to Ascot.—Days at the Races.

IMAGINE, Augustus, your friend Edward, with the ideas he had of the superiority of the French army over every other — in whose eyes the many victories gained by this army effaced its few defeats, — imagine him, I say, beginning his tour through Windsor Castle, by a room in which the first object that is shown to him is a *tricoloured* silk flag, placed there as a glorious remembrance of the Battle of Waterloo.

Just figure to yourself my face when I felt myself called upon to *swallow* — pardon me the expression — the following details: " His Grace the Duke of Wellington is obliged, conformably to ancient custom, to deposit every year in

the hands, or at the feet of his Majesty, a similar flag, as the price of tenure by which he enjoys the estates granted him by the nation as the reward of his victory."

At that time I had not even the small stock of philosophy which ten years more have given me, and every one of these words, — upon which the *bourreau d'Anglais*, who used them, seemed to lay stress,—was highly disagreeable to my ears. Then came the thought that I must in addition give a *pour boire* to the fellow for his trouble ; and it struck me as so comically ridiculous, that it dispelled my ill-humour.

Amongst the suite of royal apartments was one which particularly attracted our curiosity; it contained the portraits of the soft blue-eyed beauties who had subjugated the heart of Charles II. "of joyous memory;" and as it would be improper to call them King Charles's mistresses, "Sir Peter Lely's beauties" is the designation they go by. The architecture of Windsor Castle has been preserved, and is

purely gothic. The external ornaments, the general colour of the stones, the passages, the staircases, every part, in short, is impressed with this character; and if, on winding through a gallery, we had run against a knight of high stature, and armed *cap-à-pié*, such meeting would not have appeared unseasonable, for my head was filled with such fancies as we went along.

The Royal Chapel, St. George's, which we saw also, is a superb piece of gothic architecture, the ornaments of which are of most exquisite workmanship. The choir is separated from the rest, like a second chapel erected within the first. Its entrance is secured by a double curtain, falling in large folds, fastened upon each side to give passage into the sanctuary. What first strikes one in a church where only two or three persons are assembled, is the profound silence that reigns, and the sudden vibration from the vaulted roof of the least sound, of the slightest noise; also the

half light, stealing through high windows, often themselves darkened by sacred pictures: then the unaccustomed atmosphere, whose coolness penetrates your clothing; but the principal thought is, "that you are in the temple of God!"

In entering the choir of Windsor Chapel, this impression is more than usually profound; for to this general feeling is added the idea, that, under the polished stones upon which you are walking, rest the remains of England's kings! That all their power, all their grandeur lies prostrate there in the dust, or in the horrible form of skeletons! As a strong contrast, at some feet above, "in light and air," are the stalls of the living peers of the kingdom, in double rows, reaching to the farther extremity of the choir; and above each of these envied seats are suspended flags, bearing their coats of arms.

The tower of the castle terminated our visit of inspection; and there, again, my national vanity was put to trial: but this time the dose was less revolting, for its great age softened its

bitterness. In a spacious hall was a collection of armour, and amongst others some cuirasses, pierced with holes made by arquebuses, upon which the lance and the heavy sword of other days had left deep marks of desperate combat. These were the reliques of the battle of Agincourt, where, as history says, "perished la fleur des nobles chevaliers de France." Our guide in this part was a woman, young, rosy, and pleasing; and when with her white wand she pointed to the broken armour, saying that they had belonged to French chevaliers found dead upon the field of battle, whether it was her sex's generosity, or her own peculiar perspicacity which caused her to divine what passed in a man's heart by the expression on his face, I know not, but she hastened to remark that all these wounds "were bravely received in front," for not one cuirass was marked in the back. This was "gilding the pill," it is true; but she did it so amiably, and with a delicacy of feeling so little to be expected in her sphere of life, that my brother and I felt grate-

ful, and her little parting offering was doubled in consequence.

But it was in a very hurried manner that we visited Windsor Castle: a day such as this was, — one on which were held, in the immediate neighbourhood, some of the gayest races in the world,—was ill chosen for the inspection of antiquities, and we were anxious to get off to our rendezvous at Ascot. In those days, my dear friend, I was, you know, *half a fashionable* myself; I had my tilbury and my "tiger;" and with a red carnation in my button-hole, one of Carruther and Callow's whips in my hand, lightly caressing with its white lash the neck of my spirited "Fidget," adorned with his rose on his ear, I again drove through the magnificent alley of Windsor Forest to return to the race-ground.

We were in truth rather late, for we perceived the royal carriages, in all their splendour, half a mile before us; the bright scarlet liveries of the servants contrasting with great effect with the dark green tints of the

superb forest trees. Some other equipages enlivened the scene, and the surprised and frightened deer, crossing the road in two or three bounds, rushed to hide themselves in some more tranquil spot.

Now, my good friend, add together three times in your imagination the twenty-four hours which I have described to you, (save and except the curiosities of Windsor, which we only saw once,) and you will have the history of the three days that I passed at Ascot.

Adieu !

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

LETTER XLIII.

Estimation of England. — General Cleanliness. — Borders of the Rhine.—Wretchedness of the Towns.—Misery of the People. — Obstacles to Improvement. — People of Education. — Bad Habits.—Pavements in London.—Clean Hands. Page 161

LETTER XLIV.

Education in England.—Periodical Publications.—Agriculture.—Turnips introduced by Lord Townsend.—English Farmhouse.—Gratitude. 173

LETTER XLV.

The English Sailor.—The Royal Navy.—The Naval Captain. —Critical Situation.—Presence of Mind.—Sailors ashore.—A Sailor Convict.—Stoicism. 185

LETTER XLVI.

Recreations.—Statesmen.—Contrast.—Statesmen in France. —Pompous Ambassador. — Mortified Arrogance. — Mr. Canning.—A modest man. 197

LETTER XLVII.

Paltry Ambition. — Pretensions of Footmen. — Costume.— Ridiculous Pride. — Contrasts. — Affected Condescension. — Undue Pretension. 207

LETTER XLVIII.

Middle Classes in France. — The English Waiter. — English and French Officers. — Army Discipline. — Military Rank. — Adieu to England. 214

SKETCHES

OF

MANNERS, FIELD SPORTS, &c. IN FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

Morning Visits in France.—Madame H.—Her bon-mot.—Beautiful Invalid.—A French Sleeping-room. . Page 228

CHAPTER II.

Hunting Party.—Battues.—Preparations for the Boar-hunt.—Hunting in the Forest. 236

CHAPTER III.

Visit to Bar-le-Duc.—French Calèche.—Confines of the Forest.—Our Guides.—Silent Precautions.—The Battue.—The Sport.—Our Success.—A Wolf Shot.—His Death.—Chace of a Boar.—A Dog Killed.—Death of the Boar.—Triumphant March.—Return to Rendezvous. . . 242

CHAPTER IV.

Second Day's Sport.—Shooting Foxes.—A Wounded Wolf.—His Death. 260

CHAPTER V.

Progress of Music.—Auber, Herold, Halevy.—French Romances.—A French Singer.—Singers and Dancers.—The Pirouette.—Ridiculous Exhibition.—Albert. . . 270

CHAPTER VI.

The Fine Arts. — French Artists. — Defect in Colouring. — Horace Vernet. — The Ancient Masters.—Sculpture and Architecture.—The Theatres.—Quadrilles. . . Page 279

CHAPTER VII.

English Girls.—Manœuvring Mothers.—Matrimonial Speculations. — Match-making. — Flirtation.— French Marriages. — England and France. 289

IMPRESSIONS

OF

ENGLAND.

LETTER XXVI.

Return to Devonshire.—Home.—Mail Coaches.—Journey commenced.—Mail Coachman.—The Horses.—Rapid Travelling.—Arrival at Exeter.

By virtue of the power which I have reserved to myself of transporting you at will to different times and places, you shall now, if you please, return with me to my journey from Torquay to London, by Portsmouth. It is unnecessary to mention the cause of my undertaking it; therefore I shall only say that, during this short absence, I formed the unfortunate resolution of taking a house in Sussex, at about thirty-five or forty miles from London, in order to be nearer

our family connexions and friends. The term "unfortunate," which I have here applied, will be explained when you read the recital of all that befel us there.

In order to enable you to comprehend me, I must forewarn you that I was now arrived at a time of life when pleasures merely mundane had begun to lose their zest in my estimation. The happy recklessness of early youth, and its constant smile, had given place to other sentiments, which bestowed also their own peculiar happiness. I allude to those of the husband and father, which, in augmenting the interest of life, deprived it of the carelessness, and perhaps of the egotism, in which he, who lives by himself and for himself alone, too often indulges. But, before I go further into this subject, let me relate my return to Devonshire by the mail-coach; taking advantage of the opportunity to depict a little more fully some of the customs of the country.

Amongst the many very expressive words which the English language possesses, there

is one for which I have a particular admiration,—namely, the word "home;" this, in itself, embraces all the ideas arising from "*le chez soi*," — the paternal, or any other roof, where you have left your own family, or whatever is dearest in the world. There, where you are sure of finding her who has promised so sacredly,—as you have promised to her,—"to take you for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness, and in health;" there again, where two charming little girls run joyously out to embrace you; "home" signifies all this, my friend! And England is thus called by the sailor who is seeking a passage through the icebergs of the Atlantic; by the soldier who is panting under the burning Indian sun! Yes, this word is dear to the ear and heart of an Englishman, let him be poor or rich, happy or unhappy; dear even for him to whom this word represents but an abode of poverty!

You will now understand how impatiently I looked forward to my return to Torquay, for there my home contained all that I have just describ-

ed; and I could not choose a quicker manner of transport than that which the mail offered me. This carriage is lighter than the stage-coaches, and is only allowed to carry a very small quantity of baggage; four persons in the inside, and, at the most, two on the outside in front. Its form is, as one might say, "better cut out for racing;" the body smaller, the wheels higher, and the whole of the weight more exactly thrown upon one particular point. It was in the mail-coach to Exeter,—the chief town of the county of Devonshire,—that I had engaged my place; I found it in Piccadilly at the hour indicated. It was just on the point of departure; the whole scene offered a true English picture in its full character.

The four horses, exactly alike, are harnessed and reined up short, the head up, and their coats as shining as their harness; the leaders are held by two grooms, placed at their heads. The coach-box was covered by two or three great-coats; I had secured my place on it, by setting there my old blue cloak,—fallen from

its high estate, when lined with white it used to accompany me to the Opera and Almack's. Besides this, I found one of the great-coats of which I spoke above, and the coachman had himself goodnaturedly prepared to wrap up my legs during the cold of the night. The guard, in his red livery,—the royal livery,—mounted upon his seat in the rear, was occupied in disposing in order the different leather-bags containing the letters to be distributed on the road. On the right hand of his seat, passed through a ring, was the long and light trumpet, whose loud sound is heard from afar all along the road, announcing the approach of the mail. A great number of idlers and amateurs, who are always attracted together on these occasions, were standing in a crowd on the pavement to see the mail set off.

If, my dear Augustus, idle people, or those who have nothing to do but to amuse themselves, lose days — weeks, months, and even years of their lives, — those who are in business, or travelling, never lose a moment; their incessant

activity is incredible. One would almost think that they regret the time passed in sleeping; and I should not be surprised, in a country so fertile in inventions of every kind, to find some day that the bankers' clerks, tradesmen, &c. have discovered a way, during sleep, to continue their accounts so as to find their work finished on the morning when they awake!

But, without joking, and to return to my mail-coach, as well as to the promptitude with which all that relates to travelling is conducted in England: I was scarcely seated on my six square inches of box, without back, or any other support than what is offered by the footboard, when our coachman appeared; and, in much less time than it takes me to tell it, he adjusted his four reins, grasped his whip, and mounted to his seat. I heard his "Good-evening, sir!" —then the sharp whistle: the leaders had freed their heads by a violent motion from the hands which had restrained them, and we were off.

As long as we were in London, or the immediate suburbs, our progress was comparatively

slow, on account of the great number of carriages and people which interrupted it; but the skill of the coachman was only the more apparent in avoiding accidents, and in moderating the ardour of his horses. He was not a tall man, but strong-built; his large chest, his muscular form, his cool and assured countenance, bespoke that he possessed all the qualities necessary to his occupation. On my part, in order to show him I was not quite an ignoramus, I took good care not yet to speak to him. In fact, it would have been rather difficult to make myself heard amidst all the din of the carriages, and the piercing sounds which the guard, with a chest quite as ample as that of his comrade, drew from his horn. Besides, I should have risked diverting his attention from his business, and have passed in his eyes for no better than a cockney. Probably it was this evidence of discretion which gained his favour for the rest of the journey.

It is remarkable how much the generality of these coachmen appear flattered when they

meet with a gentleman who seems to comprehend something of their "duties as coachmen," and can appreciate their skill and experience, understand the responsibility which rests on them, and again particularly when he shows an interest in their horses. Our course, as I told you, was not very rapid until we cleared the suburbs; but, having passed through the last turnpike, no sooner was the road free before us, than the horses displayed their full ardour. I could perceive on the coachman's face a smile of satisfaction at the bounds which they made, and at the rapidity with which the carriage was hurried forward.

"Are they not fine creatures, sir?" said he, beginning himself the conversation; "they are worth a hundred guineas each, sir," added he, whilst lightly passing his whip over their shoulders, and then tempering the too great eagerness of one of his leaders by the words "steady! steady! quiet! quiet!"

In order to give you an idea of the quickness with which we travelled, I must tell you that

the distance from London to Exeter is about one hundred and sixty miles; and, including the stoppages which we were obliged to make for the delivery of the letter-bags, it was performed in twenty hours. During the night, the obscurity, far from proving an obstacle, seemed a reason for greater rapidity. If you will recollect how I was perched upon my corner of the coach-box, without any support than what my feet afforded me, you will not be surprised that, thus seeming to cleave the air like an Antwerp pigeon, the not over-pleasant thought came over me that if we met a cart, which, notwithstanding our lanterns, would never have had time to get out of the way, or a stone even,—why, coach and travellers would have been shattered to atoms!

Affecting an air of tranquillity, which I confess I did not feel, I addressed my friend the coachman, leaning over his shoulder and putting my head close, that he might hear me distinctly:

"I say, coachman! what a tremendous crash if we should meet a stone!"

"There is not such a thing on the road, sir; I know every bit of it."

"But if it were a cart?"

"Too late for a cart now, sir."

And he accompanied these words with a whisking of his whip, which gave so great an impulse to the carriage, that I only thought of keeping my seat, and put aside for the moment all further observation.

Arrived at Exeter, I took a postchaise, (a convenience you find at all the inns where they keep posthorses in England,) and reached my home, there to recommence my preparations for departure.

Adieu! my dear friend; in my next letter I shall broach a different subject, and one for which I have less courage than for any whereon I have hitherto treated.

Yours.

LETTER XXVII.

Our new Residence. — Forebodings. — Paternal Love. — Our House in Sussex.—Insalubrity of the spot.—The Clergyman.

My dear Augustus,

Our new residence, as I have already told you, was in Sussex, at a mile distance from C * *, a pretty village situated upon one of the roads leading from London to Brighton. On our arrival, whether it was regret at having quitted the beautiful scenery of Devonshire, the fatigue of the journey, or perhaps the melancholy impression produced by the solitary aspect of the house, or again, the inquietude recently renewed for the health of our youngest infant, but the moment that her mother descended from

the carriage and was seated in the drawing-room, she could not restrain her tears. These were the only reproach I ever received for the unfortunate choice I had made. But were these tears a sinister presage of the future? one of those vague forebodings which present themselves to the mind? I felt in myself their influence, and all the ideas I had cherished of a peaceable retreat vanished in an instant. In place of the felicitations I had expected, I experienced nothing but regret, without being able to explain to myself the cause.

For you, Augustus, who have decided to pass your life as a bachelor,—you who can never, as you say, submit your hands to the chains of matrimony,—there is one happiness which must ever be unknown, one affection you never can enjoy—that of a father for his child. I speak not of that momentary tenderness experienced by the man of worldly occupations, who can find but one short hour in the day to consecrate to such a feeling, and who adores his children, provided they retire when this period is expired;

neither do I allude to that species of affection where pride or vanity only are engaged, which pleases itself in the display of children richly dressed, whose future position is assured by accumulated wealth, and whose present life is protected by all that luxury can collect.

These are not specimens of the paternal love of which I wish to speak; but of that true and profound affection, in its most ample sense, which can nourish itself unceasingly, and even strengthen its intensity by the least incidents in the existence of the frail being whom you feel so entirely belonging to you, not only as a simple possession, as a fortune, a jewel, but that which God and Nature have confided to you, which the presence of your child always causes you to feel, and which no other good upon earth can replace.

I will add, that the poor little girl, to whom I now allude, became to us more dear on account of the very dangers by which her existence had been menaced. But I will quit for some moments this afflicting subject; to speak of it in

detail is to open a cruel wound, and, moreover, I ought to remember that it is not upon myself but upon England that I am to write. Let us pass then to the description of the place in which we were now situated.

The country is flat, composed of fields and meadows surrounded by hedges, which intercept the view, because they are chiefly formed of trees. There are some woods here and there; but not a roof, not even that of a cottage, is to be seen in the neighbourhood. The lawn is spacious; the gate of entry to the garden, where one arrives by a cross-road, opens at the extremity of a little bridge, thrown over a rippling brook overshaded with elms and lime-trees, whose branches are inhabited by numerous and noisy rooks. The house itself presents two fronts, forming a right angle, and both opening on the lawn. This is separated from the kitchen-garden by a yew hedge, cut in the old fashion, and offering a thick wall of verdure from ten to twelve feet high, and one hundred and twenty long. One of the façades of the house, larger, but less ele-

vated than the other, is covered from its centre with creeping vines, and extends itself towards the fruit-garden.

Behind the house is concealed the cottage of the gardener with his numerous family. He is charged to take care of the pleasure-grounds, the fruits, &c. The interior of the house, its apartments and furniture, are very shabby, as one says in England. It is true, there is a stable for four horses, coach-house for two carriages, and a right of shooting over a tolerable range of country. This must be taken as a sort of confession both for and against the place; but that which will turn the balance entirely against me is the insalubrity of the spot, which results from its low position, and the damp fields which surround it. This had escaped my inexperience when I came to view the premises during the heat of the summer. It is true, that to have apprised me of it would have been more than virtue in *Madame* the proprietor. She had, without doubt, too much desire to let it; but how many pangs and griefs would she per-

haps have spared to me, if a movement of generosity had prompted her to speak !

The first visit which was made to us, and the only one we desired to receive, was that of the clergyman of C * *, the neighbouring village. It would perhaps have appeared to you extraordinary to see him coming upon horseback, in top-boots. You would have deemed this too much like the world, habituated as you are to the severe and rigid habits of the priests of our country. But do not judge too precipitately; observe that in England, amongst gentlemen who live in the country, (and even amongst farmers,) riding on horseback and in this description of boots is a common custom; and, moreover, the great age of the minister could not allow him any longer to make these visits on foot in the environs of his presbytery.

Certainly there is nothing very worldly in this; and if you add the age of seventy years, and his grey hairs, manners full of dignity, a physiognomy beaming with goodness and in-

spiring respect, you will have the portrait of the Reverend Mr. C. But you shall know him better; he must reappear in all the solemnity of his character,—that of the minister of his church.

LETTER XXVIII.

Severe affliction.—Illness of our Child.—Reception at Hampton Court.—The Physician.—Return to Hampton Court.

AUGUSTUS,

IT will relieve me from many painful recollections to pass over in silence a part of the details which preceded the severe affliction with which we were visited in Sussex. All our endeavours to support our courage in the middle of this solitude, to render even our abode there tolerable, were useless and unavailing. The sad effects of the slow disease which destroyed little by little the strength and constitution of our child, were too perceptible and too certain to afford us any room for tranquillity. If, occasionally, the least symptom of amelioration mani-

fested itself in her appearance, then the innocent gaiety, the playfulness of that age, seemed to struggle to return. Alas! it was confined to some feeble essays to imitate the agility and joyful boundings of her sister, who was rejoicing to see her better. Poor child! her joy was a passing smile, which the sad language of her eyes too visibly belied: and I should fear now to retrace in an infant that profound and melancholy expression; a sensibility so deep, so precious; and, above all, such angelic patience under suffering!

All this, my dear Augustus, had but too strongly awakened the idea that she was not born for this world, that God would recall her to himself. But, I repeat, that in spite of our efforts, our cares, and prayers, the disease assumed daily a character more alarming. We decided to change the air, and approach nearer to London, for the purpose of having a more prompt and easy access to the best physicians of the capital. With this view we went to Hampton Court, where some friends from Cheltenham

were established, who awaited our arrival with impatience. It was the family of whom I spoke to you in one of my former letters; that of "the good father in his library," and "the friend so shy in giving his bottle of hock;" that being, so good, so generous, whom misfortune also had smitten in his turn!

If you remember what I said to you of their friendship for us, of the attention and kindness with which they overwhelmed us, you will divine the sympathetic reception which we found at Hampton Court. But I have promised to avoid all details; and there are so many at this moment which would be painful for me to recite, that I shall pursue my principal subject. I must reserve all my force for that.

After a few days' repose for the invalid, we carried her to London, to consult Dr. V. (to whom I had written) on her pitiable state of health, and to hear from his lips whether we could encourage the least hope. When we arrived at his door, and descended from the carriage, I bearing the infant in my arms, her

mother became so pale and trembling, that she had scarcely strength to follow me. We were introduced into the parlour of the doctor, who appeared immediately. Having affectionately pressed both our hands, he fixed his eyes upon our child. There was then a dead silence in the room. The poor creature, on the knees of her nurse, sustained the look of the doctor with the innocent ignorance of her unhappy state. Her mother held her hand upon her eyes. As for me, my heart was beating enough to shake my whole body. I fixed my look upon the physician so as to pierce into his very soul to read the truth, and to know beforehand the sentence we were to receive!

He calmly desired that the shoulders and chest of the child should be uncovered! Here the sensitive nature of a mother could no longer be restrained: the generous shame of the exposure of her infant, reduced to such a point of weakness and decay, entirely overcame her, and she burst into tears!

But enough! enough! for me, as well as for

you, my dear Augustus. We took leave of Dr. V. after having received some encouraging words, and his request that we would write regularly the progress of the disorder; with some directions for our guide, which were listened to with avidity. In an hour more we had returned to Hampton-Court.

Once more adieu!

LETTER XXIX.

Alarm.—Death of our Child.—Incendiaries.—Their Retreat.

After a few weeks passed at Hampton Court, we returned to Sussex,—to that fatal spot, for I cannot call it otherwise. Fashion, before which, I have already told you, everything yields in England, had caused some of our relations to fly from London; others were absent, from different reasons; we had not a friend near us, and our child was dying! After many nights passed by the side of her bed without sleep, without a moment of rest, a cry of alarm one morning at two o'clock caused me to jump from the chair on which

I was seated, my head resting in my hands. It was the cry of a mother at the sight of a fatal and sudden alteration in the features of her child! In seeing it myself, a shudder apprised me that it announced the approach of death; nevertheless, a remnant of hope caused me still to seek for succour. A surgeon of the neighbourhood, to whom we had already applied, was to return at daybreak, but there was now not a minute to lose. My servant neither knowing the country nor the residence of the surgeon, I descended to go in quest of the gardener at his cottage. The night was frightful; it rained in torrents, and the wind roared through the lofty trees about the house. The brave fellow was attached to us: he hesitated not a second; a horse was saddled, and he departed.

Again I stop! Let me draw a veil over a scene too distressing for a father and a mother. At seven in the morning all was over! Our child reposed for ever!

But listen! another scene was preparing for

me! I will tell it you with more courage, for it was as a blessing of Providence, which, in the midst of my despair, and of the burning fever which arose from anguish and fatigue, seemed created to calm my suffering for an instant by a new and sudden emotion.

A few hours after the child had expired, I was alone, on my knees, praying near the bed of death, and contemplating that face which then resembled that of an angel in its sleep. The solemn silence which the presence of death imposes in every Christian house, reigned profoundly in ours. On a sudden I heard a murmur of voices, which approached from the garden. It was during the time when incendiaries were roaming over the country, burning farms and stacks, and committing everywhere destruction. On lifting one of the curtains, which excluded the light from the chamber of mourning, I perceived about a hundred men armed with pitchforks and sticks, who were opening with violence the garden-gate. A look cast upon my child inspired me with an energy and a

calm extraordinary for the state in which I was: I descended the stairs, and opened the door of the house; they were all there. Whether it was the promptitude of my appearance, or the wretched figure I made, they retired a few steps on seeing me, and I addressed them in these words:

"My friends, there are surely many fathers amongst you. My child is there lying dead. The hand of God has visited my house, and I am sure you will respect it." In thus speaking, I pointed with my finger to the chamber where lay the body of my babe.

In a moment every hat was lifted in token of respect; the greater number advanced to shake hands with me; they then retired in silence, and gently closed the garden-gate.

And I, my friend, returned to pray at the foot of the bed of my departed child, and to thank God for having rendered her, after her death, the protectress of her father and mother.

LETTER XXX.

Benevolent Comforter.—Spiritual Consolation.—Departure.—The Clergyman. — Ramsgate. — French Fishing-boats.—Goodwin Sands. — Furious Gale. — Life-boats. — Intrepid Sailors.—A Wreck.

DEAR AUGUSTUS,

I PROMISED to exhibit the Reverend Mr. C. in all the solemnity of his functions as minister of the church; but you will forgive me if I do not keep my word. In truth, I have not sufficient courage to continue this subject. I will therefore only show him to you as the benevolent comforter who endeavoured to restore strength to my mind, and to lead me to resignation by arguments full of simple piety; at the same time condemning with gentleness the senseless reproaches that I addressed to

Providence, accusing its justice, and blaming its cruelty. How much do I not owe him for the spiritual consolation he offered me during my sad retirement! for his consoling views of the Divine goodness of the Creator! for all his conversations, which fell like balm upon my wounded heart! If ever these letters should fall under his eyes, he will find in them the tribute of my sincere gratitude, for having rendered me, stranger as I was to him, the object of one of the numerous acts of Christian kindness with which his irreproachable life has been filled.

I shall also pass rapidly over all the difficulties which were to be surmounted before we were able to quit our miserable abode. Already its malign influence, or our sick imaginations fancied it so, had begun dangerously to affect our only remaining child, and had seemingly marked her as a second victim; and under this intolerable suffering I addressed our landlady for permission to under-let the house, of course rendering myself responsible. Although it was

to a mother that I addressed my request, yet it was some time before I received a reply, and this from her man of business; which, whilst agreeing to my wish, was filled with such ridiculous and absurd exactions,—such as the necessity I should be under of proving the good character, respectability, almost the *virtues* of the family who might replace me,—that, unable to master my indignation, I returned the letter to the gentleman who had written it. However, not to lengthen unnecessarily this uninteresting history, we shortly afterwards were fortunate enough to find a most honourable *remplaçant*.

Before my departure, I went to the rectory to make my adieus. I found the good clergyman in the garden, holding in his arm his young grandchild: as soon as he saw me, an impulse of delicacy, I have no doubt, made him instantly re-enter the house to place the child in other hands, for a moment afterwards he re-appeared alone, and came forward to receive me. After several turns in the garden,

during which he made me observe again and again his flowers, particularly his bed of tulips, of which he was very proud, we entered the house: his wife was alone in the drawing-room. He asked me to take a family dinner with him; and, my dear Augustus, if you had seen later in the day these two beings, united as they had been for so many years, seated together on the same sofa, you would, like me, have admired the serenity depicted on their countenances, their calmness of demeanour, the confidence and respect they appeared mutually to feel for each other; and he who, just before, had been talking to me in his garden with so much interest, and with so much religious inspiration, about the cruel loss I had lately sustained, now appeared only the simple husband in his own home. He pointed to the dark grey steeple of the old village church, which was seen across the garden, and with a quiet smile he said, "Have I not done well, my dear Mary, to have the branches of the oak thinned, which interrupted

our view? we can now see the steeple so well from here!" And their eyes rested together on the spot, in which was centred all their wishes, all their ambition!

After having heartily shaken hands with him, and received his blessings, and his promise to watch over the tomb of my poor child, I took leave of my reverend old friend.

We departed for Ramsgate, where we had a sister and a brother-in-law, who had kindly invited us to go to them. Ramsgate is one of the ports on the Kentish coast. It is justly celebrated for the great utility and the beauty of its pier, which, advancing far into the sea, gives a secure and a tranquil asylum to vessels which put in in stormy weather; whilst, on the other side of this impenetrable mass of stone-work, the furious waves break violently, but harmlessly.

The scenes that here presented themselves to my observation were all quite new to me. It was pleasing to me to see the arrival of the fishing-boats from France, (generally from

Dunkerque,) and to witness the good fellowship which existed between the French and the Ramsgate sailors. My interest was still greater in watching their departure from the end of the pier. It was generally in the evening after sunset that this took place. The crew of these barks usually consisted of about eight or ten men: their dress was of a thick common cloth, with great boots mounting above their knees, and large broad-brimmed leather hats; all this to protect them from the continual humidity and cold which they had to endure, for it was in the very middle of winter.

I observed one of these boats particularly: it was decked, and two-thirds of the crew had already descended to repose in the hold, in which they are so confined for room as to be obliged all to lie down on the same side closely packed together, and then to turn simultaneously to the other when they wish to change their position. Those who remained on deck were occupied in the management of

the boat, and directed its course towards the mouth of the harbour; there they passed down at my feet: amongst them were some who recognised me; they already knew me as their compatriot, and as such had more than once got a few shillings to add to their potations; so I failed not now to receive their farewell and benediction. Once out of port, their bark appeared so frail, and was so tossed about by the waves, that I could not fail to pity them, as I saw them exposed to all the dangers of a winter's night on a stormy sea; and yet, as they disappeared in the fog and the coming obscurity, I could still hear their cheerful songs and lively cries! The thought of the morrow, when they would embrace their wives and children, animated them, and kept up their courage.

Some miles out at sea, and a little to the left of Ramsgate, are situated the dangerous quicksands called the Goodwin Sands; near one point is placed a vessel without rigging, but strongly fixed with anchors, chains, &c.

Every night a brilliant light is hoisted on it, to warn vessels passing of the danger of approaching it too nearly. Besides this, the port of Ramsgate is supplied with several boats, which are called life-boats; uniting the two qualities of strength and lightness, and formed so as to be able to live in the most tempestuous seas. They are manned by sailors, chosen among the most intrepid; and are always prepared to go out in every kind of weather to the assistance of those who have been wrecked.

Several times we witnessed those violent gales of wind which are so common on that coast in winter; one of them I remember particularly. It began at about noon, and towards evening burst in all its force and grandeur. Cannon was heard several times in the night following, in the direction of the Goodwin Sands; and although faintly distinguishable through the roaring of the tempest, still it was at once detected by the practised ears of the sailors in port. I was unable to resist my

desire of visiting the pier. There the wind blew with such violence that I was several times rudely thrown by it against the parapet. The sea was indeed tremendous, and swelling to a prodigious height. I found the captain of the harbour at his post, with his speaking-trumpet in his hand. (He was an old seaman, who was deaf in consequence of the explosion of a vessel in a celebrated battle.) The port-light shed its brilliant beams just on the group which surrounded him, and particularly on himself as he stood forward on the very edge of the pier. He appeared quite inattentive to the waves which were breaking at his feet, and covering him with foam; his eyes were fixed upon two fishing-boats, which had been overtaken by the storm, and were trying to get into the harbour, the entrance to which is extremely difficult and dangerous in such a moment, on account of its narrowness and its position. They both advanced directed by his trumpet, whose loud sounds almost defied those of the tempest. The first, raised up, just at

the critical moment, by an enormous wave, which entirely filled up the entrance, was thrown as if by miracle into the harbour in safety! The second came, the helmsman seemed to hesitate; a few words were thundered out from the speaking-trumpet, but in vain. She dashed with a violent shock against the massive stones of the side, a few yards beneath us, and the three men who were on board disappeared in the abyss. Two were immediately picked up, but stiff and motionless from the effect of the cold.

And yet, Augustus, it was in the midst of this raging of the elements, in a severe frost, that the life-boats left the port, braving the sea, running mountains high, which seemed ready at each moment to swallow them up! They departed, bearing with them the prayers and good wishes of all the spectators. It was towards the Goodwin Sands, where the light had disappeared, that they directed their course; as it was thence that had proceeded the sound of the guns of distress.

Tell me,—is there in this world anything grander than such intrepidity? A king, in all his pomp and power, surrounded by a *cortége* dazzling with splendour, opening his assembled parliament,—a conqueror, marching at the head of his army, preceded by his prisoners, and covered with laurels, praises, and glory, because he has been instrumental to the destruction of some thousands of his fellow creatures;—are these comparable? Are these morally great, like the simple sailors of whom I tell you?—these who brave peril, fatigue, suffering, death itself,—death of the most horrible kind,—in order to save men who are utter strangers to them!

You will not be surprised to hear me say, that when I had returned home, and was seated comfortably near a good fire, having changed my wet clothes, I could not help feeling that I was little indeed when compared to the brave fellows who were now voluntarily exposing themselves to the frightful tempest that was raging! Where is the egotist who would not have experienced the same feelings?

The next morning we learned that the life-boats had succeeded in reaching the sands, that they had found there the wreck of a vessel which had struck during the storm, and to which were still clinging some miserable wretches half dead with cold and exhaustion; the greater number had perished. They had picked up at sea two bodies, frozen apparently to death; but who, after being extended upon the roof of a baker's oven at Ramsgate, were restored to sensibility.

And their preservers, these true heroes, far from pretending to any glory or praise, were tranquilly occupied in cleaning their boats!

Adieu, my friend! Here is one of the lessons from which I have acquired a little philosophy.

LETTER XXXI.

Ramsgate.—The Sands.—Dover.—The Castle.—Subterraneous Passages.—Means of Defence.—Elizabeth's Pocket-pistol.—Life Guards.

Previously to quitting Ramsgate,—where we remained but a short time,—I should like to show the place to you under less gloomy colours. This town, like all watering-places, is well and abundantly supplied with provisions of every kind; it possesses numerous shops, libraries, hotels, houses to let ready furnished. Public balls and concerts are not the things in which Ramsgate excels; but I speak of them here only by hearsay, as I had no inclination to judge of them by my own experience.

The commerce that exists with the opposite

French coasts is tolerably active, though it does not reach articles of great importance. What appeared to me most remarkable, was the immense quantity of eggs that arrived from France. These are packed in long cases, each of which contains about four thousand; and I once reckoned eighty of them unloaded from one vessel, and ranged along the harbour.

At low water, on the left of Ramsgate pier, is a fine extent of dark grey sand, sheltered by the high cliffs which shut it in. There I often took my little girl, accompanied by her cousins, when the weather was fine, to hunt for shells. The pure and strengthening sea-air had dissipated the langour she had experienced; and the vivacity and happiness natural to her age began to re-appear, though at times, in the middle of her play, she would suddenly stop, and looking around her, as if she was seeking something or some one, her eyes would meet mine. She saw her thought was divined, and she would rush into my arms,

throw hers round my neck, and burst into tears.

Dover is situated to the right of Ramsgate, at the distance of about twenty miles. I had frequently disembarked there, in my various visits to England; but had always passed straight on to London, like most others, knowing nothing of Dover but Wright's very dear hotel. At the epoch of which I speak, I took advantage of my vicinity to pay it a visit, in order to see its fortified castle. Such excursions are made with great facility in England, where quick stage-coaches run in every direction at your service. I remember, when I went to Dover in this way, I was in the inside, with a lady whose exaggerated toilette appeared to me rather inconsistent with the vulgarity of our mode of conveyance. She, however, seemed accustomed to it, and was completely at her ease. Amongst several observations which she did me the honour of addressing to me, was one by which I was very much puzzled: remarking the quick pace at which we were

travelling, she exclaimed, "Beautiful cattle we have in England, sir, in our stages!" From politeness, I assumed the air of comprehending her; but, as I only knew the word "cattle" as signifying oxen, cows, &c. *(bestiaux)*, I could not resist putting my head out of the window, to see if we were really drawn by such animals. If I had been a little more versed in the expressions and manners of the country, I should have known that amongst horse-dealers, coachmen, grooms, and even among certain amateurs of the turf, the word "cattle" is often used when speaking of horses. I should also have been able to guess to what distinguished class my companion belonged, with her ribbons, bows, frills, and flounces.

As to Dover Castle, do not fear that I am going to treat you with a scientifie description of the bastions, demi-lines, scarps, batteries, &c., which render it formidable; I will say but a few words, and those few will rather be in accordance with the general sketch which I try to give you of England. The fort there

is situated on the left at a great elevation, and almost perpendicular over the town and the harbour. You reach it by several flights of steps built in brick, or by roads made in zig-zags to lighten the steepness of the ascent, all kept in excellent repair. At the time I visited it, the rifle brigade was on duty there; and their dark-green uniform, short carabines, and black shakos shaded with horse-hair plumes falling over their *visières*, gave a picturesque appearance to the sentinels, who were parading before their respective posts on different points of the heights and fortifications.

I was conducted by my guide, a subaltern of this corps, into the subterraneous passages and caverns, where I saw iron traps prepared in the arched roof to let down behind the enemy who might gain access into these places, and to secure them as rats in a *ratière*. In these roofs also were holes, through which boiling oil, melted lead, or any other destructive matters might be poured; also passages which could be closed almost hermetically,

so that the enemy might be stifled in them by means of smoke or intense heat. In fine, the whole of the pleasing assemblage of the charming means of destruction and defence of other times, added to those of the present, which are not inferior to them in any respect, were complacently pointed out to me. When I came out of these agreeable places, I was shown a tower, the upper part of which is in ruins, where formerly prisoners were confined. The mottoes and verses, still visible on the ancient walls of the prison, express in the olden language the regrets of the lover or the exile for their lost happiness or distant country.

Upon one of the most elevated of the ramparts commanding the ocean, and facing France, my conductors pointed out to my observation a bronze cannon of extraordinary length, ornamented with beautiful work, on a carriage of, I believe, the same metal. They told me that it was a present of the famous Queen Elizabeth; (but on what occasion I do not

recollect;) and that this fine piece is called "Queen Elizabeth's pocket-pistol." The idea that a pistol of this size accorded very well with the gigantic power and despotism of this sovereign made me smile, notwithstanding the gravity and respectful demeanour of the sergeant, who, in presence of such a precious relic, stood with his feet in line, and as if under arms, without moving a muscle of his face.

I will not let this opportunity pass, to remark, that if amongst the British officers there are some who, like those of all other armies, look as if they had killed, or were ready to kill, every one, it is not so, as far as I have seen, with their soldiers. In the various occasions in which I have seen them, I have always found in their demeanour a kind of modest tranquillity and reserve, which is but the more striking from its junction with their indisputable renown for bravery.

I saw once a superb regiment of cavalry in their quarters; it was "The Life Guards." This I owed to the courtesy of Lord H., who

commanded them, and to some of the other officers, who accompanied me. There also I found the same contrast; and in this case their modest countenances were also more remarkable, as they were joined to powerful frames, and statures so tall, that I, with my six English feet, (of which I am not a little proud, be it said in parenthesis,) was obliged to raise my head to look at their faces when I spoke to them.

Good-b'ye for to-day!

LETTER XXXII.

Tunbridge Wells.—Picturesque Road.—Heath and Furze.—Eridge Castle.—Bayham Abbey.—Buckhurst.—Penshurst.—A Relic.

I AM now going to carry you, my dear Augustus, to Tunbridge Wells, at the risk of your taking me for the wandering Jew. This is one of the prettiest places in England. Its distance from London is about thirty-five miles. The road is bordered by houses of every description, by gardens and villages. Sometimes it winds between two parks, edged on each side by magnificent trees whose branches almost meet across it. On gaining the heights which immediately precede Tunbridge Wells, the town is seen at the bottom of a deep valley,

the hill on the left is thickly covered with houses, and its top crowned by a grove of handsome trees, whose thick foliage adds greatly to the beauty of the neighbourhood.

The road, at the point I have indicated, is divided into two branches: one continues along the top of the hill to the right, passing in front of many houses of very good mien; the other descends, following the winding of the valley into the town. The whole of the steep hill on the right, facing the town, is covered with high furze, intersected with pretty gravel walks. At the time we arrived, it was adorned with its brilliant yellow flower in full bloom, looking like a golden covering spread over the declivity. Here and there, rocks partly covered with moss elevated their purplish heads above the heath; sometimes it was broken by the roof or chimney of cottages. This plant is justly considered as one of the prettiest ornaments of England; it is found generally on the commons, and it abounds plentifully in the counties of Cumberland and

Westmoreland, where are situated those celebrated and magnificent scenes of woods, lakes, and mountains. There are several kinds of it; its generic name is *heath*, the yellow sort is called *furze*. In Scotland, where this plant is found in abundance on the hills and on that plains, it is called *heather* and *broom*, and is often mentioned in the pastoral poetry of that nation: witness the songs of Scott, Burns, Cunningham, and others.

We had passed not long before through the town of Tunbridge; the addition of that word "Wells" will have already induced you to suppose that the place of which I am speaking possesses a mineral spring, and that it is frequented on this account. You know with what facility a family establishes itself in such places; so, after a day passed at the Sussex Hotel, we were settled in a very comfortable abode. Summer attracts many visitors to Tunbridge Wells; at least, many in proportion to its size, particularly during the session of Parliament. The arrival of a few noble peers—Irish prin-

cipally, who, having no seats in England, find this place convenient—causes the rents of the houses to increase, sometimes to the sum of fifteen or eighteen guineas per week; I speak of the best houses.

Tunbridge Wells is one of the oldest places of public resort in England. It was frequented by Charles the Second and his court, and was a favourite place of retirement of his wife. Tunbridge Wells presents an assemblage of everything to attract visitors; at least, such as can exist during a few months without dancing or dining out every day, and who know how to enjoy a lovely country, and drive, ride, and walk, either to sketch views, or to admire seats celebrated for their beauty, antiquity, or historical recollections, of which many are situated at a short distance from this little town, and form a circle round it.

On one side, about two miles and a half distant, is the splendid park of Lord Abergavenny, — Eridge Castle, — with its lakes, its heights covered with thick masses of trees, and its

undulating grounds. From the top of the common at the Wells, where the view is most extensive, you see the beams of the setting sun reflected brilliantly from the gilded vanes on the top of the castle, whilst all the rest of the building is hidden underneath the green curtain which the large trees form round it.

Some few miles further off is Bayham Abbey, — belonging to the Marquess of Camden, — a monkish retreat of old time. Of this, nothing remains but ruins, near which the residence of Lord Camden has been erected; but the former are preserved with such religious care, that they do honour to the taste of the proprietor. Portions of light and elegant columns, the form of the old refectory still marked by the mouldering walls, and still preserving exquisitely sculptured windows, the remains of a tower,—all these different pieces, which ages have not yet been able entirely to destroy, are overgrown and surrounded with young and vigorous ivy, with the flowering clematis, with wild rose-bushes, which often finding no further

support from the ruin, fall in festoons, intermingling their flowers between the arches. Not one stone—not a vestige of decay remains on the closely-mown grass which encompasses these beautiful relics, and which really resembles a velvet carpet, on which one might almost fancy they had been carefully placed! The whole of the pleasure-grounds, in which these ruins are situated, is kept up with the same exquisite care.

In another direction is Buckhurst,—a country seat of Lord Delaware,—placed on an elevation: you arrive by a winding road, which ascends through a grove of trees of great extent, and in which each tree offers a magnificent study. The house is surrounded with a parterre of flowers, and a lawn in front. The hill is prolonged horizontally, offering to the eye one of the ancient *laissez-courres* formed by a quadruple row of trees at each of its sides; on the opposite side of the grove, the ground re-descends in a verdant park. This property is renowned for the grandeur and age of its trees.

I do not know how many other seats I could mention which are to be seen in this neighbourhood. It is true I have chosen the most remarkable to present to you : not that they, or such as they, exclusively demonstrate the general richness of the country ; for, in my humble opinion, this is shown still more strikingly in England in the farms and simple country-houses, each having, in proportion, the same comforts, the same niceness, and evincing the same care in the inhabitants to repair any accidental damages.

I will now terminate my description with Penshurst, one of the most remarkable edifices as an ancient place among them. This is an hereditary property of the old family of Sydneys and Percys, — now in possession of Sir Philip Sydney, who is married to one of the present King's daughters. Although vast, and of a noble appearance, this place is more interesting from its antiquity, and from the historical recollections and fame of some of the ancestors of the present proprietor, than from

its situation, or from the park which surrounds it.

Above the door of entry, placed in a portion of the *façade* which appears more ancient than the rest, is an inscription engraved on stone, surmounted by the arms of the family, proclaiming the royal patent by which Edward the Sixth, I think, invested one of the ancestors of the Sydneys with the domain of Penshurst, all its rights, appurtenances, &c.

We saw, in a suite of apartments of ancient splendour, some pictures of great beauty; amongst them a Lucretia, and a Saint Barbara, (martyr,) carrying her own eyes in a plate: also portraits of the famous Algernon Sydney, the patriot, — and of Sir Philip, the author of the Arcadia, "with his fine and speaking countenance." At last, when we were coming out of the old hall, the housekeeper pointed out to us, hanging against the walls, the enormous antlers of a stag, preserved for more than

a century, in remembrance of the death of a poor woman, which was occasioned in the park by the fury of the animal to which they belonged.

Adieu !

LETTER XXXIII.

Rural Pleasures.—Ball-rooms.—The Promenade.—Acts of Charity.—Charity-children at dinner.—Exclusives.—Curious Custom.—English Women.—Tiresome Conversations.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS is not, like Cheltenham, a place completely dedicated to gaiety; it is far from offering the same chances to those gentlemen who are rather desirous or "obliged" to get married, or to those who, as I said before, only live by parties with refreshments, or invitations to dinner. Tunbridge Wells is much more simple, much more rural; its pleasures are sought and found in country excursions. Asses (biped as well as quadruped) are to be seen everywhere; but those which are found here have this peculiarity, that they

are always saddled and bridled, and ready for the ladies to mount for their daily amusement or exercise; whether it be to go four or five miles to admire a view, a ruin, or a country seat, or whether it be a mile and a half only, to eat strawberries and cream in the garden belonging to the little cottage on Rusthall Common, where this fruit is found in as great perfection as the imagination of the utmost epicure can conceive.

At Tunbridge Wells they dance, it is true,—for where do they not dance?—but it is only about once a fortnight, and that during the season only. There is here, as in all these public places, a "master of ceremonies;" but this one has so little to do, that he finds time most evenings to enjoy his game of whist very quietly. If the ball-rooms are frequented by little company, at least one has the enjoyment of breathing freely, and listening in comfort to the music of an excellent band (part of Weippert's, I believe); and, what is still more agreeable, these same musicians repeat three

times a day a number of pretty airs on the promenade which is close to the mineral spring. This promenade is merely a wide pavement of stones, of not more than four hundred paces in length, bordered on one side by a wooden gallery, under which are the principal shops, the libraries, the ball-rooms, &c.; and on the other by a double row of trees, through which is seen the fashionable Sussex Hotel.

By-the-bye, did you ever hear before of an innkeeper in a small town, who gave from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and thirty pounds per annum for a right of shooting? And here I must add, that at Tunbridge Wells every one, even to the linen-draper, is a sportsman; and the landlord of the Sussex Hotel finds in it a double advantage, himself having the pleasure of killing the hares and birds that he afterwards puts upon table before the visitors to his hotel.

You may find in this place abundant proofs of the truth of what I have asserted respecting the beneficence of the wealthy, or of the

middling classes in England, towards the poor and infirm. I do not think the principal families residing at Tunbridge Wells exceed fifty; yet, although none of them are extremely rich, their assistance seems to suffice for the support of the indigent, who appeared to me to be in greater proportion there than in most other places I have visited. This is done, as I have before told you, by subscription, or by particular acts of charity, and continued by distribution of food, clothing, medicine, blankets, &c. You may at this very time see there a young clergyman, (the Rev. Mr. P., brother-in-law of the celebrated Archbishop of Dublin), sometimes directing in person the studies of a large number of boys — the children of poor parents. This school has been founded by the same generous spirit; it is maintained by voluntary subscription, and is under his superintendence. The scholars are instructed in their Christian duties, and receive elementary notions useful in their after-life.

I saw this young clergyman preside at a dinner that he gave himself to the charity-children: he was standing at the head of a long narrow table in their simple school-room, and was occupied in carving an enormous piece of roast beef, followed by a huge pudding; his task was by no means a slight one, for the appetites of his young guests were not easily satisfied. The pleasure, however, depicted in his countenance, proved that he was amply recompensed for the trouble he was so kindly taking.

My little girl was one of those who waited on these poor children during their happy dinner. A general examination had taken place some hours previously, which evidently proved the social utility of such an establishment.

Notwithstanding all this, do not imagine, my dear Augustus, that all is perfection at Tunbridge Wells; for here are comprised certain persons who, perhaps carrying a little too far their ideas of religion, become a kind of spiritual exclusives. Here also, although in

so small a community, a higher rank, a rather larger fortune, or better connexions, establish invidious distinctions. From this, some curious peculiarities result as to the polite duties of society. I will give you an example. I was walking one day upon the common, or rather upon the road which runs along the top of it, called Mount Ephraim, composed of a succession of pretty houses surrounded with gardens: this may be called the aristocratical part of Tunbridge Wells: on passing before the habitation of a lady, who may be considered in herself as the *élite* of this society, —who had been absent, and of whose return I was ignorant,—I saw two ladies coming out of her gate; I bowed to them, and continued my walk; upon which they both cried out to me, "What! are you not going to call on Mrs. T. ?—she arrived yesterday!" I excused myself on the grounds that the slight intimacy I had with this lady did not warrant so marked an *empressement*, and repeating my bow, I walked on, leaving them, I believe,

in astonishment at my temerity or my indifference.

Another custom at Tunbridge Wells appeared to me peculiar to this place; it is that of inviting the gentlemen to dinner, and their wives to tea on the same evening. I will not stop here to seek for the reason of this oddity, as by not doing so I shall avoid perhaps some domestic details which it is better to respect and to leave unremarked: but this subject, considered more generally, may serve me as a theme upon which to add a few words; it is one which cannot fail to excite the observation of every foreigner sojourning in England,—I mean the false position in society in which women are placed.

As to that of the lady of Tunbridge Wells, who, alone at dinner with ten men, quits her own table without having taken any part in a conversation which has lasted two hours, but ascends into the drawing-room to receive their ten wives, and wait with them the expiration of another hour, which these gentlemen will pass in

drinking a few more bottles of wine, and in finishing their political or agricultural discussions,—you will agree with me, that for her the question is decided.

But in considering this subject on a more enlarged scale, I think I may say that, notwithstanding the high respect which every Englishman professes to feel for women in general, and for their own wives in particular, they are not the less excluded from the pleasures in which the men indulge. The general basis of all their conversations is politics, and why do not these ladies take part in this? Is it want of intelligence? Is it want of ability? Not at all. I am induced to think that the women are better informed than the generality of the men. Why then do they not more often enter into general conversation? Englishmen say that it is from modesty; but would it be injurious to this modesty to impart a new idea, or to combat one already announced? to interest by wit when perhaps profound knowledge or experience may be wanting? to soften, by their participation,

the dryness observable in all conversations in which men alone sustain a part? or to correct the too decisive tone in which, in spite of their courtesy, they so often declare opinions? Would not this be a great social advantage?

Why should a woman of birth, of education, for it matters not what is her rank if she possess the latter qualification,—why should she not declare unhesitatingly her opinions upon religion, upon the arts, upon literature, upon the theatres? And how even does it affect her modesty to speak of war, glory, of military triumphs or reverses? In my opinion, she would only please the more; and, if she were beautiful, would inspire her listeners with still greater bravery.

May not this reserve explain the useless and incessant running after pleasure, so prevalent in English society? the continual but vain efforts to find amusement? I will add, that with the least experience, it is impossible to dispute that women are, and must be, the soul of society, the principal spring upon which all its pleasures and resources depend; and that the wit or infor-

mation that a woman may be able to exhibit, can in no way cast a shade over her modesty.

So, my dear Augustus, as all great reforms have small beginnings, I beg you will recommend the Englishmen of your acquaintance to keep for themselves, if they particularly wish it, all the dry subjects of conversation, such as law-questions, and the tiresome subject of political economy, &c. I assure you, English society would be much the gainer by it.

Adieu!

LETTER XXXIV.

Summer Hill.—Magnificent View.—Library at Summer Hill.—A Rencontre.—Vagabonds.

Among the residences in the neighbourhood of Tunbridge Wells, is one which I have reserved in order to consecrate to it an entire page; for of this I retain a grateful remembrance, having there received much hospitality from its amiable proprietors. I allude to Summer Hill, where Charles the Second, *de joyeuse mémoire*, held his gay court, and whence the Chevalier Hamilton drew, in great part, the materials for his clever and amusing *Mémoires du Comte de Grammont*.

The present possessor has altered and greatly

embellished the interior, but has carefully avoided any change in the exterior of this ancient seat. The bluish grey colour of the walls, the formation, the whole *ensemble* of the edifice, which is built on a considerable elevation, recalls former days forcibly to the mind. The age of the trees of the park are a further attestation of its antiquity.

One of the peculiar advantages enjoyed here, is the magnificent view from the window of the great saloon on the first floor, comprising the whole width of the building. This window is, in form and size, like a handsome church-window, and opens on an antique stone balcony; it commands an immense extent of country, which, first falling in a gentle descent for the space of two or three miles, afterwards rises gradually until it joins the heights which form the horizon at the distance of twenty or twenty-five miles.

The whole of this space presents a succession of masses of trees closely approaching each other, and thus giving the effect of long lines of verdure, dark or bright according to their

nature, or to the rays of light falling on them, but diminishing in tone and strength as the distance gives them its own vaporous grey tint. Towards the left, upon the side of a hill, is seen the village church of which Grammont speaks so tenderly; and it would appear as if the trees made an opening of themselves in this direction, to allow the eye to catch the view of its white steeple.

A remarkable and valuable improvement has been made at Summer Hill, in the newly-constructed library, which I should think is more than a hundred feet in length. The walls are of carved wood, polished, and of a light colour, which prevents the usually melancholy appearance of this kind of apartment in all ancient dwellings. It is, in form, like a wide gallery, composed of several divisions, only separated by elevated arches; and each window, opening to the ground and upon the garden, becomes, from the thickness of the exterior walls, a furnished cabinet. The choice, the beauty, and the profusion of works of every description,

which are here collected together, give evident proofs of the taste and discrimination of the proprietor.

When I contemplated the general comfort which reigned throughout this retreat, its complete tranquillity, its numerous well-cushioned sofas, its lounging easy-chairs, the thick Turkey carpet on which I walked, also the treasures of history, science, and art, which it contains,—I asked myself, "What more can be desired in this world?" What exhaustless resources to him who could thus pass hours in peaceful retirement, instructing, strengthening, enlarging his mind!

I remember one day, when I was looking over several English works, I chanced to take up one which I found was a criticism on the philosophy of Diderot, J. J. Rousseau, Voltaire, &c., put in parallel with the morality they taught and practised. I have never seen a greater power of sarcasm; the author must have had access to many proofs of the peculiarities in the lives of these men, for their

letters are cited, the evidence is complete, and the lash, (if I may so express myself,) which he inflicts upon such pernicious opinions, appears to me well and vigorously applied.

After one of my visits to Summer Hill, as I was returning on foot to Tunbridge Wells, I took a path which led through a wood of about a mile and a half in length. During my progress I perceived an ill-looking fellow standing right in the middle of the path I was following; his arms crossed on his breast; as I advanced I saw another, half concealed by the hedge, coming against a tree with his hands behind him. I immediately recollected that by good luck I had taken my sword-stick, although I determined not to use it except in the greatest extremity. I continued to advance without seeming to have any suspicion. When I arrived within a few feet of him he moved as if he intended to prevent my passing the fellow, without moving

"Pray sir will you tell me what o'clock

letters are cited, the evidence is complete, and the lash, (if I may so express myself,) which he inflicts upon such pernicious opinions, appears to me well and vigorously applied.

After one of my visits to Summer Hill, as I was returning on foot to Tunbridge Wells, I took a path which led through a wood of about a mile and a half in length. During my progress I perceived an ill-looking fellow standing right in the middle of the path I was following, his arms crossed on his breast; as I advanced, I saw another, half concealed by the bushes, leaning against a tree with his hands behind him. I immediately recollected that by good luck I had taken my sword-stick, although I determined not to use it except in the greatest extremity. I continued to advance, without seeming to have any suspicion. When I arrived within a few feet of the one who looked as if he intended to prevent my passing, the fellow, without moving a single inch, said:

"Please, sir, will you tell me what o'clock it is?"



"Please, Sir," said the fellow, "will you tell me what o'clock it is?" I stopped, and drawing my "steel" half out, answered, "Is it really the hour you wish to know or is it my watch that you want?" Vol. 2. P. 70.

London Published by R. Bentley New Burlington Street, Oct.r 1836

I stopped, and, drawing "my steel" half out, answered:

"My good fellow, is it really the hour you wish to know, or is it my watch that you want? This is not a place to ask such a question, and I recommend you for your own sake to get out of my way."

Thus speaking, I walked close up to him, pulling my blade out an inch or more at each step; he moved a little on one side, and I passed, fixing my eyes firmly on his. If I read in his countenance an expression of annoyance, I gave all the credit to my cane. I turned half a minute afterwards to look for the men, but they had both disappeared.

I am far from thinking that these two men would have attempted my life; I do not even suppose that they would have used violence in robbing me; yet, the solitary situation where I met them, the attitude they had assumed, and particularly their wretched appearance, sufficed to put me on my guard. Besides, what explained this adventure better

than anything else, was the fact that for the last three days there had been races at Tunbridge Wells, which, like all such meetings, had attracted as many vagabonds and rascals as respectable company.

Adieu !

LETTER XXXV.

Sporting Invitation.—Melancholy Accident.—"Genteel People."— A Country Villa.—Shooting Parties.—Newmarket Races.—The Course.—The Betting Post.- The Company.—The Race.

Now you must again put on your travelling-cap, for I am going to transport you into Cambridgeshire. The accident which had happened to me in Wales, had in no wise diminished my love of sporting; so I eagerly accepted an offer that had been made me the first season I was at Tunbridge Wells of hiring the right of shooting over a property a few miles off, and where I went two or three times a week for this enjoyment. This sufficiently declared me a sportsman, in taste at least; and thence resulted, in accordance to the

usual attention and hospitality that I have everywhere experienced in England, invitations from various quarters to join in this sport: amongst others, from Summer Hill, where a good shot (but one without modesty) might easily have killed twenty brace of pheasants in a very few hours. Here again, a circumstance occurred which might have shaken a less eager sportsman than myself in his love of this amusement. The old game-keeper, who usually accompanied me, and for whom I had really a great regard, for he actually did show me where to find game,—this poor fellow, after a long service of forty years, just upon the point of receiving his retiring pension, disappeared, and after two days was found dead upon a hedge, the upper part of his head entirely blown to pieces by his gun having gone off in his own hands.

We had made a few acquaintances at Tunbridge Wells; amongst them was a numerous and very amiable family, spending like us the summer there. At their departure I received

a kind invitation to their country place in Cambridgeshire; not only to enable me to gratify, as they jokingly said, my "instinct of destruction;" but that I might see the famous Newmarket races, which would take place during my visit. Perhaps you do not know that they are the cream of all English races, consequently the first in the world; and to perfect my half fashionability I had only to visit these, as already I had been in some of the exclusives' boxes at the opera, also at Almack's, at Lady S.'s routs, and at the Duke of D.'s balls.

In the country-house where I am now to conduct you, you will find neither lords nor ladies by birth or creation, but only what in English is called "genteel people," and in French, "*gens comme il faut.*" Here is no gothic castle, no arched gateway surmounted by sculptured coats of arms, nor the numerous regiment of livery-servants ranged in the sumptuous hall. This is only the modern handsome villa, spacious enough, however, to

contain the large family who at present occupy it, as well as several of their friends. The house, without being splendidly, is elegantly, furnished; it contains all the comforts, the dear comforts, so inseparable from this style of establishment in England.

Place then this villa in a park of proportionate size, in which every evening at sun-set you may see the hares, rabbits, and pheasants come even on the lawn to play: to this add "the right of shooting" over three thousand acres of preserve, and the society of the amiable family which inhabit it; and who, notwithstanding their taste for the said comforts of life, and for the worldly pleasures of painting, music, and even of an excellent table, yet reassemble every evening before going to rest, to hear prayers read by the young mistress of the family, whilst her father, mother, sister, brothers, friends, and the domestics, all listen to her on bended knees; and you will have a just idea of the place and family where I went to spend a few weeks.

You would have been envious had you seen me on the morning after my arrival, (and almost on every other during my visit,) with two or three sporting companions, crossing and recrossing the fields in every direction as far as we could see; they were covered by turnips, whose long stems, wet with the dew, cooled our legs as we walked through them. Here it was firing to the right, firing to the left, firing behind, firing before, upon the coveys of partridges which rose at each minute from under our feet. To describe to you all the gyrations they made in the air before they fell, and the cloud of feathers which followed each joyful discharge when it had been well directed,—to describe all this, I say, would make you too envious; so I will spare you for the present. I am now going to conduct you to the Newmarket races.

We were distant ten miles from Newmarket, which is but a small town. The famous downs where the races are held are about a mile distant. This is the first of all turfs for elas-

ticity, and for its complete smoothness and flatness; it is also celebrated for the pure blood of the horses which run there. It is in this place that is seen the animal aristocracy of the country; their genealogies are kept with the greatest care; and such a horse or such a mare enters the lists with the names of his or her ancestors attached to his own. Sometimes considerable bets are made even on a colt yet unborn, which is to run two years after its birth.

The whole of the country in the neighbourhood of Newmarket is flat, and this vast plain is intersected by the remains of an ancient wall of defence, constructed, it is said, by the Romans. These remains are only a few feet in height, in form of banks, now covered with grass and weeds, and which, accompanied by a ditch, are about eighteen miles in length. The flatness of the country accounts for the excellence of the numerous roads which cross it in all directions, particularly towards Newmarket; and whether it

arise from this facility, from the real necessity of quick arrival, or from the dictum of fashion inspiring the desire of appearing to take part in the transactions of the turf, —whatever be the motive, you never see any one on these roads who is not going at the greatest possible point of velocity, generally drawn by post-horses; for so to be seen is to declare that you are going to Newmarket.

But this is not the animated scene of Epsom and Ascot; here there is no triple row of carriages, no fashionable stands with flags flying, nor are thirty thousand persons assembled as spectators. An hour even before the races commence, scarcely a soul is to be seen on the plain; the greatest number are still crowding the hotels, the inns, and the taverns of Newmarket; and amongst this crowd, although all are "men of the turf," are several great people, such as the Earl of M., the Marquis of W., who was, if you remember, some years since so great a favourite in the chief circles of Paris; also the old Duke of G. with his

spy-glass, which his friend and doctor, combined in one, carries for him. Then there is Colonel P., Colonel S., Lord T., Lord G., and his son, and many others whose names I cannot now recall to my memory.

The races at Newmarket are completely "a matter of business;" no acclamations, no tremendous noise, no necessity for clearing the ground by sharp application of the whip, no cords extended to keep the people within bounds, and to mark the direction of the course. Here it is well defined by the straight line of fine short grass, and by those Roman remains of which I spoke, and which in part bound it. Here are, at the most, a few dozen of carriages, belonging chiefly to the families of the neighbourhood; a few hundred persons on horseback; and, what is odd enough, three or four waggons, from which the horses have been removed, and on which some of the "great people" I have mentioned take their place, to command a better view of the race, which always terminates close

to them, for the length of the race often differs; so the goal is moveable, and is thrown further off, or brought closer at pleasure, and then the waggons follow its motion closely. For this purpose, the horses are kept near, and occupy themselves in eating between the heats, and during the long hours which precede the races; and, I dare say, it is with much regret that they find themselves so often disturbed in their peaceable occupation.

You must become acquainted also with the "betting-post" at Newmarket, which is isolated in the middle of the plain; and round it assemble all the betters, the owners of the horses which are going to run, and all, in fact, who are interested in the races. It is necessary, even for an Englishman, to be well versed in the language of the turf, to comprehend all that passes,—everybody screaming out at once the bets that are offered, accepted, doubled, tripled, and then written down in each pocket-book.

Except the exact time of the race, which certainly rewards one for all the preceding *ennui*, there is nothing at Newmarket which gratifies the eyes, nothing which speaks to the imagination. The lords, old and young, the fashionables, the betters, and the vulgarians, all are crowded together round the post; they are mounted on shabby horses or ponies, enveloped in their great-coats to protect them from the cold wind which begins to be pretty sharp on these plains about the end of October. The consequence of which is, a blue face, or a red nose, even amongst the great aristocracy. If I were not fearful of appearing unpolite, I should say that the whole company more resembled a meeting of horse-dealers, than what I had figured to myself upon the flower of all the turfs in England.

As to the race itself, it is the affair of a few minutes. During this short space of time, the expectation is so raised, so excited by admiration and pleasure, the emotion is so strong,

that long after the victory is decided it still agitates you. You perceive, at the extremity of the plain, a few small black specks, and some which appear more brilliant, although the eye cannot yet discern the colours; you immediately fancy the jockeys on horseback. Suddenly you hear the word "Start" repeated around you in every direction, followed by a murmur, and a sort of agitation in all the spectators; every eye is turned eagerly towards the same point. It is, in truth, the jockeys who arrive; ten seconds more suffice to distinguish their forms and the colours they wear. They arrive all together; and their rapid course strikes you so much the more, from their coloured mass being the only thing in motion throughout the whole of this absolutely naked plain: but, before you have been able to draw your breath twice more, which the emotion you feel renders difficult, they have passed you like lightning, the race is won, and many thousands of pounds lost!

If I were to describe a Newmarket race in English, it would be with these five words:

Start!——There they are!——Done!

The race is over!

So, good-b'ye.

LETTER XXXVI.

A new Friend.—Instinct in Friendship.—Sporting Excursion.—Old-fashioned House.—Welcome.—Sporting Colonel.

To-day I am going to try to render you really jealous of me, my dear Augustus. Being an ardent sportsman, you will enter heart and mind into my recital and enjoy it like an old friend.

Amongst the guests whom I found at the Cambridgeshire mansion, was one much about my own age, who was allied to the family by marriage; we had become intimate at Tunbridge Wells, and this intimacy was highly prized by me, as I daily discovered in him new and valuable qualities of head and heart. He had

much natural gaiety,— a qualification that is not very common in England,—as well as much originality and drollery of mind, which gave him a quick sense of the ridiculous; but his wit was always without malignity.

Putting out of the question the many beings in this world to whom one is totally indifferent, there is a sort of instinct in regard to others, which may serve as a guide or restraint for either giving or withholding one's friendship. We feel either an indescribable attraction or antipathy for those we may meet in the pathway of life. But, in order that these two opposite sentiments may be of use in directing the judgment, they must be free from all personal interest; the social position of the two parties must be pretty nearly equal; and there must be on neither side any expectation of future benefit, — except that accruing from agreeable society, — to influence the feeling of attraction; nor, on the contrary, any fear of injury or disadvantage, which might have the effect of producing a natural antipathy. In such cases one

may, I think, abandon one's self to the sentiments inspired, with some confidence and certainty; and here I did so without hesitation.

My friend and I left the villa, to pass a couple of days at his father's,—a clergyman,—who had kindly invited me to assist his son in the "general destruction" which he was going to make of his game; he being on the point of departure from his ancient family residence, and not wishing to leave any advantages to the poachers during his absence. His place was about eight miles' distance from the one where I was staying. A phaeton was sent to fetch us the afternoon before our shooting was to begin. As soon as our two guns in their cases, an ample provision of powder and shot, and all our little necessaries for the toilet, were put in the phaeton, we departed. After a few miles, we quitted the Newmarket road, and penetrated further into the interior of the country, taking a cross-road; and, after passing through two villages, (neither so picturesque nor so clean as most that I had seen in England,)

we arrived at the gate of a park which was as flat as the rest of the surrounding country. The winding road up to the house, about a quarter of a mile in length, was remarkable for the size and age of the trees which shaded it on each side.

Delaying my presentation to the rest of the family until the hour of dinner, which was fast approaching, my friend, whom I shall now call George, caused me to be conducted to the chamber destined to me. Its furniture was not elegant, like that at the villa we had just left; but of ancient style, and in keeping with the old house. My bed was sufficiently large to have allowed me to sleep across it, and of proportionate height, with ample flowered chintz curtains. The chimney-place also, in the old style, was high and deep, with a bright coal-fire blazing in the grate; before it stood a little airing-horse, with half a dozen snow-white napkins. The whole of the furniture was in the same fashion, and formed one of the most

comfortable bed-rooms that I have ever met with.

I soon heard a gentle knock at my door, and, upon my crying out "Come in," there entered a "trembling maid," bringing me a copious provision of warm water. On descending in due time to the drawing-room, I found there an elderly gentleman dressed in black, who was occupied, when I entered, in lighting the wax candles on the chimney-piece. From his venerable air, and from the courteous smile on his countenance, I immediately guessed it to be the Rev. Mr. J., and I asked his permission to introduce myself to him. He took me kindly by the hand; and, shaking it heartily, bade me "welcome."

When the dinner was announced, George, drawing me aside, whispered to me not to take any notice of the oil-paintings which I should see hanging up in the dining-room, as they were painted by his mother, who was but lately dead, for he feared to awake a painful remembrance

in the breast of his poor father; I, of course, obeyed. We were joined by another guest, an old colonel, tall and thin, and grey-headed ; he also had been invited to partake in the two days' sport. He talked much and long on the subject during the dinner, telling us of the immense quantity of game he had killed in his life.

To-morrow you shall have the details of our sport.

LETTER XXXVII.

Shooting Preparations.—Our Party.—Beating the Covers.—Profusion of Game.—My success.—A Morning's work.—Destruction of Pheasants.—Two Day's sport.

It is nine o'clock in the morning, the guns are in readiness and ranged side by side on the hall table, and we are in our shooting-jackets, the numerous pockets of which are well furnished with provisions of powder, shot, patent wadding, &c. We are in the mean time agreeably occupied in the breakfast-room, laying in another kind of store, consisting of slices of thin-cut ham, cold fowl, tongue, fried fish, fresh eggs, washed down with large cups of coffee or tea, with delicious cream; and all in such profusion as to defy even the appetites of the six hungry sportsmen that surround the table.

The Reverend Mr. J. was also of the party, in spite of his seventy years. He accompanied us, not so much to take an immediate part in the coming destruction,—for, as he himself said, he no longer possessed his pristine activity or quickness of eye,—but rather to preside over and direct the sport, and participate in the pleasure of his guests. Our party was strengthened by the arrival of a young baronet who resided in the neighbourhood; he had failed in the election of the preceding year, but expected more success with the pheasants, for he was said to be a "capital shot." One of the sons of our host had returned to his own home, his tastes and pursuits being turned to other objects; he was a great naturalist, mineralogist, &c., and not fond of shooting. As to the youngest, he was obliged to refrain, for, suffering under a nervous disorder, he dreaded the agitation caused by this exercise. He nevertheless offered with great good-humour to accompany us, that he might keep close to me, and help me to load quicker and prepare my ammunition.

Thus we were reduced to five guns,—the old colonel, who was to kill everything, the baronet, George (who had great reputation as a shot), the reverend gentleman, with his peaceable single-barrelled gun, and your humble servant.

We were not without some pretensions, as you will imagine when I tell you that a tolerably-sized cart, with one horse harnessed to it, was prepared in the back-court to accompany us, that it might transport the game to the house as we filled it; there was besides a dozen countrymen armed with great sticks to complete the battue when we should ourselves be fatigued. The covers nearly reached up to the house; and the evening before, whilst I was dressing myself for dinner, I had distinctly heard "the call" of the pheasants, as if they were saluting us in advance.

We began by beating the covers ourselves, crossing them in lines, and keeping at thirty or thirty-five paces distant from each other: the shots soon began to be heard; but it was only after the lapse of about half an hour, and when

we had gained the heart of the preserve, that we had really a glorious work to perform. We were enjoined by Mr. J. not to spare the game, and to kill all but the hens, whose sentence of death was put off until the afternoon.

I must confess that at first I remained greatly in arrear of the baronet and George in point of success, for they both made the hares, rabbits, and pheasants dance at every shot. At first I felt giddy at the quantity of game which rose from under our feet; however, I soon rallied my senses, and, regaining the coolness necessary, began to acquit myself better. I must acknowledge that I was a little anxious to do well, not only for my own satisfaction, and to gratify my own vanity, but also to satisfy that of my friend George, who had too much vaunted my prowess to these gentlemen.

As to the colonel, it turned out as I had expected when I heard him on the evening before puffing off his success; he killed about one piece in half a dozen, and took aim at all the game, whether they had risen before him or before any

other of the party; his ill-humour increased at each step: at last, just as we quitted the wood to cross an open space filled with low brambles, a magnificent pheasant started up before his very nose, so near as to fan him with its wings; the sudden noise and cry of the bird, acting I suppose on his nerves, caused him to discharge his two barrels at once, but ineffectually! I happened to be placed on his left side, and, forgetting in my anxiety that perhaps what I did was not over-courteous, I tried the chance and the superb bird fell.

This took place three years ago, and I doubt if he has yet forgiven me. The circumstance was too galling for his vanity, and it happened not only before the whole of the shooting-party drawn up in line and all still, but also before the beaters, who were close behind us, and from whom proceeded a half-concealed laugh, which only served to augment the expression of anger already sufficiently visible on his features. I tried to soften it by attributing my success to accident, or to the merit of Mr. Manton, rather than to myself;

but all was useless, and he only bit his lips without replying. A little time afterwards, George returned me the compliment, in rolling over a hare which I had missed. I immediately took off my hat, and, making him a low bow, thanked him for the lesson, and here again, and very unintentionally, I renewed my offence against the colonel, as every one laughed, and particularly the good old clergyman; the colonel alone retained his gravity.

By one o'clock, about forty pheasants were laid in the cart, and twenty or twenty-five hares and as many rabbits hung over these on branches placed across. This formed a pretty fair trophy, and a not very light weight to convey to the house, which our reverend friend then ordered to be done. A truce of three-quarters of an hour ensued, which we spent in reposing ourselves and "eating a bit." As you know in such cases nothing increases the appetite like success, so it happened in this; for, of the *bit*, (which was no less than an enormous pie, accompanied by a few bottles of hock,)

nothing remained except the white napkin that had enveloped it.

But the return of the cart re-awakened all our ardour, and it was with a merry cheer that we greeted it, for we had to refill it. This time we had not to seek our own game; we were to be placed outside of the cover, and the *batteurs* were to go in and beat, directing themselves towards us; and it was then that the real destruction began, particularly of the poor pheasants. Without exaggeration, it was by dozens at a time that we heard them rise; and whatever direction they took, separating from each other to try to escape, each of us was sure to get his share.

The youngest brother of my friend kept his word, he did not quit me; and without his aid I should never have been able to load fast enough to pay my compliments to half the game that passed either over my head or through my legs.

This scene lasted until about six o'clock in the evening; and we returned home, having

killed in all one hundred and eighty pieces of game, two-thirds of which were pheasants. Mr. J. senior had scarcely made any use of his gun during the day, his whole attention having been directed to the arrangement of the shooting, to placing us in the best manner, and even in himself occasionally joining the beaters; his seventy years did not prevent his passing over gates and ditches quite as nimbly as ourselves.

The day following we pursued the same occupation and with the same advantage; and then taking leave of the rest of the family, George and I departed for the villa. We had killed—listen well to this—three hundred and seventy head of game at least; and of the five shots who accomplished this work, really you ought not to count the old gentleman, nor ought you to *forget* the colonel.

Good-b'ye, my dear Augustus.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The English Theatre. — Dramatic Poets. — Neglect of the Drama.— Tragic Actors.— Unseemly Interruptions.— Comic Actors. — The Miller's Maid. — Rayner's Performance.— Singers.—Melodrama and Pantomime.

My excursions as well as my adventures are finished, my dear Augustus; and after a few words more, upon the English Theatre, which I shall hazard in honour of you, I shall have only to sketch one or two additional characters before I terminate the record of my "Impressions."

I am not going to undertake the praise of him who created English tragedy: the beauty of Shakspeare's pieces, his genius, his profound knowledge of human nature, and the skill with which he has brought into action the history of his country—a history so fertile in com-

motions and great events,—are now so well known and appreciated on the Continent, at least through the greatest part, that my feeble voice could add but little to his glory. The only observation that I shall permit myself is, that these admirable works alone might, and ought to have elevated the English stage much higher; and that in this, as in the case of the art of historical painting in England, it must be from a want of encouragement, of support, or of enthusiasm in their cause, that these two arts remain in so secondary a position in a country where so many others and where all the sciences are carried to so great a point of perfection.

England possesses, besides Shakspeare, several other excellent and remarkable dramatic authors, such as Massinger, Otway, and others, in tragedy; Beaumont and Fletcher, for every kind of drama; Ben Jonson in comedy, and many geniuses of later date, such as Congreve, Sheridan, &c. But, notwithstanding all this, it is not the fashion to go to the great theatres, Covent Garden and Drury Lane, although they

are magnificent and most brilliantly lighted, and although immense expense is incurred nightly for the accommodation of some thousands of spectators. Only a few private boxes are reserved, which are close to the stage: the whole of the great space which remains is open, and separated by partitions into large squares called boxes, in which entire families place themselves, having retained beforehand one or two of the benches with which they are filled. You see, therefore, that there is no complete separation; and, as you may suppose, this indiscriminate approximation to the vulgar is too great, and it is not *bonne façon* to expose yourself to this. Another reason explains this negligence of the *beau monde* for the theatre; namely, that the play commences at an early hour in both the theatres, and it is fashionable to dine very late.

Considering the great influence which the nobility of a country so aristocratic as England must necessarily exercise in almost everything, this neglect of the theatre would of itself be a

real disadvantage to it: but there are other causes; the directors are abandoned to their own efforts, neither the king nor the government contributing to the support of either Covent Garden or Drury Lane; and these theatres are only open a part of the year.* Besides, the great size of the house (although frequently offering a superb *coup-d'œil*, from its brilliant illumination, from the freshness of its paintings and decorations, and from the dress of the ladies†) is detrimental to the display of talent in the actors, who, in order to make themselves heard and to produce effect, are obliged to have recourse to great exaggeration in their gestures, voices, and accent.

If the absence of the nobility, or of those who associate with or seek to imitate them, is disadvantageous to the success of these representa-

* In the summer, during the recess of Parliament, they are closed.

† In England, the ladies generally dress a great deal to go to the theatre; both married and unmarried women have their heads uncovered and adorned with flowers, or with toques, with feathers, &c.

tions, I do not know if the presence of another class, that one of the lowest of society, is not still more so. These people occupy what we call in France *Le Paradis ;* and by their acclamations, their impatient cries, their custom of throwing orange-peel from this height into the pit, they too often distract the attention from the scene, and interrupt the silence which is so necessary to enable one to seize the inflexions of the voices, the almost imperceptible gesture, the clever repartee which good comedy demands if it be well played. You may imagine, then, what it must be for tragedy !

To this you may add, that in one evening you sometimes see in succession a tragedy, a melodrama, a little piece interspersed with songs, and a farce : from this cause many of the actors are obliged to fill characters completely opposite, and, as we should say, *sont mis à toutes sauces.* It is almost impossible that taste should be perfected by such means. The non-success of the Drama in England is certainly not attributable to any want of talent in the first-rate

actors, at least not in those who adorned the stage a few years ago; Kean, Young, C. Kemble, Macready,* are all actors of great merit in tragedy, and Shakspeare has found in them interpreters worthy even of him. I remember also to have seen John Kemble in one of his finest parts, that of "Coriolanus." Still these artists are ordinarily so ill supported in the secondary parts, the actors who fill them are so pitiably bad, that the effect is almost destroyed.

In one of the most affecting scenes of "Romeo and Juliet," (at the time to which I allude these characters were played by C. Kemble and Miss O'Neill,) at the moment that one's whole feelings were moved in the liveliest manner, you heard on a sudden a sharp screaming voice, that of the Nurse, who was calling in a tone as if she was being skinned alive, "Juliet! Juliet! Juliet!" This was like the cry of a cat, which, in the middle of the night, awakens you from

* Every one in Paris has seen Macready in *Virginius*.

a dream of bliss! The intention of Shakspeare was to interrupt the scene, but surely not in this detestable manner; which, without doubt, was adopted by the actress to please the galleries, who immediately answered her appeal by loud bursts of laughter! but then what became of the illusion? I could have scolded that woman; and yet she was considered a capital actress!

Again, figure to yourself a scene in which one of these first-rate actors is full of enthusiasm; suppose Kean for instance, so celebrated in his Richard III., when, with his low, hoarse, but expressive voice, he depicted all the subtilty, all the blackness of the royal monster! Imagine, I say, the thousands of trembling spectators listening in the profoundest silence,—when suddenly a great noise is heard in the corridors, people running and then rushing violently into the boxes, with their hats on, in order to seize upon the vacant seats as quickly as possible! I see you here opening your eyes in surprise: my dear Augustus, it is nothing but the half-

price audience who arrive; their occupations as clerks, as shopkeepers, the business of their counting-houses and shops being concluded for the day, they profit by the remainder in taking their half of the pleasure going on. But again, what is become of the actor's enthusiasm? must it not affect him like a glass of cold water thrown in his face? And the emotion, the shudder of the spectator, where is it?

Notwithstanding these obstacles, comedy is sometimes represented in perfection. At the same epoch of which I have spoken above, there was in London some excellent comic actors: Fawcett, in the parts of fathers; Farren in those of humorists, or in such as the *ci-devant jeune homme;* Munden and Dowton, in characters where goodness, abruptness, and passion are intermingled; the latter was the more natural in his acting, from his being in reality the character he personified, for, when he got warm and angry on the stage, it was no longer a part that he played, but he really followed the im-

pression of his own anger! I have been told that it often required some little time, and not a few efforts, after he had quitted the stage, to calm him. Then there was Emery, and Rayner, in those dramas which might be called Tragedy in low live. Rayner was especially admirable in the affecting piece called *The Miller's Maid;* the character is a mixture of roughness and sensibility; an assemblage of noble qualities, of striking courage, with common manners and no education. I shall never forget the terrible effect produced by his arrival on the scene towards the end of this piece with the young girl he loves in his arms, and whom he has just saved from a great danger. It is not the passion of a "fine gentleman," tender and romantic, that he feels; but it is that of the lion in the forest, of the African under his burning sky!—it is passion such as Nature inspires in all its violence! But I must give you a description of the scene:

Rayner has just heard from the lips of the

young girl, that she loves him only as a brother — that her affection is given to the Sailor, with whom he had already fought at the opening of the play, and whom he was on the point of destroying if he had not been stopped by the Miller. With his heart broken by this avowal, he wanders about the mill in despair, not knowing what to do, or where to go ; in this state of mind he hears her cries upon being seized by the creatures of a *Roué*, who had surprised her alone, and who are going to deliver her up to their master. Upon this he bounds forward, flies to her assistance, and, armed with an immense staff, quickly puts the ravishers to flight, snatches up the young girl in his arms, and arrives thus on the scene, still pale with fury and emotion : he holds her tight to his breast, he remains motionless, casting round him glances of frightful excitement, to see if any other danger dares to approach her !

The Miller, his wife, and the young Sailor, are there also, motionless, frightened, and in

the greatest astonishment. It was then that the scene commenced which I found so fine as a dramatic composition, and so admirably performed. The young girl, sure of her influence over him who loves her so truly, certain of the nobleness and rectitude of his heart, but fearing his impetuosity and the state of despair in which she sees him, does not try to disengage herself from the powerful grasp which presses her against him; no, it is by the sweet accents of her cherished voice, by words of kindness and affection, that by degrees she calms his tortured feelings, and soothes his anger. She appeals to his generosity, which she confidently reckons on; to his heart, which she knows and values; and she places her future happiness at his disposal! The stick, which he still holds in his hand, falls gently to the earth; the powerful arm which holds her relaxes insensibly; he puts his hand over his eyes to hide the tear which burns them. Then, suddenly raising his head, he looks once more fixedly at her that he loves better than

his own life; and, making a sign to the Sailor to approach, abruptly darts away, and disappears for ever!

Emery also, in the "Caliban" of Shakspeare, should have been seen to be appreciated. His performance also of the character of "Tyke," a son whose vice and debauchery have caused the ruin of his father, whom nevertheless he loves, was inexpressibly fine. I must not forget to mention the agreeable voices of Miss Paton, Miss Tree, and Miss Stephens, in little operatic pieces; and Braham, too, whose powerful voice vibrated and filled the whole of the immense house: most happily for himself and for his hearers, his visits to Italy had corrected him of his long pauses, his shakes, and roulades without head or tail, according to the English school.

But, after all, I perceive that the "few words more" that I was to add upon the English Theatre have grown into a long letter, and my subject is not half exhausted; so you must let me send you a second epistle, for it would be

unjust to pass in silence the two instances where the English excel all other nations, "and beat them hollow:" I mean in the melodrama, of which you have some notion; and in the pantomimes, which resemble nothing that we have on the Continent.

So, farewell till my next.

LETTER XXXIX.

Melodrama. — Dramatic Combats.—Pantomime.— Clown and Pantaloon.—Tricks and Changes.—The Clown.—Perpetual bustle.—Ridiculous Scenes.—Effect of Pantomime.—Liston. — Matthews.

To-day my task is to display, *envers et contre tous*, the superiority of the English melodrama; and, for this purpose, I commence by asserting that in a spectacle where everything is disposed to enchant the eyes more than to satisfy the mind, one of the most important points is already attained in England, in the magnificence of the scenery,—in the art with which the decorations are painted, the extraordinary effects produced in picturesque subjects and in wild and desert scenes, in the mists, the vapouring distance, the sea, the caverns, tem-

pests, dark or bright weather, all, in fact, which constitutes this species of spectacle. Nature is, indeed, imitated in the most perfect manner, and to the most complete point of illusion.

You may apply all that I have here said, and almost all that will follow, to the small as well as to the large theatres; of course, in proportion to their size. Yet I must beg you to keep in view principally the houses of Drury Lane and Covent Garden, for on them is my field of battle; and you know already that every description of piece is represented in both.

Two other points are absolutely indispensable in a melodrama,—furious combats, and death exhibited in all its horrible details; and I unhesitatingly declare, that there is no comparison to be made with English melodramas in these particulars. It is impossible to fight with more eagerness, with more skill, or apparent reality. I have seen a warrior who, before he attacked his implacable enemy, kissed the blade of his sword with a sort of enthusiastic

ardour, and even sharpened it on his arm, like we do a razor on a strap. This caused me at first a hearty laugh; but I assure you, as soon as the combat began, I experienced quite a different sensation. My warrior was engaged against a savage armed with a tomahawk; and the blows were exchanged with such rapidity, and appeared so seriously and furiously applied, that the illusion was complete: and when the warrior passed his sword, palpably for our eyes, two feet through the body of his adversary, coming out between his shoulders, I began to look around for some fainting ladies; but I was mistaken; it was very warm weather, and I saw no agitation but that of fans. There was, perhaps, in some instances, a slight air of satisfaction visible on the countenances of these fair spectators.

When death is to be represented, it is done with consummate effect. The victim rolls in the dust; and the convulsion, the trembling of the limbs, the vain efforts to pronounce a few words of vengeance or remorse,—all is rendered

to the minutest particular. But what a little deteriorates the truth of such scenes is, that generally the conqueror during the whole time remains perfectly calm, looking quietly at his vanquished foe, with his hand on the hilt of his sword, and the point turned towards the earth. It was in this manner that Richmond, in the tragedy of Richard III, stood coolly looking at the dying prince, whom he has just killed in a single combat at Bosworth field; where, in history, terminated the reign of the tyrant, and at Covent Garden or Drury Lane, the play of Shakspeare. It is true that the Earl of Richmond succeeded Richard on the throne, (under the name of King Henry VII,) which perhaps will explain satisfactorily his tranquillity in seeing his rival expire.

I must not forget Harley for lively parts. And then there is Miss Kelly, the pearl of actresses, she who can at will make you laugh or cry. The expressive mobility of her features, her clear voice, and distinct enunciation, her natural yet energetic attitudes, her skill in al-

ways being dressed in character, and the interest which she spreads on the whole scene immediately she appears, render her one of the first actresses in England, if not the very first.

But now for the pantomime! This is the most amusing monstrous assemblage of follies, nonsense, slaps and blows, and of scenes changing as quick as the combinations of a kaleidoscope turned round with alacrity. One cannot help thinking that the inventor of this species of amusement, convinced of the great difficulty of exacting a laugh from his countrymen, and of rendering them gay, must have said to himself, "A fourfold dose must be administered to produce this effect; so I will give them such a quantity at a time that they *shall* be gay, or I'll know the reason why." And surely, as far as fun, nonsense, and horse-laughs can go, he has kept his word.

Although filled with every kind of varying incidents, these pantomimes have all the same subject as a base; the main spring is the same, the end similar. It is always a pair of lovers,

who are turned by a fairy into Harlequin and Columbine, in order to avoid the pursuit of the father of the young princess, and of the lover that he favours: these two are also metamorphosed in their turn by another genius; the latter into Clown, and the other into a character which resembles in a degree that of *Paillasse*, and is called Pantaloon. The whole piece is composed of the innumerable tricks that these two couple play each other; without reckoning all those that the Clown himself practises upon his own peculiar companion, Pantaloon. There is no conversation on the stage, except indeed an occasional cry or droll exclamation which issues from the Clown in the heat of the action; but it is very difficult to distinguish them amidst the general row, which begins even before the curtain rises, and increases in violence during the piece, without a moment of respite. It is the orchestra which is working hard all the while without taking breath; they perform the air of an old English country-dance, and appear to enjoy the spec-

tacle themselves as they play,—I think, by heart and without music. Then commence the shouts of laughter and applause of thousands of spectators, of which a fourth is composed of children. The bellowings of the galleries surpass all description! Again, there is the noise made on the stage behind the scenes, the moving of the machinery, houses which sink down and disappear to make room for other objects rising in their place. The greater number of these changes are occasioned by Harlequin's wand, who strikes the ground each time a metamorphosis is to be operated. This wand, I must not forget to tell you, has been a present from his good fairy. Occasionally, Columbine screams out in fright as she is nearly caught, and then she recommences dancing with dishevelled hair, red, and out of breath. The pursuit of the Clown and Pantaloon never ceases; they are everlastingly running, tumbling against each other, thumping and falling down, and the whole time the orchestra continues its *tra là là là, tra là là là,* &c.

During all this noise and bustle, (which, however, the ear learns to endure after the first giddiness is over,) there follows a succession of the most amusing scenes; and these are arranged so drolly, the accidents are so burlesque, so comic, and so numerous, that I confess I have often laughed myself out of breath. The Clown is the most amusing of them.* Merely to look at him gives you an inclination to laugh. As far as I can remember, his costume is always white, with a pair of very ample unmentionables trimmed round the knee, sometimes with a little blue or red: then he has such a mouth,—two enormous lips which reach from ear to ear; and to see what he contrives to stuff into this interminable gulf to try to satisfy his insatiable voracity is *impayable!* whilst the great pockets of his nether garment serve to hold all that come in his way that is eatable: sometimes he seizes upon the leg of mutton

* The name alone of "Grimaldi" will dilate the physiognomy of the most sombre person in England.

which the butcher's boy is carrying on the tray over his shoulder, sometimes it is a loaf of bread stolen from the baker's basket, and all this is pocketed with the greatest ease. Meanwhile, he does not remit his pursuit of Columbine and her dear Harlequin ; nor does he neglect any opportunity of playing off the most mischievous practical jokes upon his partner, the poor old Pantaloon.

These scenes pass chiefly in crowded streets ; you see open shops, people going in and out, and, in fine, a constant and general moving-about. Sometimes it is Harlequin who, to escape his pursuers, with great agility springs head foremost through a high window, breaking a pane of glass in his entry into the house : he is followed closely by Pantaloon, who endeavours to imitate him ; but, being unable to leap so high, falls back and upsets the Clown, who runs behind him : the latter starting up seizes upon a large pitcher, which is standing at the door of a grocer, and breaks it on Pantaloon's head,* who, in his

* I suppose his head is protected by an iron skull-cap, for the

turn, after standing as if stunned for a moment or two, (the other looking at him in an indescribable manner,) gives him a real English blow with his fist full on his jaw-bone; this sets him spinning round, and makes him shake his head as if to bring it back to its proper place. All this passes with a gravity so droll, and is done so naturally, as to produce shouts of laughter from all the spectators.

Some of the scenes are irresistibly ridiculous. I remember one in which Pantaloon is stuffed by the Clown into a cannon: his kind friend then applies the match to it, it goes off, and the fright which the explosion causes overturns him; he looks up at last, and, behold! his companion is stuck against the opposite wall, flattened like a bullet out of a gun! Another time, they are in search of arms; they find some; and the Clown, wishing to prove the goodness of a sabre, draws it, and tries it on

sound of the blow is distinctly heard, and is hard enough to kill an ox. Slaps on the face and boxing are imitated also in an incredible manner.

Pantaloon's neck; his head falls off, and rolls at his feet! He remains motionless with surprise; but when he sees him begin to walk about without his head, his knees knock together with fear: soon after, the head appears in a dish on a table, turning towards the Clown wherever he goes, nodding at him as if to say "How d'ye do?" whilst the body is behind him imitating all the other does. You may easily imagine the effect of all this upon the excited spirits of the numberless spectators!

I will finish by another joke of the same Clown, who on going to bed and wishing to blow out his candle, which is in a candlestick too high for him to reach, leaps up in vain several times, blowing with all his strength: at last he takes a chair, upon which he climbs, and then lifts up his head to recommence his puffing; but the light has disappeared, at least for him, for, whilst he was getting on the chair, it has descended within a couple of inches of the ground; he then looks for it without success in the clouds, and, upon suddenly lowering his head,

perceives it on the floor; he now gets down, and, whilst he is replacing his chair, the light re-ascends, and another, and another appears in every direction. These manœuvres increase in quickness until the spectators are exhausted with laughing. It is not, after all, the circumstance which renders this so ludicrous, but the comic manner in which it is all performed.

I must leave untold many other details of this kind, as well as the scenes of fairy-land introduced in these pieces, which are generally taken from Oriental tales, and add greatly to the amusement of the spectacle. If you find fault with it because it passes upon the same boards where an hour before you saw "Coriolanus fall," or heard "Antony haranguing the Romans over the dead body of Cæsar," I will reply, that it is not the less true that it acts as a very agreeable antidote to the gloomy ideas which a deep tragedy has left on the minds of a people already too cold and serious, and that the result is a little addition of good-humour,—

some few more ounces of *bon-sang*, as we say, in the veins of those who have witnessed it all, and who return home to their supper in a more merry manner than is usual with them.

For an indifferent author, nothing is more convenient than letters, my dear Augustus; for if you forget anything, there is always the resource of the *postscriptum*, which comes now so nicely to my assistance; as, when I spoke of melancholy, of spleen, or the gloomy ideas which are prevalent in England, I forgot to mention another means of dissipating them—namely, by going to see Liston* or Mathews in their different characters.

The first possesses the talent of being comic in the highest degree, not only in his acting, but in his aspect, throughout his whole person, and in all his gestures; he puts you in mind of Potier and Perlet, because, like them, he is an excellent comedian. But it must be confessed that his acting is almost always farce, broad

* One of his first characters is "Dominie Sampson," in a piece taken from the Guy Mannering of Sir Walter Scott.

farce; whilst Potier was at times very affecting even in his comicality, and often left his auditors between "a smile and a tear." It was towards the end of his dramatic career that this actor had attained his greatest perfection.

Mathews plays alone upon a stage which he calls "Home;" the newspapers announce that, on such a day, *Mathews will be at home*, and every one is anxious to visit him there. A man must be endowed with extraordinary talent, — his wit, his originality, his facility of elocution, must indeed be great, to enable him to entertain a large assembly, — to move their sympathy and to enchain their attention during three hours, (which I have seen him do several times,) and this without flagging for a moment; relating anecdotes, assuming various characters, representing striking portraits to the life! His French characters are admirable.

Adieu!

LETTER XL.

A Dandy.—An Exquisite.—Sybarites.—Luxurious Residence.—Boudoir.—Drawing-room.—Dressing-room.—Bed-room.—Roués.

Do you know what a Dandy is? There are at least ten different species of this animal. If you commence by the lowest, it is the city-beau, to whom I have already introduced you at Mr. Jackson's dinner, presenting an orange to a young lady, by taking up the fruit between two spoons, and extending his little fingers to have an air of delicacy, and to appear *unquestionably polite:* but this is a vulgarian; we must ascend the scale, passing by the ranks of this interesting class, such as the puppy, coxcomb, fop, the half-fashionable, the complete fashionable, &c. till

we at last reach the exquisite, the quintessence of all coxcombry conjoined. He shall be a young man, whether noble or *parvenu* it matters not so that he be rich; he must have an air of *nonchalance*, and appear *ennuyé* with everything. He hardly deigns to speak at all, it is too fatiguing for his delicate organs. If you have the honour of knowing him, and should meet him, he will address you, "Oh! how a-a-ye? am gad to see you;" but these words will be scarcely articulated, and pronounced in a drawling tone as if he had some impediment in his throat which prevents him from speaking: this will be all you can get out of him. He is the epitome of self-sufficiency, affectation, and impertinence: he despises every social talent, wit, and amiability, because he himself is incapable of either; for he appears only organised for putting on cravats, wearing a well-cut coat, choosing pommades, perfumes, &c.: his pride is to attend to no one but himself.

One of the best traits I have ever heard, and which perfectly characterizes the insolence of

the exquisite, is related of an officer in a certain *ci-devant* fashionable regiment of hussars: he was at a ball, and the master of the ceremonies offered to present him to a very pretty girl; the exquisite, lolling back in his arm-chair, putting up his glass to his eye, and looking at the young lady, replied, as if he were at a horse-dealer's, "Trot her out!"

You may find Sybarites in every part of the world, but I think they are more plentiful in England than elsewhere, and in no place is luxury and personal profusion carried so far; I will choose one for an example, whom I know intimately, but in whose character the principal qualification of his species is wanting—I mean egotism. Far from it, he is generous, most obliging to his friends, and hospitable; he is what we emphatically term *bon garçon*, possessing great gentleness and blandness of manners, and is neither dandy, coxcomb, nor exquisite.

Although he is no noble, he lives in the first society, as the numberless cards of lords on his

table or chimney-piece testify. At present, the *super* fashion is to furnish one's house in the mode of Louis the Fourteenth's time. The furniture of my friend's residence is profuse and superb; his apartment is *doré sur tranches* (gilt-edged), with embossed hangings, and encumbered with coffers and cabinets minutely incrusted with mother of pearl, brass, gold and silver, scented wood, and even rare and precious stones. You may perceive, through the glass doors of these elegant receptacles, dozens of magnificent snuff-boxes, and other gorgeous trinkets and jewels of our grandfathers, such as the tooth-pick cases which they wore in the pockets of their long satin waistcoats, often costing more than fifty guineas; he has also some charming pictures, after his own peculiar taste; amongst others, several well-chosen pieces of the celebrated Watteau. These are in his drawing-rooms: but as I am fond of description, my dear Augustus, I will continue, and give you an idea of the luxury with which some bachelors in England surround themselves.

Open that white door with gilt mouldings, and enter that boudoir; it is furnished in red velvet, bordered with gold-coloured fringes. The breakfast is prepared for himself, and for you, whom he expected; the service is of delicate *Sèvres*, and all the utensils of metal, such as teapot, kettle, &c. are in silver gilt and most richly chased. The table is placed near the fire, and in the corner next the wall is a soft stuffed low sofa, with plenty of cushions. This is the master's own place. With his hand on the bell, he requests you to choose out of the delicacies usually set apart as breakfast dishes, and as such selected by fashionable epicures; you do so, and are instantly supplied: how this is managed I know not.

This elegant little room, as well as the drawing-room, is adorned with pictures, but of smaller dimensions: here is a portrait of Madame du Barri, quite *en négligé*, which renders her *jolie comme un cœur*; also a sleeping nymph in a wood, surprised by a satyr: from this you perceive you are in a bachelor's house. To go into

the dressing-room, you must pass through the drawing-room, and enter by a concealed door into this sanctuary of white marble. On the right hand is a bath of the same material, of a most elegant form, above which are the bending necks of two swans, ready to supply you lavishly upon the slightest touch with a stream of hot or cold water; so that, at whatever hour of the day *monsieur* may fancy, the bath is prepared in the space of three minutes. In front of this, at the other extremity of the room, is the washing-stand, also in marble; here again are three sorts of water,—warm, cold, and hot,—always ready; each with its button. On the right is the toilet-table, which supports the various objects to render one presentable; and opposite to this is a lovely and graceful statue,—Venus on a pedestal. You may judge of and admire her beautiful contour and charming form, for she is completely *en déshabille*.

At last you enter into the bed-room, where a more tempered light reigns; here you perceive again, on one side of the sumptuous couch, a

little secret door, which is appropriated to the service of the apartment. I will only add, that this room is furnished as luxuriously and as full of comfort as the others, and, besides, contains a few paintings which from their subjects require privacy; not that I mean to insinuate that they represent anything shocking, or what need cause you to fly, yet truth obliges me to confess that it is almost a pity that they are so deliciously painted. There is one particularly, which may perhaps merit a reproach, for it makes the heart beat, and troubles the senses as you look at it, and besides pursues the imagination long after the eyes are turned away.

Augustus, I am going to make a long stride, for, from the man whose tastes I have just depicted, (and who, although a little eccentric, is a perfect gentleman in the fullest acceptation of the term,) I pass to the *mauvais sujets* or *roués* of England. In spite of all those qualities which I have so praised when speaking generally, yet I think that in this country exists the highest degree of immorality, the greatest de-

pravity of habits, among certain individuals possessing fortune, rank, and, in some instances, a noble and celebrated name.

There is only one, and but a very feeble excuse to be offered for them; is it, that they are led away by the facilities which an almost inexhaustible fortune offers them for present and future purposes. In a country where gold has the power of the wonderful lamp, they make use of it to evade the laws. The vices of the rich are the more inexcusable, as they invariably lead to the destruction of others; and particularly when they choose, as their victims, women without any means of defence; then their conduct becomes a piece of degrading cowardice.

Among these *roués*, I am acquainted with one (and he is a peer), whose profound knowledge of vice has made the most expert at Paris tremble and draw back; and this is saying not a little. Another was pointed out to me in a gay *salon* in London, with the additional intelligence that he had committed actions which

would have hung an ordinary man seven or eight times over! He also is rich and great.

But to express myself with greater calmness; it is too true, that in point of luxury, expense, and extravagance, there is no country which can bear any comparison with England. The facilities for enjoyment of every description are unbounded to a young man who knows that one day he must inherit many thousands a year, and that nothing can deprive him of this inheritance. This knowledge leads him to contract enormous debts, has already satiated him with pleasure, and worn-out his constitution by the time he arrives at manhood.

And tell me, what must he become, in whose bosom, at the age of twenty-five or thirty, every sentiment of delicacy and honour is already extinguished?—I do not speak of that honour which makes a man fight a duel.—I ask what is left to him? Nothing but to persevere in satisfying his debauched tastes, which are now like those of gamesters or drunkards, whose motto is, "the more one plays, the more one

wishes to play;" "the more one drinks, the more one feels the necessity of drinking."

And if nothing remains, neither heart nor honourable feelings, yet he still possesses the powerful spring which enables him to continue his pleasures—gold and credit. And such is the English *roué*.

God bless you, my dear Augustus!

LETTER XLI.

Women of England.—Contrasts.—Female Costume.—Duties of Women.—Visits to the Continent.—English Abroad.—Law-suits for Adultery.—English Women.

I AM now going to venture upon a few observations on the women of England: but I preface them by telling you that I am, by nature and education, strongly imbued with respect for the fair sex; and that if I were going to speak of an Iroquois woman, it would still be with reserve: so expect nothing else.

Elegance of appearance, an extreme nicety and freshness in the whole of the toilet, a gracefulness and suppleness in walk and gesture, an ability in exhibiting every advantage and in concealing every defect, a profound study of

the lessons of coquetry in order to attract and fix the attention of men, an ease and assurance in conversation, an influence and empire which are always created and exercised in society,—all this must be sought for in French women. A *real* English woman comprehends nothing of it; for, as I have said elsewhere, the reserve imposed on her is the first obstacle, and the education she receives is a still greater one.

The contrasts presented by a party of women in England are very remarkable; each of them will have taken a *hint* from the Continent for her dress or manner, and their efforts, sometimes successful, more often the contrary, are very amusing to observe. These contrasts exist often in the same person: the most perfect beauty of feature and form will be accompanied by a stiffness which completely disenchants: a woman of high stature, of which there are many in England, often possesses a gentle, infantine voice; another, fifty years of age, wears roses on her head, and a bouquet in

the belt round her waist; a fourth is dressed with infinite care, her toilet is costly, but throughout there is a waste of fine things,—mixtures which are incongruous, and which cause the whole to fail in the effect intended to be produced. By the side of a young, delicate, pale woman, with a melancholy and interesting air, you will see a portly highly-rouged dame *ramassée dans sa courte épaisseur*, (bundled up in her short thickness,) with a turban, a dress, band, gloves, and shoes all of different colours; and her enormous sleeves almost completely hiding her modest neighbour, who sits in perfect stillness with her eyes bent down.

In general, the dress of an English woman is more handsome in materials than fresh in preservation; they commonly sit down upon a chair as if chance alone had caused them to fall there, without paying the least attention to the manner in which their dress is placed under them, so that sometimes it is pulled all on one side, and gives an appearance of crookedness to the figure; and if they venture to rise, to move

from one end of the room to the other, the part of the dress which had been in contact with the seat having been well pressed, betrays in numerous folds this want of attention. Only recollect the care with which a French woman places herself in an arm-chair, taking hold of her robe on each side, raising her arms gently, like a bird spreads its wings, and then lightly seating herself! Even if she should throw herself upon it, exhausted by laughing, or half fainting from excess of emotion, still the robe will remain untumbled, there will always have been an imperceptible motion which will have preserved it.

I must not be understood to comprehend, in these remarks on English women, a certain class in high life. Amongst these, the habits and modes of Paris have taken firm footing; their intercourse with that capital is continual, and their physical education is most finished. You must also withdraw from this picture a number of English who reside on the Continent; they are a class apart, and to these also I destine a

few *scratches* when their turn comes. The women of whom I speak are the completely English, of the class called genteel, and the most numerous.

Englishmen have contrived to impress upon the minds of their wives that it is their duty to watch over, from morning till night, the direction of the house, the home interests, those of the children, their education, &c.; that out-of-door affairs belong to men exclusively. Doubtless, this is the primitive instruction of nature; the savages of America offer well-known examples, but *their* out-of-door business is somewhat different to that of civilized life—its importance somewhat greater, as on them depends the existence of the family. It is they who must brave every fatigue and danger to provide for their subsistence; it is they who must protect and defend them from all attacks. The out-of-door occupation of the Englishman is to attend his club, to amuse himself in gaming, horse-racing, at the opera, in riding, or in the pleasures of the chase; and this, not from

necessity but choice. Again, the praise which Englishmen prodigally bestow on their wives when they virtuously remain at home, answers two ends, as it flatters those to whom it is addressed, and satisfies at the same time their politic husbands. They avoid thus the terrible dangers, which, according to them, a woman never fails to meet if she goes often in society.

But, after all, in the many families where the position of the women is such as I describe, whether it arise in part from the causes to which I have attributed it, or whether it be the effect of the excellent education common to English women, the truth is, that their duties are most rigidly performed. It is impossible to meet with greater regularity, greater exactitude in the care with which they educate their children, and manage their household. I have always been inclined to compare the existence of an English family, (particularly one in the country,) to the progress of a clock, on which each moment of the day and the year is marked

and takes its turn. The basis of all this is a profound sentiment of religion, which makes part of their education: it is rare to find an English woman who does not fulfil its behests, —it is the first lesson she receives,—it is the first she tries to make her child comprehend.

Many an English husband puts on a long face when a tour on the Continent is proposed. The experience that has been acquired, the change it has produced on many of their ladies, is doubtless the cause of this repugnance. I have known several who were quite discouraged at their first return to their country. "There were no longer the pleasures of the Continent, the agreeableness of the men, their apparent devotion to the ladies; and, above all, that dear *sans façon* which renders everything pleasant," they exclaimed; "Englishmen are so heavy!—the climate of England is so bad," &c. It is to be hoped that their regrets soon fade away, and that they resume, after a time, their former occupations and feelings with pleasure.

Of the number of English families which

reside on the Continent, either in the capitals or in provincial towns, (it is well known from motives of economy,) much might be said; but I will maintain my usual habits of discretion, and make but a few passing remarks on them. Their economical manner of living is nearly equal in expenditure to the wealthiest in the places they inhabit (excepting in two or three of the great capitals); from this result such airs, particularly amongst the ladies, that are really *impayables;* and, what is better still, it is among themselves that they establish the greatest distinctions! They carry with them their exclusiveness, their aristocracy, the same as in London; they are difficult of access to each other, they only receive those of distinguished name or title! the party must have been presented at St. James's! and yet—would you credit it?—three-fourths of these very people have never been in anything like high society in London! Their very names have never even been heard there!

There is another thing very remarkable in the

customs of the English; namely, the pride, the haughtiness of many, as well as their overstrained opinions of the qualities essential to sustain what they call "the high character of a gentleman," put in contradiction with their receiving payment of damages from him who has seduced or run away with their wives. This is a problem I find most difficult to solve; there is an anomaly, a sort of ridicule attached to the idea of being materially consoled by money for a moral pain or loss, in repairing one's honour by receiving what it is not even honourable to ask. Explain this, Augustus,—you who have always been my master in reasoning and logic. I do not speak of the *people*, remember. Among them, for the same cause, a man drags his wife to the market-place, with a cord round her throat, and sells her to the highest bidder, sometimes for "two shillings and sixpence;" but this is a farce which is now rarely played, and which John Bull only laughs at; and it is, you know, contrary to law. The practice of which I spoke above, is a question of social

life : it is done by the noble and the fashionable ; indeed, let me say, *en passant*, that it is among the latter that it most frequently occurs, and where there is the most risk of its occurring.

As I am on this subject, which, when I commenced my letter, I foresaw I could not well avoid, I must add that an English woman seldom stops in a fault of that kind *half-way ;* it is done completely, — heart and soul are in it ; or, in other words : "*Lorsque les Anglaises jettent leurs bonnets, c'est toujours par-dessus les moulins.*"* A harsh observer could say that the cause of this romantic disregard of propriety arises from the complete loss of reputation which always follows a fall of this kind in England ; but this is neither just nor generous. I should be much more inclined to think that Nature has given to women far more weakness and enthusiasm, than courage or inclination to brave the laws of society, and society itself, in thus throwing down the gauntlet.

* " When English women throw thier caps off, they cast them completely over the mill."

You smile here, I am sure, accusing me of getting out of my hobble by a half-compliment to the frail English fair ones; but, if there is any truth in my opinion, it is equally applicable to women of all countries: and as to English women considered apart, it is not by individual faults found in certain classes—it is not by examples which prove their rarity by the very *éclat* they produce, and the reprobation which follows them, that the character of a people can be judged. Unimportant as is the opinion of any one individual, yet I feel I have the right to give one; for it is one formed after a long residence in England, during which I lived on terms of the greatest friendship and intimacy with many families in various ranks. And I say, and boldly say, that, if I am asked for an example for a mother to follow, the model of a respectable life, an assemblage of talents, education, and modesty, an unfailing confidence in God, whether in prosperity or in adversity, I could cite thousands among women whose nobleness of feeling seems concentrated in one sentiment,

the most touching of all,—"the desire of rendering their husbands and children happy!" And I would moreover point to England, and say, "Go there and seek it!"

Adieu!

LETTER XLII.

Catholics and Protestants.—Their Ministers.—Clerical Preferment. — Church Patronage. — Fashionable Clergymen. — Country Clergymen. — Conscience. — Catholic Austerity. — Protestant Contrast.—Happy Life.

I DOUBT if two men, filling the same position, having the same pursuits and functions, their life directed to the same ends, can yet differ more in their manner of acting and modes of existence than the Catholic priest and the Protestant minister.

Here I pause a moment to tell you, my dear Augustus, that I have no intention to enter into a theological discussion, or even to make a profession of faith. As I have said in another place, religion is a subject by far too serious to be treated in these familiar letters, and one

on which I would not enter here, even if I were capable of doing so with advantage to others or to myself. I shall therefore endeavour to present to you the side of this subject only which offers some assimilation to my general theme—society. I shall only speak of the impressions I have received in contemplating these characters so dissimilar, and then you may draw your own conclusions.

The physical or material life of a clergyman in England is essentially different from that of a *curé* on the Continent; and, in this point of view, the former may be called worldly, whilst the existence of the latter is passed, or is supposed to be passed, in the greatest retirement and even austerity. But do not fail to remark that, notwithstanding the enjoyments which a clergyman finds in the world, where he is received like any other gentleman, (though with the restrictions that his character imposes on him,) his duties become more numerous and more difficult to fill; he is always in contact with others, and placed before all

eyes. His power is not founded on the influence and persuasion exercised in the silence of the cloister or the confessional, but on conviction and example; and his part in life is like that of any other man.

Under his own roof, in his own home, where people so frequently put aside the mask, and leave off acting for the world, a clergyman has still observers, has still witnesses, for or against him, in his wife and children. And what a crowd of reflections fill his mind! what encouragement! what a curb to him when from the pulpit he is explaining the holy Scripture, the words of God, — when he preaches the maxims of virtue and religion,—and then lowers his eyes and sees his own family, his own children, looking at him, listening to him, and judging him!

The Catholic priest is alone, absolutely alone in the world; he has no witness of his conduct but himself. He is seen only at the altar, or through the grate of the confessional; and if the hat is taken off at

his approach in the street, it is rather to his garb (which publicly announces his character) that this homage is offered, than to the qualities and virtues he individually possesses; for two-thirds of those who salute him can only suppose them to exist. His power also to inflict punishment, penances, to absolve sin, and to penetrate by confessions into the recesses of the most secret thoughts of men, gives him in the eyes of the devout and the ignorant a superiority of nature which the protestant clergyman possesses not, nor would like to possess. The superiority of the latter must be founded on education, experience, and example.

He whom we call in France Mr. le Curé (I mean the *Curé de village*, who dines at the great man's chateau on Sunday,) is often (I know many personally) quite as good, as virtuous, in his sphere, as the English clergyman of the same rank; but his education, his manners, his social functions, his means of existence, are infinitely inferior.

To become a clergyman in England, a man must pass through the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, and must be ordained* by a bishop. The religious corporation, as well as many other institutions, suffers under one of those diseases which are so difficult to cure radically, and is one to which the attention of the reformers is at this moment directed. I allude to the privileges, the sinecures, which cause so much injustice and hardship. The livings are held by the gift of the landholders, the nobles, and even of the ministers of the crown; they may dispose of them (without receiving money) to whomsoever they choose. The revenues arise from a collection of the tenth part of the returns of the land, and this is what they call *tithes* (the now great subject of discussion for Ireland). But a layman cannot touch this revenue, consequently the donor will appoint a friend or relation.

* There are some, however, who have received orders without having been educated at the Colleges; but this is uncommon and difficult to obtain.

From this you may easily conceive how many intrigues there are to obtain livings, for some are worth from two hundred even to five thousand pounds per annum.

Imagine a bishop going to pay his court, and making a profound bow, to one of those rich *roués* whose lives I have before alluded to, or to that nobleman, for example, who by his actions has more than once deserved hanging, and from whom his lordship, in all the sanctity of his profession, asks the favour of such or such living in his gift for one of his own *protegés ;* and this man, who would make the devils themselves tremble, grants the power of reading the holy Scriptures in the temple of God !

The church also becomes a resource for the younger brothers of those noble families where the eldest son takes possession of the whole of the fortune. But here, alas ! with regret I say it, not always is exhibited the character of a clergyman such as I have delighted to trace, and to hold up to your

esteem and admiration. They are for the most part young men brought up in luxury and indulgence, who have passed through the universities, rather employed in drinking champagne, gaming, and making love, than in studying theology; consequently, when they enter holy orders, they are incapable of fulfilling the serious office to which they are called. Many delegate their sacred duties to some poor curate with the appointment of fifty or sixty pounds per annum, and the rest of their incomes they expend in every sort of worldly amusement.

I recollect hearing one of these fashionable clergymen, who preached in a chapel not very far from Bond-street; his sermons announced a great severity of doctrine, and a harsh dictating tone in the reprobations addressed directly to his congregation upon the sinfulness of worldly pleasures and vanities, and this with great affectation of manner and pronunciation, and with curled hair carefully arranged on his forehead; in fact, he was a

real dandy, with his white cambric handkerchief in his hand!

But let us return to the class—happily much larger—which may be considered as forming the true support of the Protestant religion; I mean the country clergymen, those residing in and near the country towns and villages. The more simple their station, the more perhaps we shall find to esteem in their conduct, the more striking their example in the sphere in which they live. I have, on many occasions, attentively observed their mode of existence, and it appears to me the most happy that is to be attained on this earth.

Supposing him to possess a clear conscience, sincerity and rectitude of intention, and a firm belief in the simple faith which he professes and is called upon to teach, the life of an English pastor appears prepared for, and disposed to sustain in every moment, that happiness of which I have spoken. The combinations assembled to render him thus happy are so visible, so tangible, that, if

he is not happy, it can only be by his own fault. From his peculiar position, he can never be in the way of another; there is no pure and precious enjoyment which home can offer, no recreation or reasonable amusement, which is not in his power. He can afford to offer hospitality to others, he receives it in return; and the respect and consideration paid to him are apart from the pretensions of society, and cause jealousy to no man: he accepts them as they are, simple and free from all worldly interests.

I must not omit to observe that the society in which clergymen are met, knows well how to appreciate them and really honour them; not because they are ministers of the church, but out of respect to every worthy action of their lives. The best proof of this is the general contempt which follows an opposite line of conduct, or any dereliction of duty. Of this too I have seen examples under my own eyes.

The life of a Protestant clergyman affords

the best means of securing a pure and unblemished conscience. Let us consider the unfavourable influence, too real to be disputed; which an agitated mind and tormented feelings must have on the constitution and health — first of all blessings,—and you will be of my opinion that a life, more than any other sheltered from such attacks, must be enviable. It is impossible to find in society any other situation which does not call for many acts of deception, such as the *finesses* of politeness ; envy, ambition, the numerous causes, in short, which destroy tranquillity of mind, and too often of conscience. With the latter there is no arrangement to be made ; it is an eternal witness of all our thoughts, of all our actions ; an inflexible untiring judge, who accompanies us ever, even in our sleep ; one who never pardons. The immortality of the soul is more revealed to me in this thought than in all the fine discourses which have ever been made on the subject.

But to return. A Catholic priest, however

pious, however irreproachable in his conduct, is exposed to constant trials of his conscience. His isolated position, the severity of the laws of his vocation, exact from him a superior degree of virtue; and to maintain this, a resolution is necessary, which is perhaps beyond the moral strength of man. He pronounces often, by devotion, words to which his understanding refuses assent; if he is really sincere, he yields from terror; if he is a hypocrite, his conscience is there to tell him so incessantly. In the bottom of his heart Nature speaks, and is always combating the vows that he has sworn to fulfil. He must renounce many things that he knows are enjoyed by his fellow-beings, and valued above all price! And then, that other happiness! that which his religion sanctifies, at the same time that it forbids him even to think of it for himself! His life, morally and physically, is one eternal struggle! It may inspire respect, nay, admiration; but it excites regret for so much rigour, which is in contradiction with what Nature and God himself has implanted.

Let me quit this picture, and turn my eyes to a state of existence so much more natural, that of the Protestant minister. Not only is he protected from the moral sufferings above cited, but he is free from those which are felt in the world, where so many different interests are in continual opposition, and with which he has nothing to do; his position and character completely keep him free. I must also place by the side other advantages which he possesses; which, however physical they may appear after what I have said, are nevertheless very valuable to poor human nature, and which an English clergyman, I assure you, knows how to appreciate.

He has a wife—one of those women I have sketched at the end of my last letter; he has children who ensure his happiness by creating for him the greatest interest in life; he has a home, simple perhaps, but one where reign the greatest order and regularity, the nicest care: his existence is tranquil; he is respected without, and cherished within; he has health, arising

from exercise,—tranquillity of mind, from a conscience void of great offence: and then, dear Augustus, place this pretty cottage, and he who inhabits it with his amiable family, by the side of a bright green meadow, a mile from the village where is situated the church, and where every one blesses and respects him, and you will own that this is an existence worthy of envy!

It is the best I could desire for the best of my friends.

Adieu!

LETTER XLIII.

Estimation of England.—General Cleanliness. — Borders of the Rhine.—Wretchedness of the Towns.—Misery of the People. —Obstacles to Improvement.—People of Education.—Bad Habits.—Pavements in London.—Clean Hands.

My dear Augustus,

However slight may be the sketch I give you of England, it has at least the merit of being a faithful one; and if I succeed in imparting to you a few exact notions of this country, my aim will be attained.

The circle that I have traversed has certainly been small in comparison with one which should include all the remarkable things that England contains,—things which others have seen, and perhaps better appreciated than I could have done; but it is likewise certain that, as all

that I have met with has not been expressly arranged in order to fascinate my eyes and imagination, but has been real, my description cannot but serve to give a just idea of the country. It is probable that any other person in my position who might have followed a route diametrically opposite, he turning to the right and I to the left, would have met with pretty nearly all that I have described. Consequently, the wealth and prosperity of the country, the national dignity found in every rank of people, and the many other advantages that I have eulogized, passing over many of which I am ignorant,—all these, I say, do not merely exist in the small circle trodden by me, but are spread over the whole of England. I do not here speak either of Scotland or Ireland, as I have visited neither of those parts of the British dominions. I follow the same course of reasoning, respecting the defective points which are to be found in this country as well as in all others, and which have also not escaped my observation.

Amongst other qualities which distinguish the English, there is one most incontestable, one from which results an infinity of advantages; namely, the extreme cleanliness general amongst them, the peculiar attention that they pay to personal neatness. Also that abstinence, even amongst the common people, both in their families and in the streets, from all those indecent or indecorous habits, which are so common and so disgusting on the Continent; from which even the women, I am ashamed to say it, are not free; and which place the human creature below the level of brutes; for *they* in general love cleanliness, and some not only avoid filthiness by an instinct of their nature, but even, in satisfying its wants, fly to privacy and concealment.—Try to comprehend me, as I cannot venture to be more explicit.

Of the Continental countries, I will choose one as a contrast, which has been the most praised, particularly during the last fifteen years that Fashion has ordered her votaries to visit it. It has been the subject of endless

pamphlets, "Tours" filled with romantic descriptions, embellished with engravings, and with accounts of all the ancient legends attached to these places, whilst not one of these books, as far as I recollect, has said one word of the condition of the people who inhabit such charming sites. I speak of the country through which the Rhine flows. This river is extolled, and justly, for its beauty, its grandeur, its majestic windings in its passage through mountains whose heights are crowned by ruined castles, and whose perpendicular sides are covered by its vineyards famous throughout the whole world. All this is fine, indeed; but look at it *near*, look closely at the towns, the villages which "adorn the borders of the Rhine," as the guide-book says; on passing which, the English lady, seated on the deck of a steam-boat, with her glass at her eye, exclaims, "Delightful, charming, exquisite!" as she is rapidly carried past them, and sees them only at a distance from the centre of the stream! Stop at these places, enter them if you please, go

through them, and then judge of the habits and social position of the inhabitants!

You will first be disgusted with the odour of stagnant streams which have no issue from the streets, by the filth of every description piled up before the half-falling houses, through whose naked windows you see a miserably-furnished sombre interior. Here and there you will meet with a few small shops, but they are poor and shabby; you are pushed about in dirty, narrow streets, by ill-dressed, ill-mannered people. And yet it is amidst all this poverty, all this degradation, that you arrive at those superb churches, at those remains of ancient grandeur, those ruins full of historical interest and beauty!

I ascended the Rhine from Cologne to Mayence, a distance of about one hundred and twenty miles; I stopped at Coblentz, and afterwards at Bingen, a small town much celebrated for its picturesque situation, it being placed at the extremity of one of those angular bends which the Rhine forms; and it is to that town

that my reproaches are particularly addressed: thence I proceeded to Mayence. In the four principal towns, and in the country that surrounded them, particularly in the vicinity of Coblentz and Bingen, I found the situation of the people, their manner of living, their moral and physical existence, always equally miserable, and, I may say, uncivilised.

Upon seeing the Rhine, and those who people its borders, a poet or an enthusiast would not fail to cry out, that, if the ancient Heathen gods still existed, the deity of this stream would rush from its waters, shaking with indignation his damp, green locks at the sight of these lovely shores so contaminated, and, with one stroke of his trident, would cause all those dirty villages, with their inhabitants, to be swallowed up, and leave Nature alone and triumphant in all her beauty! But I, who am no poet, would destroy nothing; most certainly not the fine road constructed by Napoleon, which follows so faithfully every bend of the river. I would also preserve those precious

vineyards which ascend the mountain's side; but, above all, I would, if I could, ameliorate the condition of the poor people.

Go, my dear Augustus, and ask this of the King of Prussia, of the Prince of Hesse, for each of these *souverains* possesses a portion of this beautiful country. Go, and be refused. You will be treated as an impudent madman who wishes to overturn the constitution of two states, because you desire a moral education and a better religion for the people, the poor people!— because you wish to remove them from the influence of a bigoted clergy, and give them a religion in which they look up to God alone! Dare to ask more liberty, more wide-spreading rights, more encouragement and facility for external commerce, better internal communications; ask some such sacrifices on the part of these governments, and you will be called a visionary at the best, even if you escape the terrible imputation of being a republican. You will be told that the people are happy as they are, and that they owe that happiness

to their ignorance of a more elevated state of being.

I must now speak of a class actually superior, in the defects of which the government has no part; for examples of which I will go no farther than the steam-boat where I left my English lady with her raised eye-glass admiring the views. Among the Prussians or others whom I met with on the Rhine during the last fine season, either travelling for pleasure or business, there must have been many persons of talent and education; indeed, it was sufficient to exchange a few words in conversation with them, in order to be convinced of it; and yet, under what a vulgar exterior, under what gross habits, are these advantages concealed! Why is this? I am more struck by it perhaps from having fresh in my memory the habits and people of England; this, doubtless, renders me more difficult to be pleased. But is it indispensable in Germany, at least in the part I have seen, to have dirty hands because you are a literary character,—an histo-

rian,—a natural philosopher? Why must you exhibit black teeth, half decayed by the excessive use of tobacco, and have your linen impregnated with the colour and smell of the smoke?

What surprise would have been entertained by the punctilious Lord Chesterfield,—who wrote to his son that a gentleman could be always known by his manner of eating, of sitting at table,—if he had chanced to find himself at dinner in a steamboat with such company as I have described? What would he have said on seeing these men taking up their sauce with a knife, wiping that instrument, and its companion the fork, on the remains of a bit of bread which is left thus *barbouillé* on the table until the arrival of the next dish? A fainting fit must have been the consequence.

At first sight these observations may appear futile; but how many other more degrading habits do they not lead you to suppose? In human things there is always an imperceptible chain which unites together what is valuable, and another which performs the same office

for what is bad. Thus, one good habit always produces another: so the lower link of the chain, whilst isolated, may appear indeed indifferent; but if you consider it conjointly with the whole, and see the good which results, you own its importance.

Again, without quitting common—nay, vulgar examples, if you will call them so, you have heard me extol the large pavements which are to be found in every town in England, particularly in London throughout its great immensity! Well, let me trace the tenth part of the benefits which arise from this one convenience:—First, much greater security for women, children, aged and infirm persons, who are protected by it from the accidents which would infallibly be occasioned by the thousands of vehicles of all descriptions ever in movement in London, and which themselves profit by this security in going more rapidly to their place of destination. Secondly, a quick and uninterrupted communication for the thousands of people on foot, who have affairs of various im-

portance in different parts of the town, which daily communicates with every quarter of the globe. After the most violent rain, a little sunshine or wind will dry these pavements in the space of a quarter of an hour; this may help to account for the cleanliness of the dress and shoes of the people. Thirdly, the separation which it establishes between the handsome and innumerable shops, and the centre of the streets, where the carriages are confined; keeping the former free from mud: tradesmen can thus afford to use those brilliant plate-glass windows, through which you perceive the wealth of their splendid magazines, their excessive neatness and magnificence.

I should never finish if I tried to enumerate every advantage of this chain, which after all begins with so simple a thing as a few large stones placed together. Do not then, Augustus, despise my *foot pavements;* and believe I could say as much, in an inverse ratio, in taking for the first link of my chain, dirty hands, neglected teeth, a never-ending pipe, and gross habits.

It is no joke when I tell you that a stage-coachman in England has always clean hands. Beginning at this point, you may go a long way.

Good-b'ye .

LETTER XLIV.

Education in England.—Periodical Publications.—Agriculture.—Turnips introduced by Lord Townsend.—English Farm-house.—Gratitude.

Even in the very lowest classes in England, it is difficult to find a person who does not know how to read or write. There is scarcely any village, however insignificant, which has not its "national school;" and, without meaning any offence to other countries, I think I may assert that the education of the people in England is superior to that of any other.

But there are other sources of instruction besides that of these schools, by which the middling class, embracing in itself two-thirds of

the population, profit. These consist of the immense number of periodical publications, by which knowledge adapted to all situations is spread over the whole country. Almost every town possesses one of its own. The most celebrated are the "Quarterly Review," (Tory politics,) "The Edinburgh Review," (Whig,) "The Westminster Review," (Radical,) "The Monthly," "Penny," and other Magazines; besides many works of the like description published by different literary and scientific societies, giving information on all the arts and sciences, and even on religion; for there are some published by Methodists, Evangelists, &c. In fact, every sect, every party, every opinion has its organ; and when you consider that the most simple elements as well as the highest branches of arts and sciences are therein treated,—that there is no subject left untouched,—that these works are written and edited by men of the first talent, and that general information is thus placed at the command, and brought to the level of the

plainest understanding, by means of the cheapness of these publications, the simplicity of the language in which they are written, and the readiness of communication from one part of the kingdom to the other, you will easily conceive the superiority of information of which I have spoken.

Doubtless, in works of this description, where so many different subjects are brought forward, many are treated very superficially, but still in every page there will be some information or advice suited to one or many individuals. I have met with people in society, who, by a regular perusal of this sort of works, have acquired a great fund of what is called "general knowledge," without their being perhaps very well versed in any one topic; and it was impossible to touch upon any subject in conversation, in which they did not immediately bear the principal part. Then you must not forget the innumerable newspapers and journals which are sent from one part of the kingdom to the other,

and which give to the inhabitants of the most retired corner of the distant counties, notions respecting their political position, their rights, immunities, charters, taxes, together with information of every act of their Government, or that of other countries. I remember, one day, meeting a peasant on the road from Tunbridge Wells to Summer Hill, who was driving, *sauf votre respect*, a herd of swine, and reading a newspaper! I stopped to speak to him, that I might assure myself of the fact, and found that it really was "The Times" that he held in his hand.

I am myself indebted to several of these Reviews for much useful detail, and for many general notions on the state of the country, which, even with more time and opportunity, I could not have acquired from my own experience. For instance, it is rarely that a man of the world can know much about agriculture (unless indeed he possesses an estate which he manages himself); it is impossible to distinguish the amelioration which such or such a field may have undergone, by merely walking across it, or

by passing it in a carriage ; but the information of the press supplies the necessary knowledge : whilst, with quite as great ignorance of the mode of producing certain manufactured articles, a person can judge of their improvement immediately they are brought before his eyes. It is not necessary to be a mechanic in order to comprehend and appreciate the ingenuity of a new machine ; if it be only half explained, one may guess the rest, as well as the advantages likely to result from it ; to me nothing is more interesting than this.

Thus, upon the subject of agriculture, I have been able to discover very little of myself. I could see the superficies, the bright golden colour of the full-eared wheat, the fresh green of the cultivated meadow, the ripe grain with elevated slender stalks, five or six feet in height, waving so gracefully in the evening breeze, like the undulations of the sea. I could, it is true, discern that the fields were well drained ; that the farmer had well manured and cleaned his land, and that the labourer worked incessantly.

All this is easy to seize upon by the medium of the eyes, and thus one may admire agriculture without understanding the means which sustain it, or their most precious results; so, if I add a few words more on this subject, you must conclude that it is rather taken from what I have heard and read, than from my own experience.

What has considerably added to the product of the land in England, is the general introduction of the culture of artificial meadows, and the alternate system of ploughing and herbage mutually supporting each other. The green crops furnish an immense supplement for the food of cattle, who in their turn assist greatly in manuring and enriching the land. The use of more perfected instruments, and the application of machines to the different operations of agriculture,—formerly performed by manual labour,—have considerably diminished the number of men and horses employed, and the still greater number which of necessity must have been employed in the more perfect system of agriculture now adopted.

Another source of agricultural prosperity in England, is the adoption of enclosures, which dates from the year 1797, when (I believe) the first act for this purpose was passed. Dividing their fields by high and strong hedges, and generally into rather small spaces, the English farmers gain many advantages; the grain, the herbage, the crops of every kind, are better sheltered from storms and high winds, better protected from trespasses, whether of cattle and other beasts, or of man.

From these enclosures also arises a great facility to the farmer of removing his cattle from one meadow to another, as his convenience may dictate, and keeping them secure by barred gates, shutting with locks. The absence of wolves, (which, according to Voltaire, explained how English liberty extended even to the sheep,*) the pain of death — the penalty awarded for

* It is said that in a large assembly of literary men, Voltaire interrupted an orator, who, descanting on the liberty enjoyed in England, had just cried out that sheep even enjoyed freedom in that country. "You forget, sir," said he, "that there are no wolves in England!"

either sheep or horse stealing;* and again, the hedges surrounding and protecting them, give great security and tranquillity to cattle of all kind.

I found, in one of the periodical works which I have mentioned, some curious particulars about the enormous increase of a plant which was first introduced into English agriculture by Lord Townsend, on his return from Germany, whither he had accompanied George the First as secretary of state in one of his excursions. He had remarked there that turnips (then scarcely cultivated at all in England) were planted in extensive open fields; they were used as fodder for cattle, and at the same time gave value and fertility to land arid by nature. On his first arrival he was much ridiculed, as he brought with him seeds of that plant; and the witty courtiers of the day called him "turnip Townsend;" but he did not the less continue his endeavours to get this root adopted by his own farmers, and its benefits-

* Commuted to transportation.

were soon acknowledged. Since then its culture has spread all over England; and in the statistical researches of Mr. Colquhoun, it is specified that the annual revenue derived from this plant amounts to 14,000,000*l*. It will appear evident that the subsequent advantages drawn from these crops, must greatly exceed its value as fodder for cattle. By its culture the farmer makes use of land otherwise unproductive; and so greatly purifies and fertilises the soil as to prepare it for a crop of barley, or other plants, such as clover; and this again becomes an excellent preparation for the planting of wheat.

In speaking to you of an English farm-house, I can form an opinion from personal observation. Its situation is almost always chosen with taste, as well as with regard to utility. Cleanliness and cheerfulness reign throughout all that compose the establishment; every part announces order and regularity. Before the house is a well-kept court, through which you pass; here is no enormous dunghill, no holes

filled with fœtid water and mud, which you are obliged to take pains to avoid in order to get into the doorway. At the windows of the English farm are hung snow-white curtains, seen through the bright, well-cleaned panes; which windows are frequently adorned outside with pots of flowers. The steps which lead up to the house are of stone: upon the upper one you perceive a man of square-built, robust form, standing firm and upright; he has on a large shooting-jacket of grey cloth, leather gaiters which reach to his knees, an ample waistcoat descending lower than his hips, into the pockets of which his hands are thrust, playing with the shillings and half-crowns with which they are well-filled.

This is the farmer himself, and on his face you again read the English device, — "an Englishman's house is his castle." His whole appearance announces ease of circumstances, and tranquillity of life. He salutes you merely by a movement of the head, slightly touching his hat at the same moment; but it is with

great civility that he asks you to "walk in," and introduces you into his parlour. You find this room furnished very simply; but great nicety, and even taste, accompany this simplicity. The floor, which soap and the scrubbing-brush have rendered almost white, is covered with a carpet in the middle; the table in the centre has also a cloth on it; the one at the side, the blue tea-service, the glasses, &c.

Soon the luncheon arrives; it is composed of an excellent ham cured at home, fresh butter just come out of the dairy, home-made bread, a glorious tankard of beer, with foaming froth falling over the edges.

But I have lost the thread of my history, —I have abandoned the subject of my letter, — "education and agriculture;" for, whilst speaking of the country, I have involuntarily strayed back to my shooting excursions, and to the frank hospitality that I have so often received from the English farmers on such occasions.

This absence of mind, however, gives me

the opportunity of paying another debt of gratitude in acknowledging kindnesses that are still not forgotten. I will also profit by it to close my letter.

Adieu!

LETTER XLV.

The English Sailor.—The Royal Navy.—The Naval Captain.—Critical Situation.—Presence of Mind.—Sailors ashore.—A Sailor Convict.—Stoicism.

I HAVE only one more purely English character to depict for you; and if I have reserved it for nearly the last of my letters, it is because I think it the most interesting and original of any England can boast. He is her natural support; it is on him that the wealth and power of the nation repose; in a word, it is the brave English sailor.

To an iron constitution he unites great bodily strength, and a bravery that no perils can shake: his habits of mind and body enable him to support all sorts of privations and

sufferings; to brave the tempests as well as the enemy's cannon; to be formidable in the fight, but gentle and generous when that fight is over. And if to these qualities you add the most entire devotedness for the maintenance of his country's honour, a great veneration for his king, (who is always supposed to be present on the deck of an English vessel,) a constant gaiety and originality of mind, a carelessness of money when he receives his pay after a long cruise, and an air of superiority over all who are mere landsmen,—you will find in the English sailor a being apart from all others, and one full of interest under whatever circumstance or form you may consider him.

The geographical situation of England, and the great extension of her commerce, demand a naval force out of all proportion with that of any other country; and consequently the field of emulation there, (if I may so express myself,) is larger and more open, the opportunities for stimulating the dispositions and

faculties necessary to a mariner more frequent. It must also be observed that a great portion of the population lives in towns on the sea-coast, upon the lengthened shores which this island describes; thus the tastes, habits, and ideas of a great part of the people are naturally directed to subjects regarding navigation and a sea life. I think the width of shoulder and great strength of most Englishmen, particularly of the race of which I speak, may be attributed to the national taste for rowing; not only is this taste common to the lower, but to the upper and fashionable class.

Without depreciating the great importance of the merchant service, or that of the Army, the "Royal Navy" is considered in England the first in rank as well as the highest in importance. In order to form a tolerably just idea of the experience and qualifications of those who compose it, you should read attentively the journals kept on board, or rather the books which daily appear, describing the cruises and voyages of different vessels, written

by the lieutenants or commanding officers themselves. The warmth and spirit with which droll or terrible scenes are depicted, the nobleness and dignity of sentiment which is expressed, and the sensibility even which is betrayed whilst on a service extremely severe, and continued with a discipline excessively rigid—the precision and calmness of manœuvres in the greatest dangers,—the coolness of the commander, so necessary yet so difficult to acquire, — all this will explain the superiority which the English navy has attained.

In fact, with equal forces and equal bravery, the advantage in a sea-fight must almost always be on the side of the English; because the greatest ardour or courage are nothing without that precision, skill, and experience, which years, long habit, and constant practice alone can give.

The great responsibility which devolves upon the captain when once on board, the unlimited power which is confided to him, his rapid decisions, which are as promptly obeyed as

conceived, the brief yet comprehensive language in which his orders are conveyed, the profound respect paid him by his officers and men, all entirely dependent on him, present also a character completely apart, and one which is in many cases most admirable. I will cite a passage from one of those books I mentioned in the beginning of this letter, written by a very distinguished naval officer; he is speaking of his captain: the scene described takes place at the beginning of his career, when he was still very young and held only the rank of a midshipman.

It passes on board a vessel, which, after having "run on shore" several others she had been in chase of, is surprised by a violent gale in the very bay where the other ships had been lost. In order to avoid being thrown on the shore by the wind, it is necessary at any risk to regain the high seas. The vessel is in the greatest danger, and distant only one mile from the point where the bay terminates, the cape of which she has to

double; but the heavy wet sails fall suddenly flapping in the wind, and she loses two points of her direction,—however, I will let the author speak for himself.

"The officers and seamen were aghast, for the ship's head was right on the breakers. 'Luff! now all you can, quartermaster,' cried the captain; 'send the men aft directly. My lads, there is no time for words, I am going to club-haul the ship, for there is no room to wear. The only chance you have of safety is to be cool, watch my eyes, and execute my orders with precision. Away to your stations for tacking ship! Hands by the best bower. Mr. W. attend below with the carpenter and his mates, ready to cut away the cable at the moment that I give order. Silence there, fore and aft! Quarter-master, mind you ease the helm down when I tell you.'

"The ship had closed to within a quarter of a mile of the beach, and the waves curled and topped around us, bearing us down upon the shore, which presented one continued sur-

face of foam, extending to within half-cable length of our position, at which distance the enormous waves culminated and fell with the report of thunder. The captain waved his hand in silence to the quartermaster at the wheel, and the helm was put down; the ship turned slowly to the wind, pitching and chopping as the sails were spilling. When she had lost her way, the captain gave the order, 'Let go the anchor! we will haul at once, Mr. F.' said the captain.

"Not a word was spoken, the men went to the fore-brace which had been manned; most of them knew, although I did not, that if the ship's head did not go round on the other way, we should be on shore and among the breakers in half a minute. At last the ship was head to wind, and the captain gave the signal; the yards flew round with such creaking noise, that I thought the masts had gone over the side, and the next moment the wind had caught the sails; and the ship, which for a moment or two had been on an even keel, careened her over to

the gunnel with its force. The captain, who stood upon the weather hammock rails, holding by the main-rigging, ordered the helm a-midships; looked full at the sails, and then at the cable which held the ship from nearing the shore. At last he cried, 'Cut away the cable!' A few strokes of the axes were heard, and then the cable flew out of the hawse-hole in a blaze of fire, from the violence of the friction, and disappeared under a huge wave, which struck us on the chess-tree, and deluged us with water fore and aft. But we were now on the other side, and the ship regained her way, and we had evidently increased our distance from the land.

"'My lads,' said the captain to the ship's company, 'you have behaved very well, and I thank you;' and beckoning to the master to follow him, he went down into his cabin.

"'By the powers! it was as nate a thing as ever I saw done,' observed O'B. 'The slightest mistake as to time or management, and at this moment the flatfish would have been dub-

bing at our ugly carcases. Peter ! you 're not fond of flat-fish, are you, my boy ?' "

I now return to my simple sailors. Nothing is more amusing than to meet them on land, travelling either on foot or by a stage-coach ; which latter only occurs, as you may suppose, when they have just received their pay or prize-money. They are then in great joy, and full of jokes and fun, practised upon their companions, or upon all they may happen to meet on their road. Their great pleasure is to act as if they had converted the top of the stage-coach into the deck of a vessel ; and, notwithstanding the velocity of its motion, they frequently stand upright on it, at the risk of breaking their necks, or of falling, as they say, " overboard,"—which is more likely to happen, as they *refresh themselves* at every pot-house, and at length finish by seeing every object *double.*

When the coach stops a an inn, the sailor cries out, " I say, you pewter-carrier, bring another pint of ale." This is addressed to the waiter, whose business it is to serve the public

carriages. He quickly obeys, and brings a pewter-pot full of beer. Jack drinks half, and throws the rest in his face, asking at the same time, "What 's to pay ?" "Fourpence, sir," says the waiter, wiping his face, and not daring to show his anger, lest he might not get an extra penny for himself. The sailor, still perched upon the top of the coach, thrusts his large hand into his breeches-pocket and pulls out a handful of bank-notes, shillings, and halfpence mixed together; and, just as he is on the point of giving more than his demand, the impatient coachman sets off: the sailor then quietly puts his money back into his pocket, saying, "There 's cut and run;" then, turning to a young traveller seated by his side, he says "That 's what you 'll learn to do, my joker, before you have been two cruises at sea."

The stage-coachmen generally take in good part all the annoyances that may arise from these turbulent companions; indeed, they may be considered as the spoilt children of the whole nation. Sometimes you will see half a dozen of

them at a time climbing, with all the agility of their profession, on one of these public coaches, without the coachman pulling up his horses for them; he is sure, he says laughingly, soon to get rid of them; and indeed, by the time he arrives at the place where he is to change horses, perhaps there remains only one or two, all the others being left sprawling on the road.

If you would like a contrast to this picture, I will show you the English sailor under solemn circumstances, but still with the same indifference. The fact related in the following anecdote really occurred.

A sailor was brought as prisoner before a court, accused of a crime punishable with death. It is not by a court-martial that he is to be judged, but by a common criminal court. During the whole of the sitting, and during a trial where his life is at stake, he exhibits the greatest tranquillity of demeanour, and an indifference which astonishes the whole assemblage. His counsel makes every effort to save him—but in vain! The judge receives the decision

of the jury, and places on his head the fatal black cap,—a sign that he is going to pronounce the terrible sentence of death! Jack remains perfectly unmoved! He hears the words resound in his ears,—"Condemned to be hung until he be dead!" The only movement he makes is to take his quid of tobacco out of his mouth and put it on the other side! No mark of agitation or grief appears on his countenance! The judge, surprised and almost angry at such stoicism, asks him in a loud voice if he has comprehended the sentence?

"Surely I did, my lord," he replies. "But, miserable sinner," cries out again the judge, "do you know that you are going to die, loaded with a horrible crime, and that you will go to hell! and burn there to all eternity?"

"Well, my lord," says the sailor, "I hope I shall be able to bear it."

Farewell, my dear Augustus.

LETTER XLVI.

Recreations.—Statesmen.—Contrast.—Statesmen in France.—Pompous Ambassador.—Mortified Arrogance.—Mr. Canning.—A modest man.

THE calmness and reserve which I have said the English like to preserve even in their domestic relations, as well as in society, does not prevent them, however dignified they may be, from taking part in recreations and pleasures which, although perfectly irreproachable in point of morality, yet appear rather trifling when compared to the functions and characters of those engaged in them.

If you were newly arrived in England, and yet unacquainted with the usages of the country, you would, I think, be surprised at learning

from the newspaper, (where all the goings and comings of the great and fashionable are minutely detailed,) that the prime minister, a noble duke perhaps, is going on a shooting excursion into the country, on a visit to the Marquis of ——, killing every day his fifty pheasants: or again, that some other important political personage will "run his hounds," on such a day, at such an hour, and in such a place; this is an advertisement, understood by all amateurs, that at the time indicated there will be a fox-hunt.

I would not have you disapprove of this, my dear Augustus; nor even that the honourable baronet who passed the greater part of yesterday, and even of last night, in discussing the most serious affairs of the nation in the House of Commons, shall appear to-day in Hyde Park, mounted on a beautiful blood-horse, dressed nearly like a dandy, and followed by the smallest of tigers. I myself am far from blaming this; for, to speak to you frankly, (of course in the strictest confidence!) I will ac-

knowledge that I would accept the presidency of the ministry of Great Britain myself if I was sure of enjoying the reward that the noble duke does when he goes on his shooting excursions!

My object at present is only to place before your eyes the differences that appear to me to exist between the French and English, considered in similar positions, and supporting the same characters. Let it be understood besides, that, notwithstanding the good or bad compliments I may distribute to the right or left, I do not mean in anywise to alter the opinion with which I have tried to imbue you in my first letters respecting the English people; there I considered them *en masse*, here I speak of individuals and small portions of society.

Without pretending to say that a minister in France would be openly censured if he sometimes suffered himself to enjoy such recreations and pleasures, it is nevertheless true that it would not appear so simple and natural as it does in England. For instance, at Paris, could you imagine, without laughing, Mr. T. with his

spectacles on his nose, in a shooting-jacket, and with his gun in his hand? Or fancy another grave personage, in a pair of leathern breeches and top-boots, engaged in fox-hunting, leaping over hedges and ditches. I do not think, among all the various presidents of the Chamber of Deputies, that there has ever been one since its creation who has had the least pretension to the character of a sportsman; whilst in England, the right honourable gentleman who a few months ago was Speaker of the House of Commons, has the reputation of being a great lover of all kinds of sport, and is "a very good shot." Perhaps the inequality of fortune has something to do with these differences, but I believe there is still more in natural tastes and habits.

With the least worldly experience, it is easy on the Continent to recognise an ambassador, or any other great personage; they never relinquish their character for a moment, they always keep their *gros bonnets*, and they besides generally announce themselves by their too great pompousness and too little simplicity of man-

ner. Among the English of a like rank, it is just the contrary. Not only do they like in society to put aside all distinctions arising from their places or situations, (remark, I do not speak of titles or riches,) but they even discard the exterior marks of those distinctions, such as crosses, ribands, stars, &c., which they never wear but in great ceremonies or fêtes, when it is necessary for them to be so adorned.

Some years ago, at Paris, I was at a concert at the Duchess de R's. The music-room was crammed with fine ladies, among whom were several English of rank and fashion; those who had succeeded in penetrating the apartment were standing closely packed against the walls, whilst a group of others entirely filled up the doorway; I was one among the latter. While we occupied the post, the name of a very great personage was announced; he was a proud ambassador of that day, of whom a punster said, his name was full of *o*, and his person of *r* (airs). His excellency finding that none of us disturbed ourselves to let him pass, but re-

mained with our eyes fixed on the admirable songstress* who was then enchanting all ears, began gently pushing his way, but the party was too strong against him. Among them were several officers, who were certainly not accustomed to receive the enemy in the rear; and this did not render the passage easier for him. He then tried the effect of two or three *hum! hum!* to which one of us, a true *dilettante*, without turning his head, answered by a prolonged *chut!* which at last put an end for the moment to his excellency's pretensions, and he was obliged to wait until the air was finished. We all of us knew his haughtiness; and a little hint, which had passed from one to the other on hearing him announced, had prepared this lesson for him.

Since that time, I have seen in London, under circumstances almost exactly similar, a person of greater importance even than this great ambassador, after refusing to take advantage of the passage offered him, quietly seat himself in the

* Madame M. Fodor.

ante-room until the piece of music was finished. You will perhaps object to me that it was his indifference to music which made him act thus; but you are mistaken, for he is known as a great connoisseur and even amateur performer; and it is much more probable that he was actuated by the fear or aversion which almost every Englishman feels to attract the eyes and attention of a whole saloon upon him; it was just the contrary feeling that induced *Mr. l' Ambassadeur* to try to make his way through a crowd of people perfectly silent, listening to a charming voice; he would in such a case have entered with full effect.

I remember another instance: it was the first time I ever saw Mr. Canning; and you will permit me to remark that in his single person he was of more importance than the whole of the diplomatic corps of which my ambassador made one. It was at a ball, (at Mr. de Ch——d, then the French representative at the English court,) that I saw him whose premature death has since plunged his whole country

in grief, and whose loss has been deplored by every civilized nation. He was modestly seated in a corner, half concealed behind the door of the great room, where all the gay people were assembled; and, seeming to listen to the person with whom he was conversing, he occasionally passed and repassed his hand upon that noble and elevated forehead which added such expression to his physiognomy; and, far from appearing to seek by a proud exacting look the attention and respectful bows of those around him, he kept his eyes lowered and fixed on the ground. For him the ball, the brilliant fête had disappeared, and he was sunk in one of his grand and generous contemplations, in which was involved the honour and happiness of a whole nation!

There are two other things for which distinguished men in England have a great aversion; first, the profound bows of most Continental nations and any decided compliments personally addressed to themselves. Like a conjuror, I have always my sack in reserve in

which I keep my examples; I will give you one in illustration of this remark.

The gentleman to whom I am about to allude, was of one of the most ancient families; but he possessed a still higher title to distinction than that bestowed by birth and situation, — he was member of several learned societies, and endowed with the greatest talent and full of scientific knowledge. I will call him Mr. C., as his family name begins with that letter. Besides the aversion to be noticed, of which I spoke above, he was peculiarly *shy*,— a negative English quality with which I have already made you acquainted. Well then, to my story: at a rather large "réunion," where Mr. C. had found his modest corner, and was talking, as he thought, secure from intrusion, one of his friends came to him, and, without any preface, presented him to a foreigner, a learned German, who desired "with the greatest ardour" to make his acquaintance. Mr. C., already quite confused to find himself face to face with this foreigner, arose; and the latter,

after making him two or three profound bows, and giving him no time to recover himself, commences with

"Sir! I have travelled several thousand miles, from the further parts of Germany, in order to have the happiness of contemplating in you one of the greatest geniuses and one of the most learned men of the age!"

So saying, he renewed his bows, and, on lifting up his head, to his great surprise found no one before him; Mr. C. had disappeared. After remaining for some moments as if stupified, and without saying a word, he had turned his back to his complimenter, and ran home to lock himself up in his room, and only there recovered his respiration.

LETTER XLVII.

Paltry Ambition.—Pretensions of Footmen.—Costume.—Ridiculous Pride.—Contrasts.—Affected Condescension.—Undue Pretension.

After the compliments I have just been paying to the English, I cannot refrain from certain reproaches which I have now to make to a large portion of their countrymen.

Abstracting the aristocracy, who cannot pretend to a higher elevation, it is certain that every other class in England are continually endeavouring to do so; they are ever striving to quit their respective situations, and to appear richer and greater than they really are; "every one must be fine." You will find haughty airs in a London coach-maker, and in many others

besides him. The footmen even, notwithstanding those good qualities that I have often found in them, and ascribed to them elsewhere, are full of pretensions also; but theirs is to have "high wages and nothing to do;" and this is carried to such a point, that, overlooking their impudence and effrontery, you cannot help laughing at them.*

In travelling in England, properly called, in contradistinction with the other parts of the British dominions, you will never find any of the picturesque provincial dresses, the costumes general on the Continent, which are so perfectly in keeping with the lives of the peasants

* "On what terms are you willing to enter my service?" said an Englishman to a servant who offered himself in the place of one who had just been turned away.

"Why, sir, I should require fifty pounds a year, three suits of livery, my washing, my tea and sugar, and a boy for the dirty work, as boots, shoes, and cleaning the plate; also, as you know, sir, to run out on commissions when the weather is bad."

"Is that all that you want?"

"Yes, sir, that 's all."

"Then, my good friend, if you ever find such a place, I beg you will let me know, for I shall be most happy to take it myself."

who wear them, and the nature of the places they inhabit. This want of harmony makes itself more felt and regretted in the villages of England, as they are (as I have often repeated) so very pleasing in appearance and so agreeable to visit. You can hardly, however, give the name of peasants to those who inhabit them, for there is very little difference between their manner of dressing and that of the inhabitants of the great towns, except perhaps among some of the men, principally the carters, who wear a sort of long shirt which descends to the heels; and it is difficult to find anything picturesque in this accoutrement. As to the women, what would you say, accustomed as you are to the costume of our peasants, if you saw in a retired village full sleeves *à la gigot!* the same form of dress and hat, the *polisson* even, of the gaily-dressed Londoners!

From this it naturally follows, that the same peasant, with her fresh-coloured, beautiful complexion, who would look so well and be so pleasing to the eye in a garb suitable to her situation

and character, becomes heavy, ungraceful, and even vulgar in the dress of the town. It is particularly on a Sunday that this unlucky spirit of imitation is carried the furthest.

In a higher class the pretensions are still greater. No individual who would wish to pass for a gentleman would venture to carry in his hand the smallest object whatever, not even the little purchase he has just made. It is never made a question that the shopkeeper shall send it. To be seen with such a thing in the streets of London! Good God! how shocking!—it would be exposing yourself to the loss of all consideration. And yet in a higher rank this is not felt, for I recollect very well one day meeting the Duke of L. with a large music-book under his arm, which he was carrying to his lovely and amiable wife; and he could not help smiling when, on stopping to speak to me, he perceived in my hand a pottle of strawberries,—which fruit, by-the-bye, I have never eaten in such perfection as in England.

Here is another contrast: a female of that

large intermediate class called middling, (who, although she may have the title of a lady by courtesy, and may be really so in social position, yet, in this country of thousand distinctions, is nevertheless infinitely below a duke in rank,) will most carefully avoid taking in her hand out of her own carriage, when it stops at her own door, the most trifling parcel — not even the riband she may have just bought. It would be vulgar to do so: it is the footman who is expected to collect all the little purchases together, forgotten expressly in the carriage; and it is he who gives them to the maid, who deposits them on her mistress's toilet.

Continuing my contrasts, for which, you will perceive, I have a particular weakness: often and often in England, upon being presented to women of the first rank, I have seen them rise from their chair, and receive me in the kindest and politest manner; whilst, from simple gentlewomen, all I have been honoured with was an inch or two of ascension. If I descend still lower, it will be still more striking; for

instance, I met a lady one day in a country-house; she had just arrived in a superb equipage, attended by two footmen armed with large gilt-headed canes. She was, like me, paying a morning visit. I was introduced to her,—a ceremony which is inevitable in such a case,—although unasked by me; my very reserved bow was, to my great surprise, answered by a "nod" of so protecting a nature that I could not but imagine that this lady was a princess incognita. But I was soon undeceived, for some one told me shortly afterwards that my princess was the wife of a wholesale dealer, who possessed a considerable fortune, a fine estate and house in the country, hunters, hounds, a famous preserve, &c. Since I have better comprehended the complicated combinations of the English society, I have been able to understand that these were the causes of the little bow with which the lady deigned to honour me.

I could give you many more examples of this general desire among the English of

appearing greater, richer, happier, and more amused than they really are, and of all the sacrifices that are made to give rise to that belief in others; but I will leave for another letter my further reflections on this subject, and the comparison of these usages with those of France.

And then, my good friend, I shall have done, and together we shall say adieu to England.

Good-b'ye!

LETTER XLVIII.

Middle Classes in France.—The English Waiter.—English and French Officers.—Army Discipline.—Military Rank.—Adieu to England.

Am I not right when I say that every man in France who follows an honourable profession or employment, such as that of a merchant, a tradesman, &c. knows how to keep his proper place?—at least, that it is very rare to find any one in this very considerable class who ever thinks of giving himself airs,—of trying to pass for a gentleman? Is it not also true, that an artist in our country is always willing to remain such, and does not seek to be any other? that he is even proud of his quality on its own account? If you meet him in society, where he is always well received, do not his opinions, enthusiastic

as they are apt to be, always declare what he is, what is the art to which he is devoted? And then the physician—you may immediately recognise him by his reserved and peculiar manners; even his dress is distinct.

There is also nothing more regular, more fixed, than the manner of existence of that large number of individuals living on their moderate incomes, whom we call *bourgeois*. This designation, which from age to age has remained unaltered, is a proof that the people who come under it are unchanged; and that, although sometimes ridiculed by the other classes, they themselves continue attached to their condition. Let us pass from this to a higher class, the one which corresponds to that of the gentility in England. There is a great similitude in both, in the manner of living, in the occupations and amusements, in the education, and many other particulars too tedious to enumerate; but as soon as I arrive at the point in view, "the pretensions above their position in life," I have immediately occasion to renew my observation about the

English. I do not, however, think they have much cause to complain of me. It is certain that persons composing this sort of society in France rarely aspire (like the same ranks in England) to an association with the nobility. They keep to themselves, and desire not to attain a sphere superior to their own in point of rank; I do not believe they even care anything about it. They do not, like the greater part of the middling class in England, pretend to the possession of coats of arms and crests, bearing proud devices in Latin, to prove to every one that they are of high lineage, and descended from distinguished ancestors.

But from among the divers conditions of the two countries, which may serve as examples, will you condescend to follow me into a *café* or *restaurant*, in order to remark the waiter—"*le garçon*." He is always ready at his post; not only prepared, but happy to preserve his character. He never quits it; you see him always in his short blue vest, with his clean white apron. This costume says openly, "I

am the waiter;" and he proves his vocation by his readiness and promptitude of obedience to the never-ending calls made on him. Now look at his parallel on the other side of the channel, "the waiter at a coffee-house."—Heaven preserve you from the dinner that he will bring you! Instead of the vest and apron, the natural and descriptive emblems of his condition, he assumes the black coat, black waistcoat, and black trousers, that out of doors he may appear something more than the servant of a tavern; but it is all so threadbare, so shabby, that he looks more like an undertaker than anything else: and what renders the likeness more true is, that it is into one of the little dismal half-lighted partitions, (almost like coffins,) of which the interior of a coffee-room is composed, that he introduces you, where, in solitude and silence, you may devour like a wild beast the enormous slice of half-dressed beef that he presents to you, and which is streaming with blood.

Now, will you leap with me from the low re-

gion into which I have made you descend, up to the height where the English officer stands? Here I have an observation to make with the same intent, that of pointing out the difference of habits in the same rank of life in the two countries, without at all venturing on delicate ground, or meaning to give offence anywhere; for I am not going to discourse upon glory, bravery, or any of those fine things foreign to my present purpose. My observations will only be made upon the manners and appearance in the world of English and French officers.

I will suppose you quite ignorant of the customs of the two countries, not even knowing the difference of uniform which distinguish the respective armies. We are at a *levée* at St. James's, or at Windsor; or, if you like it better, at a royal *fête* on the Continent; but where every one is required to be in uniform, and where there is a mixture of French and English officers.

Well, here we are! I point out to you two

officers conversing in a friendly way together: one is dressed very plainly in a dark-coloured uniform, with small epaulettes made of twisted silver thread; his hat ornamented in an equally unostentatious manner. The other has thick gold lace on his sleeves, on his coat-collar, behind and before. His uniform is of a bright colour; his epaulettes are also of gold, in large twists, and equal in size to those you are accustomed to see on shoulders of a general in your own country. Both of them are young. A third officer approaches; he is much older, his breast is covered with orders and ribbons. When he joins the two friends, one of them assumes a respectful attitude, and inquires with a bow after the health of "*mon général*;" whilst the other extends his hand, saying, "How are you, general?"

Well, I ask if you can guess the rank of the two officers; I myself know them both. You smile that I should suppose you can have any doubt on the subject, and with great assurance (which, by-the-bye, is what the English

reproach us for,) you reply, "*Parbleu!* that's not difficult: the officer in the plain uniform is at the most a French lieutenant, I heard him speak French; and the other, the Englishman, who said 'How are ye?' is a colonel at least, if he is not a general."

And you stop quite satisfied with your sagacity. But I interpose with my experience, and in this case my certainty that you are quite mistaken. The French officer, I tell you, is a captain-commandant in a regiment of light cavalry; and the English one is a lieutenant in the——fusileers.

Here I must give you a few words of explanation. In the English army, when not "under arms," discipline (severe enough) gives way to the distinctions of the world,—at least to a certain point there is no distance between officers of different military grades, but only what may exist from courtesy, age, or title; whilst in France, although certainly there is less rigidity than when in the field or on parade, still there is always a strong line of demarcation main-

tained between such and such an epaulette. But, although this last remark is in accordance with my general theme, yet it has not so particular a relation with the subject of this letter; whilst that of the great difference in the appearance and manner of the two officers I have exhibited, exactly accomplishes my object of showing you that the desire in England is general of appearing higher than in reality one is placed; and consequently, in the English army, as the officers of low rank wear immense epaulettes, and affect perfect ease with those of the greatest rank, so I am right in comprehending them in my observation.

From what I have said, and the examples I have given you, you will I think arrive with me at the conclusion that the lightness and frivolity of character which is often imputed to the French by the English themselves, might in these cases be reversed. There is dignity and philosophy, as well as a sort of courage, in being satisfied with the lot of life which has fallen to you; and I believe this quality to be real and

very remarkable in the French character. The result is still more curious than the fact itself, and quite different from what might be expected:—namely, that in England, where almost every one tries to appear greater than he is, yet the ranks are distinct and immovably fixed; whilst in France, where no one seems to think of the place he holds, they are intermixed by an infinity of slight gradations.

But I have done! Adieu, then, England! adieu! I take leave of your beautiful meadows and well-cultivated fields, of your magnificent trees, your gardens, your parks, your perfumed hedges, your charming villages, your smooth and highly valued roads, winding so gracefully and picturesquely as if in search of every beautiful site. Adieu! This is my summer farewell! But, adieu also to the dim light of the winter day!—to the towns uncheered by a single ray of the sun! Adieu to fogs, damp, and sadness!

Adieu also to the reign of aristocracy! to lords, right honourables, &c. Adieu to the

finished but cold politeness; to the sumptuous assemblies, where luxury and magnificence shine unrivalled, but where ease and pleasures make way for stiff etiquette!

Good-b'ye to you also, plain John Bull! with whom I have not had much acquaintance, but still sufficient to convince me that your good and solid qualities more than counterbalance your defects! Adieu! continue to keep your healthy, full, round face, although your nose be rather red! keep also your sturdy habits, your long pipe, and the dear pot of beer!

By Jove! you form one of the happiest portions of the English community!

Adieu even to you, beggars of England! you who, in your misery, seem still to feel shame in asking alms openly and publicly, and entreat assistance in a low and constrained voice, as if you feared to be heard or seen!*

And you, gipsies! why shall I not say adieu to you? I had nearly forgotten you, but the

* If the law which prohibits begging, for fear of the police, is the cause of this apparent reserve for timidity, it shows the utility and comfort of the institution.

mention of poverty and misery has recalled you to my memory. Are you not beings quite apart from all others? A distinct tribe, wandering by chance amongst a civilized, grand, and powerful people! Are you not without parish, without asylum, without any refuge but the little wooden house on wheels, with its one window and door and chimney, drawn by one poor old horse?

How I liked to meet with you in the narrow green lanes, sheltered under the high hedge, or encamped on the borders of a solitary wood! The poor horse then set at liberty, seeking his own nourishment on the adjacent turf; and the family having left their moving home, and spread on the ground their rags and miserable household utensils, are seated round the low fire of burning faggots or furze, over which was placed the boiling pot, supported on three cross sticks, in which the simple and often wretched meal was cooked.

And when you perceived me, a young girl would quit your group; and, as she smilingly

approached me, exhibiting a superb row of teeth, whose whiteness was but the more striking from the contrast with her sunburnt visage, she would fix upon me her black and piercing eyes, in which was mingled an expression of gaiety, cunning, and suffering; and, asking for my hand, would offer to tell my fortune! I heartily pardon you for deceiving me, or rather for pretending to be deceived yourselves, when you predicted happiness to me! One source alone of satisfaction at least I possess in the recollection of the few moments of pleasure that I secured to you when I bestowed my extravagant half-crown! Your prophecy is accomplished in this feeling alone!

Farewell and thanks to the few clergymen that I have known and valued, for their benevolence and kindness towards me! And to one especially, thanks for the balm he shed on my suffering heart in the day of affliction! Adieu to the finest of all moral characters, the faithful and real English clergyman!

And now, adieu to the whole English nation!

Adieu to their industry, energy, and constant activity, exercised without noise, bustle, or loss of time and words! Adieu to their humanity to animals, to their generosity in never combating with a fallen foe! Adieu to their regularity in performing their religious duties, to their modesty and decency of conduct in private and public, which in itself places them above every other people! Here, at least, the observer may follow them with the eye everywhere, into their towns, their villages, into every place which they inhabit, without ever feeling that disgust which, in so many other countries, almost obliterates the admiration and interest that would be otherwise felt!

To you, my dear Augustus, no adieu,

Mais "au revoir!"

SKETCHES

OF

MANNERS, FIELD SPORTS, &c. IN FRANCE.

Just at the moment that the translation of the preceding letters was ready for publication, some English friends of the author proposed to him to make a few remarks on France, choosing those subjects which present the strongest contrast to English habits or manners, as treated of in the foregoing pages.

CHAPTER I.

Morning Visits in France.—Madame H.—Her bon-mot.—Beautiful Invalid.—A French Sleeping-room.

I SHALL perhaps run the risk of wounding the modesty, or at least of shocking the ears, of certain strict English women, when I say that there are examples of intimacy in France, which warrant ladies in receiving visits from men in their bed-rooms, nay, even when they are still in bed! But in relating this fact, which from my own experience I know to be by no means of rare occurrence, I shall represent it in its real light, and show the object of this habit; and I think that, even to the apprehension of the English reader, I shall remove all appearance of want of modesty and disregard of decency.

As an example, I will cite a Parisian lady whom I particularly well remember,—Madame H., a woman of great talent and information, endowed also with that knowledge of the world which makes use of all those shades necessary to be observed in society, and which as much particularises the woman *comme il faut* as the most refined education. This lady also well knew how to appreciate the luxury that her large fortune procured for her, and she habitually received her friends in this manner every morning. It is true, she was not surprised

> ———" Dans le simple appareil
> D'une beauté qu'on vient d'arracher au sommeil."*

Far from it, without being a pretty woman, she possessed the advantages of an agreeable and expressive countenance; this countenance appeared ornamented with a nightcap too fresh and well arranged to allow of the supposition of its having been slept in. A cashmere shawl was negligently thrown over the shoulder, showing a bedgown of dazzling whiteness,

* In the simple apparel of a beauty just roused from her slumbers.—(From Voltaire.)

trimmed with lace, as was also the downy pillows which served to support her in her half-reclining position. Upon the thick quilted silk counterpane before her were strewed, half open, letters and notes that she had just received, the morning papers, and new pamphlets.

Arm-chairs placed around her, but at a respectful distance, were occupied by those who came to offer their homage. Amongst them were often strangers of distinction; I could mention by name two English gentlemen and one noble lord. It is natural to think that these gentlemen enjoyed passing an hour or two in a sanctuary which in England no mortal dares profane; for the conversations were full of tact and good sense, touching upon everything that was passing in society, either at the court or in the private drawing-room, in the political, literary, theatrical, or scientific world.

Madame H. had the talent of enlivening the dialogue by an infinity of bons-mots, &c.; and it appeared as if this sort of adoration offered her, as if she were on her throne, in-

spired her still more than usual. She possessed in great perfection that quality which is called *wit* in England. I cannot help giving here one of those clever sarcasms which she had the art of applying so happily and readily. But this did not occur in the bed-chamber; the individual upon whom she now exercised her power was not honoured enough to be received there; it took place in a drawing-room one evening.

Figure to yourself one of those disagreeable beings which the usages of society occasionally compel one to associate with; a vulgar-looking, short, thick man, egoistical, ignorant, abrupt, coarse in word and action, talkative beyond bearing, and, to sum up all, displaying in all his tastes and opinions, habits and gestures, a striking resemblance to the unclean animal whose name even one objects to mention. He was deafening the company with an uninteresting history of his youth, to which there seemed no hope of termination, when Madame H., interrupting him, with one phrase rendered him mute: "*Ah! mon cher,*" said she, "*vous voulez dire quand vous étiez*

marcassin." * This was said in a gentle and rather drawling tone, with a most peculiar smile, and thus she saved us the end of the tiresome history.

I will only cite one more example of this practice; not that I mean to affirm that it is universal amongst French women,—God forbid! for I know many and many who, on no account, would permit a similar intrusion: still the practice is frequent. The scene now will be changed to the country, at about thirty miles from Paris, in the chateau of Count ——, celebrated for his attachment to the *grand homme* amongst the guests. There was a lady, who also received in this manner her friends, like her visitors in the house: this was, however, when she was indisposed and kept her room; but, as she was in very delicate health, the occasions were not very unfrequent.

This case I will allow is not so *unattackable* as the first-mentioned one; I shall not wonder even that certain severe ladies under whose eye this page may fall will knit their brows, and

* Oh! my dear, you mean when you were a young boar!

look grave; for I must confess that after penetrating into this charming place of repose, no instruction, no conversation, no political news, no *wit*, nothing of this sort, was to be expected.

A gentle entrance, on tip-toe, over the thickly-carpeted room, brought you to the bedside, where your inquiries were made in a low voice, and, after a few words of courtesy, you retired with the same precaution; not however before you had time (at least I always found it) to remark, even by the half light which the pink-lined window curtains spread over the room, and all its elegant furniture, under the ample folds of the bed-curtains, a lovely face, with languishing blue eyes, adorned with an elegant cap and profusion of Mechlin lace covering the whole of the dress that was to be seen. The sheet, quite freshly put on, was of the finest cambric, also trimmed with splendid lace, and covered the bed from the foot up to the dimpled chin of the beautiful *invalide*. Not far from the bed was the prettiest of fancy tables, covered with essence-bottles, a novel,

and a treasure of a basket or box containing several costly embroidered perfumed handkerchiefs, &c.

You would then receive a few amiable and flattering words in reply to your inquiries after her health, or an intimation of how pleased she would be when returned to health to renew her musical exercises with you, or still more her rides on horseback in the pretty woods surrounding the house: again an enchanting smile, and another languid regard, repaid you for your polite attention.

Since we are on the subject of the magnificence of the sleeping-rooms of the ladies in France, I cannot resist giving a little description of another that I greatly admired. It was that of the Duchess de B. at Paris, (she, I regret to say, has now been dead some years,) but who was celebrated for her beauty, and majestic height and form, at the imperial court, and long afterwards. I now hope to smooth the wrinkled brows of my fair English reader, when I tell her that this lady never received visits when in bed, but only allowed a few intimate friends to

visit her bed-room as a matter of curiosity or pleasure.

It is not necessary to detail the usual furniture of a sleeping-chamber, the silk hangings, the gilding, the glasses—the magnificence of the furniture; but I will mention what I think will strike even those so accustomed, as the English are, to splendour in their receiving-rooms, contrasted by the simplicity of their apartments destined to repose. The back of the alcove in which stood the superb bed of the Duchess, was formed of one entire plate of glass, pure and transparent, partly covered with the green satin curtains of the bed, through which you perceived a charming bathing-room in marble, ornamented with very pretty and graceful statues. When the occupant of the bed wished to make use of this luxury, she had only to touch a spring, and the glass disappeared and gave her entrance by one step into her bath. The night lamp, which shed its softened light over this pretty scene, was contained in a vase of alabaster of exquisite workmanship, and was suspended from the ceiling.

CHAPTER II.

Hunting Party.—Battues.—Preparations for the Boar-hunt.—Hunting in the Forest.

It may appear strange to leap at one bound from the elegantly furnished bed-room, made visible by the temperate light of an alabaster lamp, into the midst of a party engaged in hunting the wolf or wild boar in a sombre forest of France: but so it is; as each subject presents itself to my mind, I write without premeditation.

I must, however, beg the reader's indulgence for this want of the regularity prescribed to authors (a name by-the-bye to which I do not aspire): but what more particularly induces me

to enter upon this description is, my knowledge that these two species of animal, as well as that of the wild roebuck, are totally unknown in England as game; and that, therefore, the manner in which we hunt them might amuse or interest the English sportsman.

The taste for hunting in France is almost extinct; there are so very few fortunes sufficiently large to keep up what was formerly called a complete equipage,—the hounds, the huntsmen, whippers-in, horses, &c. The late Duke de Bourbon was the only person who maintained one; perhaps there are but few besides who could afford it. In these days, when the object is the destruction of a wolf, or wild boar, or wild roebuck, it is always done simply by *battues*, or by a few hounds put upon their scent, and a few shots. I will first give a short sketch of the usual preparations for this sport; supposing always a property of sufficient extent, and woods of sufficient importance, to attract and retain such species of game. I must also have the *country-house*, (for of castles and lords,

France is now pretty nearly denuded,) where lives a plain simple proprietor, who shall be a lover of sports, and who shall have asked a few friends to partake its pleasures with him.

In the morning, before daybreak, one of the gamekeepers goes on the ground, choosing those places in which he thinks it most likely that game will be found. He takes a bloodhound in leash, who precedes him, with his nose close to the ground, that he may discover, by the fineness of his scent, the impression of the foot of the wolf or the wild boar: as soon as this end is attained, the gamekeeper, perceiving this trace by the soft and generally humid earth which forms the paths of the woods, ascertains to what animal it belongs; he judges from it of its age and strength, and then places two light branches across the mark, and this is called a *brisée.*

To make myself better understood, I must premise that woods in France (I do not speak of the larger forest) are always divided into portions or irregular squares, more or less ex-

tensive, which are marked out by the paths which encompass them.* So, when the keeper has taken cognisance of the trace, showing by its direction into what square the animal has penetrated, he then goes all round it by the path with his hound, and if he does not find the same track issuing from the wood before he comes round to the *brisée*, he concludes with certainty that the animal is within *à la reposée*, which means that he is lying down in that portion of the wood; and his experience tells him that he will not move out before the ensuing evening or night. He then makes a note of it in his book, and this he repeats until he obtains, as he would say, "a good provision." At last,

* This manner of division easily explains how the proprietors of woods in France annually receive their revenues from them. Supposing that a man possesses 1,000 acres, he will divide them into ten portions, and cut one every year, so that when he arrives a second time at the first portion the trees will have acquired ten years' growth, and be fit to be cut down for the different uses to which they may be destined. Trees of a better sort are reserved for separate sale, and sometimes the general cutting is retarded by five or even ten years; the distance of time is regulated by the purpose to which they are to be applied.

when he has left his *brisées*, wherever he may have seen tracks, he returns to his master at about nine o'clock—the sportsman's hour for breakfast, and presents him his tablet, which is to serve as a guide for the occupation of the day.

But, reader! if you are a real sportsman, do not be afraid that I am going to enter into a long description of so ordinary a chase; its details are already too well known, also the scene is too circumscribed, and you see too easily its beginning and end.* I will transport you to a wider theatre, one more worthy of you, one in which you shall partake of the emotions produced by a *manly sport;* it shall be to an almost impenetrable forest, no habitation within many leagues: here shall be no game-keepers, no preparation except that of your gun, and the ardour necessary to enable you to endure the fatigue you must undergo before

* Each man, with his gun, is placed in one of the foot-paths, keeping an equal distance as nearly as possible between them, and against the wind; the beaters come walking towards them from the opposite sides, or else several hounds are put upon the tracks marked by the *brisées*.

you will succeed in turning out in these almost deserted places the wolves, wild boars, or roe-bucks, which have never perhaps met the eyes or form of man, and who as yet do not know the terrible power of a cool, well-directed shot.

CHAPTER III.

Visit to Bar-le-Duc.—French Calèche.—Confines of the Forest.—Our Guides.—Silent Precautions.—The Battue.—The Sport.—Our Success.—A Wolf Shot.—His Death.—Chace of a Boar.—A Dog Killed.—Death of the Boar.—Triumphant March.—Return to Rendezvous.

Some years ago, I, and two of my friends, took the resolution of quitting Paris and its winter pleasures for the sake of a visit to Bar-le-Duc, and the contiguous forest. This town is situated at about eighty leagues from the capital. We had been much pressed to make this excursion by an old friend of ours, an ancient colonel of the *grande armée*, now fulfilling in the country a quiet, though important civil employment. He had promised to make us acquainted with all the ferocious *wild beasts* of this part of the world; the call was irresistible!

We took the mail to ourselves that we might be more at our ease, and free from the interruptions of strangers, and so off we went. If there was ample provision of guns, powder, shot, balls, and caps, there was also no want of unutterable gaiety, of cheerful friendship, and of the happy good fellowship, which I think I may with justice claim as almost peculiar to my compatriots, as well as that enviable talent of setting every one at his ease, which may be adjudged to us as one of the great advantages of social life in France.

This is not the place, and perhaps it would not become me, to depict the French character; it has already been so well estimated by able observers. Amongst them I may mention as one of the most distinguished, the clever author of "High-ways and By-ways," who has so happily depicted many of the finer shades, and remarked with so much justice and ability the peculiarities of my countrymen. The scenes that he describes, and the personages he brings into play, during his amusing pilgrimage

throughout the country, with his observations thereon, are full of talent, good-nature, and truth.

But to return to my subject: The morning after our arrival at Bar-le-Duc, where we had been most kindly and hospitably received the night before by our friend the colonel, by six o'clock,—consequently before daybreak, for it was in December,—we were all ensconced in one of those vehicles, *alas! à la Françoise*, called a *calèche* (and even such as this is rarely to be found for hire in a provincial French town); it had certainly never been touched by sponge or brush since the last century. Its colour was a composition of different shades of blue, green, and white caused by mould; the body had never once succeeded in making the springs bend since first it was suspended, and the whole machine went rumbling off on its heavy wheels in a fine style.

But what was this to us?—Which of us thought of it once?—Which of us paid the least attention to the intense cold of this winter's

morning?—Were we not going to the attack of the ferocious wolves?—of the monstrous boars?—or, more pleasing still, to try to lay prostrate one of those wild, timid roebucks, whose motions are as quick as lightning, and who often spring up to the height of eight or ten feet at one bound?

One of the heavy cart-horses, taken from the farm-yard to be harnessed to our carriage, was mounted by a long, thin old fellow, in a blue frock, with a red and white checked cotton cap on his head; this old man, shaken without mercy as he was on his hard-trotting charger, still seemed to listen with pleasure and much amusement to our jokes, laughs, and songs.

At the end of about two hours we arrived at the confines of the forest, where we found assembled by the direction of our host about twenty peasants armed with sticks and ready for the *battues*. Their clothing was far from bespeaking poverty; it was good, and protected them against the thorns and brambles they expected to meet with in the hard work in which

they were about to be engaged. They had on besides thick woollen shirts, strong iron-soled shoes, fur caps, and leathern gloves.

Amongst them were two individuals who attracted our attention more particularly; they were farmers, possessing in the neighbourhood a few fields and some acres of wood, and were renowned for their powers and great experience in this sort of sport. They were to aid us with their advice, serve us as guides, and, although dressed like peasants, they had a manner about them which distinguished them from the others. They received us cordially; one of them called to a peasant who stood near, holding in his hand a gourd filled with brandy, and offered it to us, saying, "*Buvez, messieurs, c'est du pays; cela vous réchauffera les pieds et l'estomac.*"* "Hang the man!" cried I, as I gasped after my draught, which was absolutely a dose of liquid fire; and we all three made such frightful grimaces on swallowing it, that, notwithstanding

* "Take it, gentlemen, it is of this country, and will warm your stomachs and your feet."

the pain of the burning we were suffering under, we burst into a horse-laugh that was quickly joined in by the two farmers and the villagers surrounding us.

It was with great caution and in the most profound silence that we penetrated into the forest; the peasants also had been forbidden to utter a word under the penalty of being sent back to the village, which would have been felt by them all as a disgrace. Our two guides had given us the same recommendation, observing to us, that the wolf has so fine an ear, and is so subtle and always on his guard, that he will be sensible, at an almost incredible distance, of the slightest noise made by a person in the forest, and is instantly on the alert, and steals silently and secretly away. Arrived at the point of the forest where the different cross-roads meet, the villagers took one direction and we another; we were guided by signs, all maintaining the strictest silence. We were soon placed within about two hundred paces one

from the other; one of the farmers at each extremity.

So we remained for about twenty minutes, during which I was in a state of anxious expectation! As Mr. T. was the last but one on the left, I had an opportunity of observing one of our guides; he was firmly fixed at his post, his left leg a little in advance of the other, as motionless as a statue, and with his head turned, and as immoveably fixed, towards the side from which he expected the arrival of the *batteurs*. Suddenly was heard in the distance the general halloo of the peasants; this was the sign that the *battue* had commenced. My reader will conceive the excited feelings of that moment. I had frequently partaken in wild-boar shooting before, so I was acquainted with the sound of the animal's step in the wood, of his coarse grunt of rage when wounded; but I had never been out after wolves before this, and I prayed for the chance of one. I had loaded one barrel with a ball in case of a visit from a boar, and the other with large shot to salute

the other rascally beast if he should do me a like honour.

Whilst listening to the approach of the *batteurs*, my eyes were once more directed to my neighbour on the left, and just at this moment a buck leaped over the path at one bound, close to him; he scarcely condescended even to turn his head to give him a glance, and immediately resumed his motionless attitude. I had no time to discover the reason of this indifference, I was too busily occupied with myself. A shot was now heard from the right, re-echoed by the depths of the forest, and was immediately answered by a general cheer from the *batteurs;* they approached nearer, and I recognised with joy a well-known sound,—that of the arrival of several boars from the wood. I fired at the first that passed, it was a young one; he staggered on for a few paces and then fell; but the noise of the explosion caused the rest of the band to stop: after a little, I heard them in motion again, and out they issued suddenly from the underwood close to the farmer. Here I

got a good lesson: he let the whole of the young family pass quietly; but when the enormous chief appeared, he discharged his gun, and he fell, as if struck by lightning, dead on the spot. The ball had gone through the back of the shoulder, right into the heart.

This first *battue* was now over; there had been only three shots, and each had told. The first was from one of my Paris friends, who had killed a roebuck; I had laid low my *marcassin;* and we added to our trophy the superb prey of the farmer. I went up to him, and asked him to explain to me why he had let the buck pass him without firing; he replied, that, having only a single-barreled gun, he had preferred reserving his shot for the more important piece of game.*

In the second *battue*, and those which succeeded, we went deeper and deeper into the forest. There was no chance of finding the larger game *(trouver de la grande bête)*, as

* A whole family of French peasants are nourished during the winter, in abundance, by the flesh of one of these enormous animals salted.

the peasants called it, in the vicinity of the spot that had just been beaten; their sense of hearing is too acute, and "their legs are too well stretched for that," they said; therefore each new place of attack was chosen at a considerable distance from the former one.

The whole of our day was very successful, excepting only a failure of my own. A couple of wolves, at the same time, passed almost between my legs; and, trying to have the two, I missed both. My cool friend the farmer said to me afterwards, "Ah! what a pity! for you will never have such another opportunity in all your life!" This was really turning round the poniard in the wound. However, I had the gratification in the afternoon of re-establishing, in a slight degree, my reputation, by killing a wolf; and as the peculiarities I observed when this occurred may serve to exhibit the character of this animal, I will venture to relate the circumstance.

I was at my station, half hidden behind a tree, with neck extended, and listening with

attentive ear to every sound, looking eagerly into the bushes around me, but at the same time keeping my person as still as possible. I was aware how gently, without the least sound that could be detected by the sharpest ear, a wolf could steal away; so I watched with eagerness, reckoning mostly on my good sight for a chance. After about a quarter of an hour, I perceived a head peeping out; it was indeed, that of one of those four-footed robbers, distant about twenty-five paces from me. I had learned my lesson; instead of taking aim at him, I remained perfectly still behind my tree, our two heads alone being visible. The slightest movement on my part would have caused him to retire.

After a minute spent in mutual examination, —a minute that appeared an age to me,—the brute turned his head a little on one side, as if listening to the cries of the *batteurs* who were approaching. He then gently stole forward, *at a wolf-like pace*,* almost on his belly, and thus

* A pas de loup.

presented about half his body to my view. I asked no more. I now took aim, and calmly sent him my charge of large shot. The animal sprung up, fell upon his back, and then rolled along on the ground to within a few paces of me. He was not quite dead, and now began to gnaw his own foot, and tear his own flesh, as if the blood would serve to quench his angry thirst. At this sight, compassion began to struggle in my breast with the passion and duties of a sportsman: I had still one ball in the other barrel, and I might have finished the agony of the poor beast; but with shame I confess, I thought if another wolf presented himself, or a boar came down before I should have time to reload, I should lose my chance; and then came also the promptings of vanity, —I must account for the two shots, and I should only have one piece of game to show. Happily for the tranquillity of my conscience, and still more for the poor beast, he expired whilst I debated. The fourth *battue* concluded very shortly afterwards.

I have forgotten to mention that we had several couples of hounds in reserve, belonging to the farmer I have before spoken of. These dogs are generally very inveterate against the wolf and boar; and when either of these animals are wounded, but still continues his flight, they are let loose in pursuit of him, and it is rare indeed that he escapes, so great is their determined courage and perseverance.

At about four o'clock, when the day began to decline,—(we had added another wolf and a buck to our store,)—a second boar was wounded by one of our party; he fell, but rose again, and had taken to flight in the wood; still traces of blood on the snow certified that he was severely wounded. We held a council of war whether we should give him up, or continue in pursuit of him. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, my friend the farmer was determined rather to pass the whole night than to lose so fine a piece. He said it was a pity to let him be devoured by the wolves. His eagerness was met by equal zeal on my part, and that of one of my

companions; the other, pleading fatigue, said he would return to the carriage, which we had left in care of some villagers, and that he would wait for us. The second farmer was a man of advanced years, and he took upon him the task of transporting the game to the village; so there only remained three persons to go in search of the wounded monster.

Four dogs, whose impatient barking testified their consciousness that their turn was now arrived to go into action, were uncoupled and put on the scent; in a very few minutes they also disappeared, and we soon heard them giving tongue joyfully. At this sound all sense of fatigue was forgotten; the cool farmer took four of the *batteurs* with us, and the conclusion of the day showed what use he intended to put them to. He recommended us not by any means to lose sight of him, for, said he, "if one of you were lost by night in this forest, the Devil himself would not get you out whole!" Thus saying, he briskly entered the wood; we followed: he, directing himself by the voice of

the dogs, and knowing well all the regular footpaths, and the passes made by the different game, rendered our course as little difficult as possible; for we had to go through high and strong brambles and thorn-bushes, and to push aside the lower branches of the trees which obstructed our passage. After half an hour's work our conductor stopped short, and listened attentively: "*Ah!*" he cried, "*les chiens le tiennent acculé quelque part; je connois ça par leur voix: courons, dépêchons-nous!*"* Quickly, however, as we obeyed, we arrived too late; the strife was over, and he was off again. The farmer was right, and we received a sad proof in the ripped-up body of one of the four dogs lying dead at the foot of a large oak, against which probably his enemy had stood on his defence.

The farmer looked at the poor brute earnestly for a few seconds, and then, stamping his foot, he exclaimed; "*S— n— de D—! tu vas me le payer.*"† Whilst speaking, he pointed to

* "The dogs have him at bay somewhere; I know that by their voice: make haste! run!"

† "S— n— de D—! thou shalt pay for this!"

the fresh and abundant traces of blood on the snow. This showed us what course to take in pursuit of the boar. He added, that he could not hold out more than another quarter of an hour; and we were at work again with renewed ardour, always guided by the indefatigable dogs. At last we got up to him; and, luckily, this was in an open part of the forest, or we could not have distinguished the scene now offered to our view. The boar was exhausted and half prostrate, but still supporting himself on his fore-legs: one dog lay dead at his feet; another was wounded, and lying disheartened a few paces off; but the fourth, *Morilo* (the farmer's favourite), was in the act of springing, all bleeding as he was, with undiminished fury, upon the dying animal. We relinquished in favour of his master the right of terminating the combat; he approached coolly within ten paces of the desperate animal, and sent a ball through his head, right between the eye, and thus finished the tragedy.

The question now was, how to transport

our heavy victim to the carriage: the foresight of the farmer came into play, it was for this purpose he had caused the four men to accompany us; luckily, the boar had made a circuit in his flight, and we had not more than a league to perform. One of the men cut down with his little hatchet a straight branch from a tree, strong enough to support the brute; the feet were crossed, and tied in that position; he was then laid on his back, and the branch passed through his legs, and two men at each extremity lifted him up with much difficulty by this rough lever. When, however, he was once placed on their shoulders, they set out with good heart, and we began our triumphant march. The two large wounds of the dog made by the tusks of the boar were dressed by the farmer, who tore up his own handkerchief for this purpose; as for *Morilo*, he, all bloody and torn, nevertheless ran joyously by the side of his master.

As soon as we found the path by which we had entered the forest in the morning,

the route became easy, but still it had long been quite dark when we arrived at the place of rendezvous. Here we left our brave guide, having prevailed on him with great difficulty to accept one of the boars. We wished him to take one of the roebucks also, but this he pertinaciously declined; he promised to be at his post early on the morrow to receive us, and then departed. We also, after leaving the necessary directions for disposing of our "killed," resumed our places in the carriage, and returned to the town.

I will postpone to the following chapter the history of the rest of our exploits, and particularly that of the great imprudence of one of my friends, which the day after put an end to our sport in the neighbourhood of Bar-le-Duc.

CHAPTER IV.

Second Day's Sport.— Shooting Foxes.— A Wounded Wolf.— His Death.

PARTICULARLY ADDRESSED TO MY FRIEND THE SPORTSMAN.

DEAR ——

THE ensuing day was but a repetition of the one just described, as far as regards the early departure, the snow, the cold, the assembled peasants, and our friend the farmer; his old companion was alone wanting. But on this second day we explored a different part of the forest; we did not confine ourselves to "*la grande bête*," as on the day preceding. This time, hares, rabbits, woodcocks, and even foxes, were to take their chance in the dance! "What?" you cry, "what! shooting foxes!" "Yes, sir, with a gun, powder, and shot!"

But wait a little, keep yourself cool until I explain the affair; permit me to remark on the extremely different manner in which we in France, and you in Great Britain, look upon this malicious, spiteful, destructive animal. In England, you have them in very small numbers in your covers (where you take care of them as spoiled children, in order to give yourselves the pleasure of hunting them to death afterwards); these covers in France would only be regarded as small woods well suited "to go nutting in," whilst in our interminable forests these gracefully long-tailed rogues abound. In these said forests there is no possibility of hunting them, mounted on beautiful high-priced horses, and dressed in fine red coats. The trees are too close and too branchy to allow a horse and horseman to penetrate between them; here are no hedges or ditches to leap over (which part of the chase, with you, is a far more important object than the fox itself); here there is no wish of breaking necks or legs even; no, with us, my dear sir, in

our villages and solitary farms, they become, from their destructiveness, a real pest which it is absolutely necessary to get rid of.

I do not, however, affirm that they are never hunted in France, but it is rare; and it is still more rare in such cases to get the good-for-nothing animal to quit the protection of the woods on these occasions; it is more than difficult to *force* one, and your only chance of killing one is by firing at him the moment he ventures to show the end of his nose from under the wood. This reminds me of a ridiculous observation that I have heard made by certain of your countrymen, on the inferiority of French foxes to those of your happy country,—"*that they do not run so fast.*" You must avow, my dear friend, that it is carrying the rage of superiority rather far when it leads to a belief that even foxes have been created (by particular favour to England) with longer legs and quicker pace than in a neighbouring country separated from it only by seven leagues of salt water!

However this may be, it is but too true that we do kill foxes in France with guns, and take them in snares and traps; so I must continue my history. In fact, I could not find a better occasion to relate an instance of the spitefulness and rage of one of these animals. Do not fear another long description of *battues*, difficulty of progress through the wood, &c. I will abstain from all this, and simply relate three incidents that occurred on this second day, and which may interest by their novelty, as it is not possible to meet with anything similar in your own country.

First. A wolf had been wounded, and got away; he was afterwards found in the wood, some two or three hundred paces distant from the place where he had been shot. He was too much exhausted to be dangerous; so, the men dragged him to the path where we were stationed, that we might examine him at our ease. He was of the largest species, and although incapable of moving, and visibly on the point of expiring, he still looked at us

with an expression of ferocity impossible to describe. The peasants, animated by the spirit of hatred that they generally feel against this animal, were cruelly beating him to death. He never uttered a single cry, not a groan; his eyes remained immoveably fixed on his destroyers, until death at last rendered them glassy and put an end to his pain! As soon as he was dead, the odour that exhaled from his body was so fœtid as to compel us to retire. Here I may as well mention, that, in those provinces where wolves are plentiful, the government allows fifteen francs, as recompense, to each person who kills a male wolf, and eighteen for a female.

Second. One of the customs adopted in these *battues* is, strictly to abstain from quitting your post, under any pretext whatever, as long as the sport continues. Notwithstanding this rule, one of my own companions (he who had given up the pursuit of the boar the evening before) fired at a fox, and, on seeing him fall and remain extended on the ground, quitted

his post to go in search of him, and, taking him by one of his hind-legs, dragged him by it after him: the beast, however, was not dead; he sprang up, and seizing the hand that was pulling him, with his sharp-pointed teeth clung firmly to it. Our friend re-appeared in the path screaming horribly, and violently trying to shake the brute off, but uselessly; his torture continued the same: I ran to his assistance, as well as the good farmer, who had also heard his cries. By this time the poor young man was prostrate on the ground, without strength, and almost senseless! We were obliged to force a piece of wood, cut down in a hurry, into the jaw of the fox, to deliver him from this torment; and, in an instant after, the head of the beast was smashed to pieces by the heel of my hero the farmer!

It was now late, and besides we could not continue our sport, for the wounded hand began to swell prodigiously; it had been completely pierced through by the fox's teeth

(rendered, we feared, venomous from the suffering he had himself undergone); and his agony was so great, that we resolved on starting immediately for Bar-le-Duc, in order to procure the prompt assistance of a surgeon. Our invalid, supported by two persons, arrived at last at the outskirts of the forest, where the carriage was in waiting; we laid him down in it, and my other friend accompanied him. In order to give him more room, I mounted a pony that the colonel had good-naturedly sent in case of our standing in need of anything.

Third. At this time I had a very pretty English spaniel that I was very fond of. (His name was Teapot—pardon this folly; I had called him thus, because, when he was quite a puppy, I used to let him get upon the breakfast-table, and he would lap the tea out of my own cup.) He had been tied up all the day, and, wishing to give him a little exercise, I unloosed him that he might run after me, as I followed the calèche at a short

distance. It was now dark, and the only light we got was from the reflection of the snow.

At about a couple of miles from the town there is a hollow in the road, the banks on each side being about ten or twelve feet in height: here I faintly perceived an animal trotting on the right side; it was too dark for me clearly to distinguish the form, and I at first thought it was a dog, but, on seeing my own little pet run close up and get between the horse's legs, I guessed that it must be a wolf, and I was right. Our guns were in their cases in the carriage; I had nothing with me but a hunting-whip; and whilst I was hesitating what I had better do, the wolf leaped down from the bank, and rushed upon my poor little dog, and tried to seize him. Teapot had always been remarkable for his agility, and numberless were the tricks I had taught him to perform. By a rapid flight on one side he escaped the fangs of his enemy, and I, clacking my whip loudly, caused the brute to retreat to his perch, where

he stood looking at us. I eagerly called to the dog, who only understood English, "Up to me! up, my boy, up!" He obeyed with wonderful alacrity, and sprang sufficiently high for me to catch him. I placed him before me on my saddle, and set off on a good round gallop after the carriage. You will scarcely believe me perhaps, but the impudent marauder continued to watch us, and followed us to the very gates of the town!

To conclude this subject, I will only add, that in several of the French provinces, in a hard rigorous winter, the wolves unite themselves in troops or flocks, and become really formidable by the ravages they commit on the inhabitants. Hunger renders them quite ferocious, and they frequently enter the villages at night. I heard it related at Bar-le-Duc, that one of these animals scratching at the door of an isolated hut, a child who was alone within opened it, and was immediately seized and carried off more than the distance of a mile by the brute, who there devoured it. Another wolf, rendered still more

ferocious by hunger during a very severe winter, entered the town one morning, and meeting with a postilion who was returning with his horses, he attacked him, and bit him so badly on the knee, that the man died mad a few days after.

CHAPTER V.

Progress of Music. — Auber, Herold, Halevy. — French Romances. — A French Singer. — Singers and Dancers. — The Pirouette. — Ridiculous Exhibition. — Albert.

PURSUING the irregular course which I permit myself in my observations, I now take as my subject a science in which the French appear lately to have made a sensible progress, — I mean that of music. This progress is evident in the improvement now so apparent in the upper classes. The Germans and Italians, by placing constantly before us so many excellent models, have succeeded at last in teaching us to understand and to feel what really is good music.

Cherubini and Paer first began this happy reformation; Auber, Herold, Halevy, have since continued it with different success. Auber, at his *début*, took a high flight, and by his first conception and execution gave us the greatest hopes for the future: I allude to his *Muette de Portici;* but, unfortunately, these hopes have not been realized. This has been followed by compositions, comparatively speaking, of only indifferent merit. Herold, the most melodious and *suave* representative of the modern school, has in three different works succeeded in gaining merited and distinguished approbation. *Zampa*, *Le Pré aux Clercs*, and *Ludovic*, the last opera in which he was engaged, when Death abruptly terminated his career (like Weber) before he had attained the age of forty, are evidences of his genius. Zampa is a charming work, and is as original as can be expected in these times, when "brass and ass's skin" are permitted to play so distinguished a *rôle*. Halevy has also acquired deserved fame.

Still, I fear, that the middling classes will

long continue to find delight in the detestable music of Herz; and in those plaintive, sentimental, well-known French romances, which, to my mind, are sometimes so ridiculous when uttered by manly lips. Whenever I hear them, I may almost call the sensation I feel one of disgust: this I have experienced very recently at a party in London, at the house of a lady of title whom I will not designate even by initials; she is known for her gracious reception of foreigners. The amusement of the evening was almost entirely confined to music; and, as far as I could judge, to this particular style of music, "Romances."

Amongst the number of foreigners, (so easily distinguished as such in a drawing-room in England,) who by turns seated themselves at the piano to bestow on us their chromatic expressions of the pains and pleasures of love, (the great subject of *Romances Françaises*,) there was one, I regret to say, a compatriot of mine, God bless the man! whose figure, face, and entire appearance were much more allied

to vulgarity than to the tender sentiments he expressed. When he lifted up his goggling eyes to heaven, or rather to the ceiling of the room, and threw a languishing air over the whole of his stupid countenance,—it proved too much for me, and I really felt ashamed as well as disgusted. But, will it be believed, that, just as I was trying to conquer these emotions, one of the amiable foreigners came up, and addressing him with an air of delight, said, "Ah! sir, this is your own, is it not? Charming! divine!" I could stand no more; I rapidly descended the stairs, and was soon out in the street without saying adieu to any one.

But, to return to my subject. Amongst the public singers of Paris, Nourrit holds without question the first rank; but he also, with his beautiful voice, is obliged, in order to please the pit, which still continues to love exaggeration, to scream, to declaim at the top of his compass. Levasseur possesses a superb organ; but sings without feeling, or the

slightest enthusiasm of manner. At the head of the female singers we must place Mademoiselle Falcon; she is young, and promises to be very great in a few years. Cinti Damoreau has passed forty; (this in France is considered a fault in a woman;) she has quitted the Great Opera for the Feydeau, where she, nightingale as she still is, is associated with a set of owls, all envious of others, all worn out and attenuated as if by consumption.

I scarcely speak of theatrical dancers; their superior merit is so well known and recognised as to admit of no question; — witness Taglioni, who has just re-appeared on the stage after a long absence, as graceful and light as ever.* There are, besides, the Elslers, Alexis Dupont, Fitzjames, and many others; but I see only one male dancer of equal merit with

* The *complaint in her knee*, which has caused such universal regret both in France and England, so as almost to render even the dandies' box at the King's Theatre a desert place, has been cured in so *drole* a manner, that I dare not venture

the females. His name is Mazillier; he has not yet made his appearance on the London boards.

However, there is one thing I have a great pleasure in saying, namely, that I think the pirouette, the most ungraceful imitation of the tee-to-tum, is very near its dethronement upon the Parisian stage; there only remains one individual to perform it. This is well; it is a sign of improved taste and good sense in the French no longer to attach so high a value to the dancing of men upon the stage, particularly in that detestable style which has been so long prevalent. The martial dance may be allowed; the village round may pass; and some others which still exist in reality, and are well represented: but I hope the reader will agree with me in thinking that there is nothing in this world so absurd as to see, in our ballets of the present

to make it known to the reader; I will even recommend him not to inquire into the particulars of Mr. A. D. It is sufficient that she is well again.

day, a man in a short tunic of gauze, with a large toque covered with waving plumes on his head, or else dressed to represent Cupid, with butterfly's wings (made of paper) attached to his shoulders. Look at him erect before you, his thick legs rendered hideously muscular by the violent exercise to which they are daily doomed, whilst he is playing the graceful with his naked arms, appearing by comparison doubly skinny and frightful.

This is already ridiculous enough; but what becomes of the illusion, (if any ever existed,) when this man, after his numerous bounds, capers, pirouettes, &c. at last stops, panting with fatigue, out of breath, and bathed in perspiration; and, nevertheless, throws into his gestures and countenance the tender admiration that he is supposed to feel for the lovely shepherdess who now in her turn begins her exhibition? Ought this not to be put aside for ever? Is it not a thing of bad taste, to which habit alone reconciles us? Why not

leave to women all that is graceful and light? It is their domain, and they ought to fill it exclusively.

Yet there is one dancer whom I cannot comprehend in this species of excommunication; I mean Albert, for so long a time the favourite of the King's Theatre in London. One may still recall with pleasure his pantomimic ballet; his step so measured, his attitudes so easy, and, at the same time, so dignified; his style of dancing so even and graceful! In all his characters, and more particularly in that of *Faust*, he always gave me the idea of a gentleman. *Certes*, this will appear impossible, or at least extraordinary, to certain fine English gentlemen, to whom, indeed, I have before made allusion in my letter on *Roués*, and they will find it difficult to believe that "a vulgar public dancer" could produce such an impression. I should, in reply, tell them, that they themselves are examples of a fact much more difficult to understand; for there are many amongst them

who in their tastes and habits bear a great affinity to the *vaurien*, (good for nothing,) whom Albert represents in this ballet, and yet these persons do not the less continue to be regarded and treated as gentlemen !

CHAPTER VI.

The Fine Arts. — French Artists. — Defect in Colouring. — Horace Vernet. — The Ancient Masters. — Sculpture and Architecture. — The Theatres. — Quadrilles.

NOTWITHSTANDING the diversity of parties, ideas, and opinions which have agitated and still continue to agitate France, and in the midst of all the evil and good that rapidly occur there, it is curious to observe the actual progress that the fine arts have made and are making: painting, music, sculpture, *belles lettres*, architecture, all are learnt, practised, followed with energy and constancy, by thousands of individuals. At the present hour there are not less than from twelve to fifteen hundred artists at Paris who support themselves re-

spectably, many even living quite at their ease; and it is probable that this capital alone furnishes each year as many finished pictures as all the rest of the Continent in the same period of time. The classical or ancient style is quite abandoned; in literature it is the same; the French of to-day have liberated themselves from the rules and models of Greece and Rome.

Contemporary history offers a vast field for the painter, and subjects from it are chosen and executed by artists of the first talent. Such are Horace Vernet, and Paul de la Roche, his son-in-law, who finds his inspiration in the fruitful history of Great Britain. Also Ingrès, the Director of the French Academy at Rome, whom many persons consider as the first living French artist. Then, Conderc, who this year bore the palm for his beautiful Battle of Lawfeldt. Then there is Shneitz, he who has undertaken to represent on canvass the history and bloody recollections of the "*Trois Glorieuses Journées*:" he is clever, but he depicts no-

thing but blood, wounds, naked arms, and ferocious countenances. And then Scheffer, who has given us those touching and heroic pictures of events in the history of modern Greece. And lastly, the veteran Gerard.—Such are the first historical painters, or, to speak the language of the atelier, *les premiers artistes à grande toile*, which France at present possesses.

Amongst those who are designated as painters of the *grand chevalet*, but whose works are of smaller dimensions than the last mentioned, there are Leopold Chabert,* Granet, Beaume, Dévéria, the brothers Johannat, Steuben, Hesse, Bélanger, and Charlet. The two last, if I remember well, are rather considered as painters of cabinet pictures of a more familiar style. As for portrait-painting, it is far less encouraged in France than in England. The artists of the greatest name are Ducaisne and Dubuffe: this latter is well known as the favourite delineator of the English beauties resid-

* He killed himself, two years ago, at Venice; I do not know from what cause.

ing in or visiting Paris; and as he contrives to embellish them even more than nature has done, I am not surprised, nor will be my reader, particularly if it be a lady, that he is very fashionable and much sought after.

There is, as I have said, much genius in the conceptions, and great talent in the execution, of many of these modern artists; but the weak side, the rock upon which painting splits in France, is the want of durability in the colouring. This is a defect which has often forcibly struck me, when, after a few years' interval, I have again seen pictures which at their first issue from the painter's *studio* were brilliant in colour and effect; and I have upon a second view found them so dark, that all the effects of light had disappeared; there was neither air nor space, and every object or figure in the composition seemed as if stuck on the canvass.

This deficiency is very remarkable in almost every picture painted during the time of the empire: the Coronation of Napoleon, by David, had undergone much alteration a very few years

after its completion; and the picture, otherwise clever and well executed, had completely lost its colouring. Even the works of H. Vernet are not entirely free from this drawback. I have heard that he himself avowed that he used too much oil in the working up of his colours, but he added, "It is to get on faster;" and these few words give a good idea of the character of this eminent artist; a rapid conception, and great facility and quickness of execution that nothing can chill, enable him to produce with astonishing promptitude his numberless inspirations. I have often seen him leap down from his scaffolding whilst painting some of his great pictures, and, laughingly seizing hold of his foils, begin to fence, or else, putting on his gloves, commence a boxing-match with any of his friends who might chance to have come into his *atelier;* and then as lightly springing up again to his place in high good-humour, and, rehandling his brush and pallet a minute after having distributed his blows or passes, return to his work with a firm calm

hand, and become entirely absorbed in his occupation !*

One cannot but revert here to that so often debated question,—Whence arises the purity of tint and touch, which still lasts, and has lasted through so many years—centuries even —in the works of the ancient masters ? Was it that in other times the Rubenses, the Vandykes, the Titians, the Correggios, the Guidos, possessed a secret, unknown to modern artists, for the composition of their colours ? Or, was it, as I have lately read somewhere stated of some particular master, that he composed his colours only on bright, clear, shining days ? Did they all adopt this plan ? or perhaps, carrying the same idea even further, and on the principle of philosophical combinations of which we suppose them ignorant, only work in certain colours in certain temperatures and in certain lights ? I am not scientific, nor practical painter

* It is asserted that the cartoons which contain the sketches of all H. Vernet's pictures, exceed in number all those which are in the depôt, (at the Musée I believe,) of the whole of the other French artists.

enough, to know if this be a reasonable supposition, but I think it not an improbable one; and I think it still more probable that great part of their superiority in the art of colouring arose from perhaps a bold unhesitating touch which at once found the hue required, and applied it without going over again and again the same work; for it seems to me that necessarily the addition of one layer of colour over another must produce a want of transparency, and particularly a mixture which perhaps subsequently produces effects unintended by the composer.

May not this be the cause of the want of durability in the colouring of the modern French school of painting? I am unequal to take upon me to decide this point; but I throw out this reflection as it has occurred to me, submitting it to the decision of more competent judges.

There only remains the painters of marine pieces to be spoken of, a style of picture offering to the artists the richest and most inex-

haustible subjects. In this we have Gudin, Isabey, Boulanger, Hersent, &c. The reputation of the first two is European. Sculpture also merits praise, as much from the quality of the pieces that she has produced in France, as from their great number. She may perhaps be reproached, as well as her sister, (Painting,) for her ambitious, exaggerated, even forced positions; still, every day gives birth to new and meritorious productions. The public gardens and squares, the bridges, all are annually more and more embellished by her aid.

The Exchange, the Church of La Madeleine, and the Arch of triumph in the Champs Elysées, exist as bold and incontestable proofs of the actual state of perfection, and of the progress that architecture has made in France. The Madeleine is an immense imitation of some Roman temple; but the Arch of triumph is the finest, the noblest ornament of the capital: size, unity of composition, richness of detail, and grandeur in its whole aspect, all is there! It is a perfect monument, and will exist

for future generations to admire. The four principal groups,—Victory, Resistance, Peace, and War,—are fifty French feet in height; yet they do not look exaggerated, the proportions being so true!

I have already spoken of music; I have only to add, that, in admitting the great foreign masters on our principal stage, we have received an impulse useful to every other lyrical theatre; all have felt the good effect, even to the Vaudeville; and in return, Auber, Herold, and Boyeldieu, have become such excellent musicians, and so highly estimated, as to be applauded even on the stages of Germany and Italy, both sovereigns of the entire musical world.

The theatres are always much frequented in Paris (whilst in London they remain shut during a part of the year); but it must be confessed that the decorations and other accessories go far in encouraging this taste. Now also there are orchestras in the open air: those of Julien and Musard are composed of the

pupils of the *Conservatoire.* The directors gain an immense deal of money, yet a ticket for the enjoyment of these pleasures costs only the modest sum of a franc !

Contredanses or quadrilles—(what a word when treating of the fine arts !)—have made giant steps of late.—Rossini ! Rossini himself composes airs for them !—and now it is not a matter of surprise to have added to the energy of the finest orchestras, whips, dogs, songs, shots ! thunder ! toscins ! red and blue fires—in fact, what is there not ?

The result is, that the best company in Paris frequent these places for the purveying of strong sensations.

CHAPTER VII.

English Girls.— Manœuvring Mothers.— Matrimonial Speculations. — Match-making. — Flirtation.— French Marriages.— England and France.

THE reader will perhaps recollect the young English girl that I mentioned, in one of my letters, as walking early in the morning in her father's park. In that picture I tried to describe her amiable simplicity of manners, her touching confidence, and the graceful charm which her innocence and frankness threw over the beauty of her whole person. In the numerous families residing in the provinces of England, there are many and many bright specimens of all these precious qualities: but the medal has its reverse; and the praise, or rather the merited adoration I have offered

to such, is far from being merited by all the English young ladies. Justice compels me to place in contrast a species not at all uncommon, and which but little resembles that I have above alluded to.

I draw my examples more particularly from those families which annually visit the watering-places in England. They arrive there encumbered with so many daughters, that, in order to get rid of a few, the mothers are obliged to seek husbands for them with avidity; and these places offering a choice of various descriptions, greatly induce such mothers to visit them. Whatever may be the pecuniary means that each family possesses, there are always, in addition to the daughters, some two or three brothers to be provided for, to be placed at the bar, in the army, in the navy, &c.; and thus the pittance destined to each girl becomes so small as to be reduced in many cases to almost nothing, and the young lady's hand and *accomplishments* are all the parents have to offer. On the other side, there are in England, as in any other coun-

try, a number of men very amiable and pleasant, who are without a *sou*, either because they have expended all they ever had, or have never possessed anything to expend: these gentlemen also, in quest of the same object, find themselves in the same place, seeking an advantageous matrimonial speculation to retrieve their affairs, or place them in a better position. From this result intrigues, wherein the curious spectator finds much to amuse.

I regret to be obliged to acknowledge that this desire, this necessity, (for it must be called so,) to get married, eventually destroys all that charm of which I have spoken with such admiration. The manners of these young ladies are as opposite to those before alluded to as can well be imagined; they exhibit an over-free and unnatural gaiety, and a desire to please which passes the legitimate limits, even so far as to make the first advances. Also the general habit of *flirtation* completely does away with all the illusions which their beauty and other advantages might otherwise

produce. In high society, or rather in that which may be better called *fashionable*, but which is not always the best, the same remarks may be applied with almost equal justice; still there are many bright exceptions.

There is another style of woman which I must not forget to mention, who frequent these aforesaid watering-places, and to whom I have an utter repugnance; I mean those who, having passed *la quarantaine*, have taken the mania of match-making. The manœuvring mistakes they make are *impayables*. Others again, (in this purely English,) who speak only of lords, dukes, of Lady C——, of Lady B——, or some right honourable, &c. It is quite impossible to get them to converse on any subject but the nobility, or to look at anything in rank lower than a baronet.

But to return to the letter that I have just cited. The precious advantages which I extolled as existing in a marriage formed under such different auspices, cannot of course be expected in the matrimonial connexions contracted by my watering-place young ladies, nor by their

partners. A man cannot pretend to deceive himself into the belief of an exclusive first, or only attachment, or even of a deeply-felt preference; whatever words he may address to the willing ear now lent to him, have already often been heard by it. The lady cannot conceal this from herself; nor can he, if he be not an egregious coxcomb, believe that he is the first that has made any impression on her heart or imagination.

It is certain that by dint of making love with one man after another, (this, I think, well defines the word *flirtation*,) a young girl must unavoidably lose that reserve of manner, and tarnish that first blush of modesty which is the greatest charm she possesses. When this is lost, who can love her sincerely? Where is the real attachment she inspires. I remember a vaudeville intitled, I think, *Les premières amours*, in which one of the characters is a young Englishwoman of this sort, I suppose, for the couplet says of her and those like her:

* * * *

Elles ont tant de vertu, qu'il en reste
Même apres les premières amours. (bis.)

These lines explain in a few words my meaning better than many pages could do. I now naturally revert to the very opposite manner in which the bonds of marriage are formed in France; always under the influence, or by the will of parents, and most generally the immediate parties having but a slight personal knowledge one of the other. The advantages of this mode of proceeding are a certainty of security for the past, arising from young unmarried women enjoying so little liberty, and never having the opportunity of making love with any half-dozen men who come in their way, and also hope for the future. And he who puts himself in the ranks of married men feels he has a good chance of inspiring and feeling love from the better knowledge of the good qualities that increasing intimacy may bring out in himself, and in the individual chosen for him. I leave to the reader to form his own opinion on these important matters, without seeking to influence it; and I shall terminate these additional remarks by a few general reflections.

For all that regards material or physical existence, for comforts, and the precautions taken against maladies, particularly *colds*, (the frightful means of engendering that disease so fatal in England — consumption !) for luxury of every description, for the extravagant expenditure of time and money offered to their individual persons, the English distinguish themselves amongst all people, from whatever rank you may choose them; but, on the other hand, they know but little of the real enjoyments of society, the pleasures of complete intimacy, and of mutual good-will, and particularly that smiling good-humour and readiness to enjoy, which distinguish the French people, — they who, notwithstanding the political commotions which are ever shaking their country, the dangers which are continually menacing it, the changes of its dynasty and constitution, nevertheless *go on* constantly and fully enjoying the pleasures of existence !

I would represent England and France, those two great friendly rivals, in two distinct pictures, under the semblance of two female figures :—

The one of great beauty, but with a grave expression and reserved demeanour; in splendid apparel, with feathers in the head, and possessing an eye that haughtily and proudly seems to defy contempt, and *exact* respect rather than court admiration, or inspire love. (The sky of this picture should be cloudy.)

The other should be a graceful, lovely woman; her dress less magnificent, but more finished, more elegant; flowers in the hair; and her smiling lips and eyes should express just the contrary of those of her superb rival. (The sky of this picture should be on one side threatening storms, which the bright beams of the sun are dispersing.)

THE END.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.