

MARIANNE BAILLIE

FIRST IMPRESSIONS ON
A TOUR UPON THE
CONTINENT

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*First Impressions on a Tour upon the Continent / In the summer of 1818
through parts of France, Italy, Switzerland, the borders of Germany, and a
part of French Flanders:*

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PREFACE

In perusing the following pages, it will I hope be believed, that they were not originally written with any view to publication: circumstances have since occurred, which induce me to alter my first intention, and to submit them to a more enlarged circle, than that of a few intimate friends, to whose eye alone I had once thought of presenting them.

In committing my First Impressions to so fearful an ordeal as the opinion of the Public, I feel oppressed by a sense of their various imperfections, and by the conviction of their trifling

value as a work of the sort; yet I still flatter myself they will be received with forbearance. I had much amusement in attempting this little sketch, and I most sincerely entreat that it may be considered as what it is, a sketch only. My friends will not, and readers in general must not, look for fine writing from the pen of such a novice as myself; nor ought they to expect me (labouring under the twofold disadvantage of sex and inexperience) to narrate with the accuracy and precision of a regular tourist, the history (natural, moral, political, literary and commercial) of all the places we visited: still less, that (in compliment to the lovers of the gastronomic art) I should undertake to give the bill of fare of every *table d'hôte* or *traiteur* that we met with in our progress.

Among the many fears which assail me, there is one that recurs to my mind with more pertinacity than the rest: that I may be taxed with having bestowed too warm and glowing a colouring upon some objects of natural beauty and sublimity. Formerly, indeed, I believe I was in danger of leaning towards romance in describing scenes which had particularly impressed my imagination or interested my feelings, and of attempting to imitate, with too rash and unadvised a pencil, the fervour of a Mrs. Radcliffe, although to catch the peculiar charm and spirit of her style I felt to be (for me) impossible. But notwithstanding that I still remember with complacency the time when the vivid imagination of very early youth procured me the enjoyment of a thousand bright and lovely illusions, and cast a sort of fairy splendour over existence which was certainly more bewitching

than many realities that I have since met with, I at present feel (as better becomes me) more inclined to worship at the sober shrine of reason and judgment. This, it will be easily conceived, was likely to render my Tour a more faithful picture, than if it had been undertaken some years ago, and I can safely affirm, that I commenced it with a determination to observe all things without prejudice of any sort, not even that of nationality; for prejudice is still the same irrational and unworthy feeling, in every shape and under every name. I was much hurried at the time of writing this Journal; but a greater degree of subsequent leisure has enabled me to add some few notes which may, I hope, amuse and interest my readers. In these I acknowledge with gratitude the occasional assistance of a partial friend.

April, 1819.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

On Monday, August 9th, we embarked from the Ship inn at Dover, for Calais, on board the Princess Augusta packet. The passage was dreadful, the usual miseries attended us, and at the time I am now writing this, viz. August 13th, we are still suffering from the effects of our voyage. I will not make my readers ill by recalling the disgusting scenes which we there encountered, suffice it to say, that the bare remembrance of them is sufficient to overwhelm my still sick fancy, and to render the very name of the sea appalling to my ears. Upon landing at Calais, however, we contrived to raise our heavy eyes, with a lively feeling of curiosity and interest, to the motley crowd assembled on the beach to view us come on shore. I was pleased with what we are taught to call the habitual politeness of even the lowest order of French people, evinced in the alacrity with which twenty hands were held out to support me in descending from the packet, and in the commiseration which I plainly discovered in many a sun-burnt countenance for my evident indisposition. The hotel (Quillacq's) is excellent, and the attendants remarkably civil and active. The style of furniture is superior to that of the best English hotels; and for a dinner and dessert of the most superior quality, we did not pay more than we should have done at an ordinary inn in our own country for very common fare. The dress of the lower classes here is rather pretty; the circumstance of the

women wearing caps, neatly plaited, and tolerably clean, together with the body and petticoat of different colours, gives them a picturesque air: the long gold ear-rings, also (universally worn at this place, consisting of two drops, one suspended at the end of the other), contribute greatly to their graceful effect. The men do not differ much in their appearance from those of the same rank in England, but I think the animation universally displayed in the countenances of the fairer sex particularly striking, and certainly preferable to that want of expression so often to be found among my countrywomen.

When we first started from Calais for Paris, with post-horses, I could not help a little national feeling of complacency upon observing the slovenly, shabby appearance of their harness and accoutrements, compared with those of England. From London to Dover, we had bowled away with ease and rapidity; the carriage seemed to cut through the air with a swift and even motion. Now we crawled and jumbled along, as it pleased the fancy of the horses and driver, upon the latter of which no remonstrance of ours would have had any effect. The costume of the post-boy (who drives three horses abreast, a fat, full-sized beast in the middle, his own rather smaller, and the off horse always a ragged flap-eared pony, looking as if he had just been caught up from a common) is whimsical enough; it is universally the royal livery: a shabby, dirty, short-waisted blue jacket, turned up with crimson, and laced sometimes with silver; boots resembling those of our heavy cavalry, and a thick clubbed

pigtail, swinging like a pendulum from beneath a rusty japan hat. It was not till we had reached the distance of Abbeville that we met with the celebrated genuine *grosses bottes*, whose enormous size put me in mind of my nursery days, when I used to listen to the wonderous tale of the giant-killer and his seven-leagued boots. The lash of the post-boy's whip is thick and knotted, and they have a curious method of cracking it upon passing other carriages, to give notice of their approach: this saves their lungs, and has not an unpleasant effect, the cracking sound being of a peculiar nature, double, as if it said "crac-crac" at each stroke. It is not every post-boy, however, who manages this little implement in the true style. They all carry the badge of their profession upon the left arm (like our watermen), being a silver or metal plate with the arms of France upon it. From Calais to Haut-buisson the country is extremely flat, barren and uninteresting, like the ugliest parts of Wiltshire and Sussex; and the straight line in which all the French roads are cut is tiresome and monotonous to a great degree. The case is not mended even when you advance as far as Marquise, and I began to yawn in melancholy anticipation of a similar prospect for nearly a hundred and eighty miles, which yet remained to be passed ere we reached Paris; but upon coming near Beaupres, we were agreeably disappointed, finding the surface of the country more undulated, and patches of woodlands thinly strewn here and there – it is amazing how greatly the eye is relieved by this change. The hamlets between Haut-buisson and Boulogne much resemble

those in the west of England; we were perpetually fancying ourselves in a Somersetshire village as we passed through them. On the road-side it is very common to see large crucifixes, raised to a considerable height, with the figure of our Saviour the size of life. We remarked one in particular, painted black, and the image flesh-colour, with the drapery about the middle gilt; another was inclosed in a small railed space (like a village pound), surrounded by four or five clumsy stone images, which I rather imagine were meant to represent the holy women who assembled round the cross during our Saviour's last moments. As we approached Boulogne, we met several old peasants: they all wore cocked hats, and a suit of decent, *sad-coloured* clothes, not unlike the dress of our villagers on a Sunday.

The entrance to Boulogne is very picturesque: the fortifications are crumbling a little beneath the touch of time, and the walls are partly overgrown by trees and lichens; but a very little exertion would render it formidable enough, I imagine, to besiegers. We dined here at an inn, where they thought they could not do us a greater favour than by sending up a meal in what they believed to be the English style of cookery; consequently it was neither one thing nor the other, and extremely disagreeable: amongst various delicacies, we had melted salt butter swimming in oil, and quite rancid, brought to table in a tea-cup, and a large dish of tough spongy lumps of veal, which they called veal cutlets. As I sat at the window, which opened upon the principal street, I had an opportunity of remarking a specimen

of true French flattery, but I was not quite so pervious to its benign influence as Sterne describes his ladies to have been in the Sentimental Journey. A little ragged urchin of about ten years old rather annoyed me, by jumping up and grinning repeatedly in my face: "Allez, allez, que faites vous là?" said I. "C'est que je veux dire bon jour à Madame!" – "Eh, bien donc, vous l'avez dit à present – allez!" – "Ah! mais que Madame est jolie! Mon Dieu! elle est *very prit*. Elle me donnera un sous, n'est ce pas?"

It was at Poix that we accidentally met a woman of Normandy upon the road. She was well looking, and the costume both singular and becoming: the snow white cap with a deep plaited border, and a crown half a yard in height, fastened on the forehead by a gold pin, the long drop ear-rings and gold cross in a heavy worked setting, suspended round the throat by a narrow black riband, white handkerchief crossed over the bosom, and a body and petticoat of opposite colours, with full white shift sleeves coming over the elbows, formed a remarkably pretty dress.

I ought to have mentioned before now, that on the road between Marquise and Beupres we were amused by observing an unfinished tower, erected by Bonaparte some years since, designed to commemorate his intended victory over the English, by invasion – a true *chateau en Espagne*. Wishing to refresh ourselves by leaving the carriage while the horses were changed, I entered a sort of rustic public-house, where I observed with much interest the interior of a French cottage kitchen and

its inhabitants. A group of peasants sat round a wood fire, apparently waiting for their dinner, which, as a brisk lively *paysanne* took it off the embers to pour into a dish, looked and smelt most temptingly; it consisted of a mess of bread, herbs, and vegetables, stewed in broth: there was a member of this little circle who seemed to watch the progress of the cooking with peculiar delight; I mean a large, powerful, yet playful dog, whose exact breed we did not discover, but we were informed he was English – doubtless he recognized his countrymen! The plates and dishes, utensils, &c. were ranged upon shelves from the top to the bottom of the little kitchen, and equally distributed on all sides, instead of being confined to the vicinity of the dresser, as is generally the case in England; they were chiefly of a coarse white clay, painted in a gaudy and sprawling pattern of red flowers: the old woman of the house apologized for their not being quite so bright as they ought to have been, but said the flies dirtied them sadly; however, every thing looked clean and comfortable. The costume of the men is not becoming; they all wear white coarse cotton night-caps, and smock-frocks dyed with indigo; their features and countenances much resemble those of a similar rank in England. It appears to me that the old peasants alone wear the cocked hat in this part of France: perhaps it is a remnant of the national dress in the time of the *ancien regime*. The young children, from one to five or six years of age, are (generally speaking) very pretty, and some of them have the drollest little faces I ever saw, dark eyes and marked

eyebrows and lashes, full of smiles and roguery; their hair is always allowed to hang at full length upon their shoulders, never being shorn and cropt. Having dined at Boulogne, we proceeded on our journey as far as Samer, intending to sleep the first night at Montreuil; but a direct stop was put to any such project, by the circumstance of a total absence of post-horses; they were all too much fatigued to carry us farther, or were employed in the service of other travellers. Evening was now closing rapidly in, and we were really glad to comply with the urgent solicitations of a rural *fille de chambre*, who ran out of the little inn at that place (Samer), and assured us we should meet with very comfortable accommodations and be treated with every attention at the Tête de Bœuf, to which she belonged: "Ma foi, messieurs," said the postilion, "vous trouverez que cette demoiselle est bien engageante." When we entered the house (through the kitchen, which much resembled that of a large cottage), we found a neat little parlour, the water ready boiling in the tea-kettle, excellent tea, bread, butter, and cream. The *demoiselle* or *fille de la maison* (being the daughter of the hostess), and her assistant (the before-mentioned *fille de chambre*, in her country costume), flew about, seeming to anticipate all our wishes and wants; every thing was ready in an instant, and all was done, not by the wand of an enchanter, but by the magical influence of good humour and activity, void of pertness, and free from bustle or awkwardness of any sort. *La jeune demoiselle* was a pretty, modest, well-behaved girl, of sixteen or seventeen, and the maid a merry, good-looking,

sprightly lass, some few years older. She appeared to enjoy a joke to her heart, and returned a neat answer to our laughing questions more than once, and this without being at all immodest or impertinent. Mr. B. asked her if she was married: "Pas encore, Monsieur," (said she, looking comically *naïve*), "mais j'espère toujours!" In short, her manner was something quite peculiar to the French in that class of society. An English maid servant who had kept up this sort of badinage would most probably have been a girl of light character; but servants in France are indulged in a playful familiarity of speech and manner which is amusing to witness, and seldom (if ever) prevents them from treating you with every essential respect and attention. When we started the next morning, the demoiselle earnestly entreated us to breakfast at the Hotel de l'Europe, at Montreuil, which was kept by her sister, a young woman only two years older than herself, who was just married; and both she and her little maid added many a remembrance upon their parts to *la chere sœur*. Whether this was genuine sisterly affection, or the policy of two innkeepers playing into each other's hands, I really cannot take upon me to determine.

The country between Samer and Montreuil becomes far more agreeable than hitherto; one here sees hills and vales, and waving woods: we passed the forest of Tingri, but did not remark any large trees; they were chiefly of beech, with a great profusion of low underwood. We met many waggons and carts upon the road which are all very different from those used in England,

being much narrower, and lighter for the horses: they are usually open at the ends, and the sides resemble two long ladders. The wheat harvest in this part of the country was remarkably fine; oats were plentifully planted, but the crops were thin; the hay, clover, &c. were scarce also, and of inferior quality, owing to the long drought. We observed the women reaping quite as much as the men, and their complexions, poor creatures! were absolutely baked black by the sun. The road now led us through the heart of the forest of Aregnes: it is of large extent, but we observed the same want of fine timber as in that of Tingri; the reason of this is, that the trees are always cut down before they attain their full growth, for the purpose of fuel, as wood fires are universal in France. We admired, however, several "dingles green," and "tangled wood walks wild," which looked very cool and inviting, but I remembered with pride the "giant oaks and twilight glades beneath" of our own New Forest, and this coppice made but a trifling appearance in the comparison. Emerging once more from hence upon the open country, we beheld in the distance a troop of English dragoons (probably from Boulogne) exercising their horses. What a singular spectacle in the midst of a people who so lately ruled the world, but who now are trampled beneath the feet of the stranger! The sight of the English, thus proudly paramount, must necessarily be revolting and galling to them in the highest degree: we should feel quite as bitterly, were it our own fate – more so, perhaps. Let us therefore be just, and make allowance for their natural disgust, while we condemn the vanity

and mad ambition which has thus reduced them.

The approach to Montreuil is pretty; the character of the landscape changes, in a sudden and agreeable manner: in place of an uninclosed tract of land, resembling a vast ocean of waving corn, you now see verdant meadows and green pastures, refreshing the tired eye, and wearing the livery of early spring; this effect is produced by the fields lying low, and by the practice of irrigation, which is an admirable substitute for rain.

Montreuil is a fortified town; we passed over drawbridges upon entering and leaving it: the houses are all very ancient, and the whole appearance is picturesque. Here we had a mental struggle between sentiment and good nature, for we wished to breakfast at the same inn where Sterne met with La Fleur, and yet were unwilling to disappoint the hopes of our little demoiselle at Samer, who had recommended her sister's hotel. Good nature carried the day, and we drove to l'Hotel de l'Europe, where we met with most comfortable accommodation, and were pleased by the young hostess's resemblance to her pretty sister, and by her civil, lively manner of receiving us. She sat during our breakfast in a neighbouring apartment, by the kitchen (like the mistress of the mansion in times of yore), working at her needle, surrounded by her hand-maidens, who were occupied in the same employment. They all seemed to be fond of her, and the light laugh of genuine hilarity rang from one to the other as they chatted at their ease. The room in which we breakfasted had (in common with most of the French apartments, which are not

paved with brick), a handsome oak floor, waxed and dry rubbed till it was nearly as highly polished as a dining-table; the walls were wainscoted in part, and partly hung with a very amusing paper, having groups of really superior figures stamped upon it, in the manner of black and white chalk drawings upon a blue ground; one space, which had been intended for a looking-glass, was filled up in this style, with a scene from the loves of Cupid and Psyche, executed in a classical manner. You would never see such a thing in any English country inn, and I consider the French in these sort of decorations to possess far better taste than ourselves. As we passed through the cornfields on our way from Montreuil to Nampont, we were saluted by the *ramasseurs* (gleaners), with a bouquet or two, formed of wheat, platted in a neat and ingenious way, which they threw into the carriage, begging a sous in return, which we bestowed with much good will! Some children also began to sing and dance on the pathway by the road side, and I was surprised by observing that the tune was that of a quadrille, and that the steps were correct. I plainly recognized the *en avant* and the *rigadon*. Did this nation come into the world under the influence of a dancing star? I should say yes.

When the horses were changed at Nampont we disturbed the postillion at his dinner, who made his appearance devouring an indescribable something, which we afterwards discovered to be an *omelette aux herbes*: he deposited this occasionally on the saddle, while adjusting his harness.

The ricks of corn and hay here are constructed rather in a slovenly manner: the French farmers seem to have no idea of the neat method of the English, in this respect.

The road now led us by the celebrated Forest of Crecy, and the image of our gallant Black Prince rose vividly before my mind's eye. At Bernay we entered another peasant's cottage, where we (for the first time since our landing in this country) beheld real and positive beauty. Two lovely girls with clear brown skins (through which glowed a pure and animated carnation), long, dark blue eyes, black fringed lashes, and oval faces, came out with their mother, (a hale, well-looking country woman), and a younger sister of six years old, whose infantine charms were full as great in their way. I asked if the latter was the *cadette* of the family? Upon which the rural dame, with infinite good humour and readiness, corrected what she termed my mistaken appellation, by informing me that it was only the second child which they called the *cadet* or *cadette*¹: the youngest was *le dernier*, or *la derniere*. We had much pleasure in remarking this beautiful trio, and the mother seemed not a little gratified at our evident admiration of her progeny.

The face of the country here again changed for the worse, relapsing into the same flat and monotonous appearance as at first, and it continued thus until within a mile of Abbeville, which is a very fine old town, with a cathedral dedicated to Saint

¹ I had reason, however, afterwards to doubt the accuracy of the rural dame's assertion.

Villefrond. The architecture is very striking, and the interior replete with the usual ornaments of superstition and idolatry: it was built by the English. My companions visited it, while I was resting quietly at the hotel, and saw several precious relics of saints departed. They found three very young devotees there, before a *Salvator Mundi*, who were much too merry to be very religious! I however met with quite an affecting spectacle when I went in my turn. Two poor *paysannes*, in the usual picturesque costume, were prostrate before the image of a dead Christ supported by the Virgin. They were praying with an expression of much earnest and sorrowful devotion: one of them had a sick child in her arms, for whom she appeared to invoke the divine compassion: poor little thing, the impression of approaching death was stamped upon its pale face, as it lay motionless, hardly seeming to breathe. The group struck my imagination so forcibly, that I afterwards attempted to sketch it from memory. Surely this religion, with all its faults, is very consolatory; and the faith and piety of these poor women must be confessed to be respectable and praiseworthy, however mingled with the alloy of superstition and ignorance: Calvin himself might have thought as I did, had he seen them.

It was market-day at Abbeville the morning after our arrival, and we were much amused with the various costumes and faces assembled there. We did not, however, see one pretty woman during the whole of our stay, which was two nights and a day. We went one evening to the theatre, and observed the same dearth

of beauty among the audience, which chiefly consisted of *petites bourgeoises*, and officers of the national guards. This theatre is a very inferior one, and full of bad smells. We were assured by our hostess that the company (from Amiens) was very good, and that the piece they were to act (*Les Templiers*) was thought highly of. We all found it extremely difficult to follow the actors, owing to their unnatural declamatory tones, and the mouthing manner of pronouncing their words: this I believe, however, is universally the case, even with the first tragedians at Paris, *Talma* not excepted. How brightly do nature's favourite children, *O'Neil* and *Kean*, shine in comparison!

The inn at Abbeville, in which we took up our quarters (l'hôtel de l'Europe), is most excellent: it is very large and roomy, and must once have been a handsome chateau. There is a delightful garden, which belonged formerly to a convent adjacent: the high walls covered with a profusion of delicious fruit. The trees in other parts of the garden also were bending beneath the weight of the apples and pears, plums, &c. Myrtles and rododendrons (the latter very large and fine) were placed here and there in tubs; and the fig-tree and vine overshadowed our bed-room windows, which looked upon this agreeable scene: the grapes were nearly ripe. The furniture of our bed-rooms was in a very superior style, though I have seen the same sort of things even in the most shabby looking little inns throughout France. Marble must be very common, and of a reasonable price, for we met with it every where, in chimney-pieces, slabs, tables, the tops of drawers, &c.

The little washing stand, in our room at Abbeville, was of fine carved mahogany, in the form of an antique altar or tripod; and the bason and ewer, of an equally pure and classic form, were of fine French porcelain.

As I have a great passion for seeing the manners of all ranks of people, I went down into a little room next the kitchen, to chat with the hostess, while she was shelling some *haricots blancs* for dinner. I found this lady very communicative and civil; and I won her heart I believe, by taking some notice of her daughter, about six years old (her farewell performance in the maternal line), a pretty, gentle, timid little creature, who was busily occupied in putting her doll to bed in a cradle. Several peasants came into the inn-yard as I sat on a bench there: I observed that all the women wore large crosses, of clumsy workmanship, chiefly of white crystal, or glass, and coloured ear-rings, but not so long as those at Calais. We went into a little jeweller's shop, and bought a couple of the silver rings, with curious ornaments, which the peasants usually wear; their sentimental devices were very amusing.

Leaving Abbeville, we saw the common people employed in making ropes by the road-side, and remarked several large fields of hemp, and one or two of flax: the hemp, when cut, is piled up in sheaves, like corn. The country here is verdant, and rather woody: it lies low, and the river Somme winds through it, whose course may be plainly traced to a great distance by the willows which grow upon its banks, reminding me of parts of Berkshire. I

ought not to omit mentioning the profusion of apple-trees which grow by the road-side, almost all the way to Paris: the trees were absolutely sinking beneath the weight of the fruit, and one or two of them had quite given way, and lay prostrate, training their rosy burthen in the dust. I am almost ashamed to say that my appetite was so much stronger than my honesty, that I could not be satisfied without tasting them; when I discovered that these fair apples were like those mentioned in the Scriptures, bright and tempting to the eye, but bitter as ashes within! In short, they were not eatable, but entirely of the cider kind, which, as every body knows, are good for nothing in a natural state. There are quantities, however, of eating apples besides, in every cottage garden; and the favourite food of the peasant children appears to be coarse, brown, heavy bread, with these roasted and spread upon it, instead of butter. We saw large piles of roasted apples in the market at Abbeville for this purpose.

The country near Airaines again becomes tiresome, from its barren sameness. Passing a little public house, we observed the following somewhat selfish inscription over the door: "Messieurs! nous sommes quatre hussards, et nous disons, que pour conserver nos amis, il ne faut pas faire de credit." The weather was invariably delightful: a bright sun, with a refreshing cool breeze, and an elasticity and lightness in the air, gave animation and cheerfulness to us all. The sky was generally of a cloudless azure, and the nights almost as light and as free from damps as the days: I never beheld the moon in greater majesty.

Airaines is an uninteresting little town, not worth mentioning. Our postillion here was a most ruffian-like, cut-throat looking creature, all over dirt, and having a true jacobinical air. He cast several glances full of sullenness and malignity at my companions; so much so, that I felt very thankful we were in the cheerful haunts of men, and not in the solitary Alps, or the black forests of Germany, with such a conductor.

We dined at Granvilliers, where we were waited upon by a little girl of thirteen, fair and lively enough, with an English bloom. She spoke our language remarkably well, although she had only been six months *en pension* at Amiens, in order to acquire it! Her instructress was a French woman, which is singular, for she seemed to have given her little pupil a perfect knowledge of our idiom, and an excellent accent.

From Granvilliers to Marseille, the country rapidly improves in beauty. Just beyond the latter place we remarked a very fine old chateau, embosomed in extensive woods: it must formerly have belonged to some of the rich noblesse, and perhaps does so still. Near Marseille, vineyards appeared for the first time. We now approached the town of Beauvais, which had a very pretty effect, surrounded by woods, with the cathedral standing proudly conspicuous over all. It just now occurs to me to mention (though not immediately *à-propos* to Beauvais), that the houses, in most of the French towns and villages we have yet seen, are numbered, and in a singular method; for the several streets are not allowed their numbers, separately reckoned, but they go on

counting from the first house in the place to the last, so that it sometimes happens you might be directed to call upon a friend at number 1000, or 2000, and so on. In Paris they have another peculiarity, for the even numbers, such as 2, 4, 6, 8, &c. are all on one side of the street, and the odd ones, 7, 9, 11, &c. on the other.

Beauvais is a filthy town; the streets narrow and dark, and the houses very ordinary. The diversity of intolerable smells here nearly overset me, and made me wish almost to lose the power of my olfactory nerves. The inn was miserable, dirty, inconvenient, badly attended, and noisy. The only good things we met with were beds; indeed we have been fortunate in that respect every where, and the linen throughout France is excellent and plentiful.

We had (with some difficulty) prevailed upon the awkward *Maritornes* of a *fille de chambre* to set a tea-board before us in the little chair-lumbered closet dignified by the name of a *salle a manger*, and into which three or four doors were perpetually opened *sans ceremonie*, when our Swiss travelling valet, Christian, came in to tell us of the hard fate of an English family who were just arrived, and whose fatigue obliged them to sleep here; but as the sitting-rooms were all occupied, they were under the necessity of taking their tea in the kitchen, which did not, alas! boast the cheerful and clean appearance of the cottage kitchens I have formerly described. Common politeness, therefore, laid us under the necessity of sending an invitation to these unfortunates, to share our sitting-room, and join us at our tea. Accordingly, in came two ladies; one a fat, comely,

masculine dame, of a certain age; the other lean, tall, plain, and some few years younger. In a few minutes they were joined by a large, gruff, sour-looking old gentleman (the husband of the elder lady), who, without attempting any salutation or apology to us, began to express his dissatisfaction at finding tea going forward, 'when you know (said he) I never drink any.' He then settled himself at a small table, and ordered a *pâté* for his supper. The style of the ladies may easily be guessed by the sort of language in which they described every thing they had seen. The younger, mentioning a tempestuous passage which they had encountered, from Dover to Boulogne, told us that the air smelt quite *sulphurus*, and the lightning *tizzed* in the water very frightfully. The old gentleman grumbled himself by degrees into conversation, and we soon discovered that he was a genuine Squire Sullen, and that his companions were fully aware of it. These poor people seemed to dislike almost all they had met with in France; persons, places, travelling, &c. They beheld every thing *en noir*, and appeared to make mountains of mole-hills. Peace be with them! and a speedy release from each other's society.

We went (although the day was sinking into twilight) to view the magnificent cathedral, which for beauty of architecture I have seldom seen equalled. It is not finished. The different chapels of the saints, and the high altar, were very striking, seen through the solemn gloom of the fine old stained glass windows. Lights were burning before the shrine of one single

saint, the patron of the town; they twinkled dimly through the Gothic pillars and tracery, and had a highly picturesque and singular effect². Many peasants were kneeling round the altar at this shrine, and the old woman (our guide) informed us they were praying for rain, now the harvest was got safely in: we asked her if she thought the saint would grant their prayers, and she replied she had no doubt but that he would. Prostrate on the steps of the altars, in the different small chapels of this cathedral, half lost in shadow, were several other devotees, who had come there for the purpose of confessing themselves previous to the great and solemn festival of the *assomption de la Sainte Vierge*, which was to take place on the morrow. Altogether the spectacle was interesting and imposing, nor could I find any disposition in my heart to ridicule a religion which seemed to be carried on with so much sacred solemnity, and in so awe inspiring a temple. Certainly the absence of pews in the body of a place of public worship is a great advantage, both in a religious and a picturesque point of view. There is something soothing and elevating to the imagination in the idea of so grand a building being open equally, and at all times, to the noble and the peasant, who, it might easily happen, may be seen side by side kneeling on the same steps of the magnificent altar, wrapt in devout adoration of that Being, in whose sight all men are equal. In my opinion (and I have ever since I can remember thought the same) a Gothic cathedral is the

² The principal beauty of this cathedral is the choir, and it is also famous for Gobelin tapestry.

most appropriate style of building for a place dedicated to the worship of the Almighty, nor can I look upon the magnificent style in which the Roman catholics adorn their altars, and array their officiating priests, without some feelings of approbation and reverence.

We were right glad to quit Beauvais early the next morning; and, as we advanced towards Beaumont, were delighted with the beauty of its environs. The river Seine has a fine appearance here, although vastly inferior to our Thames; and we remarked a great number of chateaus rising among the woods, on every side: many of them, with their parks and domains, were really superb. Some peasants here attempted to impose upon us as foreigners, in a very disgusting manner, asking a franc for a couple of greengages, and three sous a-piece for pears, which they offered at the windows of our carriage. Our servant was very indignant at their impudence, and sent them off in a hurry, saying, "Dey ought to be shamed of demselves." Upon entering Beaumont, we met the population of the place returning from mass, in their *costumes des fêtes*. Nothing can well be more sweetly pretty, and delicately neat, than the dress of the women! snowy caps, with deep lace or thin *linon* borders plaited, white cotton gowns and stockings, gay coloured cotton handkerchiefs crossed smartly over the bosom so as to display the shape to advantage, a large gold cross suspended from the neck by a black narrow riband, or gold chain, with ear-rings, and pin for the forehead of the same material. Some few wore a crimson apron and bib, over the white gown, and

others crimson gowns, with aprons of a bright antique sort of blue – a mixture of colours which is for ever to be remarked in the paintings of the old masters, and which has a singularly becoming effect upon the skin. A little worked muslin *fischu*, with a vandyke bordering, is sometimes added, as a finish to the dress, worn over all.

We now came to St. Denis, and at length beheld Paris! We did not pass the heights of Montmartre, &c. without emotion, when we recollected the memorable contest which so lately took place there between the veteran Blucher and the French! The country in the immediate vicinity of Paris is flat and ugly; but we thought not of nature upon entering this celebrated work and wonder of art. Covered with dust, and followed by the eyes of the multitude, who easily discovered our English physiognomies, we drove up to several hotels, at every one of which we were refused admittance for want of room to accommodate us, there being at this moment no less than thirty thousand English at Paris. At last, we were comfortably housed at the *hotel Rivoli* (near the *jardins des Tuileries*), one of the best in the city, where we found abundant civility and attention, and every convenience.

Why should I attempt to describe Paris? It has already and so often been done by abler pens than mine, that the very school girl in a country town in England is perfectly acquainted with all its lions; I shall only say, that we spent so short a time there, and I was so afraid of exhausting my stock of strength, which was fully wanted for the journey to Geneva, &c. that I did not even

attempt to see every thing that might have been seen.

The extreme height of the houses, and narrowness of the streets, together with the inconceivable variety of horrible smells in all parts of the town, and the want of pavements for pedestrians, made an extremely unpleasant impression upon me. The gaiety and fancy displayed in the signs over the shops (every one of which has an emblematic device peculiar to itself) were very striking, however, as well as their markets, where Pomona seemed to have lavished the choicest treasures of her horn: indeed I never beheld such a profusion of exquisite fruits and vegetables, the cheapness of which astonished us natives of a more niggard clime not a little. The quantities of cooling and refreshing beverages, sold in every corner of the streets, were also quite a novel thing to us, as well as the circumstance of all the world sitting on hired chairs out of doors, sipping lemonade, or eating ices.

I did not remark, I must confess, that appearance of excessive animation and enjoyment, which I had been led to expect among the Parisians; on the contrary, I saw full as many grave faces as in *notre triste pays*, as they call it. The Palais Royal I thought a very amusing place; and the fountain in the midst is most beautiful and refreshing, throwing up a stream of water, which in its descent resembles a weeping willow. The fountain of the Lions, also, is still superior, and I think them among the most agreeable objects in Paris. The Boulevards are an airy, cheerful situation, and the moving scene constantly going on there put me in mind of a

perpetual fair.

The gentlemen went to the Opera Françoise, where the splendour of the ballet, and the superiority of the dancing, struck them with astonishment and admiration. They visited Tivoli (which did not appear to them to be so good a thing of the sort as our Vauxhall); and I went one evening to the *Beaujon*, and *les Montaignes Russes*, in *les Champs Elysées*. Both the latter, however, were shut; that is, no sliding in the cars was going on, for there had been so many fatal accidents lately, that the rage for this amusement was over. I did not like *les Champs Elysées* so well as our Kensington Gardens; the want of turf was unpardonable in our English eyes. *La place de Louis XV.*, opposite the Tuileries, where the unfortunate Louis XVI. was executed, is very superb in itself, as well as interesting from its melancholy legends. I was rather disappointed in *les jardins des Tuileries*, admiring the fine orange-trees in tubs there more than the gardens themselves. We saw the remains of that horrible monument of cruelty, injustice, and despotism, the Bastile; and drove past the entrance to the celebrated *Jardin des plantes*, which we did not enter, as I had already seen a very fine botanical collection at Kew, and a much superior set of wild beasts at Exeter Change.

To the Louvre, however, even in its present state of diminished splendour, no words of mine can do justice; its superb gallery far exceeded even my expectations, which had been highly excited by all I had ever heard upon the subject: to see the paintings properly, one ought to go there every day for a week. We had

only time particularly to distinguish several landscapes of Claude Lorraine, beautiful beyond all idea, and the set of historical pictures illustrative of the life of *Henri quatre*, by Rubens: I was much struck with the fine countenance and person of the gallant monarch. A Saint Sebastian also, by Guido, rivetted my delighted attention. A friend of ours has painted an exquisite miniature copy of it, with which I remember being greatly struck in England, but it was not until I had seen the original that I was fully aware of its extraordinary merit. The gallery itself is a most magnificent thing; it really is quite a long fatiguing walk from one end of it to the other; and the crowds of people of all ranks who are constantly to be met with there render it altogether one of the most curious and interesting spectacles in Europe.

I was much amused with the shops, particularly the confectioners; the ingenious and endless devices into which they form their delicious bon bons and dried fruits are really surprising, and we purchased specimens of their different fancies, to astonish our English friends upon our return home. The *vendeurs des tisannes* (cooling beverages, something like *eau de groseilles*, or lemonade), going about with their stock in trade strapped to their backs like walking tea-urns, were curious figures. The vessel which holds the *tisanne* is not unlike a long violin case in shape, with a spout to it; it finishes at the top like a Chinese pagoda, and is sometimes covered with little jingling bells, and hung round with pretty silver mugs. The dress of the *petites bourgeoises* is quite distinct from that of every other rank

of person; it is rather smart and neat than otherwise, but not at all picturesque.

I do not remember to have heard a single note of agreeable music while I was in Paris, except that which regaled our ears in an opposite hotel (belonging to Count S.) the second evening of our arrival. This nobleman (of an Irish family, but now a naturalized Frenchman) gave a grand dinner (in a temporary banqueting-room, built out upon the leads of the house *à la troisième étage*) to the English; and, during the entertainment, his band of musicians played several pieces, amongst others the celebrated national air, still dear to the French, of *Vive Henri quatre*; they then attempted God save the King, but made a dreadful business of it, which I attribute less to professional ignorance than to the impossibility of their being able to feel it, or to enter into the spirit of it *con amore*! The ballad singers (at least all of them that we had an opportunity of hearing) have harsh wiry voices and nasal tones; the latter circumstance, however, is almost inseparable from their language. I could not but be diverted with the *espièglerie* of the *fille de chambre* who attended me at the hotel de Rivoli: she was ugly, but shrewd, and very active and civil. I asked her if Count S. was a young man; upon which she hopped round the room in the most ridiculous manner possible, imitating the action of a decrepit old person. *Jeune!* (said she) *oh mon Dieu, que non! c'est un vieux Monsieur qui va toujours comme cela!* I inquired if she knew why he gave this fête. *Oh, je n'en sais rien, mais, le pauvre homme, il n'a que tres peu*

de temps encore à restre dans ce monde ci, et je crois qu'il aime à faire parler de lui, avant de partir pour l'autre.

As to the personal charms of the women here, they appeared to me to be very mediocre; we remarked three or four pretty faces, but not one that had any claim to superior beauty. The people were all civil to us, except one woman, who kept a little shop for *bijouterie* in *le Palais Royal*: nothing could be more pert and sulky than her language and manner; she looked as if she hated us and our nation altogether. We heard reports from other English people residing here, that it was very common for the lower orders of French to treat us with marked incivility and dislike; indeed that they should do so, under the present circumstances, ought not to be wondered at. The bronze statue of *Henri quatre* was erecting during our stay; we passed by the spot (close to the *Pont Neuf*), and beheld a mob assembled around it, with *gens d'armes* on duty: we did not see the statue itself, it being at that moment covered with a purple mantle, studded with golden *fleurs de lis*. The various political parties speak differently of this affair: some say the brass of the statue will soon be converted into mortars, and others, that it is built upon a rock, and will stand for ever! The bridges appeared to us all vastly inferior to ours in London; that of Waterloo, in the Strand, makes them shrink into utter insignificance in comparison! but the palaces and public buildings are, on the contrary, infinitely finer than our own. Nothing can be more magnificent, or in a more noble taste! I was very much amused by the novelty (totally

unknown to ladies in England) of dining at a *restaurateur's*. Curiosity induced me to accompany Mr. Baillie, and our friend, to *Véry's*, and the next day to *Beauvilliers'*, two of the most distinguished in the profession in Paris; and the excellence of the cookery almost awakened (or rather I should say created) in me a spirit of *gourmandise*. There were a few other ladies present, which was a sort of sanction for me. A Russian or Prussian officer (by his appearance) sat at one of the little tables next to us, at *Beauvilliers'*, and very nearly made me sick by the sight of his long, thick, greasy moustaches, and his disgusting habit of spitting every instant upon the floor. I observed that the French people eat their vegetables (always dressed with white sauce) after the meat, &c. and as a sort of dessert or *bonne bouche* even after they have finished their sweet dishes: to us this seems an odd custom. We took our coffee and liqueurs at a *Café* near the Tuileries, and then, while the gentlemen went to the opera, I returned to the hotel, to go on with my journal.

One morning we devoted to an expedition to the interesting cemetery of *Père de la Chaise*, the celebrated confessor of Louis quatorze. The house in which he resided stands in the midst, and is preserved as a sacred ruin. Nothing can be more striking, and affecting to the imagination, than this place of burial; it is of considerable extent, with a well managed relief of shade and inequality of ground. The tombs and graves are kept in the highest order and repair, and almost all of them are planted with shrubs and fragrant flowers, mingled with the

mournful cypress and yew: the acacia tree also is planted here in great abundance, and the wild vine trails its broad leaves and graceful clusters over many of the monuments. We remarked several beautiful tombs; amongst others, a light Gothic temple, which contains the mouldering remains of Abelard and Eloise, brought from the former place of their interment to the present appropriate and lovely situation: their statues lie side by side carved in stone, in their religious habits, their heads resting on cushions, and his feet upon a dog. All this did him too much honour; as he was the most selfish tyrannical lover in the world, and quite unworthy, in my opinion, of the attachment of the unfortunate Eloise. Several of the inscriptions on humbler tombs were affecting from their brevity and simplicity; upon that of a man in the prime of life we read the following short sentence: *A la memoire de mon meilleur ami—c'étoit mon frere!* On another, *Ci git P – N – : son epouse perd en lui le plus tendre de ses amis, et ses enfans un modele de vertu.* And upon one raised by its parents to the memory of a child, *ci git notre fils cheri*; a little crown of artificial orange blossoms, half blown, was in a glass-case at his head. We observed many garlands of fresh and sweet flowers, hung upon the graves; every thing marked the existence of tender remembrance and regret: it appears to me as if in this place, alone, the dead were never forgotten. I ought, however, to make honourable mention of a similar custom in Wales. A woman was kneeling upon one of the tombs (which was overgrown by fragrant shrubs), weeping bitterly, and

I felt a great inclination to bear her company: the last roses of summer were still lingering here, and she was gathering one as we passed. There is a remarkably fine view of Paris from the mount on which the house of *Père de la Chaise* stands. I said it was preserved as a sacred ruin, but I, as a protestant, could not look with much veneration upon it, as the residence of the instigator of the revocation of the edict of Nantes; that foul stain upon the character, and disgrace to the understanding of *le grand Louis*, which will ever be remembered with indignation by every candid and liberal Christian. But Protestantism has likewise its bigots, almost as remorseless, and equally blind! witness some sentiments discovered in the discourses of furious Calvin, and John Knox; witness the actions of Cromwell, and his fanatical roundheads; witness (alas! in our own days), the uncharitable and horribly presumptuous principles and tenets of the Methodists and Saints! But this is another digression: I return to the view of Paris. It is, as I said before, extremely fine; you have a bird's eye prospect of the whole city, with the proud towers of Notre Dame eminently conspicuous, and the gilded dome of *l'hôpital des Invalides*, glittering in the sun. A word (only one word) relative to the French custom of gilding so much and so gaudily; it quite spoils the dignified effect of some of their noblest works of architecture, and puts one in mind of a child who prefers the showy ostentation of gold leaf upon his gingerbread to the more wholesome taste of its own plain and unornamented excellence. I have met with English people, however, who are vastly delighted

with this false style of decoration.

Before I take leave of Paris, I ought in justice to acknowledge that I have not had an opportunity of enjoying its chief and proudest attraction; I mean its best society. Our time did not allow of any intercourse of this nature, and I regretted it much, because I have always heard (and from those most capable of judging rightly) that the tone of conversation in the upper circles here is remarkably attractive and delightful; and that lovers of good taste, high breeding, social enjoyment, and literary pursuits, would find themselves in Paris *en pays de connoissance*. Deprived of this gratification, we felt (at least Mr. B. and myself) no sort of reluctance or regret when the day of our departure arrived: for our friend Mr. W. I will not so confidently answer; he had been in Paris twice before, had met with many agreeable people there, and consequently felt more at home among them.

As for me in particular, I can only say that Paris made no great impression upon my fancy, and none at all upon my feelings; (always excepting the *Louvre*, the *cimetiere* of *Père de la Chaise*, and one or two other interesting spectacles): and that I was, as I before observed, so overpowered by its inconceivably filthy effluvia, and the wretched inconvenience of its streets (both for walking and going in a carriage), that I rather felt an exhilaration of spirits than otherwise when we finally bade it adieu.

On the morning of our departure it rained a good deal, and our postillion had taken care to fence himself against the weather; for he had disguised himself in a long shaggy dress of goats' skins,

bearing a very accurate resemblance to the prints of Robinson Crusoe. We observed this done by others, more than once. The horses had little bells fastened to their harness; which practice is very common, we were told, both in France and Italy. All the roads in the former, and most of them in the latter country, are good; wide, smooth, and generally paved in the middle, which has a noisy effect, but it renders the draught for horses much easier than the road, in wet weather, or when they work in very heavy carriages. Avenues are general; they improve the face of the country when seen at a distance, but are monotonous and tiresome in themselves. I used formerly to admire roads leading through avenues, but it is possible to have too much of this. Between Villejuif and Fromenteau we observed a pillar on the left with the following chivalrous inscription; *Dieu, le Roi, les Dames!* I was going to rejoice in this apparent proof of the gallant spirit of the nation, but I recollected the celebrated words of Burke, in his letter upon the French revolution, and sighed as I involuntarily repeated, "The age of chivalry is no more."

Just beyond Fromenteau, the country is really fine: woods, villages, chateaus were in abundance, and the river Seine appeared to much advantage; we remarked two stone fountains, one on each side of the road, with the *fleurs de lis* engraved upon them, built by Louis XV. The French mile-stones here have quite a classical air, resembling broken columns; they are not properly mile-stones, but serve to mark the half leagues.

At Essone, where we changed horses, the postillion came out

in a white night-cap (or rather a cap which once had boasted that title of purity), loose blue trowsers reaching scantily below the knee, and sans shoes or stockings of any sort: upon seeing that his services were wanted, he threw on an old japan hat, jumped into his jack boots, and clawing up the reins, drove off with an air of as much importance and self satisfaction as the smartest-clad post-boy on the Epsom road during the race week.

In the stubble fields near Fontainbleau, we observed great quantities of partridges. The shepherds here sleep in little moveable houses or huts, upon wheels, somewhat inferior to a good English dog-kennel. At Chailly, we saw the Virgin Mary looking out of a round hole in the wall, and not at all more dignified in her appearance than the well-known hero of Coventry. We now exchanged our driver for a spirited old gentleman, who frolicked along beneath the burthen of threescore or more, seeming to bid defiance to the whole collection of pains and HH's (vide Kemble's classical pronunciation). Perhaps, reader, I do not make my meaning perfectly clear; but that does not signify, the first authors write in this way; and besides, I know what I mean myself, which is not always the case even with them. We remarked in the course of our journey a great number of similar merry Nestors, and found, almost invariably, that they drove us faster, better, and in a superior style altogether to their younger competitors. I suppose they have a sort of pride in thus displaying their activity, which a middle-aged man does not feel.

We entered the superb forest of Fontainebleau just as the day began to decline; the sombre gloom and peculiar smell of the leaves were very agreeable. I have ever loved forest scenery, and would prefer a constant residence in its vicinity to that of mountain, lake, or plain: the trees here were chiefly beech, mixed with silver poplars, birch, and a few oaks. How was it possible to thread these mazes without thinking of *Henri quatre*, and his famous hunting adventure in the miller's hut? I almost expected to see the stately shade of the noble monarch start from each shadowy dell. Methought the sullen, yet faithful Sully, emerged from the dark glades on the opposite side, seeking in vain for the benighted sovereign; and venting his affectionate inquietudes in the language of apparent severity and ill humour. I thought – but it does not matter what more I thought, in which opinion I dare say my reader will fully agree with me. We arrived at our inn (*la Galère*), and well did it deserve that name, for never poor slave chained to the bench and oar suffered more severely from the merciless lash of his task-master than I did from the tormenting tyranny of the bugs, which swarmed in this detestable place. There was no sitting-room immediately ready for our reception, so we sat down in the old, lofty, smoke-stained kitchen, and amused ourselves with observing the progress of our supper, in company with a very sociable little dog, (who took a great fancy to me,) and *Monsieur le Chef*, an appropriate name, invariably given to the cook in most parts of the Continent.

When we retired to rest for the night, no words can express

the disgust which assailed us: finding it impossible to remain in bed, I was obliged to lie in the middle of the room, upon six hard, worm-eaten, wooden chairs, whose ruthless angles ran into my wearied frame, and rendered every bone sore before morning; but even this did not save me, for the vermin ascended by the legs of the chairs, and really almost eat me up, as the rats did Southey's Bishop Hatto³. My imagination for several days after this adventure was so deeply saturated with their nauseous idea, that every object brought them in some way or other before me.

Upon quitting Fontainebleau, we first observed the *sabots* (or wooden shoes) worn by the peasantry; they are of enormous size, and must, I should think, be very heavy and inconvenient to the wearer. A piece of sheep-skin, with the woolly side inwards, is often slipt between the sabot and the foot, to prevent the former from excoriating the instep.

At Moret, a dirty little town, we saw a whole row of women washing linen in the river; they were in a kneeling position, and beat the clothes with a wooden mallet; they ought all to be provided with husbands from among the linen drapers, as they are such admirable helps to the trade. We met several donkeys here, carrying rushes, piled up like moving houses, so high, that only the heads and hoofs of the animals were visible. Vast tracts of land, covered with vineyards, extended on every side, and the eternal straight road, where one could see for three or four miles the track one was to follow, began to be excessively tedious

³ Vide Southey's Miscellaneous Poems.

and wearing to the spirits: how different from the winding, undulating, graceful roads in England!

Country near Pont sur Yonne open, bald, and monotonous. The French vineyards when seen closely have a formal effect, being planted in stiff rows, like scarlet runners in a kitchen garden, but they much enrich the landscape at a distance. The river Yonne is a pretty little stream, but the nymphs on its banks are not at all picturesque in their costume, which is by no means particularly marked, being dirty and unbecoming, and very much (I am ashamed to say) in the style of our common countrywomen about Brentford, Hammersmith, &c.

Sens is an ancient town: it has a handsome cathedral and gateway. The bread made here (as well as in most parts of France, except partially in Paris) is mixed with leaven instead of yeast, and is sour and disagreeable in consequence. We remarked many gardens richly cultivated, full of choice vegetables and fruit, by the side of the highroad, without the smallest inclosure; a proof, I should imagine, of the honesty of the country people. There are several English families resident here, as the environs are very pretty, and the town itself an agreeable one. We stopped to take our breakfast at *la Poste*, and bought excellent grapes for fourpence a pound English money. The late Dauphin, father of the present king, is buried in the cathedral of this place, and the duke and duchess d'Angouleme, &c. come once a year to pray for his soul's repose.

Pursuing our route, we met many Burgundy waggons, loaded

with wine; the horses were ornamented with enormous collars of sheep-skin, dyed of a bright blue colour: the *tout ensemble* had a picturesque appearance, and the waggons were the first we had seen in France which had four wheels, the weight being usually balanced between a pair. A sudden storm of rain now coming on, had a beautiful effect; the retreating sunbeams played in catching lights (to use the expression of an artist) upon the abrupt points of the distant hills, and partially illuminated their soft and verdant tapestry of vines. We particularly enjoyed it after the long season of heat and drought. Here are whole groves of walnut-trees, beneath which we met a group of five women belonging to the vineyards; they were every one handsome, with ruddy, wholesome, yet sun-burnt complexions, lively smiles, and long bright dark eyes and shadowy lashes.

Entered Villeneuve sur Yonne; saw loads of charcoal on the river, going to replenish the kitchens of many a *Parisian Heliogabalus*! this is also an ancient town, with two curious old gateways, but it appeared very dull. I admired some fine hedges of acacia, and four pretty, sleek, grey donkeys, who were drawing the plough. The road is winding here, like those of our own country, for which we were solely indebted to the turns of the river, whose course it accompanied.

Joigny. A handsome stone bridge seems its most remarkable ornament: the river is broad and fine, flowing through steep banks fringed with wood. We dined and slept at *les Cinq Mineurs*, and this in the same room. A most obliging, intelligent, young

woman waited upon us, whose name was *Veronique*. After dinner we walked on the promenade by the side of the river, and saw the barracks, &c. My friends met with a little adventure in their rambles, while I was resting myself at the inn. Seeing a pretty little boy and his sister at play near the chateau, (belonging to the ancient counts of Joigny,) they entered into conversation with them, upon which they were joined by the father of the children, a French country gentleman, who resided in a small house opposite the chateau: he insisted upon their coming in with him, and as the dinner was ready, much wished to tempt them to partake the meal: this they declined, and their new acquaintance proceeded to shew them his collection of pictures, *de très bons morceaux*, as he called them, but which did not rank quite so high in the estimation of his visitors. He unintentionally displayed, however, a much more pleasing possession; I mean that of an amiable and grateful disposition, for he said in the course of conversation, that he was always on the watch for an opportunity of shewing hospitality and attention to the English, as some little return for the kindness he had experienced from their nation, during a visit he had formerly made to his brother in Dorsetshire; this brother was one of the monks of the order of *La Trappe*, a small number of whom had been collected together, and who lived, in their former habits of monastic gloom and austerity, at Lulworth castle in that county, under the protection of an English catholic (Mr. Weld), during the French revolution. He related some interesting anecdotes of this severe establishment;

in particular, that of an Austrian general of high rank, who after enrolling himself a member of the community, and living some years in the practice of incredible hardships and privations, at length permitted his tongue to reveal his name and family, about ten minutes previous to his dissolution; faithful to the vow which is common to them all, of not speaking until the moment of death. I was not aware that such an institution existed in England, till this French gentleman related the circumstance, and it strengthened the sensations of mixed horror and pity, which I have ever felt for the victims of fanaticism, in every shape and in every degree. How incredible does it appear, (in the judgment of reasonable beings) that mortals should imagine the benevolent Author of Nature can possibly take pleasure in a mode of worship which restricts his creatures from the enjoyment of those comforts and innocent pleasures with which life abounds, and for which he has so peculiarly adapted their faculties! Shall all created beings express their sense of existence in bursts of involuntary cheerfulness and hilarity of spirit, and man alone offer up his adorations with a brow of gloom, and a heart withered by slavish sensations of fear and alarm? but enough upon so sacred a subject.

On returning to their inn, the gentlemen met several teams of oxen, decorated with pretty high bonnets (*à la cauchoise*) made of straw: the natives here seem to take great pride and pleasure in the accoutrements of their cattle. An English family arrived at the *Cinq Mineurs* at the same time with ourselves; they were well

known in London as people of some consequence and property. Their sensations on passing through France were widely different from ours, as they described themselves to have been thoroughly disgusted with every body and every thing they saw; had met with nothing but cheating and imposition among the people; and had not been able to observe any pretty country, or interesting objects *en route*— yet they had gone over exactly the same ground that we had done. As they sometimes travelled all night, I conclude they slept the whole or greater part of the time; but there are more ways than one of going through the world with the eyes shut.

In the neighbourhood of Joigny, (on the other side of the town,) there is a great quantity of hemp grown; and all the trees are stripped up to the tops, like those in many parts of Berkshire, where the graceful is frequently sacrificed to the useful: they had a very ugly effect.

Approaching Auxerre, the cathedral looks handsome; there are three churches besides. The first view of Burgundy is not prepossessing; nothing but tame-looking hills, with casual patches of vines; the river, however, is a pretty object, and continues to bestow a little life upon the landscape. The same absence of costume continues. At Auxerre, we breakfasted at *l'hotel du Leopard*; the vines were trained over the house with some degree of taste, and took off from the air of forlorn discomfort which the foreign inns so frequently exhibit. I was rather surprised at being ushered into the same room with a fine haughty-looking peacock, a pea-hen, and their young brood; they

did not seem at all disconcerted at my entrance, but continued stalking gravely about, as if doing the honors of the apartment. The *salle à manger* was in a better *goût* (although not half so comfortable) than most of our English parlours; the walls were papered with graceful figures from stories of the pagan mythology and bold, spirited landscapes in the back ground, coloured in imitation of old bistre drawings; the crazy sopha and arm chair were covered with rich tapestry, of prodigiously fine colours, yet somewhat the worse for wear. This was our first Burgundy breakfast, and it evinced the luxuriance of the country, for it consisted (as a thing of course) of black and white grapes, melons, peaches, greengages, and pears, to which were added fresh eggs by the dozen, good *café au lait*, and creaming butter just from the churn, with the crucifix stamped upon it. At all French *déjeunés* they ask if you do not choose fruit, and at dinner it is invariably brought to table in the last course, with a slice of cheese as part of the dessert. Mr. Baillie was not well, and starved like Tantalus in the midst of plenty, which was very unlucky.

Bonaparte on his return from Elba occupied this apartment; and the postillion who drove us was one of those who rendered the same service to him: we had also a pair of the same horses which aided in conveying him on towards Paris. He passed two days here, waiting for his small army of five thousand men to come up with him, as his speed greatly outran theirs. He had six horses to his travelling carriage, and gave each postillion ten francs a piece; "*Ma foi!*" (said ours in relating the circumstance)

"*nous avons bien galoppé! quand on nous paye si bien, les chevaux ne se fatiguent jamais!*" There was some honesty as well as wit in this avowal.

Quitting Auxerre, we passed a large stone cistern, with a cross on the top; several loaded donkeys were drinking here, and some women washing clothes; it was altogether a picturesque group, and singular to an English eye. Vineyards, vineyards, vineyards! *toujours perdrix!* I was quite tired of them at last. The country, however, now became much more hilly, and we used the drag-chain, for the first time, between Saint Bris and Vermanton; these hills were richly covered with vines, and woods began to appear, in the form of thick dwarfish oak.

Vermanton. This place is famed for wood and wine. We saw the *paysannes* here in deep gipsy straw hats, the first we had beheld in France among this class of people; for even in Paris, the *petites bourgeoises*, as well as the countrywomen, all walk about in caps, or the French handkerchief tied carelessly round the head. The country from hence again changed much for the worse, barren hills extended for several miles, now and then covered with partial spots of vegetation.

Close to the town of Avalon, we remarked a range of hills, one of which is of great height, called Montmartre. We here bid adieu for some time to vineyards. Large extensive woods surround Avalon, from which the greater part of the fuel burnt in Paris is taken. Flocks of sheep were continually passing, numbers of black ones, and some goats always among them. There seemed

to be few pigs any where, and all of them were frightfully lean: "as fat as a pig" is a term of reproach for which I have ever entertained a particular aversion, but I am now convinced that these beasts are much more disgusting when deprived of their natural *embonpoint*. I fancy the French people make too good a use themselves of what we should call *the refuse of the kitchen*, to have any to spare for the necessities of these their fourfooted brethren. We now came into the neighbourhood of widely extended cornfields – fields I ought not to call them, for there are no inclosures. We saw an old woman at a cottage door, with a distaff in her hand; the first I had ever seen except in a picture. She was a withered, grim-looking crone, but not quite sublime enough for one of Gray's "fatal sisters." Scene the next, a pretty, green, tranquil glen, (where cattle were making the most of the unusually rich pasturage,) bounded by a steep bank, and copse wood; not unlike some spots in Surrey.

We drove on, through a shady wood, to Rouvray, passing on the road crowds of waggons drawn by oxen, loaded with empty wine casks, preparatory to the vintage, which was expected to be very fine this season: the waggoners almost all wore cocked hats, and we remarked that the oxen were yoked by the head. We met a *diligence* drawn by four mules, and observed many beautiful trees of mountain ash, with their bright clusters of scarlet berries, by the side of the highway.

Stopping for a few moments at la Roche en Berney, we joined a group of the most respectable *bourgeoisie*, (men and

women,) sitting with the hostess on a bench at her door. They all rose up to salute us, and the men stood *sans chapeau* as we passed, with an agreeable expression of civil good will upon every countenance. Some of the ladies had little French dogs under their arms. The country near this place is covered with wood, yet has notwithstanding a monotonous character; these woods however are worthy of remark, from their extent and duration, continuing on all sides without interruption for many miles.

We now arrived at Saulieu, where we supped and slept at *la Poste*. It was quite in the cottage style, which we all rather liked than not: we had a cheerful little wood fire at night (as the weather felt chilly), and sat round it talking of the adventures of the day, until the hour of repose. This town stands upon the highest ground in France; the snow was never entirely off the neighbouring woods during the whole of the last winter: vineyards will not flourish in so bleak a situation, and other fruits are very scarce. The hostess was a most loyal personage, for upon my observing a bust of *Henri quatre* over the chimney, and saying he was truly the father of his people, she exclaimed, *Oui, Madame! mais à present nous avons aussi des rois qui font le bonheur de leurs sujets*. The costume here still continues undecided, and devoid of taste. Two very pretty, modest, rustic lasses waited upon us, named Marie and Lodine. Lodine was a brunette, with an arch, dimpled, comical little face, (round as an apple, and equally glowing,) teeth white as snow, and regular

as a set of pearls; but I rather preferred the opposite style of Marie, who was slighter in her person, graver, and whose long dark eyes and penciled brows alone gave lustre and expression to an oval face, and a pale yet clear and fine grained skin: these eyes, however, were not so often illuminated by bright flashes of innocent gaiety as those of Lodine, but they made amends by the length and beauty of their soft black lashes. Lodine's admiration was prodigiously excited by my English ear-rings, and rings, &c. She took them up one by one to examine, and exclaimed frequently that she had never seen such beautiful things in her life. Poor little rustic! I hope no unprincipled traveller will ever take advantage of thy simplicity and love of finery, and persuade thee to exchange for toys of a similar description the precious jewels of innocence and good fame. Mr. W. went into the market the next morning, before either Mr. Baillie or myself were up, and remarked that almost every woman there was well looking; he also saw some really beautiful girls among them. There are two neat churches here. The swarms of beggars which assailed us at every town, in this part of the country, were positively quite annoying; their bold and sturdy importunity made me recollect, with regret, the sensitive delicacy of Sterne's poor "Monk," and wish that they were as easily repulsed! Had this been the case, I dare say we should have given them every *sous* in our possession; but, as it was, I never felt less difficulty in steeling my ears and my heart.

The face of nature seemed like a map, the road was upon such

elevated ground. But leaving Saulieu, our route was agreeably varied by a continual alternation of hill and dale; the foreground rocky, enlivened with purple heath and furze. We frequently made the remark, that we had not yet seen a single cottage which could be called pretty since we landed at Calais; and the lovely and picturesque hamlets of the Isle of Wight, the neighbourhood of the New Forest, and of parts of Surrey, returned upon my imagination in all their force. There are woods of dwarf oak near this place, beyond which we caught, for the first time during our tour, the view of a mountain in the horizon. We changed horses at Pierre Ecrite, where we met with a postillion who was a living image of Don Quixote. I, who am such an enthusiastic admirer of the latter, could willingly have given a double fee for the pleasure I took in contemplating his faithful resemblance; the loose shamoy leather doublet, brown beaver Spanish-looking flapped hat; long, black, greasy hair, hanging in strings about his scraggy neck and doleful visage; the wild, eager, prominent, dark eyes, &c. – all was complete! The French drivers differ in many particulars from ours; in one respect alone there is a wide line of demarcation. The former talk a good deal (*en route*) to their horses, while the latter confine themselves to the mute eloquence of the whip and spur.

The country now assumes a totally new character. The hills rise into the dignity of mountains, and are entirely barren, save in the immediate vicinity of a little valley or two which smiles between them, when their rough granite sides are clothed with

partial underwood; these valleys have a verdant and cultivated effect, from being well wooded, and also from the unusual practice of inclosing the fields with hedges. Indeed the whole scene for three or four miles before you come to Autun is bold, rich, and beautiful. We were told that the people here and in the South of France were (generally speaking) extremely well-disposed towards the Bourbon government, disliking the remembrance of Bonaparte.

Autun, an ugly town, yet most romantically situated at the foot of three mountains covered with superb woods. Here are some fine gateways of Corinthian architecture, baths, and a cathedral. We went to look at the latter, and saw several women there telling their beads, who cast an eye of curiosity upon us in the midst of their devotions, while their fingers and lips continued to move with great rapidity. I peeped into several vacant confessionals, which resembled little sentry-boxes, partitioned into two apartments, in one of which there is a seat for the priest, and in the other a grated aperture through which the penitent breathes his communications.

The tomb of the president Jennin and his wife is shewn here. It was, I believe, concealed during the fury of the revolution, in common with many similar and sacred curiosities. He was one of *Henri quatre's* ministers, and a man much esteemed by that sovereign. He cannot have a higher professional eulogium. The costume both of the president and his dame is quaint in the extreme, and the length of her waist is quite ridiculous. Our

inn (*la poste*) was comfortable and reasonable. For five francs a-head, they sent us up for dinner (I will for once say what we had for dinner) some capital soup *au ris*, a magnificent jack, a duck stewed with pickles, a fowl, white and delicate as those of Dorking, a ragout of sweetbreads in brown sauce, a large dish of craw-fish, potatoes drest *à la maître d'hotel*, Guyere cheese, and four baskets of fruit. The latter evinced the coldness of the climate here, for the peaches were diminutive, crude, and colourless, the grapes rather sour, and the cherries hard, tough, and not bigger than black currants.

Leaving Autun, we passed over a very steep granite mountain of that name, covered in the most luxuriant profusion with trees of every sort, but chiefly oak: the road wound round the sides till it reached nearly the summit of this mountain in graceful sweeps. It rained during our ascent, and the groups of women emerging at intervals from the woody recesses in the steeps above us, with their gay coloured cotton handkerchiefs held over their white caps, to shelter them from the scudding shower, looked highly picturesque. The male costume here becomes marked; it consists of a very large black hat, (with a low crown and an enormous breadth of brim,) round which is sometimes worn a string of red and white beads; a dark blue linen jacket and trowsers, coloured waistcoat, white shirt, with a square deep collar thrown open at the throat, and *sabots*. We could plainly hear the babbling of the brook which runs among these sylvan retreats. My husband gathered me some blackberries in the woods, and I longed to

accompany him in his rambles, instead of remaining in the carriage. Altogether it was the most romantic scene I had ever beheld, and my exclamations of admiration reaching the ears of the postillion, (who was easing his horses by walking by their side) he came up to the window, to ask me if I had ever seen such a beautiful thing in my own country? I assured him I had not, and he graciously added that he would shew me a very grand plain also in a few minutes. Our Swiss attendant, however, (Christian) did not seem to approve of all these commendations, and could not refrain from throwing out a hint, that we should see much finer things in *his* country. This mountain is covered with wild strawberries in the season. Bonaparte intended to have made a wider road through it, had not the Fates thought proper to cut short his plans when he least expected it. The view of the promised plain was fertile as that of Canaan; the glimpses of it caught occasionally through the openings of the rocks were charming. I liked the national pride of the postillion; applied thus to the beauties of nature, it had almost a character of refinement: he was a good-humoured, merry-looking, ugly fellow, who seemed as if he had never known a care in his life; but (the truth must be told) he was a great admirer of Bonaparte, and said he should live and die in the hope of his return. He had laid by his green jacket and badge in his box, thinking it not impossible that he might want to wear it again one day; at all events he trusted to see the young son upon the throne, and spoke of him with much affectionate emotion. Bonaparte had

been driven by this man (upon his flight from Elba,) and this puts me in mind, that I omitted to mention the circumstance of my having slept in the same bed which he then occupied at Autun; I think he must have left his troubled spirit behind him, for my dreams were perturbed and melancholy in the greatest degree. There are plenty of wolves and wild boars in this neighbourhood; five of the latter were killed the week before. I expected to have met with gipsies, but neither here, nor in any other part of the continent, had we yet encountered one of the race.

At St. Emilan, (a small village) we stopt to breakfast: it was a merry, cheerful meal. We sat round the blazing faggots in the cottage kitchen of la Poste, and boiled our eggs in a vessel which I believe was an old iron shaving pot; the milk (for our coffee) was served up in a large earthen tureen, with a pewter ladle; and the cups were of a dirty yellow cracked ware, that I am sure my cook would not suffer to be exhibited in her scullery. The bread was sour, and so was the fruit, but I never remember to have enjoyed a breakfast more thoroughly; so true is it, that hunger is the best sauce. The host (seeing that we were English) asked if we would not choose our *pain* to be *grillé*? and was proceeding to broil it accordingly, instead of toasting it, if we had not preferred the loaf in its natural state. We were somewhat surprised at seeing a print over the chimney of Dr. Nicholas Saunderson, Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge. An obscure village kitchen in the heart of France was the last place where one would have expected to have found such a thing. The hostess had bought it many years

since at a sale of the property of the celebrated Buffon.

Seeing some cows ploughing in the fields here, which was what we had never before witnessed, our servant Christian gave us an account of the manner of conducting that operation in Switzerland; "de only difference is (said he) dat dere de *cows* be all *oxes*." The costume of the *paysannes* is very picturesque; a straw hat, of the gipsy form, and large as an umbrella, rather short petticoat, gay coloured handkerchief, deep bordered white cap, and *sabots*. The landscape was rather pretty for some distance beyond St. Emilan.

We now began to meet with vineyards again, as we descended from these bleak and elevated regions. A brook wound through the lowlands, fringed with willows, by means of which we could as usual trace its course for miles. I forgot to mention the *cajoleries* made use of by a set of little beggar children, the preceding day. The white beaver hats worn by my husband and Mr. W. struck their fancy not a little, and they ran after the carriage with incredible perseverance, calling out, *Vivent les chapeaux blancs! Vivent les jolis messieurs! vive la jolie dame! vive le joli carrosse! vive le roi, et vive le bon Dieu!* We were engaged in lamenting the drawback of a *goître* (or swelling in the throat) to the beauty of a very pretty woman, whom we had just seen, when in going down a steep hill we met with an accident, which might have been serious. The harness (made of old ropes) suddenly broke, one of the horses fell down, the postillion was thrown off, and the other horses continuing to trot on without

stopping, we felt the carriage go over some soft substance, which we concluded to be the person of their unfortunate driver. Both the gentlemen involuntarily exclaimed "he is killed!" when we were relieved by seeing him running by the side of the animals, very little the worse for his fall. The poor horse was the greatest sufferer, as the wheels went twice over his neck! however, even he was not much hurt, and was able to rise and go on with his work in a few seconds. The great creature in the middle was an old, scrambling, wilful beast, who liked his own way, and I believe he would never have stopt, had not his bridle been seized by a man in the road. I was very much alarmed for the moment, and so I rather suspect was our trusty valet, who presented himself at the door to inquire if "Madame was frightened," with a face as white as his own neckcloth. This *contretemps* would not have occurred had we not changed our horses and postillion a few moments before it happened, with those belonging to another carriage which we met on the way. The country continued rather pretty, and was also inclosed; were it not for the vineyards, it would be like many parts of England. We saw a little insignificant chateau or two, and that reminds me of the very dull effect of all the houses in France when seen from a distance – they have universally the air of being shut up, owing to the *jalousies* being painted white instead of green.

Chalons sur Saone; rather a pretty town: there is a stone fountain here, with a statue of Neptune, well executed. We stopt at the hotel du Parc, a reasonable and tolerably well

appointed inn, though by no means deserving of the pompous commendation bestowed upon it in the printed Tourist's Guide, where it is mentioned as being the best in France. Mr. W. suffered some annoyance from bugs, which I must ever consider as great drawbacks to comfort. We were attended at dinner by the first *male* waiter we had seen since leaving Paris, from which Chalons is about two hundred miles distant. The people in the town stared at and followed us about in rather a troublesome manner; I believe they were attracted by the white hats, and my travelling cap, so different from any of their own costumes.

People talk a great deal about the warmth of the South of France, but all I can say is, that as soon as we approached it, we ordered fires, while we had left our countrymen in frigid England fainting with heat! I may as well indulge myself in a few more desultory remarks while I am about it, particularly as our narrative just now is rather bare of incident. The first is, the great inferiority of the French cutlery to ours: all their knives are extremely coarse and bad; and with regard to the forks and spoons (both of which, to do them justice, are almost always of silver), they do not seem ever to have come in contact with a bit of whiting or a leather rubber since they were made! Plate-powder of course is an unknown invention here. How would our butlers at home (so scrupulously nice in the arrangement of their sideboard) have stared, could they have beheld these shabby appurtenances of a foreign dinner table! They are not less behind-hand also with respect to the locks of their doors, all of which are

wretchedly finished, even in their best houses. Their carriages are generally ugly, shabby, badly built, and inelegant; and they have some domestic customs (existing even in the midst of the utmost splendor and refinement,) which are absolutely revolting to the imagination of an English person, and to which no person who knows what real cleanliness and comfort means, could ever be reconciled; but the French are, beyond all doubt, an innately filthy race, – with them *l'apparence* is all in all.

Leaving Chalons sur Saone, we observed large fields planted with Turkey wheat, called here *Turquie*; they mix it with other flour in their bread. There is nothing but barren stubble for a length of way, and we should have found the prospect excessively wearying and tiresome, had not a bold hill or two in the distance afforded a slight degree of relief. We saw a man sowing among the stubble, which they plough up after the seed is sown, thereby saving the labour of the harrow; the practice is not general, however.

About three miles from Tournus, we ascended a very steep hill, covered with underwood and vines, and were refreshed by the sight of a little pasture land. From the summit a surprisingly fine country burst upon us – the river Saone leading its tranquil waters through a rich plain, the town of Tournus with its bridge and spires, and the chain of Alpine mountains bounding the distant horizon, were altogether charming; the latter appeared like a continued ridge of gray clouds, Mont Blanc towering far above them all. We formed some idea of the magnitude of this

hoary giant from the circumstance of our being able thus to see him at the distance of a hundred and fifty miles! He looked, however, like a thin white vapour, rising amid the lovely blue of the summer sky.

At Tournus, where we stopt to breakfast, the *maîtresse de la maison* was a very pretty woman, but I cannot praise her taste in china ware; the cups she set before us were of a most disgusting shape and material, and of enormous proportions; they resembled our coarse red flower-pots glazed, and it was with difficulty that I could prevail upon myself to taste the tea or coffee (I forget which) that they contained. The women in this neighbourhood wear a singular head-dress, a black beaver hat, of the size and form of a small soup plate, placed flat upon the crown of the head, with three long knots of broad black riband, hanging down, one behind, and one on each side the face. They have a little white cap, called *la coquette*, under this, with a coarse open lace border, standing stiff off the temples, something like that of Mary, Queen of Scots. This place is celebrated for its pretty women, and we remarked many ourselves. I took a hasty sketch of one as we changed horses. There is a great quantity of hemp grown here. The weather now began to be intensely hot; and we did not wonder at this, as we were in the same latitude as that of Verona and Venice. The former chill, which I mentioned upon first approaching the south of France, was quite an accidental circumstance, partly induced by our being at that time upon extremely high ground, whereas the temperature of

the valleys is very different.

We saw the peasants making ropes by the side of the road; one man carried a distaff in his hand, much bigger than a large stable broom. I bought of a *villageoise* at Macon one of the little hats and caps before mentioned. She attempted to impose upon me as to the price; but I do not consider this at all as a national trait. I am afraid an English countrywoman would have been equally anxious to make the best bargain she could, fairly or otherwise! The cap was really very becoming, even to my British features. I saw in one of the cottages a loaf of their bread: it was extremely coarse, and as flat, round, and large as a table. There is a grand chain of mountains on the right, called the *Charolais*. We again observed cows ploughing in the fields: they had all a curious head-dress, a sort of veil or network, to preserve them from the flies, like the military bridles of our dragoon horses. Most of the cattle hereabouts (and we had seen quantities) were of a cream colour. The country is luxuriant, full of chateaux, fertile, and cultivated, more so than any we had yet observed, and it is allowed to be the finest part of France. Mr. W. examined the nature of the soil, and found it fat and rich in the highest degree. I must once more repeat my admiration of the frequent and great beauty of the young children in this country, more particularly in these parts. I saw several with cheeks like the sunny side of a peach; little, round, plump faces, and delicately chiselled features, with a profusion of luxuriant hair hanging in natural ringlets upon their shoulders: the mere babies also are

very interesting. The parents throughout France are remarkable for love of offspring⁴.

About three or four miles from Macon you enter the department of the Maconnais, and afterwards that of the Jura (so called from the mountains of the same name), but formerly known by that of the Lyonnais. We saw at St. George de Rognains a most beautiful woman, a *villageoise*; her proportions were fine, and rather full; her face very much in the style of our well-known English belles, Lady O. and Mrs. L.; but she was not so large as either of them. She wore the usual costume of her native place, which was more peculiarly marked in the cap. It is extremely becoming, and pretty in itself. I know not how to describe it exactly; but it is flat upon the crown, with a good deal of coarse transparent lace, like wings, full every where but on the brow, across which it is laid low and plain, in the style of some antique pictures I remember to have seen. This superb woman's fine features set it off amazingly. She also wore a flowered cotton gown (of gay colours upon a dark ground), a crimson apron and bib, with a white handkerchief. What a charming portrait would Sir Thomas Lawrence have made of her, and how she would astonish the amateurs of beauty in England, were she suddenly to appear among them! I am thus particular in describing costume, to please the readers of my own sex. We met here some *religieuses* walking in the road, belonging to a convent in the distance. Their habit was not very remarkable, except that

⁴ Vide Spurzheim's Craniology.

they wore black veils, with high peaks on the front of the head, and long rosaries by their sides.

Villefranche; a populous old town. It was market day; yet not one instance of intoxication did we see, neither here nor in any other part of France through which we had passed. Certainly drunkenness is not the vice of the nation, although they have a due admiration for strong beer, which is sold under the name of *bonne bierre de Mars*. There is a fine church here, of Gothic architecture.

We did not reach Lyons until late at night; and, as I was very much fatigued, and longed to get into the hotel, I thought the length of the environs and suburbs endless. However, we arrived at last, and after a refreshing sleep, were awakened the next morning by the firing of cannon close under our windows. It was the fête of St. Louis, which is always celebrated with particular pomp and splendour. It was also the great jubilee of the Lyonese *peruquiers*, who went in procession to high mass, and from thence to an entertainment prepared for them. The *jouteurs* (or plungers in water) likewise made a very magnificent appearance. They walked two and two round the town, and after a famous dinner (laid out for them in a lower apartment of our hotel) proceeded to exhibit a sort of aquatic tournament, in boats, upon the river. This is a very ancient festival, and is mentioned (if I recollect right) by Rousseau. The dress of the combatants (among whom were several young boys of eight and five years old) was very handsome and fanciful, entirely composed of white

linen, ornamented with knots of dark-blue riband. They had white kid leather shoes, tied with the same colours, caps richly ornamented with gold, and finished with gold tassels. In their hands they carried blue and gold oars, and long poles, and upon their breasts a wooden sort of shield or breastplate, divided into square compartments, and strapped firmly on like armour, or that peculiar ornament, the ephod, worn by the ancient Jewish high priests. Against this they pushed with the poles as hard as possible, endeavouring to jostle and overturn their opponents; the vanquished, falling into the water, save themselves by swimming, while the victors carry off a prize. We went down stairs to see these heroes at dinner, and one of them civilly invited us into the room, to observe every particular at our ease.

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