

every house shut up; neither after many applications could I procure a place even to sit down. I accordingly returned to the spot where I had left the carriage, that I might sleep in it all night, but I found it gone, and I knew not whither. In this situation I was endeavouring to reconcile myself to the pleasant prospect of sleeping in the street all night, and without any supper, when my good genius threw me in the way of my two Frenchmen, who, having stabled their horses, were now in the same pursuit as myself. They soon relieved me from all difficulties. I accompanied them to the municipality, where they demanded and obtained billets for supper and beds, and a servant was immediately sent with a torch to shew us the house appointed.

The family had already retired to bed; but the order from the municipality soon set all in motion. Yet even here, although the house was respectable, all that we could obtain was barely sufficient to

satisfy our hunger. A few sausages, half a loaf of bread, and a salad, were set before us; and we cleared the board even of the crumbs. Little more than a pint of bad wine crowned the repast, which we divided equally; the master and mistress of the house, and their female servant, standing up during the whole time; and the former making many apologies for the scantiness of our entertainment. Notwithstanding the civility with which my two companions behaved, I could not behold, without pity, a decent family thus unseasonably disturbed, and obliged to entertain and wait upon their very enemies. Yet for one family that had such quiet inmates, how many were there this very night obliged to submit to insolence and insult. As the hour was late, and there was no temptation to sit up, we retired to a chamber, wherein two beds had been hastily prepared. My companions politely yielded up one of the beds to me; and thus, instead of passing the night in the

open air, I slept not more uncomfortably than usual.

Santa Agata is a considerable town, romantically situated on broken ground, and amidst a varied and interesting country, bearing indubitable traces of ancient volcanic eruptions. Having collected all our party, about nine o'clock we set off, travelling along an excellent road, said to be constructed upon the ancient Appian way, which serves for its basis. Ten miles brought us to Sparanesi, where we did not halt, but continued our route nine miles farther to Capua. Impressed with the idea that we are approaching the site of a city once so famous, the rival of Rome, and the subject of such bloody contests, we view the whole surrounding country with a species of respect. The modern Capua is tolerably fortified, and stands in a wide plain, close upon the Volturno, the banks of which, although moderately high, are here possessed of little interest, being bare and sandy. Before

entering it we cross the Volturno, on a neat bridge ; and the town being full of troops, we were strictly examined, and a long time detained at the gates. A Polish regiment of cavalry was doing duty ; and I was struck with the soft and peculiar manner in which they pronounced the French language, and which was likewise afterwards pointed out to me by one of my French companions. As to the ancient Capua, which stands about two miles from the present, it has almost vanished from the face of the earth ; a few columns, the remains of a theatre, and broken arches, are all that now exist to guide the footsteps of the enquiring traveller.

The streets being full of baggage and ammunition waggons, our carriage could with difficulty pass along, or even arrive at a corner where the poor horses might be allowed to rest. Our vettorino having at length found a tolerably vacant street for that purpose, I set about the important business of procuring something to

eat, in which pursuit I was again joined by my two Frenchmen. To our great joy we found out a small eating-house, where we procured a plentiful dinner of macaroni, bread, salad, and decent wine. For this fare our host demanded two dollars. Immediately violent exclamations on the part of the Frenchmen. I put down a dollar for my share, but my companions affirming that even that sum was too much, walked off; leaving the landlord, his wife, and servant, gaping at the door.

Now, lest the honour of my new friends may appear to suffer in this transaction, I must state in their vindication, that Italian innkeepers, from the highest to the lowest, are the most barefaced imposing race in the world. Unless you make the most positive agreement with them before sitting down to table, they uniformly charge a stranger at least double what they would willingly accept as full payment. Hence at breakfast, dinner, and supper, you must reconcile yourself either to prepare for

a regular squabble, or to be egregiously cheated ; either of which resolutions being optional, I leave it to the reader to decide for himself how he might chuse to proceed in similar circumstances.

Having allowed our horses to rest themselves by standing two hours in the street, we left Capua, and proceeded as before, on a singularly good road, and cheered with the prospect of reaching Naples that evening. The remainder of this day's journey was like passing along a broad walk, through an immense garden ; the country on both sides being in general highly cultivated, and far excelling any that I had seen in Italy, except some of the finest parts of Tuscany. Twelve miles from Capua we pass through Aversa, a large and well-built town, and which, by its appearance, the air and dress of its inhabitants, the carriages in its streets, and various other particulars, mark to the eye of the attentive traveller the proximity to a great metropolis. Nothing but the

excellence of the road enabled our wearied horses to drag the carriage twelve miles farther this night to Naples. For my part, I eased them of my weight, having proceeded more than half of the way from Rome on foot. It was eight o'clock before we arrived at Naples, which we entered through the gate of Constantinople; but the moon shining very clear, we were enabled to discern the width of the streets, the loftiness of the houses, and the magnificent appearance of the numerous public buildings, the defects of which were not perceptible by moon light. As usual, I resigned myself to my vettorino, who carried me to a decent albergo (answering to the Spanish posada), where I forthwith established myself, and being but little prone to change, never abandoned it till my finally quitting Naples.

CHAP. V.

Naples.—Its appearance, situation, present state, neighbourhood, general character of the Italians. Of the French in Italy. Departure.

AS, when at Rome, I thought it incumbent on me not to pass over in total silence a city so renowned, and yet was conscious that I could add but little, or nothing, to the information already received on that subject, so now, respecting Naples, a city superior to Rome, in situation, in extent, in population, but inferior in almost every other point of view I wish to be brief without appearing unnecessarily hurried. So much, however, has been already written, both concerning the city itself, and the highly interesting

objects in its vicinity, that little remains to me, except to mark some peculiar circumstances arising from its present political situation.

The first appearance of Naples, as I have already observed, is imposing from its extent, the loftiness of the houses, and the number of public buildings, which we pass soon after entering the gates. It lies principally between the edge of the bay, and a long high ridge on the summit of which stands the castle of St. Elmo, which, before the introduction of artillery, must have been nearly impregnable. The ditch round it is deep, broad, and cut in the solid volcanic rock, and from it we have a charming view of the town and harbour beneath, Mount Vesuvius, and the whole sweep of the bay of Naples. One principal street, named the street of Toledo, traverses the city almost through the whole of its extent, and in a direction, nearly parallel to that of the hill, at the foot of which it stands. As in Leghorn, and most of the

towns through which we have passed in Italy, this principal street is paved with large broad flags of lava, without any distinction for foot passengers. Nothing can exceed the liveliness and bustle of this street, which from day-break, till some time after sun-set, is constantly thronged with passengers, carriages, soldiers, lazaroni plying for hire, swarms of beggars, and rows of stalls, where bread, fruits, meats ready dressed, and iced water are sold. The carriages drive with great rapidity, and appear to cleave the immense crowd, which quickly closes again, like the waves on the track of a vessel. At the end of the street of Toledo is an open square, one side of which is formed by the royal palace, which is in a purer state of architecture than most of the other public buildings. For this is one respect in which Naples is greatly inferior to Rome. In the latter city, the churches, the palaces, the columns, the fountains, the statues, nay even the common orna-

ments of houses are generally in a pure and strict style. In Naples on the contrary, the first glance at the public buildings announces a vitiated taste, and although we may afterwards find much to admire, in detail I scarcely saw there a single structure which did not bear the marks of the decay, or the corruption of genius.

This square, during the time of my residence at Naples, was on all accounts the most interesting spot to which the stranger could resort. Besides the palace, it is likewise ornamented with a colossal marble, Terminus of Jupiter, dug up several years ago, and placed here by order of the king. The effect of such a giant statue on one side of the public square is striking, and it was now rendered still more so by the great number of French officers and soldiers, constantly walking up and down beneath it. Joseph Bonaparte having taken up his residence in the palace, it was of course, at once, the head quarters of the

army, and the centre of the civil and financial operations. A guard of fifty men stood constantly before the front; and on each side of the arched entry, two brass four-pounders, loaded with grape, and with matches burning night and day, evinced the affection, or, at least, secured the obedience of the Neapolitans to their new sovereign. In the day time, this mixture of armed men, loaded cannon, and smoking matches, in the midst of a crowded city, had something of the appearance of ferocity, and at night, in passing the square, the ear was often struck with the repeated challenges of the centinels, whilst, by the light of the stars, it was easy to observe whole companies of soldiers stretched out, and slumbering near piles of arms.

Whatever might be the feelings of the Neapolitans, at this period, they manifested no outward discontent, but gave vent to their murmurs and vows of revenge in secret. The populace, ever urged by

the wants, and allured by the amusements of the day, applied for employment to a Frenchman, as they would have done to any other foreigner, and frequented with their usual eagerness, the theatres of puppets, the jugglers, the tellers of stories on the Mole, and the exhibitions of arlequino and punchinello. But the middling and better classes were more reserved, the places of public amusements ceased to be thronged, and the great theatre of Prince Carlos, one of the largest and most magnificent in Europe, appeared every night like an empty prison, for want of illumination and company. Forty or fifty French officers formed the greater part of the audience, and they were among the foremost to lament the want of that society which constitutes the chief pleasure of public amusements.

In this state of things the environs of Naples would have claimed attention, had they even been far less deserving of it in themselves. On the one hand the tomb of

Virgil, the grotto of Pausilippo, a passage of eight hundred yards in length, cut through a mountain, and beyond it the country approaching to Pozzuoli and Baiæ, abounding in natural wonders, hot springs, sulphureous and mephitic vapours, issuing in particular spots from the earth, mountains of lava, and craters of extinguished volcanos. The tomb of Virgil, so called, is nothing but the remains of a round tower, on a hill to the left hand, just above the entrance of the grotto. No inscription on the tomb itself, decides the truth of its having been erected in honour of Virgil, and many learned antiquarians greatly doubt its pretensions to that title. At any rate, the view from it of the whole of Naples, is, perhaps, the most interesting of any in the neighbourhood. Several young women of whom I had made inquiries, and who had followed me to the spot, seeing that I contemplated with profound attention, whatever recalled even the name of so great a poet, told me, that not far off

was the tomb of an English Milord. They led me to it, when I found it to be the grave of an English child, buried at the foot of a young fig tree. The name, I think, was William Benfield, engraved on a small head stone, and the inscription told me, in my native language, that he had died under the age of three years. I beheld with a kind of melancholy pleasure this grave of my young countryman, so far from home, and so near the spot said to contain the dust of Virgil.

Such are a few of the objects to the right of the town, looking outwards to the bay. On the left, the principal object is Mount Vesuvius, towering to the height of more than three thousand feet, with its conical summit, and its crater emitting a white smoke from numerous crevices. Leaving this mountain on the left, and passing over its base, consisting of torrents of lava, which have flowed from it at far distant periods, we arrive at Portici, where is kept the museum which

once contained a complete assortment of all the antiquities dug up at Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Stabia. Portici is about five miles from Naples, and is chiefly built upon the lava, beneath which Herculaneum is buried. Continuing along the same road eight miles farther we reach Pompeii, where the ashes and volcanic mud thrown out A. D. —79, by falling on the houses, have formed ridges of low hills, now covered with trees and vines. Nothing can exceed the interest excited by this view of part of an ancient city, the far greater portion of which is yet buried beneath the present surface of the earth. We walk in the streets, we visit the tombs, we enter the theatres, the temples, the private houses of the ancient Romans. Even the tracks of the carriages deeply worn in the pavement, attract our attention, whilst at the same time we notice with disgust, in some exterior and public ornaments, striking proofs of the gross indelicacy of ancient

manners. But Pompeii would well deserve a chapter to itself, and that I have not at present to bestow.

Even the museum at Portici has lost many of its attractions: on the irruption of the French into Italy, and their approach to the Neapolitan territories, the royal family removed to Sicily, and carried with them the most valuable parts of the collection. I looked in vain for the toilet of a Roman lady, her combs, necklaces, and perfumes, for the series of ancient coins, weights, and measures, for the most valuable statues, and for the kitchen completely fitted up with the very utensils, used upwards of seventeen hundred years ago. In the place of these we behold a long suite of empty, or half furnished rooms, mosaic pavements torn up, and inscriptions upon unoccupied pedestals and frames, which only excite our regret for the absence of those objects which we should have been so highly charmed to behold.

The collection of Paintings alone seems nearly untouched, and several large apartments are filled with those taken from the walls of the ancient towns, as also with the names, and scribbling of the Roman soldiers upon the inside of their barracks.

But Vesuvius is the great, the striking, the characteristic object of the vicinity of Naples. It is visible, from the opening of almost every street, it is marked on many of the coins, and its various eruptions are carefully recorded, and accurately depicted. The very idea of a burning mountain in the neighbourhood of an immense city, carries with it an appearance of the wonderful, and recalls the enchantments of the Arabian Nights. The best ascent is from Portici, five miles from Naples, and at that place I readily found a guide to accompany me. The road soon becomes rugged and difficult, over torrents of ancient lava and scorixæ; but being accustomed to climbing hills, I ascended with a rapidity that astonished

my guide. At about one-third of the height we arrived at a small house, kept by a Monk, who affords refreshment to persons climbing the mountain, and as the difficulties increase greatly above this spot, it is usual to make a short halt here. He was a venerable looking father of the Franciscan order, received me with a kind greeting, and quickly set before me a loaf of bread, an omelet of eggs, and a bottle of excellent *Lachrymæ Christi*. This wine, which is produced from the vineyards on the slope of the mountain, is sweetish, but pleasant, and high flavoured. My guide partook with me, and after the repast, the Friar put into my hands a small book, in which he requested me to write my name, and, if I chose, a few short sentences, and I of course did not neglect this opportunity of entering my name and sentiments on the records of Vesuvius. Although he makes no charge for his entertainment, the holy man expects to be more than fully

reimbursed for the expense of it, and assures you, that whatever may be given is regularly applied to religious and charitable purposes.

Vesuvius, like Etna, may be divided into three zones. The first, from the base to the height of the hermit's or friar's house, comprehends much cultivated ground, and toward its summit many steep and narrow vallies, and small isolated peaks. Directly after leaving the house, we enter upon what may be termed the second belt, when the surface is still more broken and irregular, appearing for the most part like the dross of iron, thrown about in heaps, and slightly connected by a loose mould, and the effects of many rains. Yet in this division we are surprized to meet with hills, formed of a kind of gravel, mud, and rounded stones, in regular strata. I could not but regard with attention these strata, which I had always, hitherto, considered as the undoubted production of the sea,

but which are here evidently of volcanic origin, the periods of their formation being on record in the history of the mountain, and some of them within the memory of man. The third division is the cone, or very seat of the fire, coated as it were all round, with a deep loose black sand, intermixed with cinders and smooth stones. For the purpose of enabling strangers to ascend this steep cone, where the sand continually gives way under the feet, the guides loosen the belts, which both the Italian and Spanish peasantry, wear round their waists, and hang it over their shoulders, for the traveller to lay hold of behind. Here again my guide's wonder was increased to find that I neglected his belt, and preferred scrambling up alone. It was like attacking a gigantic battery, whence issued fire and smoke, whilst the shot passed close to us every instant. These shot were, it is true, only stones, but they were of all dimensions, lying on the face of the cone,

where they had been supported through the night by the frost, or propped underneath by a little snow, it being now the 3d of March. But as the snow melted, or the frost-bound earth thawed, the stones fell off their equilibrium, and jumping first one yard, and then five, and next twenty, and then an hundred; they came whizzing past our ears with great violence. It was, however, easy to avoid them, both by the dust which they raised above us, and the noise they made, which in these high and quiet regions was immediately distinguishable. On reaching the summit of the edge of the cone, I looked with eagerness down into the crater, which I was astonished to find so different from what I had expected. Instead of an immense inverted funnel, I beheld only a rough and broken hollow surface of sulphureous rocks, lavas, which appeared to have been vomited up without the power of being thrown farther, and which had there cooled, half formed torrents of

melted mud, which had fallen back into the crater, abundance of smoke issuing from innumerable crevices, near which the upper crust was too treacherous to be safely approached, and here and there flames bursting forth. The whole was surrounded by the steep and lofty edge of the crater, forming a circumference of about two miles. We descended into this horrid circle, which seemed the fit abode of Demons, and recalled to mind Milton's description of hell, where the land

“ Ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire.”

After scrambling with the greatest caution, over a rough surface, full of deep chasms, and intermixed with huge blocks of lava, my guide brought me to an opening, where I saw the flames below, and heard their roaring like that of an immense furnace. The fire was so near the surface, that on putting down a stick, the end was presently burnt to a cinder. All

All round the mouth of this chasm, and wherever the eye could reach within, was variegated by many shades of red and yellow, evidently formed by a mixture of sulphur, or exhalations from it. Of these I broke off some beautiful specimens, and having sufficiently gratified my curiosity, left this dangerous spot, where my guide never ceased to remind me that we were standing on a hollow crust, which might suddenly give way, and bury us in the fiery gulph. Yet amidst these black lava rocks, and smoaking hillocks of sulphur, I noticed several men with baskets, and small hammers, breaking off and collecting specimens to be vended in Naples. The appearance of these men was miserable and gloomy, and seemingly well suited to their occupation.

After emerging from this gulph, and mounting once more upon the outward edge of the crater, I stood for a long time to contemplate with delight the rich and varied prospect beneath. Behind me

seemed the mouth of hell, from which I had just escaped, and I drew in long draughts of pure air, while I gazed on the paradise below. But I cannot stop to add my feeble description to so many which already exist. At this height, Naples and its suburbs, containing four hundred thousand inhabitants, form only one object, on the shores of an immense and beautiful bay, nearly an hundred miles in its semi-diameter. The left side, looking towards the island of Capri, is composed of a range of high mountains, which separate the bay of Naples from the gulph of Salerno. The right is less elevated, but this is balanced by the greater number of indents made by the sea, and the islands of Ischia, Procida, and other small ones, which lie off its extremity. In a word, the towns, the mountains, the plains, the gulphs, the islands, and the sea, all conspire to form one of those grand and striking scenes, where even the imagination rests satisfied, and ceases for a

moment to sketch her ideal and better worlds.

But these wonders, which a solitary Englishman might contemplate at his ease, could not be visited by Frenchmen without danger. I had heard it whispered for some time, that several of that nation had already privately fallen victims to the daggers of the Neapolitans; but a few days after my visit to Vesuvius, two French officers, although accompanied by their servants, were shot in a similar expedition. This was too public to be concealed, and it became a general topic of conversation. Visits were no longer paid to Vesuvius, except in large parties, and armed, and even these were now unfrequent, considering the number of French in Naples, the importance and interest of the object, and still more its vicinity.

As English ships of war were constantly cruising in the mouth of the bay, and there had remained very few vessels in the harbour on the approach of the French,

I was detained upwards of a month in Naples, before I could find an opportunity of embarking for any port to the eastward, the French being jealous that all vessels so clearing out, were in fact bound to Sicily. At length I agreed with the Greek master of a small brig to carry me to the island of Zante; for this I paid him twenty-five Spanish dollars, and was besides to furnish myself with provisions. But this man deceived me egregiously, both as to the time of his sailing, and various other points unnecessary to repeat. I mention this because he was the first Greek with whom I had any intercourse, although not only in him, but many subsequent acquaintances of that nation, I met with nothing but the grossest falsehood and duplicity. Mean time being unoccupied, I paid more attention than hitherto to the manners around me, as also to recal those through which I had lately passed. I now proceed to mark my general opinion of the Italian character, as far as I have been enabled

to observe it, between Leghorn and Naples.

The Italians are a singular mixture of eagerness, and cunning, of mildness, and violence ; of superstition and of irreligion. They are vehement in their gestures on trivial occasions ; but at the very time that they appear absorbed in the violence of passion, they are full of duplicity, and grow cool in a moment, if they see any advantage in doing so. They affect to speak with great mildness, and appearance of regard even to an absolute stranger, and yet suddenly break out into violent fits of passion. They will talk lightly of the church, and turn their priests into ridicule ; but after uttering an irreligious jest, a secret awe seems to drive them to the altar, where they kneel and receive the sacrament from the very hand which they have ridiculed. No people that I have ever yet seen descends so low in order to excite compassion. If they gain their object by any means they are satisfied,

and in order to affect this, fawn upon strangers in a manner that quickly becomes tedious and soon disgusting. They feel with greater accuracy than they reason, and are more apt to mislead themselves when they take time to deliberate, than when they act from the impulse of the moment. The mildness of their climate inspires them with cheerfulness, and they give themselves up with ardour to every pleasure, even the most trifling; yet their looks are composed and even grave, and their walk has nothing in it which indicates levity.

In the observance of the matrimonial engagements, no people can be more lax, nor is there any country where jealousy is so little known, nor, indeed, where it would be so very useless. When instances of private restraint or rebuke are strengthened by a considerable decency of general manners, that restraint or rebuke may be of some avail. But what benefit can arise from it, when the whole mass is corrupted,

when the cottage of the peasant is contaminated, and when the most flagrant instances of disregard to female honour are to be sought for among the nobility, and upon the throne. Italian jealousy scarcely now exists, except upon the stage, or in old romances. This however is not the case with lovers previous to marriage. Then the parties are strictly tenacious of their rights, and the slightest symptoms of indifference or infidelity, are often punished in a terrible manner.

I could not but notice, both in Spain and Italy, the avidity with which, at the theatres, the male part of the audience seized every expression which alluded disrespectfully to women. Such passages were uniformly received with unmanly laughter and applause, as if it was a great triumph obtained over their female friends. The ladies in both countries join in the laugh; but they know how to take their revenge.

During my stay at Naples great num-

bers of Calabrian prisoners were brought in, and purposely carried through the streets, or paraded in the great square. I could not observe that the Neapolitans shewed any symptoms of sorrow, or even of compassion, at the sight of their countrymen thus taken in arms, in defence of their common rights; a shrug of the shoulders was the utmost visible effect produced upon the by-standers, and they seemed to consider the expulsion of their Sovereign, and the ruin of their Country, as the decrees of Providence, against which resistance was of no avail, and murmuring impious.

I cannot refrain from mentioning an instance of what appeared to me one of the most debasing acts of superstition I had ever witnessed. One morning, in a church in the great square, I noticed a well dressed man come in, and who crossed himself with more than usual devotion. Soon afterwards he threw himself down on his knees before a crucifix, and actually licked the pavement with his

tongue. After he had done this for some time in one direction, he repeated it cross-ways, and having thus licked the shape of a crucifix rudely upon the pavement, he rose well assured that he had done a most meritorious action. I cannot express my feelings of mingled disgust and pity, at the sight of this abject wretch, who thus thought to honour God by debasing his image. My first emotions were to spurn him as he lay, and in order to check these emotions, I was obliged hastily to quit a temple where the bigotry of the votaries was so sadly in union with the mummeries of the priest.

With regard to the French whom I saw in Italy, their general character was no doubt influenced in some degree by the peculiar circumstances of their present situation; yet many traits still remained, which have been noticed by all who have travelled among them. Perhaps, indeed, these traits were rather heightened than altered by their present circumstances;

yet I am unwilling to form and express a decided opinion of a people whom I may hereafter have an opportunity, as I have the wish, of examining more closely. What I have observed would lead me to say nothing favourable, which clearly shews how circumscribed must have been my means of observation; since every nation must possess some virtues. To me the French manners appeared a mixture of self-conceit and insolence, slightly varnished over with exterior politeness. Their ignorance upon common topics of history and geography is astonishing; and exceeded only by the assurance with which they will talk on these topics, without the smallest particle of information concerning them. Of their boundless ambition, which already grasps the world, and of their hatred to England, it is unnecessary to advance many instances. In a conversation at a public table, where I was present, a French officer asked another of considerable rank, in the course of conver-

sation, "What then, have we any designs at present upon Constantinople?" "Have we any," replied the other, with a kind of sneer, which said more than the most direct answer. At the same table commerce was talked of; and the extreme ignorance displayed by all ranks upon this subject did not so much surprize me, so large a portion present being military. "Ah!" cried a merchant, "I wish the day was come when we are to destroy England; we shall then be able to carry on a nice little commerce. *Nous ferons alors un joli petit commerce.*" I looked with astonishment at this miserable trader, who so coolly talked of the annihilation of England, in order that he and his fellows might carry on *un joli petit commerce.* The matter, however, was allowed on all hands to be decided; and not only England was to be humbled, but poor Alexander (*le pauvre Alexandre*) was to be driven for shelter into Siberia.

I cannot leave Italy without taking some

notice of the French military, and the impression which they made upon me. Let us not deceive ourselves. The English soldiers, all prejudices apart, are certainly stouter, broader shouldered, and more full chested than the French: but the latter are active, nervous, and have more the air of soldiers. Their looks are more keen, the movements of their limbs more easy, and their whole appearance totally free from restraint. Their cocked hats also give them a more martial air than the polished leathern cylinders, and turned up and pomatumed hair of our soldiers, which, like many other military pedantries, we have borrowed from the Germans. This struck me forcibly afterwards in Sicily, when I came to contrast the officers of the two nations. The English, whom I saw on the parade at Messina, a few days after quitting that in the great square of Naples, had at first the appearance of handsome boys, who were not yet permitted to wear cocked hats. I had no doubt, however,

that they would nobly maintain the honour of their country, as to bravery, whenever occasion afforded; but I must confess, I did entertain some respecting their superiority, or even equality, with their enemies, in point of skill and knowledge of their profession. Doubts which subsequent events have completely removed.

I now prepared to quit Italy. Absorbed as all minds are at present in political events and calculations, I can scarcely stop to praise or even to mention the fertile soil, the happy climate, and the endless variety of prospect in this enchanting country. No where are the sublime and the beautiful, the soft and the romantic, the rich and the terrible, so happily blended. Ranges of lofty mountains, hills cultivated to the summits, lakes, water-falls, fertile plains, torrents of lava, scarcely yet cool, and mountains still burning, give an endless variety to the picture, or rather present an endless succession of enchanting views. Antiquity throws her classic mantle

over the whole, and adds an interest not possessed by any other country in Europe. But we must proceed no farther than the surface, or the delusion vanishes. We are awakened to the painful sensation that the whole country is in a state of slavery; that its proudest ornaments have been pillaged, and now grace a foreign capital; and to a feeling perhaps still more unpleasant than the rest; that the inhabitants view all this and smile. Let us not awaken such painful reflections at the moment of our departure. Suffice it, that we have been enabled to make some transient remarks on a country so interesting; and let us endeavour, if possible, not to despise but to pity its inhabitants.

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CHAP. VI.

*Sicily, Malta, and the Islands of the
Archipelago.*

AT length, on the morning of the 28th, I received positive instructions to repair on board, which I speedily did, and found the little bark crowded with passengers of various descriptions, wishing to leave, or, in other words, to escape from Naples. Although the greater part of them were to be landed at Messina, this was carefully concealed while in harbour; and “for Zante,” was the universal cry. Every person laid in his own stock of provisions, according to his ideas of the nature of the voyage. Trusting to a short passage, I merely provided myself with bread and figs; and after many delays, the passengers being all on board the brig, we weighed

anchor. I was pleased to observe amongst them two American gentlemen, whose conversation was likely to cheer my otherwise solitary situation, surrounded only by Greeks and Italians. The wind being fair we sailed out of the harbour with cheerful hearts; and could discern the French flag waving on the batteries along shore, and the fortress of St. Elmo, when we were already out of the reach of their cannon. And now we had to fear visits and detentions from the English, some of whose frigates were almost constantly in sight from the coast. This, however, did not much disturb us; and we enjoyed till sun-set the fine view of the town of Naples; Mount Vesuvius, its summit covered with smoke and clouds; the romantic situation of Castel del Mar; and all the beauties of this charming bay so often and so justly celebrated. In less than three hours we were close under the island of Caprea, the scene of the infamous pleasures of Tiberius; but here the wind be-

came contrary, with heavy rain; and whilst my two American companions and I were anticipating the pleasures of a sail by moonlight along the coast of Calabria, we found ourselves suddenly compelled to go below, where the heat and smell were almost insufferable. Being less accustomed than me to similar situations, they soon felt its effects, and crept into their narrow berths. Meantime I continued to endure by turns the rain on deck and the inconveniencies below, until seeing no chance of the wind changing for that night, I repaired to the miserable situation allotted to me, amidst bales and trunks, and close under the main hatchway. By the glimmering of a lamp I beheld a Greek priest, with a venerable black beard, stretched along at no great distance from me; and in this manner I slept away the stormy night, waiting anxiously for the dawn of day.

29th.—After beating about all night to no purpose, the wind still remaining

contrary, the captain of the bark bore away before the wind, and came to anchor in the bay of *Baiaë*. This bay, once so celebrated, lies twelve miles to the south of Naples, the town of *Pozzuoli* being on the inside of the point, and on the opposite a castle upon a high rock, the cannon of which may be easily made to command this side of the entrance. We anchored close under this rock in a small sandy nook at its base, and where stood a few mean houses. In countries so renowned, the tediousness of delay is amply compensated by the objects of interest which every fresh step presents. As soon as possible we went ashore; and had not advanced half a mile from the beach before we observed the ruins of ancient temples, formerly dedicated to *Venus*, to *Diana*, and to *Mercury*. But the interior of these walls, where incense once smoked, and *Votaries* bent the knee, is now overgrown with weeds, and choaked with rubbish. Farther on to the north the whole

shore is covered with ruins of brick buildings, partly standing in the side of the cliffs, and partly fallen down into the water, where portions of them stand far off, like rocks, so admirably have they been cemented together. At mid-day we set off and walked to Pozzuoli, coasting the bay as close as possible; which every where presents traces of former volcanoes. We first ascend the cliffs already mentioned, and behold below us in the sea which washes the base of the cliff, these numerous ruins. When we have turned the point, and are beginning to descend, we enter a long narrow passage cut in the rock, with vents from space to space on our right, through which if we creep and look down we behold the sea dashing below. At the end of this passage smoke issues from a narrow gallery cut into the mountain on the left. This is the entrance to the natural warm-baths of Nero; the sides and roofs blackened with the smoke of torches, denote the number of

visitants whom curiosity has at various times attracted hither. A little beyond the entrance of this gallery is a beautiful arched bath also formed in the rock. The whole of the interior appears to have been formerly covered with elegant figures in stucco, divided into departments, many of which are still in excellent preservation. And now we begin rapidly to descend, and soon arrive upon the sandy beach at the head of the bay, along which we walk, leaving behind us the interesting cliff mentioned. Ruins of ancient buildings still, however, appear far off, half covered by the waves, and are indeed so thickly spread over the bottom of the whole bay, that a vessel cannot be too cautious in choosing a spot to anchor. Having proceeded about a mile from the cliff, along the shore, we arrived at the foot of Monte Nuovo; so called from being thrown up in a single night, during a terrible earthquake, in the year 1538. It is of course an immense mass of volcanic

matter, about three hundred feet in height; and at the summit is a deep and regular crater. After descending from this, the road to Pozzuoli is generally level, partly along a beach of black sand; and a farther walk of two miles brings us to this town, advantageously situated at the entrance of the bay. I have already said, that I am not writing a description of Italy, and Puzzuoli is among the places well known and often described; on account of the Solfa terra which smokes in the hill behind it. It appears to have been the intention of one of the Roman Emperors to construct a bridge across the whole breadth of the bay. The ruins of this stupendous work, which was probably never half completed, consist of very thick piers of brick, with portions of arches still overhanging the water. We crossed the bay from Pozzuoli in a boat; and enquired of our boatmen the origin of these ruins. They piously informed us that the devil had obtained permission to build a bridge over

the bay if he could finish it in one night; but that the dawn of day surprized him at his labour, which he instantly abandoned; and thus it has remained ever since. We smiled at this account, and they were offended at our incredulity.

30th.—In spite of all our remonstrances, the captain would not this day put to sea, although the wind was fair. He was withheld by superstitious reasons; and trusted more to the predictions of the priest than the fine appearance of the weather. There being no other resource, we went again on shore; and after visiting the former ruins, went to inspect the Piscinum Mirabile, an immense reservoir for water, on the top of a high hill. The water of this reservoir supplied perhaps the greater part of the ancient town of Baiæ; and was brought from the lakes below, and poured down into it; a work of astonishing labour. Near it are the ruins of Nero's prisons; where ingenuity seems to have been exhausted to prolong the sufferings, and

prevent the escape of those confined. More pleasing objects were visible from these heights; the Elysian Fields, Lake Averno, and the bay and promontory of Misenum.

Towards the land this promontory presents a level summit; such as is called by seamen table land; but I know not whether the wanderer along its base may yet discern the ruins of the tomb of Misenus, the trumpeter of Æneas, and whom Virgil represents to have given name to this point:

- “ At pius Æneas ingenti mole sepulchrum,
 “ Imponit, suaque arma Viro, remumque, tu-
 , bamque,
 “ Monte sub aërio, qui nunc Misenus ab illo
 “ Dicitur, æternumque tenet per secula nomen.”

ÆNE. Lib. 6.

Yet this country, once so delightful, has undergone many changes; and Baiæ, the summer resort of emperors and senators, is become very unhealthy, as the inhabi-

tants informed us, and as their meagre and sallow countenances sufficiently testified.

31st.—This day the prejudices of our captain being removed, although the wind continued still nearly the same, we weighed anchor in the afternoon, and sailed with a fine breeze; all night the wind continued fair, so that at day-break on the

1st April—Mount Stromboli was clearly visible a-head; and as the sun began to disperse the fog, the rest of the Lipari islands gradually appeared. Notwithstanding we continued to go at the rate of eight miles an hour during the whole of the morning, we did not come abreast of Stromboli before one o'clock, when we passed close under it. We had therefore seen it at the distance of more than fifty miles. It is an immense volcanic cone, vomiting smoke from the summit; and at night the flames are visible. The different streams of black lava which appear to have issued very lately, are clearly distinguishable down its sides. Soon after passing Strom-

boli we discerned the high lands of Sicily and Calabria, in spite of the maze in the air; and at four o'clock were already near enough to distinguish the Fanal or light-house, which in the night-time marks to seamen the entrance of the strait which separates Sicily from Italy. At the same time, however, we noticed a large vessel bearing right down towards us, and which soon afterwards fired a cannon, of which we only saw the smoke. That, however, was sufficient to put our captain into great trepidation; and he judged it prudent to heave to, until the vessel came near us, and sent a boat to board us. The officer informed us that it was the *Melpomene* frigate; and having examined the papers of the brig, relieved our captain from his fears, by wishing him a good voyage and leaving us. At sun set the wind died away, and soon afterwards it became quite calm, yet the current evidently carried us towards the entrance of the strait. As the light-house stands upon the end of a