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# SICILIANA

SKETCHES OF  
NAPLES AND SICILY  
IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY  
FERDINAND GREGOROVIVS

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## P R E F A C E

THE essays here translated are taken for the most part from the third volume of Gregorovius's *Wanderjahre in Italien*, published so long ago as 1853 ; the last, however, that entitled *Segesta, Selinus and Mount Eryx*, from his *Kleine Schriften*, which appeared thirty-five years later, in 1888. In these days when Italy is such a well-traversed field, when rarely a month, scarcely, indeed, a week passes without bringing some fresh work on Italian history, art, architecture or social life before the public, it may seem that the translation of a series of essays, written, with one exception, more than half a century ago, is uncalled for and demands some word of explanation. Gregorovius, however, was no ordinary traveller or sight-seer, but an eminent scholar, who, with the knowledge of the historian, brought also the imagination of the artist to bear on the scenes he visited ; he was, moreover, an author gifted with a power of vivid description such as is vouchsafed to few. Dealing, too, as he does, almost entirely with ancient and mediæval history, architecture and scenery, his writings seem, to me at least, to retain their freshness and interest undisturbed by the flight of time.

No attempt has been made to bring the present

volume up to date, nor is it in any way intended to serve as a handbook to the places described. To the traveller possessed of some degree of leisure and interested in the history of Sicily's eventful past, it is hoped, however, that it may prove a welcome companion. I take the present opportunity of conveying my thanks to the magistrate of Neidenburg, East Prussia, Gregorovius's literary heir, for his courtesy in sanctioning the translation of the essay from the *Kleine Schriften*; of expressing my thanks also to Mr. H. J. Bell of the British Museum for his help from first to last in the solution of many knotty points.

A. H.

BORDIGHERA.

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NAPLES AND SICILY FROM 1830  
TO 1852



## NAPLES AND SICILY FROM 1830 TO 1852

1855

WHEN, on November 8, 1830, Ferdinand II. succeeded his father Francis I. on the throne of the Two Sicilies he was only twenty years old. He entered on his inheritance in the midst of the excitement which the July revolution had called forth in Europe. Only nine years before had the rising of the Carbonari been suppressed by the treachery of his grandfather and the intervention of Austria ; and still more recently, in February 1827, had the Austrians quitted Neapolitan territory, where their maintenance had cost 74 million of ducats. The factions stood in harsh opposition ; the Carbonari were preparing for a fresh rising, which in conjunction with the conspirators of Central Italy was intended to assume a national Italian character. The liberal party was, however, exhausted. While the Romagna rose, only ephemeral movements took place within the kingdom, until the rapid end of the attempted revolutions at Modena and in the Legations completely disheartened the insurrectionists.

Ferdinand II. meanwhile sought to tranquillise the people by concessions ; but although unpopular

officials were removed, some persons exiled or imprisoned in 1821 and 1828 were pardoned, the self-contradiction so characteristic of the Neapolitan Government manifested itself in its measures. For the Marchese Pietracatella, an adherent of the hated Canosa, was at once made Minister of the Interior, and what aroused still further astonishment was the pardon granted to de Matteis, the Intendant of Cosenza, who had been condemned for a hideous outrage. The young King gave him a pension.

At this time Intonti, a man hated by the people and regarded as ambitious and hard-hearted, was Minister of Police. While he watched the seething discontent of the country, he himself proposed to the King to alter the system of government in a more liberal direction, to appoint a popular Cabinet, to institute a Council of State with the attributes of a Senate and to form a National Guard. Intonti took for granted that the King in his extreme youth cherished liberal proclivities, which he hoped to exploit for his own ends; and in fact Ferdinand seemed ready to acquiesce in his proposals. But scarcely had Monsignor Olivieri, his tutor and counsellor, obtained knowledge of his intentions, when accompanied by the Ministers he appeared before Ferdinand, and led him to believe that Intonti had an understanding with the French Government and contemplated the overthrow of the State. Ferdinand immediately ordered the Minister of Police to leave the kingdom, and thus ended the attempt at reform.

The fall of Intonti was greeted with rejoicings at

Naples; joy, however, soon enough turned to terror, when to fill his place was appointed del Carretto, Chief of the *Gens d'Armes*, a man of whom it was said that he was born to be an executioner, and who was already notorious for having in 1828 destroyed the town of Bosco, where the Carbonari had raised a revolt, and for having condemned many unfortunate beings to death or the galleys. Henceforward, until 1848, del Carretto was the evil genius of Naples, the founder of an accursed rule of police.

In 1831 Ferdinand married Maria Christina of Savoy, daughter of Victor Emmanuel I. This princess rapidly made herself beloved by her virtues, but her bigoted temperament exercised a disastrous influence on the tendency of the Court. She died on January 31, 1836, a few days after having given birth to Francis, the heir to the throne. A year after her death, the King married Maria Theresa, daughter of the celebrated General Charles of Austria, a union that strengthened the Metternich system in Naples. The year 1837 was a disastrous one, owing to the unexampled severity with which cholera appeared in the kingdom. Within a short period it claimed 13,798 victims in the capital, and with still more pestilential effect did it rage in Sicily, where in Palermo alone 24,000 were snatched away; in Catania, 5360; while in the entire island the number of dead amounted to 69,250. Since the Black Death had visited Europe no such scenes of terror had been witnessed; the descriptions given by Boccaccio and Manzoni in their accounts of the plague, or those depicted by the brush of Spadaro, were repeated. Terror was increased by

the delusion of the people, who believed that the fountains and provisions had been poisoned, and who murdered, burnt and buried alive officials, physicians and private individuals. The Syracusans rose against the local Government, murdered the intendants and many others. The King appointed military commissions to punish the guilty, and sent Giuseppe de Liguoro, Intendant of Catanzaro, to Calabria, while to Sicily he sent del Carretto as his *alter ego*. On the terrors of the pestilence followed those of the police. Syracuse, as a punishment, lost the Intendancy, which was transferred to Noto.

The modern history of the Two Sicilies is thus marked by repeated revolts, earthquakes and pestilences. Since the sect of the Carbonari had given place to Mazzini's Young Italy, the revolutionary party seemed to grow increasingly active in all provinces, especially in the south ; for although the Government had a large body of military, increased by new Swiss regiments, at its command, the Neapolitan territories were nevertheless far removed from the immediate influence of Austria, and the Radicals were justified in calculating on the inflammable character of the Calabrese, as also on the national hatred of the Sicilians, embittered by the loss of their guaranteed rights. From 1840 onwards a revolt was anticipated. The Eastern question already seemed about to perplex Europe. > Naples was also threatened by a war with England on account of the so-called Sulphur Question, so that, as in 1820, even the government of the King seemed about to assume a liberal aspect. The



report that the King was ready to grant a Constitution and liberty to the press testified to the universal demands of the people. Meanwhile here and there armed risings took place. In 1841 the Constitution was proclaimed at Aquila. The people murdered Tanfano, the hated Intendant, and former confidant of Cardinal Ruffo, but the revolt was suppressed by force of arms; and General Casella, who was sent to Aquila, as Commissary of the Government, sentenced fifty-six men to the galleys and others to death.

A short time after Cosenza rose, then Salerno. The revolts increased the hatred with which the State was regarded, but only fanaticism could expect that they would work its downfall. Among the adventurous enterprises that took place, none excited so much sympathy throughout the whole of Europe as that of the brothers Attilio and Emilio Bandiera, the noble-hearted sons of an Austrian admiral, who sailed from Corfu to Calabria, neither deterred by the warnings of Mazzini, their mother's entreaties, nor the evident madness of their hazardous enterprise. For since the English Government kept Naples informed of all the plans of the exiles, and Calabria was so closely watched that it was impossible for the insurgents to join forces, it followed that these bold youths went to meet their death. A traitor enticed them and their twenty followers to S. Giovanni in Fiore, where they were taken prisoners, and on June 25, 1844, they were shot at Cosenza. The world looked with surprise on the weakness and cruelty of the Neapolitan Government, while the example of the Bandiera brothers fired

the youth of Italy. The Romagna at this time assumed a threatening character; emissaries of Young Italy stirred the people up to rebellion; the provinces were deluged with pamphlets, committees were appointed and money was collected. The military commission still sat at Bologna; the reign of Gregory XVI. was nearing its end. Massimo, his Cardinal-legate, had summoned this tribunal at Ravenna and had thrown many citizens into prison on the charge of high treason. These arbitrary measures aroused indignation; it was scarcely possible longer to stem the revolutionary movement in the States of the Church, which, after the failure of the revolts in the Neapolitan kingdom, seemed likely to become the centre of revolution. Another tendency had, however, made itself felt; it had been perceived that in order to make the rising national and to compel all classes to take part, the co-operation of legal power was necessary. The path of reform was entered on, and efforts were made to raise public opinion to the level of a power, which the Government would be obliged to follow.

This revulsion of feeling had already shown itself in the memorable manifesto from Rimini (*Manifesto delle popolazioni dello stato Romano ai principi ed ai popoli d'Europa*), in which in 1845 the revolutionary party laid down its political programme. Since the country and provincial towns of Italy could not declare themselves as the organ of public opinion, it was the press alone, and the press of foreign countries, that gave voice and expression to the will of the people. The press was now an all-compelling force.



As literary products of far-reaching influence at the time must be mentioned Gioberti's *Del primato morale e civile degli Italiani*, Cesare Balbo's *Le speranze d'Italia*, the writings of Massimo d'Azeglio and Giacomo Durando. It was chiefly from Piedmont that the reform party disseminated their political principles and spread their propaganda concerning their scheme for the unity of Italy and the Confederation of States, at the same time that in Gioberti's opinion the Pope, and in Balbo's the King of Sardinia, were designated one as the moral, the other as the political centre of unity. The kingdom of the Two Sicilies consequently remained in the rear of the movement. Its geographical severance, its connection with the East in commerce, customs and language, the almost non-Italian character of the history of the country, separated the Neapolitans and Sicilians from the rest of Italy, as again these two peoples are themselves severed from one another. The revolutionary movement consequently assumed in the South a local character to the same degree that it became national and universal in the rest of Italy.

As throughout Italy in general Cesare Balbo's and Gioberti's writings appeared as epoch-making, so for the kingdom of the Two Sicilies there were likewise two writers—Colletta and Amari—who represented the party of reform. Colletta—the acquaintance of General Murat, the man who had concluded the Convention of Casa Lanza—had been exiled to Florence, where he died in 1831. There, shortly before his death, he finished his *History of Naples*, an excellent work both in contents and

style, which set forth the wretched organisation of the State, the untenable nature of absolutism and the necessity of a popular government, with the somewhat artificial eloquence of a Tacitus. This work was one of the greatest victories achieved by the reform party ; it opened the eyes of the people, giving historic proof of its assertions.

Colletta also influenced Sicily. He undoubtedly inspired the gifted Michele Amari to write his *History of the Sicilian Vespers* which appeared in 1842. He described this memorable revolution with dramatic vivacity, and instructed the Sicilians with regard to their constitutional rights and the curtailment of these rights by despotism. Amari, who more recently has made his name famous by an excellent work on the history of the Mussulmans in Sicily, wrote his *Vespro siciliano* with a distinct purpose. He was inspired by national Sicilian aims to transplant the well-known figure of John of Procida from the reality of history almost entirely to the realm of legend, merely in order to make the deliverance of Sicily from the yoke of Naples appear as an act of the popular energy.

Meanwhile in Naples the secret press was unwearied in the diffusion of pamphlets, protests and appeals, passionate in language and ruthless in denunciations of the King and the Ministers. The public press itself stood under the strictest censorship. The terms *popolo*, *cittadino*, *nazione* were excluded from literary use ; the nervousness of the Government was absurd. On the other hand the Jesuits enjoyed perfect freedom of expression ; they

published their pamphlet, *Scienza e Fede*, under the redaction of Padre Curci, a zealous champion of Gioberti, and under the protection of Monsignor Cocle, the all-powerful counsellor of the King. The priests at the same time exercised a censorship over all the newspapers and books that were brought into the country, and even over the theatrical performances and the ballet.

A pietistic tendency, to which the King did homage, governed the Court. Ferdinand, educated and led by priests, manifested a profound reverence for religion and the saints. He attended Mass every morning; fasted strictly on Friday and Saturday; three times a day repeated the Angelus, and was never absent from any of the great festivals of the Church. His Confessor was Celestino Cocle, a priest of the order of S. Alfonso and Archbishop of Patras, a man whose power was no less hated than that of del Carretto. Other priests also influenced the King. Don Placido, a bigoted pulpit orator, who enjoyed great renown in Naples, among women especially, stood high in his favour. Since the events of the beginning of the year 1848, Ferdinand II. was regarded as a cruel tyrant, but unmitigated passion attributed to him qualities that he did not possess. Undistinguished by any gift of genius, either for good or bad, this altogether mediocre Prince shared the same fate as many others of both earlier and later times; circumstances compelled him, and fear drove him to extremes. He was too ignorant to conceive of the State in any other light than as his own property.

It is said, and not without reason, that in no other State were affairs so governed by fear as in Naples. Not suspicion of the movements in the provinces alone, but also distrust of his own Ministers, caused the King bitter suffering. He seemed to have made it a principle to divide his Cabinet into hostile elements, so that one Minister might act as the spy and the opponent of the others. In 1846 the President of the Ministry was the Marchese Pietracatella, a man of Austrian sympathies; Niccolo Santangelo was Minister of the Interior; Francesco Saverio del Carretto that of Police; while the Minister of Finance was Ferdinando Ferri, an aged Liberal of the year 1799. The Minister for Foreign Affairs was Prince di Scilla Fulco Ruffo; of Justice, Niccolo Parisio, celebrated as a scholar but devoid of energy; the Minister of Religious Affairs was Prince Giuseppe Lanza; that of War and Marine the King himself; and the Director of the last-named departments was General Giuseppe Garzia. Moreover, Duke Luigi di Majo was Viceroy of Sicily, a man held in low esteem by the Sicilians on account of his insignificant personality.

Of all these Ministers del Carretto and Santangelo alone showed themselves powerful. Behind them stood Monsignor Cocle, through whose influence over the King everything was managed, public measures, as also the appointment to office of the highest bidders or of favourites. One of the protests printed in 1846 by the secret press declared: "Even the union that prevails among bandits does not reign among the Ministers, for they know

and hate and lay snares for one another; the King holds them together by force and believes that the more at enmity they are with one another, the more faithful they are to him. If one proposes a good measure, the others out of malice oppose it and allow the bad to pass; if he proposes something mischievous, then the others show themselves heroes of virtue and prevent it; consequently nothing either good or bad occurs; each in his department does whatever he likes. Del Carretto plays the part of Nero, Santangelo robs, Ferri economises, Parisio dreams of justice, the King repeats his prayers, Monsignor opens the gates of heaven and earth. No wonder, consequently, that the State Council is a cipher, that the government is unjust, ridiculous, tyrannical and disgraceful alike to oppressors and oppressed."

The conditions of Naples shortly before the outbreak of the revolution of 1848 were indeed appalling. Arrests were of daily occurrence; the police filled the prisons, put an end to public safety and made despotism the rule. The trials accumulated without number, for arrests were made on the slightest suspicion, or at the faintest hint of spies, and were conducted secretly by the police; advocates no longer daring to appear for the defence, else were they liable to be deprived of their office. This fate overtook among others Giuseppe Macarelli, President of the Criminal Court in Naples, the courageous defender of some young men accused of belonging to the party of Young Italy. Nevertheless the Government did not hesitate publicly to acknowledge its impotence



in face of the bandits, and to conclude a formal treaty of peace with them. This it did with Giosafat Talarico, a brigand who had made his abode in the forest of Sila for twelve years. Terms were made with him ; del Carretto in person handed him the decree of pardon at Cosenza, and after the dreaded brigand leader had made submission, he and his most infamous companions were sent to Lipari with a monthly pension. Such immoral dealing in a government which was strong only towards the defenceless, necessarily made it despised. The ferment increased in every province ; in Calabria, where hatred of Naples is no less national than in Sicily, a revolt which had long been discussed with the liberals of the capital was planned.

For a time the movement was checked by the death of Gregory XVI., which was followed by the election of Pius IX. on June 16, 1846, and by the revulsion by which, as by the stroke of an enchanter, everyone was roused to ecstasies. But while the rest of Italy yielded to transports of enthusiastic rejoicings, and the populace gave way to an irresistible thirst for reform and independence, and awoke to a fresh consciousness of life, Naples assumed a more gloomy aspect ; the Government instead of mitigating, redoubled its oppressions. The King showed himself without head or heart, incapable of understanding the times. Naples protected itself with *gens d'armes* and spies ; arrest followed arrest ; no concessions of a liberal nature were made, neither in 1846 nor until the summer of the following year. In the delusion that the

troops, fully equipped, and the *gendarmerie* were sufficient to hold in check the popular hatred, which had been growing in strength for decades and been increased by so many victims, this hatred was allowed to increase and was even encouraged by the new friendship with Russia, whose Emperor Nicholas had shortly before (in 1845) paid a visit to the Court of Naples. For a considerable time repeated attempts at revolt had been stifled, and had each in turn been seen to pass away, as acts of romantic folly. Fresh enterprises of the kind were now to be vigorously prevented; General Statella being sent with troops into Calabria, which was disquieted by banditti and was the centre of all revolutionary activity on the continental side of the straits.

A revolt first broke out in Messina. A band of brave youths had conspired to seize the Commandant of the city and the principal officers on the occasion of a festival; after a short encounter in the streets, the foolhardy attempt ended in the imprisonment or flight of the conspirators. The revolt, however, was not isolated, but on the contrary was connected with other risings which were to break out in Calabria and Sicily in the summer of 1847. The brothers Domenico and Gian Andrea Romeo, of Reggio, were elected as the leaders for Calabria. After these enterprising men had come to an agreement with the conspirators in Naples, at the head of a body of insurgents, they attacked Reggio and forced the little garrison of the fortress to lay down its arms. This took place at the end of August. Nowhere was the cry for a republic

raised; the constitutional King and Pius IX. were still acclaimed, the Papal flag was even planted on the Citadel. But the movement remained local. True that the people of Reggio and the district took part; but without the co-operation of the remaining towns and without the rise of the masses in the province, the insurrection must necessarily die out, as the earlier movements at Aquila, Salerno and Cosenza had done. And scarcely had two days passed, when on the news of the revolt at Reggio, two ships-of-war appeared before the rebellious town. It surrendered after a short resistance. The leaders retired to the mountains, intending with the co-operation of the rest of the insurgents, to incite the inhabitants of the interior; the troops, however, overpowered these bands, and after Domenico Romeo, a man of lofty courage, had fallen in fight, his brother Gian Andrea surrendered himself into the hands of the royalists. Happier than the companions of his fortunes before him, his sentence was commuted to the galleys and he was destined soon after to play a prominent rôle.

The revolt in Calabria had been more important than any that had taken place since 1820. Even though the success was merely transitory, a town had at least been overpowered, a provisional Government installed, and after the insurrection had broken out on August 31, it had not been repressed until the end of October. Its connection with the Italian movement and the circumstance that it had placed itself under the banner of Pius IX. and had thus been endowed with a sacred character



in the eyes of the people, must have made it appear doubly dangerous to the Government. All penal trials were made additionally severe; torture was even applied to prisoners; innumerable persons were torn from their families both in the capital and in the provinces, and never did del Carretto's and Campobasso's rule show itself more appalling than after the revolt at Reggio. This rule, however, already neared its end. For the excitement of the people—no longer to be controlled—broke out in a movement of the masses in the capitals themselves. The revolts in the provinces had been merely of an isolated character; things took a different shape when the populace in Naples overpowered the Government.

The farther the Roman reforms under Pius ix. spread, the greater became the longing to advance in equal measure. The news that the Pope had granted a *Consulta* of State fell like a spark into Naples and Palermo. The police no longer made arrests, for amid the daily tumults they would have been obliged to seize thousands of every rank. With each day increased the excitement; demonstrations of every kind, deputations of the Sicilians, of the Calabrese and Neapolitans followed in succession, and the cries of "*Viva l'Italia! Viva Pio Nono! Viva i Siciliani!*" were heard incessantly.

It was necessary to give way. Already in August the King had abolished the tax on flour and reduced the duty on salt; at length he changed the Ministry. Niccolo Santangelo and Ferdinando Ferri retired; del Carretto remained, as also Pietracatella. The populace daily surrounded the royal palace shouting,

“Reform! Reform!” Deputations daily arrived from all parts of the kingdom, daily tidings of threatening movements in the cities and provinces. Naples was in a state of feverish excitement. On December 14 the populace flocked to the Piazza della Carità. Innumerable swarms of all conditions, some decorated with the Italian national colours, huzzaed for Pio Nono, Leopold of Tuscany and the Sicilians, and shouted for reform and the Constitution. The military, strengthened by reinforcements from Salerno and Nola, stood ready for action, the castle was surrounded with loaded guns. Again wholesale arrests took place, and the fact that some of those seized by the police were young men of the highest rank, such as Prince Caracciolo, the Duke of San Donato, the Duke of Albaneto and others, showed the people that even among the highest nobility, liberalism had found adherents. The University and the chief educational institutions were closed; some thousands of youths belonging to the provinces were obliged to leave the city. The excitement consequently increased; any day a blow might be expected. It did not fall in Naples, however, but in Sicily, where, by its courageous uprising, Palermo was to give the signal to the rest of Europe for all those revolutions, which spread with electric rapidity, to demonstrate one after another the feebleness of that generation.

Of all the nations which at that time rose in the name of law and freedom, few were more worthy of sympathy, and none had been more deeply injured, than the Sicilian. None had so clearly defined an

object before its eyes: national independence, the Constitution of 1812. While throughout the rest of Europe, even in Italy, the peoples were bewildered by all sorts of ideas of a political or social nature advanced by different theoretic schools, which dividing their strength rendered any common success impossible, Sicily, in her isolation, remained undisturbed by all modern currents of thought. Feudalism had been abolished, without the socialistic idea having made its way; the nobility, closely allied with the clergy, in many cases distinguished by culture and patriotic services to learning, was the recognised champion of the national rights. The Constitution of 1812, the work of Lord William Henry Bentinck, had been suspended by Ferdinand I., and the last parliament of Sicily been dissolved on May 15, 1815. When in 1816 the same monarch seemed about arbitrarily to alter the Constitution, guaranteed by England, he had been warned and even threatened with intervention by Lord Castlereagh. The threats, however, did not proceed beyond letters, for the King was able unhindered to reduce the rights of Sicily, and on December 11, 1816, even to unite the island to Naples. The national army was abolished, the administration became Neapolitan, the offices were bestowed on Neapolitans, the taxes were arbitrarily raised. True that in the revolution of 1820 the Sicilians once more asserted their independence; but after Palermo was forced to open its gates to General Florestan Pepe, and his successor Colletta had sternly quelled the insurrection, the Government returned to its former course and pursued the

plan of transforming Sicily into a provincial part of the monarchy. Even the last remains of independence were to be destroyed. The country, oppressed by taxes, fell into poverty; the towns decayed. In the degradation of the island and in an artificially maintained ignorance, it was hoped to stifle all patriotic vigour.

In 1837 Ferdinand II., in consequence of the revolts occasioned by the cholera, had perpetrated on October 31 a further act of despotism: an interchange of appointments had been decreed between Naples and Sicily, so that without distinction Sicilians could be appointed here, Neapolitans there. The Sicilians were embittered by other grievances; although an Act of Parliament of 1813 had decreed that financial receipts should never exceed 1,847,685 ounces,<sup>1</sup> they had nevertheless been increased threefold. There were in addition indirect taxes; the small landowners consequently found themselves taxed to the amount of 32 per cent.

Two scourges had lacerated the island, the cholera and del Carretto. This man, whom a Tiberius himself would have appointed to the foremost office of police, conducted his shameless rule in the most unheard-of manner. The Sicilians were driven to despair under the threefold oppression of the collectors, the police and the soldiers. Even the governorship, a semblance at least of national recognition, whereby Sicily was distinguished from the provinces of the mainland, was reduced to a military appointment. The Count of Syracuse, brother

<sup>1</sup> [The *onza* was a Sicilian coin.—TRANSLATOR.]

of the King, known for his eccentric whims, which recall those of the Russian Grand-duke Constantine, was the last Viceroy of royal blood. On his recall in 1835, he was succeeded by generals. In 1839 the King even appointed a Swiss, General Tschudy, as Lieutenant of the island; Tschudy was succeeded by General Vial, and in 1840 Vial by de Maio.

The relations of Sicily towards the Bourbon dynasty at the end of 1847 resembled those preceding the Vespers. Both periods were characterised by the like oppression and the like aims, and each time the suppression of a Constitution gave rise and justification to the revolution. The two revolutions moreover display numerous other points of resemblance. On each occasion the reigning dynasty was declared to have forfeited the throne, and a foreign ruler was proclaimed king. The results were, however, widely different. The revolution of 1848 which began with enthusiasm, with the united determination and consent of all the towns and districts, and was further greatly favoured by the conditions of the time, ended with a feebleness that awakes astonishment; it was defeated by a military force of little more than twenty thousand men, we may even assert by a few brave regiments of Swiss.

During the autumn of 1847 Naples seethed in passionate excitement; the ferment was especially great at Palermo, where Maio was Viceroy and Vial Commandant of the royal troops. The populace, at whose head stood the most prominent members of the nobility, Ruggiero Settimo, Spedalotto,



Serra di Falco, Scordia, Pallagonia, Grammonte, Pantellaria, had sent representatives to Naples to demand the restoration of their ancient guaranteed rights. The same political demonstrations took place both in Palermo and Naples, the same threatening attitude of the troops and incessant arrests. When no concessions followed on the part of the Government, the Sicilians with chivalrous candour openly declared war. The revolution was formally announced by means of placards, speeches and deputations. It was not in any wise to bear the character of a conspiracy, not to be regarded as a mutiny, but the deliberate act of the people rising *en masse*. It was fixed for January 12, 1848, Ferdinand's birthday. Were the desires of the people not granted before this date, war was then to begin.

On the morning of the appointed day, Palermo actually arose. The storm bells rang, the people rushed from their houses, nobles, monks, priests as well as citizens, artisans and fishermen, the former well armed, the rest provided with such weapons as were at hand, spears, fish-harpoons, hunting knives. Shouts of "*Evviva Pio Nono!*" "*Evviva la lega italiana!*" "*Evviva Santa Rosalia!*" filled the air. The troops retired. Dragoons and artillery surrounded the royal palace, which commanded the Cassaro, the principal street. About 2 p.m. barricades arose on all sides, but no fighting as yet took place. Ready prepared, the opposing forces faced each other. The following morning the guns began to fire from the palace. In the afternoon shells were thrown from the fortress of Castellamare.

Colonel Gros, a resolute Swiss, who was in command, had instructions to throw a bomb into the city every five minutes ; he only threw one every fifteen. Fighting was carried on fiercely in the streets, where the populace, even in the midst of their daily occupations, always seem in a state of feverish excitement. True that the united protests of all the consuls of foreign Powers, as also of the Commander of the *Bull-dog*, the British vessel in the harbour, brought about at least a diminution of the bombardment of the city with bombs and rockets, and at length secured a truce of twenty-four hours, during which foreigners might escape by sea. But the struggle began afresh on the expiration of the time. The courage of the inhabitants showed itself worthy of their ancestors ; vast numbers of Benedictine monks were seen amongst the ranks, and priests held aloft cross and banner amid a shower of bullets. Order was exemplary ; no excess was committed, no theft that popular justice did not immediately punish with death. No act of violence on the side of the people took place during the first days of enthusiasm ; even the wounded soldiers were carried to the hospital. Later on, however, personal, as well as common, hatred began to demand its victims ; scenes of hideous vengeance occurred ; the troops were also furious, irritated by their untenable position and the desperate strain. They stormed the convents, murdered the Benedictines, threw both living and dead out of the windows on the pavement below.

While fighting was carried on in the streets, the

leaders issued a proclamation setting forth the causes of the revolution. For thirty years Parliament had not been summoned ; to the absolutism which had arbitrarily suppressed the ancient laws of the State, succeeded the misery of the land-owners and the decline of industry. In vain had the people protested to England in the year 1816, England having in 1812 guaranteed the political statute of Frederick II. of Aragon in its new form ; vain also the revolts of 1831, 1837, 1847 ! But with the reforms of Pius IX. the hour of deliverance had arrived ; the Sicilians had risen to reconquer their rights and to restore their native island to the list of prosperous countries. " Sicilians, did not our forefathers drive away the tyrannical Charles of Anjou and defend Frederick of Aragon against the whole of Europe ? What can the arms of Ferdinand II. achieve if an entire nation remain firm in its resolution ? The die has fallen ; let us fulfil our sacred enterprise. Long live Pius IX. ! Long live Sicily ! Long live our Italian brothers ! "

Meanwhile the steamer *Vesuvius* had brought the news of the outbreak of revolution to Naples. The Government sent six thousand men, on ten steamers, under command of General Desauget. On landing on January 15 in the harbour of the rebellious city, they found the populace masters of all the public squares, the troops still in possession of all the forts, as also of the castle. A temporary Government of thirty men belonging to the uppermost class had been installed, and the countryfolk had been requisitioned as an auxiliary force. That the revolution was a rising of the people, and not,



as has been asserted, a mere contrivance of the ambitious clergy and of the nobility, jealous of their privileges, is shown by the fact that it was joined by all the cities. At Syracuse, Girgenti, Noto, Catania, Trapani, Milazzo, Caltanissetta the Neapolitan troops were defeated, a committee of the people was installed, and its annexation to the Junta of Palermo proclaimed. On January 15 this Junta divided itself into four committees: one for defence under Prince Pantellaria, one for the care of the commissariat under the Marchese Spedalotto, one for Finance under Marchese Rudini, and one for Affairs of State under Ruggiero Settimo, a noble veteran, who had formerly been Minister in the Sicilian Government and who, on account of his liberal principles, enjoyed the highest popularity. He now took his place at the head of the people.

Desauget's troops had united with the garrison, and now nine thousand men strong, had resumed the fight and the bombardment. Hostilities and negotiations were carried on simultaneously. Duke Maio and Spedalotto, Prætor of the city, that is President of the Senate of Palermo, sent embassies to one another; the populace demanded the Constitution of 1812, also that Parliament should be immediately summoned. The Count of Aquila, brother of the King, who had arrived with the troops on the 15th, after a sojourn of only twenty-four hours, had returned to Naples with two frigates to represent the state of things to the King and to exhort him to concessions. The Count already returned on January 20 with the decrees of reform of January 18, which the King, terrified by the turn of events,

had allowed to be extorted from him. Therein a separate administration and legal system were secured to the Sicilians, the decree of October 31, 1837, was abolished, the Count of Aquila was appointed Viceroy, and a new Ministry under Lucchesi Palli was announced.

But the provisional Government declined these concessions; it boldly demanded the removal of the troops, the surrender of all the forts and the summoning of Parliament on the basis of the Constitution of 1812. Enthusiasm shrank at nothing; it was determined to obtain whole, not half, measures. The strife began with renewed violence. Fighting was carried on by each side with the utmost ferocity; the soldiers suffered terribly; exhausted by hunger, bad weather and constant fighting, they began to waver. When, on January 25, the castle itself fell into the hands of the people, Desauget recognised the impossibility of subduing Palermo or even defending himself; he requested an armistice, in order to send the remainder of his troops back to Naples. But as the people made the surrender of Castellamare a condition of the armistice, the royal troops withdrew on the night of January 29 beyond Bagaria to Solunto, whence with difficulty they escaped by steamer. On landing at Naples, miserable, unkempt, unshod, and tattered as after some prolonged campaign, they announced the victory of the Sicilians and the incapacity of the Government to effect anything by force of arms.

The revolution in Sicily indeed made rapid progress. The royalists had vanished; only the citadels of Palermo and Messina, the latter of

which was defended by General Pronio, and the fortress of Syracuse remained in their hands; all the remaining country was liberated, and was actively engaged in organising itself on national lines.

In Naples itself report magnified the events. The people gave way to unconcealed rejoicings, and surged through the streets with shouts of "Sicily and the Constitution!" Already the blood-red flag waved over the fortress of S. Elmo, and alarm signals resounded in every barrack. Who could hold Naples in check? The King, surrounded by his counsellors and foreign diplomatists, wavered and then gave way. Already on the evening of January 26 he dismissed del Carretto, the Minister of Police, who, as he was leaving the palace in the company of Duke Filangieri, was arrested on the staircase, led away in profound silence and taken on board a vessel that was lying ready and that sailed for Leghorn that night. No intercourse with land was granted him; he was not allowed to take leave of his friends or dependants; and the King merely sent three thousand ducats after him.

All the Ministers handed in their resignations. The Duke of Serracapriola, hitherto Ambassador in France, was made head of the new Cabinet, the remainder of the Ministers were appointed from men welcome to the people, such as Bozzelli, who had been known as a liberal from the time of the revolution of 1820, and who had suffered imprisonment and exile, such also as Bonanni, Dentice and Carlo Cianciulli, who undertook the post of Minister of the Interior. It has been asserted that these men only

accepted their posts on condition that the King would grant a Constitution. But recent information assures us that the King himself had already resolved to grant one. The decree of January 29 promised a House of Peers, to be appointed by the King, a Chamber of Deputies to be popularly elected on a property qualification, the responsibility of the Ministers and freedom of the press with repressive measures. The absolute King of Naples, utterly disconcerted by events, thus gave his country a Constitution before even Tuscany or Piedmont had received one. The sudden change had a magical effect. At a stroke the police disappeared; the exiles returned; the prisons surrendered their victims; the enslaved press showered pamphlets, *brochures* and satires on the ex-Ministers. The lowest class of the populace regarded the new system with distrust; the *lazzaroni*, the friends of the absolute monarchy, who had been accustomed under del Carretto to receive gifts of money, even rose with threats and assembled in a mob on the Mercato. The National Guard restored them to tranquillity. But with the bestowal of the Constitution parties were at once formed, and while on one side the Radicals—for the most part advocates, writers and enthusiastic doctrinaires—ranged themselves and entered on an ardent course, the populace on the whole showed itself excited, it is true, by the novelty of things, but incapable of forming a political thought, and devoid of seriousness or genuine sympathy. The Neapolitans are children of a larger growth; even history like nature wears operatic decorations and runs its course like a piece

in a theatre, the side scenes of which are shifted by the police.

Wild transports of joy were indulged in ; emissaries hurried to disarm the provinces with the magic word " Constitution." A steamboat hastened to Palermo to tranquillise the Sicilians, who were still at war, and to order the Commandant of Castellamare to surrender the fort to the people. This was only done on February 5. Three days previously the General Committee had appointed itself an ordered Government under the presidency of Ruggiero Settimo. While in the island the new conditions took ever firmer hold, confidence in the national vigour waxed, as, with the recognition of the weakness of Naples, increased the overestimate of the popular strength. Nevertheless Messina still remained in the hands of the royalists ; for all the risings of the people that had hitherto taken place had not availed against the strength of the fortress, from the walls of which Pronio had showered a hail of bombs and rockets, while at the same time he made desperate sorties. That the Sicilians were not in a condition to take this fortress in the first impulse of their enthusiasm, must be a source of surprise. Messina was the heel of Achilles of their new freedom.

Meanwhile the Government of Naples found itself in the most evil plight. Incapable of attacking Sicily by force, still less inclined to recognise the demands of the islanders, it accepted England's mediation. Palmerston's Cabinet utilised the internal confusion of Naples, to weaken the kingdom, to interfere in its affairs and to gain a foothold



in Sicily. All eyes were turned to England. She had guaranteed the Constitution of Bentinck ; she was regarded as the natural ally of the Sicilian insurrection ; her fleet appeared before Palermo ; English arms and ammunition had been distributed in the city. English diplomacy urged the King to the utmost concessions. The King accepted Lord Minto's mediation between himself and his own Sicily, whose independent position was recognised. When the French Revolution of February threatened to overturn all European relations, and gave fresh emphasis to the demands of the nations, the Neapolitan Government yielded to the Sicilians everything it could possibly concede within the bounds of entire renunciation.

On March 6 the King consented to the immediate convocation of the Sicilian Parliament, in order that it " might adapt the Constitution of 1812 to the circumstances of the time." Meanwhile Ruggiero Settimo was nominated Viceroy, and a native Sicilian Minister appointed ; nevertheless Messina and Syracuse, as pledges, were to be yielded to the troops.

Had the Sicilian people calmly considered their feeble power of resistance and the insignificant means of war at their disposal, had they accepted the offers of mediation and been satisfied with their separate Parliament and their own Administration, under the protection of England and France, they would perhaps have retained the concessions they had won. But the easy victory of January, the contemptible weakness of the Bourbon dynasty, whose former perfidy the popular leaders were

constantly recalling, passion, hatred, national pride, the jealousy of the barons, and lastly the universal intoxication of victory throughout Europe, which seemed to herald a new epoch, stifled the voice of moderation. Sicily, which had been so often deceived, desired a definite separation. Lord Minto was received in Palermo with cold reserve; the English were regarded with no less distrust than the Neapolitans; Sicily demanded complete independence; would be satisfied with none but a viceroy of royal blood, who was, however, to be practically a plenipotentiary of the national Parliament and recognised through its will. All offices were exclusively to be filled by Sicilians and without the ratification of the King; the army was to be Sicilian. The people demanded the surrender of Messina and Syracuse, yea, even that of a fourth part of the vessels and war supplies as national property. Finally Sicily was to be independently represented in the Italian Confederation.

It was in fact intended to leave the monarch only the title of King of Sicily, much in the same way as he still holds that of King of Jerusalem. As an ill-treated nation the Sicilians may have been justified in urging these demands, but unfortunately they lacked the strongest right, that of a people's strength, able to enforce its will by action.

The King solemnly protested against every act aimed at impairing the continuance of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies that had been sanctioned by the Congress of Vienna, or of reducing his own rights over the island. Behind him stood M. de Chreptowitch, the representative of the Czar,



before him Lord Minto. Affairs being in such a plight, it was resolved, very cleverly, to leave the Sicilians to themselves, and negotiations were carried on which led to no result. The new comedy *La Costituzione* was to be first played in the land on this side of the Faro.

The Constitution had been announced on February 10 ; on the 24th, in the Church of S. Francesco di Paolo, with great pomp and amid unbounded rejoicing, the King swore on the Gospels to maintain it, even as his grandfather Ferdinand I. had once sworn.

Soon after (on March 2) Serracapriola's Ministry resigned, and a new Cabinet was formed under Cariati in its stead. Carlo Poerio, the liberal advocate, who had but just shaken off the fetters of del Carretto, was now Minister of Public Instruction ; Gian Andrea Romeo, but lately in chains on a galley, enjoyed high honours at Court, was appointed Intendant of the province of Principato Citeriore, and, as defender of the monarchy, was opposed to radicalism, which was growing ever more violent. On March 11 the Neapolitans were gladdened by the strangest spectacle : thirty carriages driven along the Piazza del Castello Nuovo, filled with the Jesuit fathers, who were going forth into exile. Even Monsignor Cocle, the King's all-powerful Confessor, had already vanished, and arrived at Malta in safety. For the rest, the removal of the Jesuits showed the moral condition of the people. For scarcely had they left the city, when the *lazzaroni*, rendered fanatical by monks and priests, went to the piazza in front of the palace and

with furious cries demanded the recall of the Jesuit fathers. They shouted Death to the Constitution and to the Liberals, who wished to deprive them of their religion and their saints, or to destroy their churches. It was not without difficulty that the National Guard quelled the tumult. These poor children of the moment and yet the most zealous adherents of the traditional system, understood as little of the Constitution as of the political movement in general. They remained devoted to the King; whenever he showed himself in public, they surrounded him, demanding arms in order that they might slay his enemies. "If we have no arms," they said, "we shall snatch the stones from the ground, and defend thee as our fathers defended thy grandfather."

Meanwhile the Neapolitan Government was drawn into the general movement. It was a question of the *Lega d'Italia*; delegates were to be sent to the Italian Congress in Rome, a force of auxiliaries dispatched to Lombardy to fight in the war for Italian independence. All was accomplished with great dexterity. As early as March 28, Schwarzenberg, the Austrian Ambassador at Naples, whose escutcheon had been torn down by the populace, was compelled to leave the city. On April 7, after a new Ministry had been formed under Carlo Troya, the King issued a pompous manifesto, in which he appealed to his people for the union of Italy. Regiments were immediately equipped for the war in Lombardy, and the command made over to General Guglielmo Pepe, the celebrated Carbonari leader of 1820. Volunteers

had already set forth, accompanied by the enthusiastic Princess Belgioioso. On April 27, however, eight thousand men in eight vessels went by sea to support the Italian cause in North Italy.

Scarcely had this taken place and the gaze been turned to the entire fatherland, when news arrived from Palermo that the Parliament there had unanimously pronounced the Bourbon dynasty for ever deposed and deprived of every right over Sicily. This astounding Act had been issued on April 13, and been signed by the Marchese Torrearsa as President of the Chamber of Deputies, by the Duke Serra di Falco as President of the Chamber of Peers, by Ruggiero Settimo as President of the Kingdom, and by Calvi, Minister of the Interior. Sicily had declared itself an independent State, the throne of which was to be offered to an Italian prince as soon as the Constitution should be organised.

This desperate decree produced mixed feelings among the people. The radicals rejoiced ; Palermo was illuminated for three nights in succession ; the royal statues were overthrown, that of Charles III. excepted ; the moderates, however, were appalled ; a division of parties and the reaction in the island itself was inevitable. Unmeasured hatred and fanatical passion, the pride of the higher nobility, hope in England and France, as well as in Piedmont, to whose King the people were ready to offer the crown, had led to the resolve. It was decided to enact the ancient Vespers once again. But the Sicilians were mistaken in the estimate of their own powers, as also in their hope of foreign aid.

The King replied to the Declaration of Inde-

pendence by a protest, in which he pronounced it null. The Parliament meanwhile had appointed a commission, which in a manifesto was to explain the motives for the deposition of the house of Bourbon to all civilised nations, and which was also intended to amend the Constitution of 1812. The preparations for the creation of a national army did not, however, advance with equal vigour. Pronio still held the citadel of Messina, and every attempt on the fortress was repulsed, until at length Gian Andrea Romeo, whom the King had himself dispatched, negotiated an armistice until May 15.

Things stood in this wise, when on this date a sudden change took place, which overthrew the revolution in Naples at a single blow. The Neapolitan Parliament was to have been opened on May 15. After the deputies had arrived from the provinces, a list of the fifty peers chosen by the King and the ceremonial to be observed on the opening of the Chambers, appeared on the 14th in the official newspaper. According to it, peers and deputies were to assemble in S. Lorenzo. The Mass ended, the King was to deliver the opening speech, after which the Oath of Fidelity to the Crown as also to the Constitution was to be taken. No sooner did this programme appear than a furious excitement arose. The deputies refused to take an oath that must necessarily limit beforehand the powers of the Chambers; the Radicals would not hear of a Chamber of Peers. The latter met on the night of the 14th-15th at Monteoliveto, 99 in number, among them over-enthusiastic nobles, such

as Ricciardi, Camaldoli, La Cecilia. They sat uninterruptedly, while they sent deputations to the presidents of the Ministries, demanding changes in the programme. The King refused. The Radicals, perhaps also agents of the Government, stirred up the people; threats were uttered; men talked of reinforcements of Romeo's Calabrese, of the intervention of the French, whose fleet under Baudin lay in front of Naples; a cry was raised for a republic and the abdication of the King. Barricades were erected during the night in the side streets of the Toledo, which was occupied by the National Guards, while the troops were drawn up in front of the palace. On the morning of the 15th the deputies assembled in the Municipio as a provisional Government and appointed a Committee of Public Safety. Any bloodless solution of the dissension was thus rendered impossible. Distrust of the Bourbon dynasty drove matters to extremities, and to this distrust, more than to the republican party, which was on the whole insignificant and devoid of support among the populace, is to be ascribed the catastrophe of May 15. The King yielded so far in the morning, that the Chamber of Peers was not to be opened and the formula of oath was to be changed, and it seemed as if the tumult had actually been appeased; some of the barricades were even abandoned, and the Swiss regiments returned to their barracks. But the revolutionists, the greater number of whom had flocked in from the Abruzzi, the Principato and Calabria, stirred up the rising by preventing the destruction of the barricades and erecting others.



Once more the deputies placed before the King as guarantee of his honest intention to observe the Constitution, the following conditions: abolition of the Chamber of Peers, surrender of all the forts to the National Guard, the removal of all troops to a distance of ten miles from the civic territory. On the other hand, the King appealed to the Constitution to which he had sworn, which the Chamber of Deputies had overthrown by their illegal resolutions, and which he would defend. It is true that the Constitution of February 10 had been overthrown by the deputies, and at the moment the Government was within its formal rights. It knew the weakness of the popular party, could reckon on the troops, and had therefore no hesitation in resuming the conflict with decision. The King showed himself prepared for extremities, and sent orders to the commandants of the forts to bombard the city when war had begun.

At 11 a.m. the first shot was fired; a man belonging to the National Guard shot a soldier; war began. The troops advanced against the barricades; the four Swiss regiments attacked them with bayonets at the charge. At the same time the Castel Nuovo fired grape-shot. For a time fighting was furiously carried on; but although the Radicals had turned the houses into fortresses and maintained a hot fire from windows, balconies and the openings of cellars, the barricades fell before the onslaught of the Swiss, who forced their way into the palaces, stabbing all whom they found carrying arms. In the afternoon the noise of war

had ceased in the lower part of the Toledo, while fighting was still carried on in S. Brigitta in Mercadello. Many palaces were in flames. Behind the Swiss raged the released crowds of *lazzaroni*, coming to sack the city, who forced a way into the houses and carried off everything on which they could lay hands. The night of May 15 over, the morning revealed a scene of terrible devastation: ruined palaces, barricades overturned in wild confusion, corpses and wounded lying promiscuously over one another, a tattered rabble laden with chattels and valuables of every kind, troops of prisoners led to the Castel Nuovo under the blows of clubs. The deputies had dispersed or been taken prisoners, others had fortunately escaped, such were Romeo, Pellicano, Scialoja, Saliceti; many on board the French vessels anchored in the harbour.

The Swiss had saved the throne. These hirelings of despotism have been reproached for their sanguinary cruelty towards the people, and even for the sack of the palaces during the 15th May; but in a declaration (published in Naples, June 7, 1848) the colonels of the four Swiss regiments have exonerated their men, refuting the accusations and asserting that on May 15 they fought not against the people but for the Constitution of February 10, to which they too had taken the oath.

On May 16 the King appeared on the balcony and thanked his deliverers; on the 17th he made a progress through the devastated streets of his beautiful Naples. He was surrounded by swarms of *lazzaroni*, who, waving the Bourbon flag, carrying the effigy of the Madonna del Carmine, with the



shout of " Santa Fede ! " congratulated the monarch and demanded permission to sack the city.

As early as the 16th the National Guard had been disbanded ; and ragged street-boys were seen dragging away their arms with cries of derision to the Army Headquarters. Naples was declared in a state of siege. At the same time appeared a royal decree, containing the solemn assurance that the Constitution sworn to would be uprightly maintained, dismissing the Chamber of Deputies and convoking a new one for July 1. Finally a fresh Cabinet was formed under Cariati, in which Bozzelli took the portfolio of the Interior, Prince Ischitella that of War and the Marine, Torella Agriculture and Commerce, General Carascosa Public Works, Paolo Ruggiero Finance, and Serracapriola was made President of the Council.

Thus Ferdinand II. issued triumphantly victorious from the war, more fortunate than his grandfather, who only rid himself of the burdensome Constitution by open perfidy and the armed power of the foreigner. Opinions concerning the 15th May are widely different : even though absolutism could never be honest in its attitude to the Constitution, it must nevertheless be acknowledged that the Neapolitan Government showed character, and in the beginning acted with moderation. The Radicals, badly organised and lacking the support of the people, for the most part, as in the rest of Europe also, unpractical men, presented the Government with the longed-for opportunity. The Government seized it with astuteness and energy, forced the popular party to appear as rebels, themselves as the

defenders of the Constitution ; easily conquered their adversaries, and then allowed the Constitution gradually to disappear. Comparing the year 1848 with 1820, we see that the revolution of the Carbonari was in its principle more definite, was consequently more lasting. It concerned itself with one question alone ; in 1848 the centre of the movement in Naples as in Germany and France was lost amid a thousand other questions. Hence the boundless weakness of the popular party and the fact that seldom have the beginnings of a revolution been more brilliant, the issues more pitiable.

The 15th May was productive of the most disastrous consequences for Italy. The recoil made itself felt in Lombardy at once. While King Ferdinand recalled his auxiliaries, the Lombard War reached a new crisis and the death-blow was dealt to the Italian efforts. The Neapolitan fleet, which had appeared before Ancona on May 5, blockaded Trieste and held the Austrian squadron in check, returned home, leaving Venice undefended towards the sea. The army under Pepe was likewise recalled. Even on its progress through the Papal States, it had moved with extraordinary dilatoriness ; many officers in the King's confidence having, under various pretexts, placed hindrances to the advance of the troops, so that the army was, comparatively speaking, a long time in reaching Bologna. A Neapolitan staff officer appeared there commanding it hastily to turn back. Pepe indeed disobeyed and led a small force farther across the Po, but almost the entire army returned home under General Statella to march against the insurgents in Calabria.

While fourteen thousand Neapolitans, on whom Lombardy had reckoned, turned their backs, the Roman general Durando, who confronted the Austrians under Nugent, could hold out no longer, and the plan of operations of the Piedmontese was thus also shattered.

More rapidly than the Neapolitans had advanced on Lombardy, did they now march against Calabria. For there the unfortunate war was to be continued, there the dispersed Chamber of Deputies intended to meet and to make Cosenza the centre of their activity. Four deputies, Ricciardi, Eugenio di Riso, Raffaele Valentini and Domenico Mauro, were to repair thither and summon the remaining members. Several thousand Calabrese had assembled; from Messina Ignazio Ribotti led some hundreds to the mainland. But scarcely had General Lanza advanced against Cosenza, when the Calabrese retreated and the Committee of Public Safety fled. Meanwhile Nunziante had landed at Pizzo, had received reinforcements at Monteleone and had marched to Campo Longo. Here the Calabrese bravely repulsed him, and the Neapolitans retired to Pizzo, where they committed wanton excesses. But unfortunately discord broke out among the leaders of the popular cause, more especially between Ribotti and Mauro. The Calabrian army dispersed; the Sicilians, who sought to get away by sea, were taken prisoners; the Committee of Public Safety, however, escaped to Corfu. The insurgents became bandits, and scattered among the mountains, rendered Calabria insecure. A disastrous anarchy was the consequence of the

Calabrian War, and barbarous cruelties, robbery, murder of landowners and crimes of every kind were committed in the province.

In the remaining provinces none but insignificant risings took place ; the cause of the people was lost. True that the Neapolitans were flattered by a semblance of constitutionalism, but this was merely because the reaction dared not venture all at a single stroke. The state of siege was removed on June 14 ; the National Guard was restored, and the elections for the new Chamber, which went entirely against the Government, took place. On July 1 Serracapriola opened the Parliament in the name of the King with a speech, in which he expressed the monarch's sorrow for the bloody events of May 15, and directed the attention of the Chambers to the administration of the communes and provinces, to the National Guard, the finances, and to public education.

The Government having safely quelled the disturbances on this side the Faro, and now become mistress of the situation, turned all her energy to the subjugation of Sicily. Nunziante's army was already collecting opposite Messina at Reggio, and the fleet with the Swiss regiments made ready to leave Naples. The Sicilian Parliament on July 11 resolved to offer the crown to the noble-minded Duke of Genoa (second son of the King of Sardinia), who as Albert Amadeus was proclaimed King of the Sicilians with a civil list of 243,030 ducats. A deputation conveyed the resolution to the Duke at Turin, but was dismissed with an undecided answer. The Prince (who died early in the year

1855) recognised the insecure position of affairs in Sicily, and Sardinia had to renounce for the time a step so adventurous.

Thus the month of August came to an end ; the royal troops, ten thousand strong, embarked under Filangieri at Naples in thirteen steamers and twenty gunboats, and after having first touched at Reggio, appeared opposite Messina on September 2. This city, in which a provisional Government was sitting, was defended by about sixteen thousand men of the National Guard, a force insufficient to repel the twofold attack, that of the enemy about to land and that in the fortress. While Pronio opened fire in the morning and showered projectiles on the city, the troops effected a landing at the roadstead Marco Grosso on September 5. The people of Messina are a valiant race, perhaps the most energetic in all Sicily, and on this occasion they defended themselves with great courage. They were obliged, however, to yield one post after another to the enemy, and after an honourable struggle Messina found itself compelled to surrender. Filangieri entered the terribly devastated city on September 7, and thus this strong Messina passed into the hands of the enemy in the course of three days. Here also the similarity of the struggle with that after the Sicilian Vespers is apparent. In the Middle Ages the collective forces of Charles of Anjou, who in person commanded his army, proved insufficient to subdue Messina, where, in spite of unparalleled famine and the exhaustion of the citizens, the valiant hero Alaimo appeared as victor in innumerable sorties from April until September



12, 1282, when Peter of Aragon, to whom the Parliament of Palermo had offered the crown, relieved the heroic city.

The fall of Messina produced a discouraging effect on Palermo. The Parliament now turned once again to England, in the hope of at length obtaining recognition. The English Cabinet indeed warned the King of Naples against a war with Sicily, and to its admonitions were united the representations of France by means of Rayneval, its Ambassador. Negotiations were carried on through Admirals Baudin and Parker, whose fleets were watching the island, and a truce was first of all concluded.

While weapons rested, nothing more remarkable took place at Naples than another prorogation and another summoning of Parliament : a spectacle on which the people began to look with indifference. The Neapolitans, ever eager for something new, are easily bored. Of nine thousand registered voters, scarcely one thousand were forthcoming in November, and after the Chambers had been opened, they were immediately adjourned until February 1, 1849. The city had gradually returned to its former aspect ; the police again filled the streets ; the military Commission, which had to try the prisoners taken on May 15, developed the greatest energy ; even Monsignor Cocle had already returned from Malta smiling to Naples on October 2.

But a singular event was soon to rivet the eyes of the world ; an event, such as had not taken place for centuries, and which promised to entail more lasting consequences than it actually did. On November 27 Count Spaur appeared in the palace



at Naples and handed the following letter to the King :—

“SIRE !—The momentary triumph of the enemies of the Sacred Chair and of religion has compelled me, the Supreme Head of the Catholic Church, to leave Rome. I do not know to what corner of the earth the will of the Lord, to whom in all humility I commend my soul, will conduct my fugitive steps ; meanwhile I have fled to your Majesty’s dominions with some truly devoted persons. I do not know of what nature your views with regard to me may be, and in my uncertainty hold it a duty, to inform you by my envoy, Count Spaur, the Bavarian Minister to the Sacred Chair, that I am ready to leave Neapolitan territory, should my presence in your Majesty’s dominions be a subject of fear or political differences.—PIO IX.”

At 7 a.m. on the 28th Ferdinand with the royal family left by steamer for Gaeta. The same Pope, who by his reforms had given rise to the Italian movement, whose name had been raised as a revolutionary cry in all the insurgent provinces, arrived as a fugitive to entreat the hospitality of Naples. The Court received him with enthusiasm. He was conducted to the Government palace at Gaeta, where he installed himself, and henceforth this Gibraltar of Naples became the Coblenz of Italy, the rallying-point of the reaction.

After, as we have already observed, owing to the mediation of England and France, a truce had been concluded between Naples and Sicily, negotiations regarding the fate of the island had been in progress.

The King yielded so far to the representatives of the two foreign courts that he placed an Ultimatum before the Sicilians ; he offered them a Constitution on the basis of that of 1812 ; a royal prince or a Sicilian as Governor ; a separate internal Administration : Sicily and Naples were, however, to have an army and navy in common, and in all foreign affairs the island was only to be represented through Naples. He finally offered an amnesty, but made an exception of forty-five persons, who were to be removed from the island.

The foreign admirals brought this highly favourable Ultimatum to the Parliament at Palermo. But some of the members had already gone too far, others put no trust in the faithless King, who had already suppressed the Constitution at Naples. It was also recognised that the concessions contained much that would necessarily nullify the Constitution ; the Sicilian nobility more especially feared the loss of their position, as the King's attitude implied that he would himself nominate the peers. Parliament replied on March 20, 1849, with a summons to a general rising. The summons ran :—

“ Sicilians ! The cry for war is to us a cry of joy ! The 29th March, the day on which hostilities with the despot of Naples begin, will be greeted by us with the same delight as was January 12th, since we can purchase freedom with the price of blood. The peace offered you was disgraceful. It destroyed with one blow all the benefits acquired by the revolution. You have merited the attention of the whole of Europe, but if you had been less jealous of your rights, if you had again submitted to the

treacherous despotism of a tyrant, what would Europe have said? Sicilians, although victory is uncertain, yet a nation like an individual, whose honour is at stake, has the highest right to sacrifice itself. It is better to bury ourselves amid the ruins of our native country, than to afford Europe the spectacle of unexampled cowardice. Death is preferable to slavery. But no! we shall conquer; we trust in our sacred cause and in the strength of our arms. Look at the despair and the ruins of Messina! War is for us the symbol of revenge and of filial piety. A single town of Sicily sighs under the yoke of the enemy of freedom. To Arms! Victory or death!"

Was there anything, however, to lend emphasis to this manifesto? What were the means of defence? Who were the generals and leaders of the people? When the Magyars in like circumstances arose, astonished Europe beheld a horde of men endowed with talent for organisation, generals and leaders, who in any age would perhaps have been conspicuous for military genius, spring as it were from the ground. But the Sicilians had not a single prominent man to put forward. And the fact shows how enervated this gifted people had become during its long servitude under the Bourbons.

Mieroslawski, a Pole of doubtful ability, was leader of the so-called Sicilian national army, which scarcely amounted to twenty thousand men, among whom were many foreigners—Poles and Frenchmen. No wonder that the War of Independence ended so pitiably! Never anything but skirmishes, scarcely any fighting on a larger scale.

On April 4 the hostilities began, and again it was the Swiss who won the victory for absolutism. Filangieri advanced from Messina first to Taormina, which celebrated town, in its almost impregnable position, barred the highway, and here consequently an unconquerable resistance was expected. But although the place was defended by four thousand men with nine guns, it was stormed and taken in a few hours. Filangieri immediately advanced and occupied Aci Reale, where the people willingly received him. Hence it is only a few miles to Catania, at the foot of Mount Etna. The Sicilians had collected at Catania, and a struggle for life and death was consequently awaited. On April 5, 1849, the city was attacked both by land and sea; the men-of-war drew up at the harbour, the entrance to which was defended by only three batteries. On the 6th, army and fleet advanced simultaneously, while twenty thousand Sicilians and foreigners, regular troops and militia, defended the barricaded city, which seemed threatened with destruction by the bombardment. The foreign legion fought valiantly, and the Catanians made a heroic defence; they were, however, forced to yield. The Swiss under Muralt took the gate of S. Agata by storm and forced their way into the city, when terrible scenes took place in the streets, slaughter, burning and robbery, such as had been witnessed at Naples and Messina. The Strada Etnea, the most beautiful street in Catania, was utterly laid waste; even the celebrated museum of Biscari was sacked, and suffered the loss of a great part of its valuable collection.

Catania having fallen, Mieroslawski made another attempt from Regalbutto to drive out the Neapolitans, but defeated at the spurs of Mount Etna, he escaped with the remainder of his troops into the interior of the island. Hereupon Syracuse, Augusta and Noto surrendered without striking a single blow. The whole of the east coast had been conquered in a few days, and Filangieri could now direct his march to Palermo.

Here Parliament, on receiving the news that all these strong points had fallen into the enemy's hands, stood steeped in utter dismay. The populace grew uneasy; voices of despair made themselves heard on every side; few seriously contemplated a resistance. Even Castro Giovanni, the ancient Enna, where Byzantines and Saracens in former times had maintained themselves so long, was occupied. The embarrassment was unbounded. It thus came to pass that the Ministry laid before Parliament a proposal of submission. The House of Peers accepted it unanimously; the Chamber of Deputies by sixty votes against thirty, and this being done, Admiral Baudin was implored to undertake negotiations. When Filangieri's troops had already reached Caltanissetta, and were about to advance on Palermo, the general was met by a deputation, amongst whom were the Prince of Pallagonia, the Marchese di Rudini, Count Lucchesi Palli, with the assurance that Palermo would make unconditional submission and would no longer place any opposition to the entry of the royal forces. True, the Radicals had risen under Scordati's leadership, had appointed a provisional Government, had made preparations



for defence, and on May 8 and 9 there was a collision with the troops, who were approaching from Monreale. The wildest anarchy, however, prevailed in the city. A quarrel between the Foreign Legion and the Sicilians had broken out. Parliament itself had dissolved, and three thousand persons had taken refuge on board English and French vessels. Filangieri meanwhile remained some days in front of Palermo. He proclaimed an amnesty from which forty-five people were excluded, among them Ruggiero Settimo, Serra di Falco, the Marchese Torrearsa, Mariano Stabile, Principe Scordia. Hereupon he advanced on May 15, the anniversary of the Neapolitan revolution, into disarmed Palermo.

In this pitiable way ended the rising of the Sicilians. They had reckoned falsely. England had been compelled to leave them to themselves. The heart and soul of the people were no longer in the revolution. The nobility and clergy awoke distrust by the selfishness of their aims; leaders as well as means were lacking, for both the country and the towns were impoverished and exhausted.

The very day that Palermo fell, King Ferdinand stood—so marvellous was the change of events—with an army ready for action on Papal territory, in his headquarters at Albano and in sight of Rome. For from Gaeta in the spring the Pope had called on all the Catholic powers to reduce rebellious Rome to submission by force of arms and to reinstate him in his own dominions. While the French, at variance with their own republican Constitution, lay encamped under Oudinot before Rome, while the Austrians occupied Bologna and the Spaniards



landed at Porto d'Anzio, the King had advanced with 16,000 men and 72 guns.

This campaign remained devoid of laurels ; but a little more and the brave Garibaldi would have routed the Neapolitans in the encounter at Palestrina on the 9th and in that on the 16th of May at Velletri. After the battle of Velletri the King hastily turned in retreat to his own dominions, followed by the republicans of Rome, who, braver and more persistent than the Sicilians, were only to be overcome after a severe resistance by the French.

With the fall of Sicily on May 15 and that of Rome on July 3, 1849, ended the revolution in South Italy, and all that we have further to relate are merely the dire consequences of all unsuccessful popular revolts, courts martial, military executions, trials and reactionary measures.

As regards Sicily, the pledges given by Filangieri to the people of Palermo were not kept. The promise that a royal prince should be made Governor was not ratified by the King ; on the contrary, he made Filangieri Viceroy, while as a reward for his military performances he bestowed on him the title of Duke of Taormina. Nunziante, the victor of Calabria, and Statella, who had led the Neapolitan troops back from the Po, became generals under him. Sicily returned to its former conditions. Previously, however, Don Giovanni Carrisi, a Sicilian, was appointed Ministerial Secretary for the affairs of the island, and had to remain beside the King, and in conformity with the resolution of September 27, 1849, a Sicilian *Consulta* was appointed, which

opened its sittings on February 28, 1850. A terrible burden now oppressed the impoverished people; not only were the former taxes reimposed, but fresh taxes were added: a comprehensive stamp tax and even a window tax. All industries fell to decay; banditti made the roads unsafe; there were not hands to cultivate the soil, for such men as had not been killed in the war, had fled or been carried off to prison. Many of the leaders had escaped in safety on board English or French vessels. Ruggiero Settimo had fled to Malta, others to Paris, London or Corfu; many, however, had been captured by the police, who scoured country and towns to dislodge deputies, and force them to a declaration, by which they revoked the decree that pronounced the Bourbons to have forfeited the throne. A like search took place for arms. The misery of the year 1837 was insignificant compared to the system of terror under which Sicily sighed after its latest revolution. While all the promises, even that of the amnesty, were revoked, the island reverted to the conditions of 1837; it became a Neapolitan province.

In Naples itself the Constitution gradually died out; after the Chambers were dissolved, on March 14, 1849, they were never again convoked. The Constitution still figured in the title of the official newspaper, *Giornale costituzionale delle due Sicilie*, until on May 21, 1850, the word "*Costituzionale*" also vanished. Here and there, in the Abruzzi and in Calabria, after effects of the revolution still took place; the police, however, sufficed to repress them.

The absolute monarchy was restored. The King

was no longer seen in Naples, for after May 14 he dwelt almost constantly at Gaeta, which Pius IX. had made his abode until September 4, 1849, when, leaving on board the steamer *Tancred*, he removed his dwelling to the Castle at Portici. The events of his sojourn there and in Naples are related in the history of the Church; and we shall content ourselves with the mention of one institution alone, that was there founded under his eyes. The idea had already arisen at Gaeta of establishing a great Catholic organ, to serve as a bulwark against the democratic press and all revolutionary tendencies. Thus arose at Naples in 1850 the *Civiltà Cattolica*, under the direction of that Padre Curci who, before the outbreak of the revolution, had edited the periodical, *Scienza e fede*, and of the Jesuits Bresciani and Trapello. This cleverly directed organ, which a year later was removed from Naples to Rome, still exists and fights with all its weapons against liberty. It appears the first and third Sunday in the month, each number containing many-sided articles, political reviews of a general character, a contemporary survey of international affairs, even novels such as the *Ebreo di Verona* by Bresciani, which first appeared in its pages, and which has for its subject the Italian revolution of 1848. In the beginning of 1855 this periodical offended the King of Naples, it was said on account of certain articles, which appeared only in a few copies, and the contents of which are unknown. Curci, the editor, was obliged to retire; the Jesuit order even seemed to be threatened with expulsion from Naples; the differences, however, were adjusted.

After Pius IX. had baptized or confirmed some princes and princesses of the Neapolitan royal family and had presented the Queen with the Golden Rose, he journeyed on April 4, 1850, from Portici past Caserta; revisited Gaeta, the cathedral of which he raised to the rank of a Metropolitan Church, and in company of the King and the Prince of Calabria, reached Fondi. Here, on the frontier of the kingdom, he took a tearful leave of his host and thanked him for the hospitality that Naples had afforded him in his misfortunes, then continued his journey, and on April 12 entered Rome by the same gate, that of S. Giovanni, through which he had fled on November 24, 1848.

The King returned to Caserta, where he remained, while scenes took place in his capital that filled the country with lamentations. For now began the wholesale persecution of deputies and liberals, and a series of monstrous trials, that were continued until the year 1853. Nine ex-Ministers were arrested or had fled, fifty-four deputies were arrested or in exile; the number of prisoners was estimated at several thousands, and according to authentic accounts two thousand and twenty-four at least languished in the State dungeons in 1851.

Among the trials that against the sect known as "*Dell' unità italiana*" awoke the universal attention of Europe. The accusation was connected with an incident at Portici, where on September 16, 1849, a petard, which had exploded on the piazza of the palace while the Pope was delivering the blessing, caused a temporary disturbance. In this wanton circumstance was detected a demonstration



on the part of a secret society, a league supposed to have for its object the unity of Italy, the spread of Mazzini's doctrines, and that threatened the life of the King. A society actually did exist which had striven to promote Italian union, to which the Neapolitan Government itself had formerly given encouragement by manifestoes and actual consent. The police agents, however, accused many prominent personages as founders of, or participators in, a regicidal association, in order to ruin them, and among the accused was that Carlo Poerio, the advocate, who in 1848 was first Director of the Police, then Minister of Education, a man of entirely moderate opinions, who had not even take part in the republican rising of May 15. Among others were also Dragonetti and the Duke Caraffa d'Andria, and many other respected men, forming in all forty accused. The police were the accusers; a special Court of Justice sat under the presidency of Navarro. On June 1, 1850, the trial was begun; on December 5 sentence was passed; only four persons were acquitted; Fancittano, Settembrini and Agresti were sentenced to death, the rest to the galleys. For the three condemned to death, shortly before the time fixed for the execution, the sentence was commuted to the galleys. It is true that the Government of Naples did not carry out any death penalty for political offences; the sentence of imprisonment, however, was severer than death. The unfortunate men, among them Poerio, who was condemned to twenty-four years' imprisonment, were led to the harbour, where fettered in pairs like galley-slaves they were taken on board a

vessel and conveyed first of all to the prison at Nisita. A cry of indignation arose throughout the world. The Turin *Risorgimento* published detailed accounts of the hideous subterranean prisons at Nisita, Ventotiene and Tremiti, where the unhappy captives, men of the highest culture, former ministers, dukes and counts, were relegated to damp dungeons and riveted to one and the same place with ordinary criminals. The well-known letters of Gladstone to Lord Aberdeen, which confirm these accounts, evoked a veritable storm. The Neapolitan Government strove to justify itself in public explanations, wrote all manner of things; but even though many an exaggeration has come to light in the accounts, the lot of the political prisoners nevertheless was and is sufficiently terrible. Riveted in pairs to a chain six feet long, besides the physical torture of their noisome dungeon, they endured incalculably greater moral agony. Some day probably the prison memoirs of one or other of these victims of the Neapolitan revolution of 1848 will come to light, to rival those of Silvio Pellico in the Spielberg.

The political trials in these circumstances knew no end. Those which were instituted everywhere in the provinces, above all in Calabria, were removed from the gaze of the world; those only that took place in the capital itself became the subject of discourse, such as that of the insurgents in May, and another that concerned the so-called *Setta Carbonaria militare*. To those sentenced to the galleys were added thousands who were either placed under police supervision, or were snatched



from their families in the provinces, to be sent into banishment on an island a hundred miles away.

In 1852 a fresh phantom of terror arose in sight of the Neapolitan Government : Josephianism and Muratism. After the *coup d'état* accomplished in Paris, finally after the imperial election, which before any other power Naples hastened to acknowledge, every movement of the kind aroused suspicion and terror. True, the position of the Government of Naples is terrible ; it stands in constant expectation of a landing of Mazzini's followers, of the plans of the Muratists, of revolts at home in Calabria and Sicily, where now at one place, now at another, at Cosenza, Messina, Palermo, Girgenti, secret associations and outbreaks are detected. A conciliatory policy is not to be thought of. It is true that the Government pacified Messina in February 1852 by the concession of a free port. The King himself travelled through Sicily and promised to construct new roads ; he issued a partial amnesty in his kingdom, when more than two hundred political prisoners were pardoned ; it was even reported that he would grant a Constitution. But the hatred of the Sicilians is implacable, and the Radical parties in the kingdom are irreconcilable. The condition of Naples is the same to-day as it was after the year 1837, perhaps even worse than it was then. While no requirement receives satisfaction, and while political passion is fanned by the excessive absolutism of the reaction, Naples goes forward to encounter a greater revolution, which it will be impossible to avert.



NAPLES IN 1853



## NAPLES IN 1853

### I

SINCE the Revolution of 1848 Rome has become even more silent than the character of the city would lead us to expect: gaiety and joy seem to have vanished from the people; the propertied class remains quietly indoors; the working class is cowed. Popular festivals grow fewer and fewer; the Carnival is on the wane; even the hitherto so joyous October festival, that drew the populace outside the gates into the open country, and was celebrated with wine-cup and dancing, has almost disappeared. Rome is a vast ruin of civilisation, through which nothing passes but processions of clergy, and is enlivened solely by the clang of bells and by church music. All life seems to proceed from the Curia, the cardinals, priests and monks alone. The people are reduced to the condition of spectators. Contemplation is everything; whether the object be the Roman ruins, the Gallery of the Vatican, a function in S. Peter's or in the Sistine Chapel, where the Pope and cardinals dispose themselves in a group in tranquil attitudes, forming as it were a picture on which people gaze, as were it already conveyed to canvas. Even in the Corso, where the

Roman gravitates morning and evening, he does not move for the sake of movement, he merely finds his way there to admire the beautiful women in their carriages driving up and down.

Now for Naples. Here the feverish stir of vitality, the universal and incessant intercourse of the entire populace are altogether astounding. The city appears in continuous revolution; nothing is stationary; everything in motion, streaming with the flood of life. Equally great is the bustle at the harbour, the quays, the markets, in the Toledo, and the traveller who thinks to escape from the turmoil at Capodimonte, at the Vomero or at Posilippo only finds himself surrounded by a fresh chaos of seething humanity. He finds here that he has neither time nor space. Reflection is impossible. Wherever he may be, his faculties are engaged in a constant war of self-defence. Even the radiance of the sea and coast is a source of disquiet, dazzling the eye and exciting the imagination. Not even in the depth of night has the ear repose from the sound of voices and the roll of carriages.

I had gone from Castel S. Elmo to the Convent of S. Martino. This princely building of the Benedictines, almost without a rival in splendour or situation, stands proudly above Naples on the Vomero, enjoying an overwhelming view of the vast bay, its islands and the city which stretches from Posilippo to the foot of Vesuvius. Here I thought that I might calmly survey a silent Naples. But even at this height the roar of the city reached me in a continuous seething sound, as were the



people below engaged in the wild uproar of revolution. Do we ask why and what is the reason of this incessant shouting of a thousand voices, we find in the end that it is nothing more than pleasure, they have nothing to offer beyond amusement. A Benedictine standing near me assured me that out of this roaring sea of voices he could distinguish with certainty the cries of a few women selling fruit. And what is there that is not offered for sale? Is there anything produced by this beneficent soil, or by human industry, from the tunny fish in the bay and the peach on the tree to Pulcinella in the street, and the wooden saints fresh from the workshop, that has not its peculiar cry? Beautiful girls are the only wares not offered aloud; the pallid ruffian slinking along the Toledo, like the serpent of seduction, hisses as he passes: "*una ragazza, fresca, bella, bellissima, di tredici anni.*"

I remained long standing on the terrace of S. Martino listening to the voice of Naples below. If this people, I reflected, even in the customary exercise of its activities, in its ordinary everyday life, fills the air with such noise, what must be the roar when it shrieks in pain and anger, when these thousands of *lazzaroni* are roused in a street brawl and shout for spoil, as they did after May 15, 1848, when running after the carriage of King Ferdinand, they demanded liberty to plunder.

But all now moves merrily and peacefully on, and even with a certain order in apparently the utmost disorder. Individuals, as whole classes, although crossing one another a thousand times, move in accustomed directions on familiar paths,

like ants in their kingdom. Life on a large scale here circulates as does the blood ; each pulse-beat seems feverish to the point of delirium, but nevertheless is regular and normal.

The revolution as well as the moral overthrow of these last years has passed at Naples without leaving a trace. Life has swept all traces away, and there is scarcely anything to remind us of past convulsions but the warnings of the well-meaning, that we must be careful in talking and beware of spies, who are everywhere about, and did we not occasionally see ruined houses and palaces, more especially those on Medina and Monte Oliveto, on which the cannon of Castel Nuovo ruthlessly fired. And since the French Embassy demanded satisfaction for an insult inflicted on a French subject, the foreigner has even been permitted to wear a pointed hat and pointed beard. The French offender was seized in the street by the police and without more ado taken to a barber's, where for reasons of state his beard was removed. I was told by a state prisoner himself at Pozzuoli that some young Neapolitans have to expiate the crime of wearing a revolutionary hat and beard by banishment to an island or fortress.

No discordant note makes itself heard ; for this Elysian landscape is never out of tune ; nowhere do we see a sad or thoughtful face, these radiant skies are uninterrupted bliss. A thousand boats ride as before in the harbour ; a thousand carriages roll along the Chiaja ; Santa Lucia swarms with people eating oysters and macaroni ; fiddlers and harpers play at will on the Molo ; all the theatres are open ;

the blood of S. Gennaro flows as before ; no bomb has blown little Pulcinella into the air, and the Villa Reale is filled with foreigners scattering money abroad. The people live but in the present moment. They are essentially and at heart unpolitical, superficial and devoid of every virile passion, apart from which historic deeds are inconceivable. As long as Naples has existed, it has been ruled by foreigners—Byzantines, Normans, Swabians, Angevins, Spaniards, Bourbons, Joachim Murat. A characterless people, devoid of nationality, has accepted every ruler in turn ; and it is amusing to see in Naples to-day coins with the head of Murat circulating in peaceful currency with others bearing the head of Ferdinand.

Enlightened and thoughtful men who do not seek to disguise the character of the people are at their wits' end. One night driving from Portici back to Naples I was joined in my carriage on the way by a doctor, an energetic man of quick intelligence and good education. Having discovered my opinions, he unhesitatingly gave vent to his views on the present condition of Naples. They were so severe that I was surprised he should give them utterance in presence of a stranger. Italians, however, are passionately fond of discussing politics with foreigners and their candour knows no bounds. My companion had suffered persecution because he had been superficially acquainted with Poerio. I interrupted the conversation to point out the innumerable hanging lamps which had been lighted along the Marinella on account of a festival. "How fairylike," I exclaimed, "is the sight combined with

the wreath of lights in the harbour!" "Yes," said my companion, "it is, alas! too beautiful. Such is our people. They dance round every despot, if only he holds out a childish toy, an illumination, a many-coloured lamp before their eyes. Is it possible that this dazzled crowd should be capable of a serious thought?"

They are irritated, but they laugh. And probably nowhere in the world is despotism tolerated so complacently as in Naples, for the inexhaustible treasures of nature cannot be destroyed, the soil cannot be exhausted, the sky allows every pursuit to be carried on in public and permits an almost unbounded licence in morals. Here nature equalises all; she is nowhere more democratic than in Naples. Who can destroy this Magna Charta of liberty? The fact that about midday *lazzaroni* in unsightly groups, with tattered doublets, lay outstretched in sleep in the portico of a magnificent church—the Cathedral of S. Francesco di Paolo—and in full view of the Royal Palace, in no way to the adornment of the portico, always seemed to me to illustrate the character of Naples. They brought to mind the *lazzaroni* of ancient Rome, who no doubt took their siestas in the same way in the Colonnades of Pompey and Augustus: they, however, had their tallies for corn in their pockets; these Neapolitans have none. In any other royal residence in Europe the police would have swept such sleepers from the steps of the cathedral and out of sight of the palace. Here they sleep tranquilly on, while in front of them the sentinels who guard the equestrian statues of

Charles III. and Ferdinand I. pace unheeding up and down.

This royal piazza, so close to the sea and yet so situated that the palaces facing it greatly intercept the view, paved so as to resemble a ballroom and surrounded by beautiful buildings, is illustrative of the Neapolitan kingdom. Here the King, the Court, the public authorities have made their seat; nevertheless, we do not look into the heart of Naples (which is the harbour) but rather into its brain, the centre of its thinking and guiding activity. We are struck here by the character of utter ineptitude, by the latest style of barrenness and unreality, as seen for instance in the beautiful royal castle with its smooth façade, the red and grey wall surfaces and the wearisome symmetry of which produce an effect of insipidity, as do also the two exactly similar palaces at the sides. Further, also, the Cathedral of S. Francesco di Paola, a copy of the Pantheon in Rome, which in its entire lack of individuality merely produces the effect of an uninspired imitation. Even the bronze equestrian statue of Charles III., the founder of the present dynasty, and that of Ferdinand I., works of Canova and of Antonio Cali, light green in colour and smooth and easy in outline, possess nothing of the character of historic monuments, but merely that of accidental ornament. And this spirit of the present, of the modern, and of a superficial gaiety everywhere prevails. Without forfeiting anything of its character, the castle might be transplanted as a large villa to some park, and would then be another Caserta or Capodimonte, both of which



it somewhat resembles. It is moreover characteristic of the palace, that San Carlo, the largest of all theatres, is connected with it, forming one of its wings. The muses of the opera and ballet thus dwell under the same roof with the head of the state, and in a courtyard at the side—into which we look down from the street—Swiss soldiers, clad from head to foot in quiet, blue-grey linen, exercise every morning. And never did I see them without thinking how well their grey files harmonised with the cold cheerfulness of the architecture of the castle.

King Ferdinand is still angry with Naples. The castle looked deserted; the Court was still in Ischia. One day, however, he returned to the city to attend the festival of the Madonna del Mercato, who enjoys a renown almost equal to that of her sister of Piedigrotta. I had therefore the satisfaction of seeing the entire Court drive not only to the market-place, but also back to the royal residence. A magnificent procession of innumerable carriages, ostentatious in gilding, moved along the Largo di Castello, when suddenly the lifeless building acquired an aspect of radiant animation. But not from one single mouth did I hear the shout of "*Viva il re!*" Heads were uncovered as they were when the bells ring the hour of Ave Maria. The soldiers looked splendid, more especially the hussars, in picturesque uniform and mounted on beautiful horses. Accustomed in Rome merely to French soldiers, I found it interesting enough again to behold Italian national troops. The Neapolitans are imposing-looking soldiers, excellently clad; it is evident, however, that they have only the outward



aspect of soldiers, that they are nothing more than a theatrical property.

In Rome there are characteristic street processions, corporations who invariably walk in pairs, in long solemn files, and produce a picturesque effect amid the deathlike stillness of the streets. These are highly essential to the conception of the city, causing the beholder to realise the way in which the inner life of Rome is spiritually ordered and divided. The following are the principal confraternities that we see march in pairs through Rome: monks, nuns, girls belonging to the most various institutions, poor orphan children, troops of students from the colleges, red, black, white; processions of the confraternities of the dead, wearing their cowls, black, green, white, violet; and lastly the troops. Naples also produces the majority of these stereotyped processions, but in the vast tide of human life they fail to strike the beholder, and the secular thrusts the spiritual element into the background. The military is prominent; but more striking than the military stand out from the crowd the unfortunate galley-slaves, who marching in pairs and clanking their chains are conducted by soldiers according to the class to which their uniform proclaims them to belong. Some wear blood-red, the colour of murder; some bright yellow, the colour of fraud and infamy; and thus clad they are led not only through the streets but even as far outside the city as Torre del Greco and Portici. A degrading sight, especially in the face of a nature which, expanding both heart and soul, fills us with the joy of life.

As I have already said, none of the social organisations are seen in Naples so strikingly as in Rome. And even the clergy and monks, as is well known, appear in disproportionate numbers, and this parasitic growth, which hinders the development of Neapolitan life, is lost in the crowd, to the motley aspect of which alone it contributes. At this festival of the Madonna del Mercato, as also later, I had opportunity of remarking how everything even here is absorbed into the secular, into the frivolous, into the populace itself. People do not go to the *fiesta* to gaze on the sight of religious pomp or on an ecclesiastical spectacle, but to enjoy the open air and the beauties of nature, to which the human throng contributes an indescribable wealth of colour. I beheld the Neapolitans at the festival of Centesimo, the centenary visit of the Madonna of Posilippo to the King, and never did I see a similar stage for a festival. The Chiaja and the Villa Reale as far as the Grotto of Posilippo teemed with the variegated swarm of humanity; flags, draperies, flowers, the glittering bay, in which between the Chiaja and the harbour six men-of-war, dressed in all their pomp, were firing continuously. The noise and throng were bewildering. The procession, however, was insignificant, devoid alike of solemn dignity and genuine splendour, and strange to the traveller just arrived from Rome.

In Rome even the most insignificant processions have a touch of artistic beauty, and, as is clearly seen, art has exercised a beneficent influence even on the most trivial ecclesiastical representations, on images and figures of saints. Nothing is entirely

devoid of a feeling for the beautiful ; the gods of Greece in the Vatican and on the Capitol themselves defend the Christian saints from a too excessive Christianity, from the baroque or the hideous. The Bourbon Museum at Naples has no such effect on the popular feeling for the beautiful. Plastic art, which seems to impart a special tone to the Roman character, has no influence in Naples ; painting is preferably and almost solely cultivated, and in painting more particularly the gay fresco work of Pompeii, imitations of which meet the eye at every turn. The more fantastic, the more popular.

Such statues as are carried in the religious processions in Naples defy my powers of description. I saw the most tasteless products of wayward imagination carried almost to the point of Indian exaggeration. We may judge of the sculptures exhibited to the people in religious processions from the baroque statues of the saints erected in the streets and from the wooden images of Christ which stand in the piazzas, figures not as we might expect modelled, but cut straight from the wood.

Lastly, we must bestow a glance on one of the workshops of religious Naples, in order to understand the way in which religion and art are brought before the mind of this Southern people and are by them received. I found myself one day in one of those narrow and sinister-looking streets that rise from the harbour towards the hills and was attracted by the sight of artists busy at work sitting in an open room. I looked into a long room, dark towards the farther end, where stood ranged along

the walls rows of already finished images of the saints, in the midst Agnes in a flowing white dress, with cherry-coloured cheeks, and accompanied by her lamb. Artists were at work at the entrance, one of them engaged in equipping a wooden doll with wings. There were probably hundreds of saints of every required size, from that of a doll to that of the human figure, bedizened with gold and silver, in the most monstrous attitudes, tortured on the wheel, impaled, mutilated with the hatchet, flayed, deprived of their limbs. How shall I speak of them, how describe the crudeness of the colours, the motley piles of amulets and symbols of superstition that lay around? I watched these mysterious artists. Truly we might say they make gods for the people as Homer and Hesiod once made them. With this glance into a factory of Neapolitan saints, I felt I had gained an insight into the religion of the populace itself, and confess that I went away utterly bewildered and only breathed freely again on the Molo, when my eye rested once more on the eternally clear and holy grandeur of nature. No, man is not like nature, not like the landscape that surrounds him, else would it be possible in sight of this sea, this sky, these mountains, to worship these hideous, petty, bedizened dolls?

## II

The traveller soon recognises from his own impulse that the entire life of Naples does not centre in the city, but extends into its surroundings. Naples itself has something repellent; this chaos

of houses of baroque architecture towering to the skies, the heat and dust of the streets, the bewildering throng do not long attract the stranger ; those who linger in Naples linger only because nature has created the most enchanting paradise around, and because from the city, as from its centre, they can reach all points of interest in brief space, can visit Pompeii, Ischia, Sorrento, Baiæ, can ascend Vesuvius and go to Capri.

There is therefore a constant movement of the crowd from the city into the open country in the three main directions which determine the topography of Naples. One stretches up to the beautiful hills of Capodimonte running through the Toledo, the main artery of Naples, to the heights covered with villas and the Hermitages of the Camaldoli ; the second and third lead right and left from the end of the Toledo along the sea, here by the harbour and the Marinella to Portici, Pompeii and Vesuvius, there by the Chiaja up to Posilippo or through the tunnel to Pozzuoli and Baiæ.

Such are the three great currents of Neapolitan life. It is a singular spectacle, especially in the afternoon and evening, to watch them in everlasting motion. Here roll not the carriages alone, but the *curriculi*, the two-wheeled cars, drawn by be-ribboned mules, up and down in endless files ; all the industry, the luxury, the requirements of life meet together ; the most sumptuous wares in the shops of the Toledo, the basements of whose buildings form storehouses of every kind ; the necessaries in the two other sides along the sea. But even in this respect Naples has a character all its own. For



the fashionable quarter, whose special territory is the Toledo, extends to the Chiaja. The Chiaja is one of the grandest quays in the world ; its modern palaces are the abode of the wealthy, and here are the embassies, and the chief hotels of the city. In front stands the Villa Reale, the gardens of which are only open to the so-called respectable classes. The populace is thus excluded ; the fashionable world has made this territory its own. Even on the shore scarcely a fisherman is seen, and the baths that have been erected there are a costly luxury. Not until where the Chiaja divides into the roads leading to the Grotto of Posilippo and that to the Mergellina do the necessaries of life and of popular requirements, fish and vegetable markets and taverns reappear.

This outlet consequently presents a quiet and decorous aspect, which changes however, as with a stroke of the enchanter, when having passed the fortress we arrive at the quay of Santa Lucia. Hence onwards the life of the populace, interrupted for a brief space by the Royal Palace and held in check as it were by the Castel Nuovo, pours forth with increasing vigour along the harbour to the Mercato, the great market, and continues gradually decreasing to the suburbs as far as Portici. Santa Lucia consequently marks the transition between aristocratic and democratic Naples, itself possesses a hybrid character and second-class hotels. The harbour, round which circulates all the traffic, which gives occupation to the lower classes, and from which emanates an incredible amount of activity, work and industry, is the centre of trade,



of popular requirements and popular enjoyment. The whole of this side of Naples looks decayed, outlived, outworn; the quay is grimy with coal dust and littered with endless rubbish, is crowded with *lazzaroni* and boatmen, fishermen and pedlars. Here the man of the lower class buys his clothes and shoes, and these wares are piled in many of the narrow streets. Every article of domestic requirement is forthcoming. Here are the shops of the people; the bars for coffee and liqueur; here stand the fruit stalls covered with oranges and water melons already cut in slices, sold for a *tornese* and devoured on the spot. Here are the eatables of the poor, prickly pears, already peeled. And here also are found the saloons of popular entertainment. Every afternoon at a corner of the street a man may be seen impressively reading aloud from a tattered volume some romance, some tale of chivalry, or tragedy of brigand life to a crowd of listeners. Here too sits the scribe inditing love letters. Here are the Pulcinella theatres with Pulcinella's house at the entrance, whence the snapping tones of the mannikin reach us with inviting sound. Here also the people's theatre, that of San Carlino, stands close to the harbour. Provision is even made for baths; for the whole of the quay is thronged with bathing-houses, in which the impecunious can manage to procure a bath.

But all this life which crowds round the harbour and the shipping seems on the ebb when we compare it with that impetuous tide that surges through the two great market-places, the Porto Nuovo and the

Mercato. Words fail to describe the throng of humanity that more especially flows in and out of the Porto Nuovo, where on the piazza the whole of Campania seems to have thrown its fruit and the whole gulf its fish. People come to buy only in order to eat. Here is the theatre for the hunger of Naples. We visit one of those curious cook-shops, where behind boarded partitions the *pizzi*—large flat cakes garnished with slices of cheese or bits of ham according to the taste of the buyer—are consumed. These *pizzi* have only to be ordered and five minutes after are ready baked. To digest them, however, is the prerogative of a *lazzarone's* stomach.

The weekly markets are held in the Mercato. This immense piazza, filled with sad associations for the German, since it was here that the execution of the last of the Hohenstaufens took place, is at the same time characterised by the fact that here also was enacted the history of Masaniello. Here the *lazzaroni* crowned and killed their king. On this account it is an historic spot to the people of Naples, the piazza of their Bastille, stained with blood owing to the terrible scenes of justice executed at the hands of the populace, who here decapitated their nobles and exhibited their heads to public view, and terrible owing to its associations with the plague.

To disentangle and classify this human ant-heap would be a task as interesting as difficult. We have many descriptions of Neapolitan life, many painstaking and clever books, but even although we may have already read a thousand of them, we neverthe-

less stand bewildered in presence of the kaleidoscopic scene.

Let us rather frame a picture of life in Santa Lucia. I have already said that this quay, one of the most remarkable points of Naples, is the neutral centre where the upper and lower strata of population meet, and where the middle class has gained the ascendancy. The beautiful quay of insignificant length is enclosed on the left by the buildings of the palace, on the right by the picturesque Castel dell' Ovo. Almost in the middle of the great bend described by the bay, it stands open to the sea and here the gaze can range across the stretch of waters, because uninterrupted, as in the harbour, by any throng of shipping. This fact consequently attracts not only the traveller to such hotels as are situated in Santa Lucia, but also the middle class to the quay, for the sake of the incomparable spectacle to be seen in the evening and for other enjoyments.

I spent six weeks in Santa Lucia. Standing on the balcony of my room, the bay, Vesuvius, the white towns at its foot, the shores of Castellamare and Sorrento as far as the Cape of Minerva, and the rocky isle of Capri lay before my eyes. Every morning the bay itself awoke me as soon as the roseate lights of its placid waters streamed into my room, and every morning I watched the marvels of the sunrise and the colour splendour of mountains and sea, which now seemed to kindle and waken the immense city itself. Such is the site of Santa Lucia; but when the moon pours her magic light over mountains, sea and city, and the entire bay as far as the quay lies flooded in a broad stream of light she affords

an even more magic spectacle. The black forest of masts in the harbour then hovers spectre-like in a white mist of silver, the slender tower of the lighthouse faintly flashes, boats glide like dark shadows dreamily across the shining levels, appear and disappear. On the horizon the beautiful rock of Capri rises phantom-like out of the night, and quite overpoweringly, like phantasmagoric photographs, shine the Somma, Vesuvius and the mountains of Castellamare and Sorrento. Who can sleep on such a night? We get into a boat and row across the phosphorescent waves, or join the populace on the quay and eat *frutti di mare*.

For here on the water's edge joyous life flows merrily on. The little stalls of the oyster-dealers stand in two rows. Santa Lucia is the centre for all the products of the sea—mussels and oysters of every kind lie here tastefully laid out on slanting shelves. Every stall is numbered and furnished with the name of its owner. The invitation to partake is incessant; the lights glitter; but the beautiful strange mussels and sea urchins, star-fish, corals, crabs with their curious forms and variegated shells attract our attention more than our appetite. The mysterious realm of the deep lies open to us; and so fairylike is the aspect of this miniature market of shell-fish as to suggest a marine Christmas fête; the sight moreover may be enjoyed every evening.

On descending the stone steps to the water, we find ourselves suddenly as if in a huge nightly illuminated hall under the open sky. People seated at tables devour oysters, and here we watch

with amazement the consumers of macaroni. Amusement is probably found in presenting a *lazzarone* or fisherman with a few coppers wherewith to buy himself some macaroni, and in watching his pleasure in devouring it. Where this tumult ends, another motley scene begins. The sulphur spring of Santa Lucia bubbles forth in a vault by the quay, and from early morning until late at night women and girls are engaged in filling and offering glasses of the mineral water. People sit round on chairs, drink their glasses and eat tiny biscuits. Visitors pour from all sides, from the town and from the boats that come and go. And here the nymphs of night cast their nets for the stranger. Girls of easy morals come to Santa Lucia with their mothers, or more usually with a grey-haired duenna playing the part of chaperon, and with a glass of sulphur water ominously combine the invitation to further intimacy.

Such is evening at Santa Lucia. And the day is no more tranquil. People bathe in public and before the eyes of all. From the quay at the Castel dell' Ovo at every hour of the day, boys and youths may be seen jumping headlong into the water to exhibit their prowess in swimming. The Neapolitans swim like dolphins. The water receives them in their original state of nature; the warm skies redound to the honour of nudity, and the streets afford opportunity for the most glorious studies of the antique. The contrast is very glaring: carriages filled with the finest flower of the aristocracy roll along the quay, and in sight of the most refined women of Paris and London



drawing-rooms nude men with an innocence worthy of Adam spring into the waves. Fisher boys run naked along the very street and with graceful bows and lively gesticulations greet the foreigner, who now and again gives them a copper. From my lodging on the fourth floor I often did myself the pleasure of enticing these urchins along the street. At a sign they sprang into the water and returned dripping to receive the reward. Throughout the entire bay we are never free from the sight of nakedness. Boys climb even the iron railings of the harbour in order to turn somersaults into the sea.

On May 18, 1853, a road was opened for the popular traffic inland, the Strada Teresa, planned by the King and named in honour of his wife. It describes a curve round the Castle of S. Elmo and runs between hills and valleys across the Vomero and then joins the Chiaja. It is not yet finished, not yet paved; planks still cover many of the hollows, but the stream of traffic already flows along it—people on horses, asses, mules and crowds of foot passengers, especially on Sundays and holidays. It would appear that the three great outlets already referred to no longer sufficed for the Neapolitans, and that the life of this huge city in now burrowing through the mountains had found a new channel by which to pour again through the Vomero on to the Chiaja.

The new road will be lined throughout with houses, but will always preserve a rural character and entirely satisfy the requirements of dwellers by the sea in search of country and garden amuse-

ments. The view of the city, the bay, the mountains and islands changes with every turn of the road, with every hill and valley; we know not where to look, whether on the blue waters, over this amphitheatre of the city bathed in light, on the luxuriant gardens with their smiling villas, or the picturesque groups of pines, palms and cypresses. The traveller who remains unmoved by such a landscape must be as unimpressionable as a lump of lava.

From the studios we turn to ascend the road, where rows of donkeys are always waiting for hire. But it is better to proceed on foot. Let us go on, and on our way take note of the succession of varying scenes. Attracting our attention in succession, we see the white walls of the Castle of S. Elmo surmounting yellow-brown rocks covered with cactus and aloe, and overgrown with climbing plants; the hollows filled with gardens; here an *osteria* smothered in vines; again, brown barren tufa rocks; a valley filled with lemon, tulip and pomegranate trees, breathing a perfume of narcotic sweetness; now a suburb with its industries; again open smiling hills, a sight of country houses; a ravine with cactus and palms; an unexpected glimpse of the city on the left, of the bay, of Capri; a hedge of pine trees, over which Vesuvius hovers bathed in tenderest violet. Again, a wild, rocky scene; gardens and fantastic-looking houses with open *loggie*; then a rural picture, shepherds driving their goats. A convent with its accompaniment of monks. Higher hills with pine trees—but ah! who can describe all these lovely scenes?

Sea, sky, earth all dancing in light, and the senses intoxicated with the odour of plants. I stood leaning against a cypress, gazed into the gardens below and saw how the vines wove themselves round the trees, as if in Bacchantic joy and moving lightly in the tepid breath of summer. They seemed to me like the poised Bacchantes of Pompeii. I have read somewhere how a scholar once racked his brains over the problem why the Bacchantes in these frescoes are dancing in the air, the attitude being unnatural, since the feet must touch the ground. According to this pedant these figures consequently could only be regarded as arabesques. Erudition and archæology are terrible things! Lying on one's back in this Eden-like green, we feel as the ancients felt. All round us is pure Bacchus worship; the soul floats with delight in the air like a Bacchante with the thyrsus, wings itself away from the earth, rises above it, becomes an emancipated existence, a cry of exultant pleasure.

But does it lie in the beauty of nature, or only in the mind nurtured in Christianity, that the sublimest things of earth invariably incline us in the end to sadness? I had climbed a hill; Swiss soldiers were drinking there opposite a bar in a straw-roofed tavern. At my feet in the clear light of evening lay the sea with the islands of Nisida, Procida and Ischia. I stood transfixed by the sight. A common Swiss soldier joined me and said suddenly, pointing to this Paradise: "Ah! it is too beautiful, it makes one quite sad."

## III

Having seen the three most beautiful sea-ports of Italy—Genoa, Naples and Palermo, rivals to one another in point of situation, I am able to compare them, and consider that Naples undoubtedly bears the palm. For what other town can boast so classic a natural amphitheatre, such a bay, a Vesuvius, such shores as Castellamare and Sorrento, and such lovely islands? The wealth of colour, the size and width of the picture are probably unequalled in the world; the dimensions are so vast that the eye cannot grasp them; the work of man like that of nature seems to stretch into infinitude, and the beautiful scene to resolve itself into light and splendour. Looked at from near, it is impossible to embrace the whole of Naples in a glance; the picture divides itself into groups. To comprehend it in its entirety, we require a reduced point of view, to behold the perspective from one of the surrounding hills or from the sea, where the outlines of the city are lost and those of nature alone predominate.

Genoa and Palermo, on the other hand, present the aspect of a picture enclosed in the most magnificent of frames; Genoa with its palaces and country houses rising on the hills, resembling an amphitheatre; Palermo stretching out in the most luxuriant of valleys and surrounded by mountains of sculpturesque outline, which project a short way into the sea, on one side in Cape Pellegrino, on the other in the promontory of Zaffarano, forms a picture enchanting both in colour and outline. At Naples

all is vastness, all bathed in such light and infinitude that the senses are carried away and no repose is allowed to the distracted eye. From whatever spot we may choose to view the city—S. Elmo, Camaldoli or Vesuvius itself—and these are the most elevated points from which to survey the wondrous panorama — Naples everywhere presents itself as a shapeless mass ; landscape and sea are everywhere predominant. The crowd of houses which has arisen around the bay produces no architectural impression, but rather the feeling of unlimited extent and that life has monopolised undue proportions in this Elysian scene. Situation and view are here sufficient for man. It would seem as if in admiration of such splendour, he had folded his hands and abandoned the attempt to compete with nature in works of grandeur. Nothing predominates amid this sea of houses ; the flat roofs stretch endlessly on ; so many platforms from which the spectator may rejoice in the view ; a few cupolas of churches, and these small and inconspicuous ; scarcely anywhere a tower to interrupt the monotony of the horizon. Incomparably more beautiful is Constantinople, whose cupolas soar over the many ramifications of the city, and whose countless slender minarets, towering above cypresses and pines, bestow a strange charm on the picture.

The architectural uniformity, indeed utter unimportance, of Naples has always seemed to me entirely essential to the conception of the city. It so completely reflects the history of the country, the instability and change of its transitory dynasties, the inorganic character, the incapacity of the



people for any task in the history of civilisation or culture, their passivity and enjoyment of the present, their utter sensuousness and universal desire for amusement. History has never left any impress, and consequently the city itself is in the last degree devoid of form and monument. Neither the character of the dynasties, nor that of the people has ever found expression in great monuments; and monuments are the embodiments of phases of civilisation, outward manifestations of the inner being, of the living ideas, which have once ruled or which still rule. It is characteristic of Naples that the greatest services it has rendered to culture have been in music. Its great men are Scarlatti and his pupil Porpora, Leonardo Leo, Francesco Durante, Pergolese, Paisiello, Cimarosa and all those masters who down to Bellini and Mercadante issued from its school of music. All other intellectual potentates, notwithstanding the many illustrious men that this city, so brilliantly endowed with talent, has brought forth, have either failed to produce any lasting organic development, or are prominent merely as isolated figures.

If the beholder has just arrived from Rome, which is itself the monument of world history, the un-monumental character of Naples will strike him the more. But even apart from the monumental character of Rome, I hold that there is no other city in the world where landscape and architecture hold such equal balance, and which, again independently of natural beauty, compels our admiration by its architectural monuments. In order to recognise this harmony between natural and

architectural characteristics, we must ascend Monte Testaccio, Monte Mario, go to S. Pietro in Montorio or the tower of the Capitol; to recognise the grandeur of the architectural effect alone, a glance from Monte Pincio, whence the city reveals itself in isolation and mighty forms as a gigantic work of history, is sufficient. The monuments here mark the different eras of civilisation, the ruins of antiquity, the triumphant cupola of Christianity, form the embodiment of all that Rome signifies.

That which in Naples, this city of the present, architecturally strikes us and meets our eyes, are neither ruins nor churches. The remains of antiquity have vanished; nothing has been built for eternity. The only striking monument of ancient times which Naples possesses is its Catacombs, which are perhaps unsurpassed in extent even by those of Syracuse; there is also the Grotto of Posilippo, —and both works are subterranean. Of churches Naples contains more than enough, but the truly democratic indifference with which they unassumingly range themselves alongside the houses and stand towerless and with mean façades, affords proof that Naples, although swarming with clergy and monks, has nevertheless at all times been indifferent to religion. Enthusiasm for the greatness of the Church, for the faith, has never prevailed here; under the Hohenstaufens Naples long remained at open warfare with the Popes. Love of life eventually and of necessity secularised all that was spiritual, and I hold that this is clearly evidenced in the latest sumptuous building of Naples, the church of S. Francesco di Paola, built in fulfilment of

a vow by Ferdinand I. for his restoration to the throne: This copy of the Pantheon serves essentially only for the adornment of the Piazza Reale; and how far the Church is removed from any claim to religious dignity, is seen from its arcade, in which shops for the sale of pianos have been erected.

The palaces too, which next to the churches are the most conspicuous buildings in Italian cities, are here lost in the multitude of houses, and, squeezed and surrounded by buildings, appear huge and in part tasteless masses. Even when of imposing majesty, as the fortress-like Maddalone, they cannot be properly viewed, because crowded into too restricted a space. The Middle Ages are consequently nowhere evident, the Modern meets our gaze at every turn.

He who surveys Naples from this architectural point of view will find that the most noteworthy features are the beautiful villas on the hills, the arsenals, the buildings of the harbour, the castle, and above all the three great fortresses. From all sides these stand conspicuous as the essential features of the city. High above the Vomero, enthroned above the entire city, stands the fortress of S. Elmo, in an incomparably picturesque situation and enchantingly beautiful both in morning and evening light. On the shores of the bay itself rise the Castel dell' Ovo and the Castel Nuovo, fantastic masses of grey tufa. These are the reins that hold in check the fiery horse—Naples.

I was not able to see the interior of the Castel dell' Ovo. It is one of the oldest buildings of Naples, traditionally owing its origin to Lucullus,

and here Romulus Augustulus, the last Emperor of Rome, ended his days. The building was completed by Frederick II. in the year 1221, when the Emperor little foresaw that it was to become the prison of his last descendant. For several years after the ill-starred battle of Benevento, in which King Manfred lost his realm and life, his children languished here in chains, his daughter Beatrix alone owing her deliverance to the Sicilian Vespers. On June 5, 1284, when the Sicilians fought the great naval battle in sight of Naples, under the command of the celebrated Admiral Ruggiero Loria, the combat was watched from the battlements of the castle by the daughter of Charles of Anjou who anxiously awaited the issue, and no less anxiously must the unfortunate daughter of Manfred have looked on. The Anjou princess saw the Neapolitan fleet routed or put to flight; her brother Charles was taken prisoner; two Sicilian galleys arrived opposite the castle; Loria demanded the immediate surrender of Manfred's daughter, threatening that were she refused, he would have the son of Charles of Anjou beheaded on board his vessel. The captive was surrendered. After eighteen years, Beatrix regained her liberty; her entire youth had been spent in prison. She was conducted in triumph to Messina, where her sister Costanza, wife of Peter of Aragon, greeted her as one risen from the dead.

In the same fortress the sons of Manfred ended their days.

The Castel Nuovo is still more important and is the greatest architectural work in Naples. In it stands the memorable triumphal arch which Alfonso I,

of Aragon caused to be erected by Giuliano da Majano, or, according to others, by Pietro di Martino, in 1470. It bridges the space between two towers, and displays in several divisions, one above the other, many interesting reliefs, referring to the entrance of the victorious king into Naples. It is singular that here also a work of the kind should be concealed from the public sight and hidden in a fortress. It had indeed been intended to erect the arch in front of the cathedral, but accidental considerations interposed.

The Castel Nuovo is a construction of Charles of Anjou of the year 1283. It is in general to the Angevins that are owing the greatest buildings in Naples, and the most important churches also date from the Angevin period. These churches are the true historic monuments of Naples, not only on account of their many tombs but also because their origin is due for the most part to historic events. The cathedral was begun by Charles I. on the ruins of a temple to Neptune and was finished by Robert I. S. Domenico Maggiore was built by Charles of Calabria in 1289, in fulfilment of a vow which he had made when he fell a captive into the hands of Loria. S. Lorenzo Maggiore was founded by Charles I. in 1265 to fulfil a vow made after the battle of Benevento. S. Pietro Martire was built by Charles II. of Anjou; S. Chiara by King Robert in 1310; the Incoronata, embellished by Giotto's frescoes, was founded by Joanna I. in memory of her marriage with Louis of Tarento. S. Giovanni a Carbonara, Monte Oliveto, S. Antonio Abate were built by Ladislaus and Joanna. The Convent of S. Martino



on S. Elmo also owes its origin and completion to the Angevins, and finally the Carmine Maggiore and the Purgatorio del Mercato to the fall of the Hohenstaufen family, for here are found the tomb of Conradin, and his statue erected by Maximilian of Bavaria in 1847, and in the same chapel stands the porphyry column which Charles I. is said to have erected on the spot where Conradin and Frederick of Baden were beheaded. The inscription on it runs :

*“ Asturis ungue Leo pullum rapiens aquilinum  
Hic deplumavit acephalumque dedit.”*

Neither Normans nor Hohenstaufens erected in Naples any buildings worthy of note, and we seek in vain for any of that Saracenic-Norman architecture of which Sicily is so full. The foundation of the new dynasty of Anjou, which after the loss of Sicily was restricted to Naples, developed also the only good examples of architecture and sculpture which Naples has produced. While the Romanesque style of basilica was abandoned, the German took its place. This period lasted until about the end of the fourteenth century, and reached its zenith during the reign of the art-loving King Robert. During this period Naples produced the two Masaccios, the second of whom was distinguished as a sculptor. He chiselled the tombs of Charles of Durazzo, of Catherine of Austria, Robert of Artois and Joanna of Durazzo in the church of S. Lorenzo, which he built on the lines of an older design; he also built the Gothic church of S. Chiara and executed behind the High Altar the most

memorable work of Neapolitan sculpture, the tomb of Robert, who died in 1343. This tomb is in the style of a Gothic tabernacle with many sculptures; and even though the outlines are not yet freely developed, the monument nevertheless leaves an impression of artistic composition and salutary naïveté. S. Chiara is rich in sepulchral monuments of the kind, many other members of the Angevin family being also buried here; Robert's son Charles of Calabria, Joanna I. and several other princesses.

The general impression made by these tombs of the Angevins is, that they are devoid of true seriousness and of all dignity. They display a wealth of Gothic ornament, already inclining towards the eccentric and whimsical, occasionally a happy naïveté, more frequently a strange and affected character. In presence of these monuments we are conscious of being in Naples. And neither to the fall of the house of Anjou, nor yet owing to the fault of the times, Neapolitan art hopelessly sank into exaggeration and eccentricity, and produced monstrous creations both in interiors and exteriors of churches; façades such as that of the Gesù Nuovo, which seems borrowed from that of a fortress, or others quite childishly extravagant; even the older Gothic architecture has been deformed by frequent restorations consequent on earthquakes.

The summit of this bad taste is reached in the three obelisks of the Conception, S. Gennaro and S. Domenico, buildings of pyramidal form upholding gilt images of saints and covered with utterly indescribable sculptures.

Here we recognise the influence of Spain, which under its viceroys ruled the beautiful land of Naples during a long course of melancholy years. The Spaniards have left many memorials ; thus the Fontana Medina, a work of Domenico Auria, designed by order of the Viceroy Olivares in 1593. Three times was this fountain transplanted, under Castro, Alba and Monterey, first to one place then to another, until Donna Anna Carafa, wife of the Viceroy Medina, caused it to be erected in its present situation. It too is a rich overladen work composed of tritons, dolphins and sea monsters, in the midst of which rises Neptune on a shell upborne by three satyrs. From his trident spring jets of water, which are pleasing enough.

The best monument of the Spanish viceroys must ever be the Toledo, which owes its splendour to the well-known Pietro di Toledo in the middle of the sixteenth century.

I visited the remarkable Catacombs of Naples. The impression here received is a combination of horror and of vivid interest in the times that created and tended this subterranean work, that were able to imbue it with life and adorn it with art.

The Catacombs of Syracuse appear less gloomy, because their corridors are designed on a symmetrical plan. On the other hand, the Roman Catacombs, so far as they have been made accessible, are merely narrow, low, tasteless passages and rooms, of, it is true, unlimited extent. They are, however, the most remarkable of all from the fact that in the capital of the world they were the places where

Christianity nourished its nocturnal life and as it were worked its way above ground in order, finally, to rule Rome and the world.

The Catacombs of Naples are situated towards the northern heights of Capo di Monte and stretch downwards in the tufa rock, cutting the chain of hills. They are two, it is even asserted three stories high and extend—a vast city of the dead—as far as Pozzuoli. No stone is more easily worked and no rock more easily quarried than this yellow volcanic tufa of Naples. How in the course of time these subterranean excavations and galleries arose is evident wherever the tufa walls were used as quarries for building purposes. Thus for instance on the new road to Posilippo, where in the rock are shown quarries, excavations and rooms, now used as storehouses and even as dwellings.

The immense halls, which have thus arisen in the earth and gradually grown into a troglodyte-like labyrinth, offered themselves naturally for the use of man. Myths have been told of how the Cimmerii, the dwellers in Neapolitan waters, burrowed here in the earth. But who can conceive of a race of beings so rude, who, in sight of a nature such as this, and under the most favoured of skies, could crawl in subterranean darkness? Such ancient rock dwellings as are found in the valleys of Ispica and in Malta are invariably open to the light of day. These halls could no doubt afford protection against hostile attacks. While the city was growing nothing was more natural than the thought of burying the dead on the spot that had supplied the material for their houses. That the Christians were not the

first to make use of the Catacombs for this purpose is undoubted; that Greeks and Romans had already made vaults there is beyond question. A little column may still be seen in a fairly large room of the Catacombs bearing in Greek characters the word *Priapos*.

The Catacombs may have been originally the burial-place of the poor, who could not afford to erect costly monuments above ground. A grave was hewn with but little trouble in the tufa, *loculi* were excavated in which urns for the ashes could be placed. In these cells we still find paintings belonging to an entirely pagan mode of thought; although the majority are undoubtedly of Christian origin. For after the persecuted community had sought shelter in these subterranean places, and had made them the scene of their religious services, they began to adorn with pictures and symbols of the faith the graves of the beloved dead, who were buried in the common refuge. The forms of their art remained the traditional forms of paganism; we find the cheerful spirit of the Pompeian arabesques repeated on the walls of these Christian graves. Even the symbolic representations are still pagan, as more especially the scenes depicting the vintage and the wine-press taken from those of Bacchus. We may see vine-wreaths, genii, grapes at which birds are pecking, and Christ represented as Orpheus. Symbols, essentially Christian, have gradually developed; the Good Shepherd carrying the lamb and tending the sheep, the stag, the peacock, the fish, the dove, the effigy of the Cross and angels. We receive a curious



impression in the survey of these paintings, now unfortunately blackened by the smoke of torches, and in tracing the rise of Christian art as it issues from Roman fresco painting, in following its progress from the style of Pompeii to that of Byzantium, and in seeing a new Christian mythology spring direct from the pagan.

Since the seed of the Christian development was planted in, and arose from, a tomb, it is small wonder that the character of Christianity brought a Catacomb-like aspect with it into the open air. The taste for the cadaverous, the morbid view of life, renunciation, martyrdom, contempt of life, desire for pain, lastly intolerance and fanaticism, would they so deeply have impressed themselves on Christianity had Christianity been able to develop its rites in the sunlit atmosphere above ground, in the midst of joyous nature, instead of being compelled to dwell in torchlight beside the dark graves of the martyrs and in constant dread of persecution?

Nothing in Naples made so deep an impression on me as the entrance to these Catacombs and the visit to Pompeii. We may call the Catacombs the Pompeii of Christianity. Both places reveal to us a great period of human history; the contrast could not be more vivid. Although in one we look on the now corpse-like dwellings of paganism, the joyousness of human nature nevertheless greets us with a laugh from both dwelling-house and columned temple, surrounding itself with the forms of the beautiful and enjoying life with its gods. In the Catacombs we gaze on the dwellings of another and

yet the same race of men. They are Greeks and Romans as those of Pompeii, products of the same civilisation, yet how different! The Pompeian *joie de vivre* has not yet even in the night of the Catacombs entirely deserted this later generation. As if from force of habit they have reproduced the frescoes, the graceful arabesques, the wine-press of Dionysus on their gloomy walls; but these emblems adorn graves. They themselves sit beside graves; and here below with the dead, celebrate their love-feasts, the Agapæ. They fill these galleries with their songs of lament and monotonous prayers. Later they will issue forth; will bring with them into the light of day gods of terrifying aspect, similar to the head of Medusa, before which the beauteous life of nature will turn to stone, martyrs, skulls, skeletons, relics of the executed will be scattered over the world, one day to be placed for worship on those altars where stood the statues of Greek gods. This will proceed from hence, and more than Vesuvius scattered its ashes over Pompeii, are the Catacombs to scatter ashes of mourning over the world.

Are these sinister ideas anything more than fantastic imaginations engendered by the Catacombs? I leave the question to rest on its own merits. No better spot for speculative theology and for ghosts could be found than these vaults. The atmosphere is damp and chilly; utter darkness or grey twilight; musty smell and appalling deathlike silence. In these confusing chambers, in the long perplexing galleries, at the sides of which graves, filled with bones and mould, stretch

endlessly on, or niches and *loculi* are revealed, we creep, burrowing our way out. The torches glare harshly into the shadows, and above to the paintings in the niches showing forms of the departed, who with upraised hands look down ghost-like and supernatural. Obliterated inscriptions, Greek, Roman and even Hebrew, capable of being deciphered or otherwise, and countless symbols, monograms and signs bring home to us the fact that we are in a world where all is mystery, allegory and enigma. Two inmates of the Hospice of S. Gennaro dei Poveri, old men who are provided for at the convent at the entrance to the Catacombs and who act as guides through the vaults, carry the torches, explain and lead the way. More appropriate guides into this lower world it would be impossible to find. They glide along in their long blue cowls, the torches in their hands, like ghosts; they are bowed by age, have silver-white hair, sunken cheeks, and are deadly pale. Looking on them, they seem to me already dead like the skeletons illumined by their torches and as had they already tottered through the Catacombs for a thousand years. One of them holding his torch in front of two figures in a niche, read: *Votum solvimus nos quorum nomina deus scit*: "We have fulfilled our vow, we whose names God knows." The impression made on the excited imagination by these mysterious words must be experienced on the spot. It seemed to me as if the words were uttered spontaneously by the two old men, and as if they thereby wished me to understand that they were no longer numbered among the living.

I looked them in the face, and as they stood there in their cowls and with corpse-like countenances, a shudder came over me ; I neither wanted to see nor hear anything more. These mysteries, this deep, black foundation of life to which nature compels our return—may it ever remain hidden to human eye ! I begged the old men to lead me back to the light, I had had enough. They smiled and crept back. At the entrance I was reassured that they were still alive, for they thanked me for the piece of silver that I gave to gladden their aged hearts with a drink of wine.

In order to make amends for these thoughts of death, it is impossible to do better than go from these Catacombs to the new Campo Santo of Naples. It is said to be the most beautiful cemetery in Europe, and I can well believe it, for its situation is as enchanting as its monuments in the midst of the Eden-like garden are pleasing to the eye. Situated on a hill under Poggio Reale, it commands the road to Nola, and hence the panorama of the city and bay, the coasts of Sorrento, Vesuvius and the wealth of vegetation at its foot lie before our gaze. The hill is entirely covered with tombs, mainly in the form of little graceful columned temples. They here form entire streets, being ranged along each side of the avenue, and while walking through them the traveller may form a conception on a smaller scale of what the Via Appia was in former days. Other monuments stand together in groups, or form themselves into a little city of the dead. Towards the summit of the hill stands a colonnade and a church, where masses for

the dead are solemnised. Farther on a tiny convent in the Gothic style has been erected, where twelve Capuchin monks live and hold services. The greater number of these temples belong to the confraternities of Naples. And these ancient very charitable societies that exist for the burial of the dead, and are unquestionably the most praiseworthy of social corporations, attending also as they do to the sick and needy, exist to the number of one hundred and seventy-four. Their names may be read on the façades of the monuments. Other monuments are the family graves. The little temples allow space for a chapel, closed by a trellised door. Inside is an altar, a figure of the Madonna, the everlasting lamp; nor are there lacking pictures and busts of the dead. Here the surviving members of the family assemble for prayers and feel themselves not entirely severed from the loved departed. In every respect these sepulchral monuments recall those of the ancients; cheerful and clever, of beautiful proportions, even decorated in colour after the Pompeian manner, they produce a soothing and tranquillising impression. To this effect also contributes the grove of flourishing shrubs—oleanders, amaranths, tulip trees, hydrangeas, myrtles—which thrust all that is sad and colourless into the background. Sitting amid such a wealth of flowers, with our gaze turned to the favoured land of Campania and the sea, radiant in the evening sun, we are forced to the belief that the dead have here found a happy resting-place. The beautiful cemetery was only consecrated in 1845.



## IV

Few care to leave Naples without having made the ascent of Vesuvius, but probably there are not many who have climbed Somma, its twin brother. The smoking volcano engrosses everyone's attention, and its extinct second crater consequently remains unheeded. Nevertheless Somma, with its steep black walls of lava, towers with equal beauty alongside Vesuvius, and with equal beauty its wooded slopes descend to the plain.

I determined to make an expedition up the mountain, knowing that the view of the cone of Vesuvius from the summit would repay the journey, since Vesuvius, looked at from above and from so short a distance, would be seen in an entirely new aspect. We were a cheerful party of seven, among us two naturalists, a French zoologist and a doctor from Tambow in Russia. We set forth from Naples at 6 a.m., and passing S. Giovanni, turned to the left through fertile country to S. Anastasia at the foot of Somma. Here we took guides acquainted with the way through the mountain woods. Our basket of provisions was carried by a sturdy woman, and two picturesque-looking men, one of whom wore a long dagger in his belt and carried a gun on his shoulder, walked in front. Thus the little caravan set out in happiest mood, delighted with the lovely sky of the July morning and with the already wonderful distant view of the Campanian paradise, that lies stretched at the foot of the mountain.

The first part of our way lay through the vine-

yards which produce the noble wine of Somma, then through chestnut woods, until the ascent grew increasingly arduous and the slopes steeper and steeper. The whole way and even to the edge of its cone, the Somma is covered with chestnut woods and with a luxuriant flora. Orange lilies, pinks, clover, purple antirrhinum and the delicious valerian attracted the attention of the botanist, while the zoologist eagerly pursued the many coloured butterflies.

The higher we ascended, the more pathless grew the mountain; not even a shepherd's track was to be seen; and any faint traces that were perceptible vanished amid brushwood or in precipices and ravines. We came across deep, steep, but now dry beds of torrents, the sides of which were formed in volcanic strata here by ashes, there by lapilli and solid lava.

Three of our company descended one of these volcanic ravines, armed with hammer and shovel in search of geological specimens. These we found in numbers in the caves formed by basaltic lava and petrified ashes. Various iron crystals and the most beautiful volcanic stone lay on the ground, or was easily extracted from it. And the seeker, who remained undaunted by the toil and undismayed by the danger of being buried under the insecure walls of the ravines, might here find abundant mineral spoils.

Laden with stones we joined the others, who had meanwhile waited for us under the shade of the trees. We climbed valiantly on, until exhausted by the exertion and heat, we sank down beside

a spring about a third of the way. Springs on the Somma are few; our guides had mentioned this one, the Fontana di Mennone, whose waters though not abundant were very refreshing. We decided to christen it in fact the Fountain of Memnon, and the chestnut-covered hill on which it flows Mount Memnon. All the surrounding stone is resonant, because burnt; the grey-blue tufa when struck with iron or a stick, emits an almost metallic tone, as do the columns when struck in the Forum of Pompeii.

The higher we went, the wilder grew the scene, more and more numerous the heaps of ashes and fragments of lapilli; the ascent more fatiguing, but the landscape ever more satisfying. We saw as yet nothing of Vesuvius, which was hidden by the steep cone of the Somma; on the other hand with every step the horizon widened landwards, embracing one of the most glorious views of the Gulf of Baiæ and the peaks of Ischia, Naples and the bay, the plain of Caserta and the entire garden of Central Campania as far as Sarno. From the bay, to which the huge city stretches from the hills, the plain extends as far as the eye can reach to the Apennines, the mountains of Mattese and S. Vergine, resembling an immense park intersected by white roads and covered with castles, villas, churches and convents, and with towns which stand out like islands in the green. We stood entranced on the last spur below the cone of the Somma, for a single glance, as it were, now embraced Naples and the sea on one side, the plain of Campania on the other.

We counted the following towns: S. Anastasia and Somma, farther on Pomigliano d'Arco, Acerra, Afragola, S. Maria below Capua, on the right from this Caserta with its palace, Maddaloni at the foot of blue mountains, right in front of us beyond Somma, Marigliano and farther on Nola, then Ottajano, Palma and Sarno, where the mountains on the extreme right close in the plain at Nocera. The day was the festival of the Madonna delle Grazie. The booming of guns from the towns below reached our ears dully like platoon firing, and as we stood above on the extinct crater of the Somma the reverberating shots sounded like the rumbling of the volcanic fire inside the mountain.

Gazing over this land and sea, we can well understand that its ruler would choose death in preference to its loss. Thus did the Swabians, thus the house of Aragon, thus Joachim Murat. From such standing-ground it may have been that the Emperor Frederick II. exclaimed, "Had Jehovah seen Naples, He would not so highly have extolled the promised land to Moses." And now a yet greater spectacle awaited us. Even yet we did not see Vesuvius; we neared the summit of the Somma, which is marked by a wooden cross, a few steps more on the abrupt peak and suddenly out of the ground arose, and stood close in front of us, the indescribable form of the crater. In harshest contrast we turned from the smiling fields of Campania to the grey corpse-like waste, where joyless nature mourns in ashes. I cannot describe the force of contrast, nor yet the impression made by the

sudden view of this smoking mount of ashes. With its sulphur flames, it seemed like some fearful diabolic thing issuing from the dark abyss of hell.

From no other point of view can Vesuvius present an aspect such as it does from the peak of the Somma, which almost equals it in height. Ascending by way of Resina, it is only seen from below, here from above, where we can almost gaze into its jaws, and can survey its entire outline against the most glorious background of sea and landscape ; we have moreover before us the theatre of the crater of the Somma, with all its perpendicular walls of lava. Lastly, the traveller who wends his way from the foot to the crater of Vesuvius is unable to perceive its outlines at all, but only its ashes and fields of lava.

Three of us ventured up on to the narrow cone of the mountain and to its utmost peak, where we saw the Somma, broken and jagged, divided into three pinnacles, toppling perpendicularly towards Vesuvius. To right and left stands the old shattered crater, a black and broken funnel ; reddish and grey spikes of rock ; large sharp fragments of lava interspersed with heaps of volcanic boulders. Standing on the middle projection of the Somma's edge, the beholder sees this edge in pyramidal forms incline in a semicircle round Vesuvius, from which he is separated by the black abyss. Close before his eyes stands the crater in overpowering height, clothed in ashes from summit to base, yellow-grey in colour, though at the sides, where the current of lava has made its way, striped with



lines of deepest black. The edge of the crater is bright yellow edged with white and from it issues a light vapour.

With admiration of the sublime mingles enjoyment of the graceful outline and form of this beautiful crater, as of the indescribable delicacy of its colouring. I know of no sight in nature in which such a perfect union of the terrible and the attractive is to be seen as in this crater of Vesuvius ; and now that I have also made the ascent of Etna, I venture to say that this combination is characteristic of, and peculiar to, Vesuvius. It is melancholy sublimity ; the colour of the ashes, the sight of which immediately suggests softness and delicacy, the mildness of their brownish or bluish tone, lastly the beautiful lines of the cone together combine to produce a wondrous picture. When the blue and glistening expanse of the sea, the violet mountains and the fragrant landscape form a background to the crater and their more lively hues seem, as it were, to leap forth into view, an enchanting harmony of colour is produced.

We rested on the steep wall of the Somma, all the bliss of sky, earth and sea lying above, around and beneath us. Only gently did Vesuvius make us aware of her presence ; only from the bright yellow sulphureous margin issued smoke, as if to remind us that in the midst of this paradise of bliss stood the demon of destruction. The two streaks of lava, which frame the crater in black, are the petrified streams of two recent eruptions. That on the left belongs to the year 1850, when towards the foot of the crater five small craters were

formed. We saw these curiously black cones. Herr Berncastle also showed me the spot where during the eruption of 1847 an American and a German lost their lives. Venturing forward in their foolhardiness they were both struck down by the red-hot stones.

A curious fate befell a cobbler from Sorrento who ascended Vesuvius without a guide in 1822. The crater, exhausted in the eruption of 1820, lay empty; the imprudent man entered it and was seized by the desire not only to gaze down into the hellish spirit's glowing jaws, but like an obscene Titan, to turn them to derision. While perpetrating this insult, he was overcome by giddiness and fell into the crater, was upheld however by the solid lava, and with a broken arm and leg, remained lying for two days at the inner edge, where his cries were overheard by some visitors to Vesuvius. The unfortunate cobbler was drawn to the surface by ropes, and apparently shared the indestructible frame of the Wandering Jew, for he issued from the hospital and returned home alive and well. This dreadful but amusing story was told us by Don Michele, priest of the Hermitage on Vesuvius, to which we had descended. For after an hour's rest we had left the cone of the Somma in order to proceed to the Hermitage on the right.

Here the scene changed. A mist had gathered over Vesuvius and a strong wind swept its clouds through ravines, across walls of rock and over the crater—a magnificent aerial battle that bestowed fresh life and charm on the scene, as through the fickle fabric, dark rocky peaks, blocks of lava and

craters showed forth. The mists dispersed quickly, and Naples, the bay, Capri, Ischia, Misenum, lay once more at our feet, and to the right the plain of Campania.

“*Voilà la Cléopâtre!*” The strange exclamation woke me from my reflections. It was the French naturalist, aged sixty-seven, who repeatedly uttered it, springing off—a modern but yet elderly Antony—to capture Cleopatra. The tastes of men are unaccountable. This amiable veteran of happiest temperament and inexhaustible energy had not bestowed a single glance on Vesuvius or the landscape, had eyes for nothing beyond the little butterfly.

The descent of the steep rim of the Somma was not devoid of danger, and after a toilsome journey over ashes and lava of the year 1850, which in their now lifeless condition resembled a black ploughed field, we reached the Hermitage tired out. This little retreat stands close to the Observatory, a tasteful building in a commanding position. It is surrounded by lime trees two hundred years old, whose vigour, unharmed by the volcano, showed that the position must be peculiarly sheltered. The ashes and showers of stones fall in fact in a curve over the Hermitage, and the hill, on which the little church stands, is separated from Vesuvius by a deep valley and is consequently protected from every stream of lava. Moreover, a black shield with yellow letters showed that the entire building has been bought by the Magdeburg Fire Insurance Company. The sight of a Magdeburg Fire Insurance Company on the very hearth of the volcano,

and in the immediate neighbourhood of its frightful devastations, is indeed amusing !

In former years a genuine hermit lived beside the little Church of S. Salvatore ; the parish priest of Resina, however, ousted him from this lucrative position and now himself comes up from time to time to read Mass and entertain the visitors with *Lacrimæ Christi*. The little community consists of a few husbandmen who have settled at the foot of Vesuvius, the inmates of the Observatory and the guard of *gens d'armes*. At Whitsuntide a festival is celebrated, when as many as twelve thousand people come from the neighbouring towns and walk in procession from S. Salvatore to the Cross at the foot of Vesuvius, to appease the fire-demon by their prayers. The mountain has now been at rest since 1850, and even then its devastations were not serious ; the stream of lava flowed towards Ottajano in moderate measure, devastated the gardens of Prince Ottajano and destroyed the Convent of S. Teresa as also some dwelling-houses.

After an excellent meal with Don Michele, the priest, who on the score of being personally acquainted with our friend B. treated us most liberally, we crossed the lava stream and descended to Resina. The black interminable field of lava produces a dreary aspect. But even here man is admirable in his all-subduing industry ; for scarcely is the lava cold when he sets himself to utilise it. Even at the Observatory I noticed the most curious grottoes and garden fences made of lava, and at the Hermitage we drank our coffee on a table of beautifully worked lava. Even busts are chiselled of

this material, and the excellent effect it has when polished I was to discover at Catania, where the variety of Etna lavas and their beautiful colours astounded me.

We descended to Resina. The desert of lava here immediately adjoins the most luxuriant vineyards, and in the midst of the ashes themselves the pomegranate puts forth its blossoms of as flaming a red as were they the product of the fire itself.

The expedition had been so pleasant and satisfactory that we resolved soon to undertake another of the kind, and consequently a few days later the carriage conveyed us once more across the Ponte di Maddalena towards Vesuvius. This time we wanted to enjoy the view from the opposite side. Hence we drove to the lava streams of 1850, which extend beyond Bosche tre Case and Bosche Reali, and for the first time I beheld these strange villages, which nestle in the most dangerous spots of Vesuvius. Their position in the midst of the loveliest verdure that volcanic forces can produce is as idyllic as that of the villages on Etna, and still more than these do they wear an entirely Oriental aspect. Small and arched, like the houses on Capri, the dwellings are built of the black lava, and even the towers of the churches are formed of the same sombre material. The people look wild, timid and poor,—not a beautiful countenance is seen among them. We alighted at a tavern in Bosche Reali, thence to continue our journey to the field of lava. In vain we asked for fruit, our desire for which was increased by the impossibility of procuring it. We suddenly noticed, however, that a



horse was tranquilly devouring the fruit of the carob tree from a bucket close beside our table. A curious scene took place, when we all fell on the bucket and helped to consume the savoury fodder. And here I learnt at first hand that carob beans are used as fodder in Naples.

We visited the lava streams. So sharply have they penetrated the vineyards, that close beside the lava stand elms many years old, round which vines have woven their tendrils. All the more dreadful seems the contrast between the cheerful life of nature and this terrible desolation. I also saw the ruins of the palace of the Duke of Miranda and the traces of other devastated dwellings amid the lava. And equally splendid did the crater look from this side.

I thus grew sufficiently acquainted with the mysteries of the volcano to climb at length to its crater. I had often been told that this ascent was more fatiguing than that of Etna. After having accomplished both, I may say that the ascent of Vesuvius seemed to me merely a walk, when compared with the tremendous exertion of climbing the crater of Etna, especially in the rarefied air and amid the strong exhalations of gas that issue from its hot and quaking soil. Indeed, when the traveller has ridden for hours over those interminable Phlegræan deserts of Etna and its never-ending lava-fields, this Vesuvius, that swallows towns and peoples, seems reduced into a mere firework toy for the Neapolitans. Nevertheless its crater presents a more compressed, vivid and highly coloured picture of hell than anything I saw on Etna.

It was a delicious night when I descended. The sun sank gradually to rest in the sea of Ponza; in the growing darkness Naples and the towns of the Campanian plain twinkled with innumerable lights, and drawn across the endless vault of the deep blue sky stood the fiery comet, the herald of war—a majestic spectacle when looked at from a volcano.

## V

In Naples the festival of S. Paulinus at Nola had been talked of as a most noteworthy event. The whole of Campania, it was said, collected there, and there was a spectacle such as could nowhere else be seen. I consequently betook myself to Nola on June 26, eager to become acquainted with the town which contains so many associations. It was before the gates of Nola that Marcellus inflicted the first defeat suffered by the great Hannibal; here the Emperor Augustus died; here Tiberius entered on his rule. And who moreover could be ignorant of the inexhaustible mine of precious vases that Nola has become? The most valuable in the Bourbon Museum have been found here, in Ruvo and at S. Agata dei Goti, and the traveller who has seen the collection will recall with pleasure that great vase of Nola which depicts in a composition of many figures the destruction of Troy. Lastly we may call to mind the discovery of the bell, of which this Campanian city boasts; may also recall S. Paulinus, in former times her bishop, an excellent poet and learned father of the Church, a by no means despicable ornament of the city.

He has been celebrated by Saverino de Rinaldis in a Latin epic. This poem, which is an imitation of Virgil, is called the "Paolineide." I bought a copy one day on the quay at Naples, where I came across it at one of the open-air bookstalls; but although the wonderful festival of the saint had aroused my interest in him, I could not bring myself to read the poem to the end. We may however remark, that the celebrated man was born in 351 in the present Gascony, that his father, a Prefect of Gaul, still held to the pagan religion, and that the son grew up in the same faith. Converted to Christianity at Bordeaux, Paulinus soon became its most zealous adherent. He had risen to the Consulate and been appointed Administrator of the province of Campania. Here he transferred his seat from Capua, the capital, to Nola, for no other reason than because the sainted Bishop Felix was buried here and that owing to his miracles the whole world was drawn to Nola. Paulinus renounced the secular life; his own inclinations and unfortunate experiences impelled him to the religious career; he had formerly been publicly accused of fratricide, and only through the intervention of his tutor Felix had he been exonerated from the terrible charge. Paulinus became a priest; his talent as a poet and ecclesiastical author brought him fame and his holy manner of life unbounded veneration. He became the successor of S. Felix in the bishopric of Nola. On his death in 431 he was buried in the Cathedral, but his remains were afterwards transferred to Benevento and finally to the Church of S. Bartolommeo in Rome.

Neither to his genius nor his miracles, however, is it due that his memory survives in the minds of the people, but rather to a good deed that is recorded of him. During his episcopate the only son of a widow at Nola was carried by the Vandals into slavery in Africa. Filled with Christian self-sacrifice, Paulinus set forth to rescue the youth and bear the yoke of servitude in his stead. Having fulfilled his object, he returned from Libya; the people of Nola went to meet him with rejoicings and conducted him with music, dancing and unwonted festivities back to his episcopal seat. This took place on June 26 of some year unknown; the memory of the day is annually celebrated in Nola and attracts an immense crowd from the remotest districts of Campania.

I went by train in the early morning. The fares had been reduced to a minimum; the throng was immense; the roads crowded with carriages of every kind, hastening from the country to Nola. For an hour and a quarter the train proceeded on its way through the flowery land, the inexhaustible wealth of which seems a perpetual festival of nature. Arrived at the gates of Nola, I beheld an endless stream of humanity pouring towards the town. A fair had been opened at the entrance; the ancient walls of the city and an adjoining tower were plastered with gigantic pictures; in the tower itself the "*gran Foca marina*" was on view, and musicians and town criers made a dreadful noise with their trumpet-blasts and shouts vaunting the praises of this sea-calf. At the same time the air resounded with the shouts of actors, who standing on a board

invited people to view their art. Indescribable was the varied throng of wares that were proclaimed at the stalls, the noise of the incoming tide of people, and the glaring colours to be found in materials and clothes and in the innumerable little flags that were carried about.

Scarcely had I entered the swarming city, when I was bewildered by a sight never hitherto beheld. Noisy music issued from a side street, a curious monster proceeded on its way, the aspect of which transported me from Campania direct to India. I saw a lofty tower, gaudily covered in gold, silver and red and carried by bearers; it was five stories high, was built of columns and adorned with pictures, friezes, niches, arches and figures, covered at each side with many coloured flags, gold paper, red draperies and with every colour. The columns glittered like red metal, the niches were decorated with the most extravagant arabesques on a gold background; the figures—genii, angels, saints, knights—in every conceivable costume, stood in rows, one above another, holding cornucopiæ, flower-bushes, wreaths or flags. Everything rustled, rumbled, fluttered in the air as the tower itself, borne on the shoulders of about thirty porters, tottered to and fro. In the lowest story girls sat wreathed with flowers; in the middle an orchestra with trumpets, kettledrums, triangles and cornets, made a bewildering noise.

The structure moved slowly on, towering above the houses of the streets along its way, and bearing on its summit a saint glittering in the sun. And now noisy music proceeded from another side,



and first here, and then there above the houses another and yet another of these moving towers stood forth.

“Good Heavens!” I exclaimed and asked a man standing beside me, “what is all this?” He answered in an unintelligible dialect, the only words of which I understood were “*guglia di San Paolino*.” “You must know,” hereupon observed a Neapolitan, who turned to me, “that these festival obelisks are for the saint, who when he returned to Nola from Barbary, was met by the citizens dancing and carrying obelisks of the kind in front of them. You can also see the others, for they all go to the Cathedral to dance.”

We hastened to the Piazza del Duomo, where the obelisks were to take their stand. Nine arrived from different sides. All were about the same size, except one, which, loftier than the rest, rose to the height of one hundred and two palms, and which belonged to the Guild of Farmers. Each guild of importance (*arte*) exhibits one of these obelisks at the festival. People had been at work from four to six months in preparing it; the cost was defrayed by the guild and amounted in each case to about ninety-six Neapolitan ducats.

On looking closely at these curious objects, it struck me that they were the architectural imitations of those baroque obelisks that stood in the squares of Naples, the fantastic sculpture and architecture of which bear so striking a testimony to the bent of Neapolitan imagination.

Each of these obelisks had its station in a street beside the house of an important member of the

guild. The wondrous structure had been fashioned there under a high wooden screen covered with canvas, which protected work and workmen against the weather. The skeleton was made of masts and cross-beams ; story was erected above story ; the whole was then covered with paper hangings, or so at least were the front and sides, the fourth and back part being hidden with myrtle boughs, green branches and a forest of tiny flags. Above the variegated paper covering, the lateral surfaces displayed genii, floating in the air and holding garlands. The front was most ingeniously designed ; painters and architects had alike ample employment. Each story had Corinthian columns, between them niches and a frieze above. The niches were filled with figures, those in the lowest being living people, girls or boys clad in short garments and wearing gilt paper helmets. In the middle niche stood the principal figure ; on the obelisk of the husbandmen or reapers, a colossal and splendidly attired Judith held on high the head of Holofernes ; the other obelisks carried saints, protectors or patrons. Over the central figure and at the sides of each story, other figures with the most diverse emblems ; angels bearing flags, others harps, genii with wreaths of flowers and cornucopiæ. In the centre niche of the highest story stood an angel, swinging the censer ; then came the gilt cupola that surmounted all, or a lily-shaped ornament, crowned as a finishing touch by the figure of a saint. On the obelisk of the Reapers stood S. George with the Maltese Cross and a white flag in his hand.

An emblem hanging from the frieze of the central

niche announced to which guild the obelisk belonged : on that of the Reapers was a sickle ; on that of the Bakers two huge loaves ; on that of the Butchers a piece of meat ; the Gardeners had a pumpkin ; the Tailors a white waistcoat ; the Cobblers a shoe ; the Provision-dealers a cheese ; the Wine-merchants a bottle. Each obelisk was preceded by a bearer carrying an emblem ; a youth with a cornucopia heralded the Gardeners. In front of the Wine-vendors was carried a silvered pillar, on which lay a barrel of wine, upborne by two figures apparently intended to represent S. Peter and S. Paul.

The obelisks, each with a choir in the lowest story, proceeded to the Cathedral. The bewildering din, the motley seething crowd, with its innumerable little banners of gold and silver paper, the balconies, smiling with girls and flowers, the curious tottering towers, the dazzling glow of the Campanian sky, formed such a strange, glaring, staring spectacle as to stupefy me and transport me back to the midst of paganism. The procession of the principal obelisks was opened by two tiny towers, in which children with wreaths sat in the lowest story ; then followed a ship, where sat a boy clad as a Turk, holding a pomegranate flower. Behind this ship a man-of-war, represented as floating in the sea ; the galley most perfectly equipped. On the bowsprit stood a young man in Moorish costume pleasantly occupied in smoking a cigar, on the starboard the figure of S. Paulinus himself kneeling in front of an altar.

As soon as an obelisk arrived in front of the

Cathedral, the most curious spectacle began. The immense tower set forth dancing to the echoing music. A man with a baton stepped in front of the bearers, and while he gave the time, they moved rhythmically to and fro. The colossus tottered, seemed about to fall, the figures moved, the banners rustled. And dancing in this way, each obelisk placed itself in front of the Cathedral, and now and then one obelisk danced against another. The solo dance and counter-dance lasted about five minutes, at the end of which the obelisk stood in front of the Cathedral, and as soon as it had taken its stand, a dance between youths and men began around it. Some twenty men and youths, each placing his arms on the shoulders of his neighbours, formed a circle, and while they moved in this circle, two solo dancers performed the most graceful movements in the middle. These two raised a third in their arms, and while they danced with him, he himself in a recumbent position made the motions of dancing with his limbs. At last, growing more and more languid, overcome by giddiness his head drooped — he was dead. Meanwhile the entire circle danced to the liveliest measure round the group; after a short time the dead revived, and smilingly raising his head, struck the castanets in the air. The rites of Adonis worship occurred to my mind; but no one was able to give me any explanation of this mysterious dance. It took place in front of each obelisk, though with variations; for in the midst of the circle I saw athletic performances, where every third dancer balanced himself on the head of a



bearer and was seen in the most daring attitudes. Even the huge man-of-war joined in the dance. The music of four obelisks was frequently heard at the same time, and, united to the shouts of thousands, produced a concert impossible to describe.

All these pagan performances took place in front of the Cathedral, while within the Bishop of Nola tranquilly read the Christian Mass and the faithful remained undisturbed on their knees.

The dance of the obelisks and the Mass ended, the religious ceremony closed with a procession of the clergy. I noticed that nowhere in Italy had I seen such imposing, or such healthy-looking, monks. This is owing to the climate of Campania, the richness and fertility of nature, and lastly to the latitude and liberty which monks enjoy in the kingdom of Naples. The procession made the round of the entire city, and was followed by the obelisks, and accompanied by the incessant throwing and report of crackers in every street.

It was noon ; the religious functions were over ; the people went about their amusements. Entirely bewildered by the infernal spectacle and wearied by the throng, I found myself in a *trattoria*, already filled with country folk. The motley and discordant seem everywhere in favour here. The very walls of the tavern were painted in motley fashion and the tiles stained with colour. I watched incredibly large dishes of macaroni and huge masses of roast lamb carried forth and disappear. The dark red wine was drunk from two-handled terra-cotta vases. Not as in Northern and Central



Italy, is the wine drunk out of glasses, but as in primitive times out of pitchers. I was vividly reminded of the terra-cottas of Campania and of the fact that the soil of Nola is full of such vessels. Even among the vases in use at Pompeii, and now preserved in the Museum at Naples, I had noticed these very jugs with two handles and trefoil-shaped mouths. The drinking jugs in everyday use in Campania are glazed white ; but the ceramic art retains nothing of the Greek style.

In the afternoon the heat, which was almost insupportable, drove everyone to the Caffé. In the towns of Campania "*Caffe Nobile*" denotes every caffè of any pretension whatever. I went in search of the noblest of all ; found it filled to suffocation ; peasants singing *ritornelli*, improvisatori, gentlemen, ladies in their smartest clothes, sitting, standing, mixing together. Ices, of excellent make, were eaten on huge dishes. Never until here, where the atmosphere was sultry and stifling, had I fully realised how delicious is *sorbetto*. It came to pass that I had not been long amid this crowd of humanity, when I fell into a slumber and was visited by the strangest dreams. Visions of Marcellus and Hannibal, the dying Augustus, Livia and Tiberius, the Bacchantes of the Pompeian frescoes, the vases of Nola, the curious obelisks and S. Paulinus chased one another through my brain. Outside surged the incessant shouts of the crowd. Noise of this kind, surging like the sea, permits of sleep just as does the constant roar of the waves.

The town, which I explored, possesses nothing especially noteworthy, but is pleasant and clean,

and gardens and vegetation meet us on every side. In ancient times it was of no less importance than Pompeii, with which it stood in active intercourse, all three cities of Campania, Nola, Nocera and Acera, having a common harbour in Pompeii at the mouth of the Sarno. The sea, which has now receded far from Pompeii, formerly covered a great part of this plain.

I left the town to climb to the Convent of S. Angelo, a beautifully situated Franciscan convent with open porticoes standing in a grove of fruit trees. On the road I joined a family already returning from the *fiesta*. A matron and her grandchildren, the matron probably eighty years of age, of classic beauty, of large proportions and tragic mould. She was clad in a long voluminous dress of crimson-coloured silk with a broad hem of gold brocade, the waist high after the Greek fashion, and over the dress an embroidered jacket likewise red; her grey hair was bound by a fillet in the ancient Pompeian style. As this stately figure walked along, she looked like a princess of ancient days, the mother of a king, and truly she might have stood for Atossa in "the Persians" of Æschylus, the noble wife of Darius and mother of Xerxes. I joined myself to this company, and although one of the granddaughters was of great beauty, I forgot the attractions of blooming youth in those of the matron, from whose imposing figure I could scarcely remove my gaze. The granddaughters were less richly clad; they wore parti-coloured dresses with puffed sleeves and the head-dress of the district. This is called the *Mucador* and is a kind of veil wound not

entirely round, but only lightly folded on the back of, the head, leaving the hair exposed on the temples. In even such wise do we see the women wear the head-cloth in the frescoes of Pompeii. Unfortunately I understood next to nothing of the dialect spoken by these peasants. They invited me to their house, which they said was only a few miles from Nola. Willingly would I have seen the family household, but I declined the invitation, for the day was drawing to its close, and S. Angelo and the view over the plain of Nola tempted me to the convent.

The sight here presented of the vast fruit-garden that lies below is indeed beautiful. On the left is Monte Somma, hiding its twin brother Vesuvius ; on the right the mountain of Maddalone ; above the convent the ruined fortress Cicala, picturesquely crowning a hill. Between these mountains lies the campagna of Nola, a wood of poplars, elms and fruit trees, round which vines weave their festoons. The space between the trees is filled with maize and corn, growing in utmost luxuriance, and everywhere stand lemon and pomegranate trees. In the midst of this park the town lies hidden amid foliage, vines and flowers, and bathed in sunlight. It is indeed a land calculated to give birth to such festivals. Nature here is an uninterrupted song of the Creation's praises.

I left Nola in the evening. Horse-races were still to take place and the eye was to revel at night in illuminations of candles and many coloured lamps. As I looked late in the evening from my window at S. Lucia in Naples, I saw countless carriages laden

with the returning throng hurry along the Chiaja ; the mules decorated with ribbons and flowers, the men waving their flags, carriages, animals and people white with dust. Thus jesting and shouting the merrymakers were borne along the Chiaja, to go still farther on and take part in the Corso.

## VI

Anyone who has travelled along the shore from Salerno to Amalfi will cherish a delightful recollection of this coast. Nothing more beautiful is to be found in the territory of Naples. Of all the expeditions that I have made in Italy, none has left behind so indelible an impression.

The road follows the coast, running high above it and winding in and out with every bend. On the right above consequently stand the mountains, green valleys with villages between, below the azure sea, with the uninterrupted view to Pæstum and the mountains of Calabria, as far as Cap Licosa, where the coast bends round to the bay of Policastro and disappears from view.

The first place on the road and close to Salerno is Vietri, the situation of which recalls that of Tivoli. A large and deep ravine, through which rushes a stream that drives several mills and runs down to the sea. At the edge of this ravine stands Vietri, brown and weird, with its cupolaed churches and chapels. Far below on the white strand lies the little port with its sailing boats. Almost each of these villages, though standing high above the shore, has its tiny harbour. They afford the most

tranquil scenes of fishing life, more picturesque in nature than on canvas, and gazing from the cliffs on the emerald green waves below, the boats look as if floating in the air.

The many towers along the sea and the numerous fortresses crowning the rocks, forcibly bring to mind recollections of the time when the Normans here founded their memorable dominion, which formed an epoch in the history of civilisation and bore far-reaching results not in the West alone, but also in the East.

The conditions in South Italy were curious ; disorderly rule of Greeks and Lombards ; incessant incursions of the Arabs ; brilliant republics, such as those of Amalfi, Gaeta and Naples. In that beautiful Salerno, that now rises so peacefully from the sea, ruled the Lombard prince Waimar. A Saracen fleet lay anchored in front of the town, and the Mussulman assailed its walls. The inhabitants were enervated to the level of the Sybarites or Byzantines ; the badly defended town appeared ready to fall. At this juncture forty Normans, pilgrims from the Holy Sepulchre, chanced to arrive in vessels belonging to Amalfi and came to Salerno. They demanded arms, rushed from the gates and attacked the Moslems. The people of Salerno, put to shame, followed them ; and after a great carnage the Saracens raised the siege. Waimar rewarded the pilgrims in princely fashion ; and on their return to Normandy they inflamed the imagination of their fellow-countrymen by accounts of the coasts of Salerno, of the eternal spring that reigned there,



of the delicious fruits and the spoils that awaited the bold invader. Adventurous Normans for the first time under Dragut embarked for the South. This was in the beginning of the eleventh century, and the Norman race proved more fortunate than either the dynasty of Napoleon or that of Murat.

Sismondi tells us that from this time onwards the word *Figiakasta*, a desire for figs, a figurative expression for an ardent longing, was incorporated into the Icelandic tongue, the idiom of ancient Scandinavia.

Meanwhile we have followed the shore as far as Cetara, an indescribably fascinating spot, an Elysian orchard amid wild masses of rock, where I was struck by the picturesque Saracenic architecture. The houses, which are small and one-storied, have *loggie* and verandas overgrown with vines; their roofs are vaulted and painted black. The tiny churches of curious architecture rise fantastically from the dark foliage of the orange trees. The whole picture is so foreign, that the traveller might well imagine himself in Kairewan, in the midst of a non-European civilisation. Everything was radiant in the sunshine: golden fruit and unknown flowers; the white houses and their verandas all entangled, as it were, in a wealth of green. No dirt, all clean and graceful like the orange, carob and mulberry trees, and exotic like the flower-covered prickly cactus and the soaring foliage of the aloe.

This lovely Cetara was the first place along the coast occupied by the Saracens, who thence pushed on, founding colonies up as far as Amalfi by way of Majori and Minori, and even at Scala and Ravello.

For even before the conquest of Sicily Saracens scoured these shores, attracted hither by the long-continued struggle between the Greeks and the cities, and the cities with the Lombards of South Italy. The city of Naples itself was responsible for their first intervention in the year 836, when its Consul Andreas appealed to the Arabs for aid in throwing off the yoke of Prince Sicard of Benevento. This then flourishing republic, heedless of the excommunications of popes, and the threats of the Greek as well as the Roman emperors, consequently concluded an alliance with the Saracens. The alliance lasted half a century, and chroniclers relate that the harbour of Naples looked at the time like a Saracen port. When on Sicard's death in 839, Lombard rule fell to pieces in Benevento and Salerno, and Radelchis and Siconulf disputed with one another for the mastery, each of these hostile princes in turn called a Saracen horde to his aid. Siconulf took into his service Apolofar with a squadron from Crete, and these Saracens established themselves in the neighbourhood of Salerno.

Siconulf and Radelchis having divided between them the territories of Benevento and Salerno in 851, expressly stipulated in the treaty of peace that the Saracens should no longer be tolerated on the coast between Amalfi and Salerno. Nevertheless many, causing themselves to be baptized, remained and have left an indelible Saracenic impress on the district. Others crossed over from Sicily, when during the course of the ninth century it seemed as if the whole of Calabria were in danger

of becoming Mohammedan; a sultan reigned at Bari, Tarento had fallen into the power of the Arabs, they even threatened Rome, where they sacked the churches of S. Peter and S. Paul, while, in spite of the Emperor Louis II., Naples constantly remained on terms of friendship with them.

They settled afresh at Cetara in 880; and the same year the republic of Naples gave them a piece of land at Sebetos; they established themselves securely at the foot of Vesuvius, in the classic district of Pompeii, and lastly on the Garigliano, whence they scoured the whole of Campania. They also founded their colony of Agropolis in the neighbourhood of Pæstum.

Not even under Norman rule did they vanish from these districts. Many had become Christians, others had remained in Roger's service. Eastern customs and Eastern culture were thus introduced into the territory of Salerno. The name of Cetara, which sounds like guitar, would itself appear Arabic.

The sun already blazed fiercely on the bare rocks, along which we sturdily continued our way, and we were still far from Amalfi. Hence onwards the coast grows more and more beautiful. The mountain peaks rise precipitously towering to the clouds, their brown colour in the brilliant sunlight, which gave an ever deeper tint of blue to the sea at our feet, standing in beautiful contrast to sky and water. On some isolated crags stood the black ruins of castles belonging to the Norman period. They had once protected the villages lying below the cliffs. Here stand in enchanted silence, surrounded by gardens and propped against the

mountains, Majori and Minori, little towns that resemble Saracen Cetara.

The coast at Minori and Majori is the most beautiful of all that the shores of the Gulf of Salerno, Amalfi and Sorrento have to offer, and at the risk of being charged with heresy, I boldly assert that its position far surpasses that of Sorrento. Never did I see places of such beauty. First comes Majori, built by Sicard of Salerno in the ninth century, its port enclosed by a narrow beach, snow-white and of fine sand. Above, the terraced mountains form hanging gardens; the beautiful white houses, each of which looks like a villa, stand attractively round. High above rises an ancient castle. The quietest of paths and roads lose themselves in the mountain, from which gushes a cheerful stream. The enchanted solitude captivates the imagination, and probably in the mind of every traveller arises the longing to dwell, or at least to spend a summer here; and the visitant from Northern lands becomes acquainted with the meaning of the word *Figiakasta*.

We sat in a dainty, brightly painted *locanda* by the sea, luscious dark figs and golden oranges piled in front of us beside our beakers of wine. The hot atmosphere, the sea air and the perfume of flowers made us heavy with sleep.

In Minori we halted again at a *caffé*. Here the houses are all as small and dainty as those of Pompeii. The room in which we sat was so narrow that four people could with difficulty find accommodation. The host stood at the bar, a fan in his hand with which he created a draught and waved away the flies, telling us meanwhile all manner of



stories in the dialect of the district, dilating especially on the macaroni, which is prepared here as also along the entire coast from Amalfi, and which supplies the whole kingdom of Naples.

We climbed in the full blaze of the afternoon sun up the hills above Minori, then rounding a promontory saw before us Atrani, which is separated from Amalfi by a gigantic rock.

The situation of Atrani is most imposing. It rises in the form of a pyramid on the highest part of the coast, the rocks above it soaring to the clouds. The picturesque architecture of the houses with their *loggie*, renders the aspect the more foreign, and the contrast of the white walls against the black background of rocks, produces a dazzling effect. These rocks divide in two at the side of the place, a green valley lying between them. Towers and castles crown the rocks ; high in the clefts above grows the fan palm. Around on the steepest peaks and in the wildest rocky solitudes stand other villages, only to be reached by arduous climbing, yet even on these heights surrounded by vines and shady chestnut groves. High above Atrani stand Pontone, Minuto, Scala and Ravello.

Amid these places Ravello is conspicuous owing to its Saracen associations. It lies high above Atrani, and is reached by a difficult ascent, a wild romantic path leading through tunnels and over rocky ground, between vineyards, and carob and chestnut trees. The higher we climb, the more beautiful is the view over the sea. We look down between brown rocks to the blue waters, which seem to flow in between the fantastic pin-



nacles of Pontone. Below our feet are green cliffs covered with the dwellings of men who live at peace, no longer disturbed by any Saracen.

We came to the deserted Convent of the Order of S. Clare, and here saw the first traces of Moresque arches; then proceeded to the Villa Cembrono, the country house, buried in oleanders and roses, of a wealthy Neapolitan, who from the summit of the rock gazes straight into the sea. This *Vigna* is incomparable; above all the great pergola or vine-arbour, running diagonally across the garden, awoke my admiration. It was a roof supported on white pillars, entirely covered with vines from which hung bunches of swelling fruit; the well-kept garden was filled with delicious flowers in all the countless varieties that Southern vegetation in the full splendour of July can produce. At the edge of the rock was a Belvedere, surrounded by hideous marble statues, which seen from a distance, however, seemed of good workmanship. Hence we gazed on the glittering stretch of sea, on the coasts of Calabria with their silvery peaks, the imposing point of Conca and the gloomy Cap d'Orso near Majori; all these mountains of loveliest outlines and severe, sculpturesque form. It is indeed a view that man would willingly purchase with the toil of days; a view whereon to gaze and keep silence behoves us better than to speak. Looking from this garden of Armida with its roses and hydrangeas into the magic sea, that seems a second sky, radiant in light, we long for the power of flight. Surely in such blissful evening repose and on such a promontory over the Cretan sea, must

Dædalus and Icarus have sat when they were seized by the longing to fly ; they rose and made themselves the wings of swans.

We climbed on to the Convent of S. Antonio. It also is entirely Moresque, with graceful little pillars in broken arches. We now entered ancient Ravello and in the midst of the rocky wilderness suddenly found ourselves confronted by a Saracen town, towers and houses with fantastic arabesques of entirely Saracen aspect. It is built of black tufa, and stands lonely and deserted in its green mountain solitude. The world has vanished ; nothing is in sight but trees and rocks ; deep below in the dream-like distance here and there the purple sea. Lofty black towers in gardens, fantastic architecture of Moresque style with half-destroyed arabesques over the windows, and graceful miniature columns in the arches.

In the market-place and close to the church stands an ancient Moorish house, likewise of black tufa adorned with arabesques and with two curiously formed columns at the corners. The roof consists of a series of arched panels. This building is called the "*teatro moresco*." It was undoubtedly a palace belonging to one of the ancient magnates of Ravello. For this now deserted town was formerly a flourishing colony of Amalfi and numbered 36,000 inhabitants. Wealthy families here introduced all that luxury which intercourse with the East and the Saracens of Sicily necessarily fostered. Especially powerful were the Affitti, Rogadei, Castaldi, and still more the Ruffuli. These families built themselves magnificent palaces in the loveliest

gardens, with fish-ponds and gushing fountains, strictly on the Arab pattern under the direction of Arab architects. Ravello remained in constant intercourse with the Saracens. Saracens even dwelt here, and up to the time of Manfred an Arab garrison was stationed here. Thus it came about that the place was one of the first in South Italy to adopt purely Moorish architecture, and that it is still one of the few that has preserved its remains.

In little Ravello I found almost as many Moresque buildings as in Palermo itself, where the castles of Cuba and Zisa are destroyed down to their outer walls. The Palazzo Ruffuli is a veritable mine of the Saracen architecture of its period and district. It is situated in a garden and for the last three years has belonged to an Englishman, Mr. Francis Nevile Reid, who first excavated it from the débris in which it stood. The beautiful palace may be called a miniature Alhambra, a three-storied building containing more than three hundred rooms, all supported by Moresque columns.<sup>1</sup> The halls, which are richly decorated with arabesques, are of Sicilian-Arabic character, and must have been of fabulous magnificence. Close by, in the middle of the garden, stands a rotunda in Saracenic style, the remains of walls and a square tower; arches and half-buried halls indicate other structures in the shape of baths and courts, which together must

<sup>1</sup> I am told by relations of the late Mr. Reid, who are well acquainted with the palace, that the number of rooms has been greatly exaggerated; the palace is by no means so vast.—  
[TRANSLATOR.]

have formed a well-enclosed and at the same time castle-like structure. We can thus form an idea of the wealth amassed by the families of Ravello of the period to which the palazzo belongs.

To what a pitch of degradation all these districts in the neighbourhood of Naples have fallen, is revealed by these remains of ancient splendour in the impoverished towns. These coasts, blessed by nature with over-lavish hand, have had two eras of prosperity ; one in Greek antiquity, to which the neighbouring Pæstum bears eloquent testimony, another in the republican Middle Ages, when the fleets of Naples, Gaeta, Amalfi and Sorrento covered the seas, long before the republican spirit, the last remains of the ancient Greek and Roman city constitutions, withdrew to North Italy, and Genoa, Pisa and Venice rose to power. In the first case the Romans destroyed the flower of civilisation of South Italy ; in the second it fell under Norman rule, sinking lower and lower to its present state of misery. A good history of these South Italian republics from the seventh century to the time of Roger of Sicily remains to be written.

Meanwhile as I stood in the Ruffuli garden, I watched a wonderful phenomenon of light over the sea. The sun was just setting ; the mountains over Pæstum and Salerno had already faded to the colour of dark green velvet ; high above Pæstum hung a gigantic white cloud, which took the deep glow of the red evening sky. It looked like a rose of fire growing in the heavens and threw its light over the sea, setting aflame the whole wide Gulf of Salerno, until it gradually turned to gold ; then

became laced with streaks of pale green, passed into violet, yellow, grey, and finally died away.

I could dwell on many other things concerning Ravello, especially the ancient cathedral built by Niccolo Ruffuli in the eleventh century, where a curious mosaic pulpit and ancient bronze doors may be seen, and where in an ampulla the blood of S. Pantaleo liquefies as does that of S. Gennaro ; but enough ! it is better neither to see too much, nor to write too much of what we have seen.



**PALERMO IN 1853**



## PALERMO IN 1853

### I

#### THE ARAB PERIOD

AFTER the Saracens had spread Arab rule over the coasts of North Africa, Sicily was one of the first European countries which they invaded. From the seventh century onward the island was subject to their incursions. They came from Asia, then from Africa, Candia and Spain—hordes of corsairs—without any aim, and not until 827 did they form any definite scheme of conquest.

In Sicily, which had suffered severely under the rule of Byzantium, a military revolution had broken out; Euphemius, the general, had risen with the intention of delivering the island from the dominion of Constantinople. The non-Sicilian troops, however, returned to their allegiance, and forced the rebels to throw themselves into the arms of the Aghlabites in Africa. Thus from hatred and revenge the Sicilian became a traitor to his religion and his country.

At Kairewan Ziâdet-Allah formed the design of sending an army to the island, which, with the aid of the Sicilian rebels, ought to fall an easy conquest.

For himself he coveted the title of Emperor. Opinions in Kairewan were divided, since many considered the expedition too hazardous. Ased-ben-Forâd, however, the seventy-years-old Kadi of the city, a respected jurist, encouraged the ruler, and himself undertook the supreme command. Arabs, Berbers, fugitive Spanish Saracens, and the best blood of Africa embarked in a hundred vessels from the port of Susa on June 13, 827, no more than 700 horse and 10,000 foot strong. They landed on June 17 at Mazzara, defeated General Palata in a bloody battle, during which Ased, as formerly Mohammed and Ali, remained on his knees, reciting the chapter Ya-Sin from the Koran. Soon after they advanced against Syracuse; they erected their camp in certain hollows round the city, as the Arab historian tells us, that is to say in the celebrated *Latomiaë*. They remained a year before Syracuse, where the Greeks, encouraged by the expectation of the aid that had been promised by the Doge of Venice, Giustiniano Partecipazio, made a valiant defence. The Arabs were decimated by the plague, of which Ased-ben-Forâd died in 828.

The army hereupon elected Mohamed-ibn-el-Gewâri as its leader, and finally withdrew, in but little better condition than the Athenians under Nicias in former days, and in the same direction, but pursued with less energy.

Led by Euphemius, the Arabs established themselves in Minoa, and strengthened by fresh reinforcements, conquered Agrigentum and afterwards Panormus. They called this city Bulirma, whence arose the name Palermo. Here Ibrahim-ibn-

Abdallah established his seat as first Vali, that is to say, Governor of Sicily. Under his successor Castro Giovanni, the ancient Enna, also fell into the power of the Saracens. But Syracuse and Taormina still held out, until, after a heroic resistance, the former also fell. The accounts that remain of the siege recall the heroism of the ancient Syracusans in the time of Nikias and Marcellus.

How great even at this time was the reverence in which Syracuse was held, is shown by a remarkable legend, which relates that while Adrian, the Byzantine admiral, remained lingering inactive on the shores of Elis in the Peloponnessus, shepherds came to inform him that demons had appeared to them in the marshes, telling them that Syracuse would fall on the morrow. They led the general to the spot indicated, where voices were indeed heard announcing the fall of the ancient Hellenic city. And it actually happened that Syracuse fell at the time foretold, on May 21, 878. The Saracens put the inhabitants to a cruel death and burnt the city they had previously sacked. The immense spoils show that even under the Byzantines Syracuse had again grown wealthy by commerce.

On August 1, 902, Taormina also surrendered, and henceforward the whole of Sicily submitted to the rule of Islam.

The island received Mohammedan laws and Arab speech and customs. From Sicily, which had formerly given four popes to Rome (Agathon in 679, Leo II. in 682, Sergius in 687, and Stephen III. in 768), Christianity threatened to disappear; nevertheless the Arabs were not fanatical opponents of the



Christian faith. Many churches and communities it is true went under ; others purchased toleration by means of tribute and upheld the faith under Arab rule. And when the Normans later came to Sicily, the Christians of Val Demona and Val di Mazzara rendered them effective aid ; Palermo had even a Greek bishop, who assembled his flock in the Church of S. Ciriaco.

The rule of the Arabs was moreover disturbed by incessant wars with the Greeks in Byzantium and Calabria, by internal dissensions, lastly by repeated revolts in cities, such as Syracuse, Agrigentum, Himera, Lentini and Taormina. As long as the dominion of the Aghlabites of Kairewan lasted, the island was ruled by their Valis, but when, in the beginning of the tenth century, this dynasty was overthrown by the Fatimids and the Caliphate of Tunis was united with that of Egypt, Sicily also became an Egyptian province. This, however, was not accomplished without sanguinary struggles between the former and the later rulers.

The dominion of the Fatimids was the happiest time that Sicily had under the Mohammedan yoke. The island was raised to the position of a separate province dependent on Egypt and governed by an Emir, who made his seat at Palermo. Of these Fatimid Emirs, Hassan-ben-Ali in 948 was the first, and as early as about 969 Sicily became a hereditary fief in his family. His sagacity was held in as high esteem as his energy ; he suppressed the factions and gave rest to the country, so that he not only ruled there in security, but also exercised terror over Calabria and Italy. In vain the Greek

Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus attempted an expedition against him ; the imperial army was defeated, the fleet annihilated. Hassan's successor also, Abdul Kâsem Ali, kept Sicily in terror with his expeditions, and the Emperor Otto II. narrowly escaped death or imprisonment. The cities grew wealthy owing to the incalculable spoils which again and again fell into the hands of the Arabs, of whom fresh hordes constantly arrived from Africa. Like Spain under the Moors, Sicily began to flourish.

The rule of Inssuff (990-998), that of Giafar in the beginning of the eleventh century, and the dominion of his successor Al Achal were also prosperous. These orderly conditions lasted for about eighty years, until the complications in Africa spread to Sicily, and finally the various sects quarrelling among themselves worked the downfall of Arab dominion in the island.

Hassan Samsan Eddaula was the last Emir of Sicily. His brother Abu Kaab rose against him and drove him to Egypt in 1036. Arab despots had arisen in isolated cities, and other Emirs from Africa seized the opportunity to make themselves rulers. This offered the most favourable occasion for ousting the Mohammedans. The Emperor Michael the Paphlagonian consequently sent the valiant George Maniaces with an army to Sicily. George, however, did not succeed in conquering the island, a task which was only accomplished by the Normans, and that not until 1072.

The character of Arab rule in Sicily was far different from that of the Moors in Spain. Both countries, the most favoured of Southern Europe,

had been conquered by African Mohammedans but in very different circumstances. In Spain the Moors destroyed a powerful Christian kingdom, endowed with a well-ordered system of administration and government, for which they were consequently obliged to substitute another equally good. Their dominion, which had originated in the Caliphate of the Ommayyads, assumed a legitimate and orthodox character as opposed to that of the Abassids in Asia. It was moreover confronted by Christianity with heroic chivalry and thus compelled to redoubled energy. Lastly Spain was a great and wealthy country.

Far different was the position of the Arabs in Sicily. Here they destroyed no great native power; they merely ousted the Byzantine Greeks, who had fallen into misery and barbarism; the conquest was easy, and the spoils of conquest were decadent cities. Further their dominion proceeded from a sect or provincial dynasty, and was therefore devoid of that power which a great origin bestows. Finally Christianity did not offer any opposition but collapsed at once, for the circumference of Sicily was too small and the mountains in the island afforded no point of vantage, such as the Pyrenees.

While the Moors in Spain rose to a splendour that overshadowed the whole of Europe; while by means of beautiful architectural works and a great scientific culture, they raised their new kingdom into a European power and were able to retain it for seven hundred years, the Arabs in Sicily during their two centuries of rule never really succeeded in raising the country out of the tumultuous conditions

of an insecure dominion. In spite of the fact that Sicilians of present days look back with a certain romantic pleasure to the period of Arab subjugation, we may assert that this kingdom of the Great Emir in Sicily was not unlike the robber states of Africa.

Nevertheless the Saracens were no rude barbarians. They bore their part in the culture of the East, which had developed with great rapidity. The poetry, the arts, the sciences of the Orient were by them transplanted to the ancient Doric soil of Sicily. Even the present literary history of the island, compiled by Amari, includes Sicilian Arabs in its catalogue of authors. We would, however, gladly give all these versifiers, with their pompous names, for the lost history of Sicily by Ibn Kattâ, and for such would even renounce the *Divan* of Ibn Hamdis of Syracuse.

More important, however, and the only remaining memorial of the Arabs in Sicily, is their architecture. Kairewan, whence they came, was already famous by reason of the mosque founded by Akbah in the seventh century, and as the chief seat of the Caliphate of those districts must have been enriched by magnificent buildings. From Kairewan the Arabs brought with them judgment and the taste for beautiful architecture, but never erected on the island buildings so imposing as those of the Moors in Spain. We are not acquainted with any celebrated mosque in Sicily, and even with regard to the Alcassar of the Emirs at Palermo, afterwards the stronghold of Normans and Swabians, cannot say with certainty how much of it is due to the Arab rulers. Palermo was conspicuous beyond all other



cities for luxury and wealth and had become an entirely Oriental princely residence. There and in other towns the Arabs built their market-halls and pleasure-houses, thereto invited by nature, which neither in beauty of sky or sea, nor in wealth of vegetation fell short of the charm of Oriental fairy-land.

Under the reign of Hassan ben Ali and of Kâsem, of whom it is expressly said that they built many cities and castles, the island necessarily became filled with Moresque architecture. No contrast could be greater than that between the fantastic style of the East and the majestic character of the Doric temples of Sicily.

The Moresque style of architecture was continued during succeeding times; remaining like the Arab writing and language in use even among the Normans and Swabians, who retained many Arab forms. Saracen architecture blending with the Byzantine-Roman, produced that hybrid style which is called the Arabic-Norman. By it alone or by the enduring influence of the Arab character, we can perceive how many and beautiful were the buildings which must have been erected by the Moors in Sicily. But all these castles of the Ēmirs, the splendour of which awoke the surprise of Roger, the Norman prince, have been destroyed by time, and of the Saracen architecture of two centuries little remains beyond the Cuba and the Zisa, two pleasure-houses near Palermo, which in spite of later restorations and some additions are recognised as undoubtedly Saracen constructions.

Both buildings stand outside the Porta Nuova



on the way to Monreale. The Cuba (the word signifies arch or vault) has served for several years as a cavalry barrack, and has become very ruinous, so that of its interior arrangements but little remains. The exterior is a regular square of well-fitting blocks, of beautiful proportions, divided by arches and windows, which in part blind, after the Arab fashion, serve merely as ornaments. An Arab inscription, which can no longer be deciphered, may still be seen on the cornice of the building. The interior lies entirely waste, and has in part suffered alteration at some later period; but in the central hall, which was formerly covered by a cupola, picturesque remains of arches and beautiful arabesques in stucco are still perceptible.

Boccaccio places the scene of the fifth tale of the sixth day in this palace, and Fazello, the historian, describes its splendour. He borrowed the description of the Cuba from older authors, for even in the sixteenth century the palace had fallen to decay. "United to the palace outside the walls of the city towards the west," he says, "was a Pomarium of about 2000 paces in circumference, called a park, that is a royal circus. Here were the loveliest gardens with all kinds of flowers, and they were always watered. Here and there were thickets fragrant with laurel and myrtle. Inside a long portico with many open round pavilions stretched from entrance to exit for the king's enjoyment, and one of these pavilions still remains uninjured. In the middle was a large fish-pond, built of ancient blocks of stone of wondrous size, in which living fish were enclosed. It remains undestroyed, but

devoid alike of fish and water. Above towered, as even now, the king's magnificent pleasure-house with the Saracen inscription on the summit, which I have not yet found anyone able to explain. Wild animals of almost every species were kept at one side of the garden. But all this has now fallen to ruin, and as vineyards and vegetable gardens, been appropriated to the use of private persons. The extent of the Pomarium, however, is easily recognised, the greater part of the walls having remained almost intact. The people of Palermo still call the place as formerly by its Saracen name Cuba."

As in Fazello's time, the palace still remains in its constituent parts, and the walls that enclosed the garden and the remains of the fish-pond may still be traced. But that is all that is left of the Cuba.

The Zisa was a still larger and more beautiful pleasure-house of the Saracen Emirs. A Spanish family, called Sandoval, who came into possession of the building, altered it by numerous constructions, but thereby prevented its falling into utter ruin, so that more of its original plan has been preserved than in the case of the Cuba. Here also the same style prevails; a great cube of simple and beautiful proportions, formed of limestone blocks, divided into three parts by cornices, arches and windows.

William the Bad restored the Zisa and apparently enlarged it, for the statement of Romuald of Salerno, that the king had built a palace called Lisa, can only refer to the rebuilding of the Zisa.

Its entirely modern interior contains many rooms, which no longer retain any traces of Saracen character. The entrance alone preserves in part a

certain aspect of antiquity. Here niches and arches supported by pillars may be seen in the wall; in one of these a fountain flows over marble steps, green with climbing plants. The Saracen arch above the fountain is fantastically decorated by ornamental interlaced arches. Varied fresco-paintings and mosaics, palms and olive branches, figures of archers and of peacocks are Norman additions. The Kufic inscription on the wall is likewise of Norman origin, as Morso, the Orientalist, has shown in his *Palermo Antico*, also De Sacy, and nothing beyond the no longer intelligible inscription on the summit of the palace dates from Arab times.

The fountain flowed from the portico into a beautiful fish-pond, which still existed in 1626 and is described by Leandro Alberti in his account of Italy and the adjacent islands. It stood close to the great entrance, a square of 60 feet each side, surrounded by reticulated walls. In the middle was a beautiful building reached by a little bridge; here was a room 12 feet long by 6 wide, vaulted and in the form of a cross, with two windows from which the fish might be seen swimming in the water. Out of this a beautiful room for women opened with three windows, each consisting of two arches resting on a tiny column of finest marble.

Several stairs led to the upper floor of the palace, which contained vaulted halls with Arabic arched windows and columns, and in the middle an open court with pavilions. The building was surmounted by battlements. The magnificence of the halls, their walls resplendent in mosaic, the floors inlaid with variegated marble and porphyry, must have

been rich and beautiful. But Alberti found the Zisa already so ruinous as to evoke his bitter lament : " In truth I believe that no noble-minded man could look on this building, which is in part destroyed, in part seems ready to fall, without an aching heart."

I have seldom enjoyed so enchanting a view as that from the flat roof of this Saracen castle of the panorama of Palermo, its plain, its coast and mountains. Here all is enclosed in an appropriate frame, for the whole of the *Conca d'oro*, the Golden Shell of Palermo, is surrounded by mountains of beautiful outline. At their feet stand orange groves and pleasure-houses ; the city with its lofty towers stretches along the sea ; on one side the jagged Monte Pellegrino, on the other Cape Zaffarana with its towers and finely cut spurs, the whole picture bathed in an atmosphere of tranquil repose and bliss.

The Norman princes, fascinated by the beauty of the Saracen palaces and gardens, continued building in the same style. Roger had already erected pleasure-houses such as the Favara, Mimnermus and others, as Ugo Falcando tells us. More especially were fountains and fish-ponds erected and laid out in the Oriental manner, and it is expressly cited of Frederick II., the friend of the East, that he constructed several costly fish-ponds. The great wealth of water, with which Palermo had been supplied by aqueducts, since ancient times, made such constructions easy. And how much they were in favour is shown by the accurate description of the fish-pond at the Zisa given by



Leandro Alberti. Benjamin of Tudela, in his short account of Palermo, speaks at greater length of the fish-pond at Albehira than of any other sight. He travelled to Sicily in 1172, at the time of William the Good, in order to become acquainted with the Jewish community there. His description of the Albehira is as follows: "Within the city gushes the greatest of all fountains; it is surrounded by walls and forms a fish-pond, which the Arabs call Albehira; several kinds of live fish are contained within it. Royal barques, resplendent in gold, silver or painting, are rowed upon it. The king and his ladies often go there for pleasure. In the royal gardens also stands a great castle, whose walls are covered with gold and silver, while the floors are paved with various kinds of marble, forming mosaic pictures of everything the world contains. Nowhere are there buildings to approach the palaces of this city."

We do not know where the Albehira was situated. Morso tries to prove that Benjamin of Tudela must have meant the so-called Mar-Dolce, as the castle of Favara, built in the Saracen style and now in ruins, is called. It stands outside the city, side-wards from the Convent of the Gesù, and below the cave, celebrated for its fossil bones. The building was called the Castle Mar-Dolce, because an ancient basin stands in front. In Arabic, however, it was known as Casr Djîafar. The ruins display the same style as that of the Zisa and Cuba.

Another Saracen pleasure-house still remains outside Palermo, Ainsenin, called by the people *Torre del diavolo*. Its ruins stand in the picturesque



valley of the Guadagna, through which the Oretos flows and which is dominated by Monte Grifone.

These are the last remains of Saracen buildings, which still preserve the memory of Arab rule in Palermo. The last living traditions of Islam expired with Frederick II., when in 1223 he removed all the Arabs still remaining in Sicily to Lucera in Apulia. For during his absence, under the conduct of their leader Mirabet, they had striven to acquire independence. Henceforth their language and customs vanished from the life of the Sicilian people, and another nationality, the Spanish, began to assert itself in the island. The traces of Islam were wiped away.

It was not until the eighteenth century, when after the discovery of Pompeii, the love of antiquities was revived throughout Italy, that people turned with enthusiasm to the Saracen remains in Sicily. The inscriptions in churches and palaces led to the study of the Arab language; a chair was founded for it in Palermo. This, however, was not accomplished without an absurd fraud, which showed how completely the knowledge of Arabic had vanished from an island where even Christian kings had been able to speak the language. Giuseppe Vella, a Maltese, who had come to Palermo assuming the airs of a great Arabic scholar, forged a *Codex*, containing a large correspondence of the Arabs in Sicily. The whole learned world of Europe was thrilled by the pretended discovery, until the impostor was unmasked and led to prison from his professor's chair.

Meanwhile Sicilians also, such as Airoidi, Rosario

di Gregorio and Morso, had turned their attention to the study of Arabic, more especially the last, who succeeded Vella in his professorship and who, in conjunction with the great Orientalists Tychsen, Silvestre de Sacy, Hammer and Frähn, was engaged in deciphering the Kufic inscriptions in Palermo. The efforts of these men were productive of useful results with regard to the history of the Sicilian Arabs, Gregorio's *Rerum arabicarum, quae ad historiam siculam spectant, ampla collectio*, Panormi 1790, and Martorana's *Notize storiche dei Saraceni siciliani*, Palermo 1833, being the fruit of their labours. More recently the Mussulman history and literature of the island have found an illustrious exponent in Michele Amari.

With the study of Arab antiquity also awoke the love of the Saracenic-Norman style. And how strongly this is present in the recollection of the people at the present day may be seen by the survey of various shops in the Toledo of Palermo, which have been erected in Arab taste, and by many pleasure-houses of the upper classes. The style of Sicilian palaces and villas is everywhere notorious on account of its extravagant whimsicality. While the noblest examples of sumptuous piles stood before the eyes, while the Cuba and Zisa rose outside the gates, and within the city many buildings due to Norman or later times, such as the Palace of the Tribunal, which might have taught architects that it is possible to combine simplicity, harmony of proportion and ornament in a huge building, they have preferred to decorate modern palaces with baroque absurdity, as in the case of the villa of Prince

Pallagonia, or have even adopted the Chinese style as in the Villa Favorita.

In recent times they have returned to the Arab-Norman style, and here we may mention as epoch-making the villa of Serra di Falco, a beautiful house not far from the Zisa, erected by the duke, who is justly renowned for his services in the study of Sicilian antiquity. The magnificent garden takes us back to the times of Al Hassan.

In the city itself the Marchese Foccella is building a beautiful palace of Arab-Norman character. It is not indeed altogether free from puerility, like all buildings erected in imitation of a bygone style, such as we see in the Wilhelma at Stuttgart. The Palazzo Foccella stands on the Piazza Teresa immediately beside the Porta dei Greci, by which it is broken. Great sums have already been spent on this villa, which is now nearly finished. The exterior is broken by arched windows of coloured glass, which are divided by small twisted columns; inside the rooms are many and sumptuous, especially the Arab hall in the middle, the walls of which are covered with a variety of arabesques and are decorated in vivid reds and blues, in gold, black and white, and with the finest marbles. The vaulted roof glitters with fantastic ornament. The pavement is formed of the most costly varieties of stone, which give an idea of the geological wealth of the island, none but native material having been employed. To complete the resemblance to the Alhambra, the plashing fountains have not been omitted. The wealthy Marchese has arranged other rooms in the Roman and Pompeian styles, and

has given a patriotic proof that the artists of Sicily are capable of excellent work in fresco, since all these imitations of ancient wall paintings are the work of native artists.<sup>1</sup>

## II

### THE NORMAN PERIOD

Two islands far distant from one another, England and Sicily, were conquered at one and the same time by the same warlike and fortunate, though rapidly withering, race. Both in one and the other island the conquerors introduced feudal rule, filled both with the baronies and entailed estates which still survive, and created an aristocratic constitution. This constitution reached a powerful development in England, and although fallen to decay in Sicily, it has not entirely disappeared.

The inner relationship between the two islands is very remarkable and serves to explain many historic connections since the French Revolution, of which I will only mention the Constitution, due to English influence, of 1812.

The rule of the Normans in Sicily covered a century. Administrative capacity, boldness, far-reaching self-seeking policy and magnificence in enterprise were the characteristics of the dynasty, until it fell a victim to Saracenic sensuality, to the climate and the unbridled strife of parties.

<sup>1</sup> At present (1887) the palace is in the possession of Prince Baucina, a lover of art, by whom it has been magnificently finished.

In 1038 George Maniaces had been sent by the Greek emperor to Sicily to drive out the Saracens. He begged Waimar, Duke of Salerno, to let the little band of Normans, who had been for some time in the duke's service, accompany him, and Waimar lent him three hundred soldiers under the command of William of the Iron Arm, of Drogo and Humphrey. Greeks and Normans precipitated themselves on the island, where they wrested Messina, Syracuse and many other cities from the disunited Arabs. The allies quarrelled over the booty, the haughty Greek thrusting the Normans aside and heaping insults upon them. The Normans abandoning the spoils, sailed to Italy, where they determined to indemnify themselves. They attacked Melfi and other cities of Apulia, and thus laid the foundations of their independent power. Scarcely was this accomplished, when the Greeks left Sicily to oust the Normans from Apulia; they failed, however, to achieve anything, instead all the towns they had conquered in the island fell again to the Arabs.

Years passed away without any important event, while the Normans established a firm foothold in Apulia. William had become Count, Drogo had inherited his dominions, and on Drogo's death Humphrey compelled Leo ix., the vanquished pope, legally to invest him with Apulia. Fresh bands had arrived from Normandy, among them was Robert Guiscard, who on Humphrey's death in 1056 caused himself to be proclaimed Duke of Apulia and Calabria. His youngest brother Roger later arrived also to try his luck.

In 1060 the valiant brothers had already con-



quered Reggio, and from thence the coast of the rich island which lay immediately before their eyes. One night, with only sixty followers, Roger crossed to Messina to inform himself of the condition of the country; with foolhardy rashness attacked the Saracens on the shore, returned to his vessel and sailed back to Reggio. Soon after fortune beckoned him to attempt the enterprise in all seriousness. Bencumen, Emir of Syracuse, who had been driven forth by his brother Belcamed, appeared before him, informed him of the hopeless disorder that prevailed in Sicily, and summoned him to go thither and wrest the fair island from the Arabs.

The undertaking was not easy: the Saracens opposed a brave resistance; and fresh reinforcements arrived from Africa itself to attack Roger, when after a bloody battle he had conquered Messina. He was there joined by his brother Robert; at Castro Giovanni they defeated the main body of the Saracens, and without further successes they returned to Calabria, to collect fresh forces for another onslaught. Meanwhile Almoëz, Caliph of Egypt, had sent a fleet to Sicily, which was however wrecked off the island of Pantellaria. Fortune favoured the bold adventurers, but jealousy threatened their ruin. Robert Guiscard began to look with envy on his brother's success; Roger desired half Calabria and the whole of Sicily for himself; Robert would not consent. These overbearing heroes consequently seized their arms, and heedless of Greeks and Arabs and of the insecurity of their recently established rule, rushed against one another in furious strife. Robert fell into the

hands of his brother, who however bowed to the violence of this extraordinary man and yielded. Reconciled, the heroes turned their united energy against Sicily.

The Normans appeared several times before Palermo, but invariably recalled by the affairs of Calabria, were unable to contemplate any regular siege. Not until 1071 did they make the attempt. The city was perhaps more populous than any other in Italy at the time, was undoubtedly more prosperous, a beautiful seat of Oriental life and extraordinarily wealthy. The Arabs made a desperate resistance and long defied the exertions of the enemy. Legend relates, that in order to show their fearlessness, they never even closed the gates of Palermo, and that one day a Norman hero ventured to traverse the entire city on horseback with his lance in rest. Finally Robert gained an entrance on the southern side, while Roger burst open the western gate. The Arabs who had retired to the interior of the city, capitulated here; they surrendered Palermo to the victor on condition that he would spare the lives and allow freedom of worship to the inhabitants.

Twenty years later the Christians entered conquered Jerusalem like savage hordes, dealing murder around. The Normans, however—valiant Crusaders—spared Mohammedan Palermo. Without blood being spilt, without any sack, they occupied the city, as satisfied victors, who had driven the enemy from the paradise which they themselves were to enjoy. No signs of that fanatical deadly hatred of Christianity for Islam is evident. The

rites and customs of the Mohammedans remained unendangered ; Christianity, which had previously fallen into desuetude, arose again of itself and thrust Islam into the background. In time it vanished in the cities, but lived longer in the interior of the island, where all that was most obdurate among the Saracens sought shelter in the mountains and for nearly a hundred and fifty years maintained its resistance.

The Normans remained tolerant to the Arabs on political grounds, and nowhere have Christendom and Islam lived more harmoniously together. The conquerors, few in number, were almost lost to sight amid the Saracen population, which for this very reason it was necessary to overcome by tolerance. Arab arts and sciences were accepted, buildings were erected in Arab style, the Christian court even assumed an Arab colour, surrounded itself by Saracen bodyguards and adopted Saracen attire. When towards the end of the twelfth century Mohamed-Ibn-Dgubair of Valencia travelled to Sicily, he extolled King William and his love for Islam. The king, he tells us, reads and writes Arabic ; his harem consists of Mussulman women. His pages and eunuchs are in secret Mohammedans. The traveller found the women of Palermo beautiful, voluptuous and clad entirely as Saracens, and when he saw them at festivals at church, dressed in gold-coloured silk, with coloured veils, gold chains and earrings, rouged and perfumed like Eastern women, he called to mind the lines of the poet :

“ Verily, when one enters the Mosque on a beautiful day, one finds gazelles and antelopes.”

The Arab tongue was learnt and was retained in use even in diplomas, yes even in inscriptions in Christian churches, where on mosaics and pillars we may still find the characters of the Koran, which have been placed there, not by Arabs, but by Christians, by the bishops and kings by whom the buildings were erected.

The Normans found existing in Sicily the following tongues: the Greek of the Byzantines, the Latin of the Romans, among the people the *Lingua Volgare*, which was soon to become the literary language of Italy, lastly Hebrew and Arabic. All these idioms were in use among the people, and we consequently find all four employed in diplomas. In early Norman times Greek was most generally in use accompanied by an Arab translation.

With the fall of Palermo the island became divided. Robert Guiscard took the beautiful capital and half of Sicily for himself, Roger the other half; Serlo, their brave nephew, received great baronies. Tancred, another nephew, became Count of Syracuse. Robert called himself Duke of Sicily, Roger Count, and archbishoprics and feudal lordships were founded in numbers. But the island was not yet entirely rendered subject, for not until 1088 did Syracuse surrender, Agrigentum not until 1091, Castro Giovanni still later, and finally Noto and Butera.

Henceforward until 1127 the duchies of Apulia and Sicily remained under the same jurisdiction, until the branch of Robert Guiscard expired, and the son of Count Roger fell heir to the territory beyond the Faro. This was Roger II., the greatest



man of the Norman line. His brave father, who had conquered Sicily, had died in 1101, and after the elder son Simon had been Count for five years, he was succeeded by Roger, who was still a minor under the guardianship of his mother Adelasia and of the Admiral George Antiochenus. Roger raised the Norman kingdom to its highest splendour, and all that strength and intellectual greatness, by which a self-made dynasty is usually characterised, were combined in his mighty personality. In 1127 he inherited the dukedom of Apulia. This terrified the Pope, the German and the Greek emperors, but Roger not only successfully held his own against them all and the princes of Salerno, Capua and Naples and also many others, he even compelled the Pope to invest him with Apulia and he ultimately assumed the crown. This he could not do, however, without the consent of the Parliament of the Barons and the higher clergy; indeed, from the relations of the Norman conquerors to the already existing nobility as well as to the new, an aristocratic constitution must of necessity arise. The parliament assembled in Salerno and bestowed the crown on the prince, but the ceremony of coronation only took place in the Cathedral of Palermo on Christmas Day 1130. Thus arose the kingdom of the two Sicilies.

Roger organised his monarchy, and in presence of the barons he was obliged to endow it with splendour and dignity. He consequently created the seven officials of the crown, the Constable and Great Admiral, the Great Chancellor, the Great Judge and Chief Chamberlain, the Protonotary and the Great



Marshal, and of these formed his Cabinet. He surrounded himself with Oriental ceremonial and entrusted the custody of his palace to eunuchs and Saracen guards, on whom he could rely. His whole reign was one of strife and warfare. He subdued all enemies both within and without his kingdom; into the Greek emperor, who could not surrender his rights over Sicily, he struck terror before Constantinople itself; he sacked Corinth, Athens and Thebes. Thence he brought several Greeks skilled in the art of silk-weaving to Palermo and thus introduced this industry to the West. The celebrated pallium, later worn by German emperors at their coronations, was woven in Roger's factory. He conquered Malta, sent a hundred and fifty vessels against Africa, and punished the same kingdom of Kairewan that had formerly subjugated Sicily. Under his guidance Norman energy developed with marvellous rapidity. Towards the Arabs he showed himself tolerant; he respected their art and learning. Among others he accorded a friendly reception at his court to Edris Edscherif, who had been banished from Africa, and this learned Arab made him a silver globe, on which all the known countries of the earth were depicted under their Arabic names. Edris at the same time compiled a geography which was generally known as the book of Roger; an extract from which under the title Geography of Nubia (*Geographia Nubiense*) is well known and has frequently been republished in Rome and Paris, and in 1790 in Palermo.

The motto which Roger had engraved on his sword, "*Apulus et Calaber, Siculus mihi servit et Afer,*"

is entirely characteristic of his ruling spirit. He died on February 26, 1154, at the age of fifty-nine.

He was succeeded by William I., on whom the nobles and clergy in their hatred bestowed the name of Bad, the only surviving son of Roger; the other sons, Roger, Anfuso, Tancred and Henry, having all previously died. The rapid decay of so vigorous and numerous a family is striking; in a few years it had become reduced to a single collateral descendant; and the power of Sicily also rapidly fell from the height on which Roger had placed it, showing that it had rested solely on the individual energy of single heroes. Already under the rule of William the Bad conditions prevailed in Sicily that recalled the times of the Saracen Emirs, the dominion of a favourite and an upstart, that of Majone of Bari, Great Admiral of the kingdom, who made an attempt to gain the crown. Conspiracies, revolts in the palace, risings of the nobility, unbounded confusion were rife. The hated king died in 1166, forty-five years old, after a troublous career, not devoid of military success.

In his son, William II. or the Good, who ascended the throne when a child of eleven, the direct line of the Norman dynasty came to an end. The first years of his reign were tumultuous, as his father's rule had been, owing to the quarrel for the regency, to rebellions of the barons and to Court cabals. The Normans had been able to conquer their beautiful kingdom, but were not able to retain it. They deteriorated as soon as the Southern climate and Oriental luxury undermined their Northern

vigour, and they were finally wrecked by feudalism or the untamable ferocity of the nobles. Nor, moreover, has any dynasty ever reigned long on the volcanic soil of Naples and Sicily; all have been foreign to it, all acquired possession of the country by adventurous means, all came to a miserable end and generally owing to treachery. William II. was for the rest unlike his father, and consequently bore the surname of "Good," which the grateful clergy bestowed on him. While William the Bad lived like a Saracen, constructing luxurious palaces and gardens, William the Good founded churches and convents. Many monuments of ecclesiastical architecture of the Norman period are due to him, in particular the world-renowned Cathedral of Monreale and that of Palermo. He died, aged only thirty-six, on Nov. 1, 1189.

With his death Roger's family was reduced to a bastard, Tancred, Count of Lecce, the natural son of Roger, eldest and short-lived son of King Roger, and to Constanza, daughter of the same king, who had married the Emperor Henry VI. The heritage of the two Sicilies legally fell therefore to the emperor; the national party in Sicily, however, turned to Tancred and summoned him to the throne. The Count of Lecce arrived from Calabria, and caused himself to be crowned at Palermo in 1190. This brave bastard strongly resembled King Manfred of later times; like Manfred he was highly educated, a poet and a singer, and distinguished for his mathematical and astronomical knowledge—knowledge which at this time had been diffused by the Arabs; like Manfred he was noble and unfortunate. From

the contest for his father's kingdom, which he was obliged to wage with the German Henry, he issued at first victorious; Constanza, the emperor's wife, even fell into his hands. He treated her with chivalrous courtesy and magnanimously set her at liberty.

The noble branch of the Normans seemed to revive in Tancred, for he himself had two sons, Roger and William. The elder, a splendid youth, he had married to Irene, daughter of the Greek Emperor Isaac Angelus, and had already crowned, when he died suddenly in 1193. Tancred took his loss so deeply to heart that he followed him to the grave on February 20, 1194. There still remained as heir his younger son William, a minor, who was crowned in Palermo, and three daughters, Albina, Constanza and Mandonia. The regency was assumed by Tancred's widow, Sibylla.

In these circumstances it was easy for the emperor to conquer Sicily. Sibylla's troops were defeated; Messina, Catania and Syracuse fell into Henry's power; the barons joined his side. The unfortunate queen, with her children, had escaped to the strong fortress of Calatabellota and here awaited her fate. On November 30, 1194, Henry entered Palermo, which accorded him a festal reception, greeting the new Swabian dynasty with the sound of kettle-drums and with songs of rejoicings. Sibylla, who found herself faithlessly abandoned, entered into negotiations. The young Prince William, to whom the emperor had solemnly promised the county of Lecce and the principality of Tarento, appeared before Henry and laid the crown at his feet. The unfortunate family had unsuspectingly fallen into



a trap, for scarcely was the emperor crowned, when, on the cunningly spread report of a conspiracy, forgetful of his oath, he vented his revenge against the adherents of the Norman house and even on the unhappy family itself. Many barons and clergy were tortured and executed; Sibylla and her children were cast into prison; William, the last Norman, was deprived of sight; the queen and her daughters were taken to the Convent of Hohenems, where they long dwelt in confinement. The end of William is unknown. Legend relates that he escaped from prison and lived for years as a hermit at S. Giacomo near Chiavenna.

Thus fell the Norman dynasty, on which fortune had bestowed the fairest lands of earth.<sup>1</sup> Their overthrow becomes the more significant from the fact that it was followed so soon by the fall of the Hohenstaufen race, to whom Nemesis decreed a like destiny. As the Hohenstaufens entered on their rule in Sicily amid blood and cruelty, so they drew upon themselves a bloody fate, and reaped as they had sown. If we may believe the account of the chroniclers, Frederick II. was born on the same December 26, 1194, that Henry VI. dipped his hand in the blood of the Sicilians. Henry died three years

<sup>1</sup> A history of the Normans in Sicily, compiled from the materials of our present knowledge, is still lacking. Monographs on the subject have been written among others by Lumia and Siragusa, and in 1886 Antonio Palomes began a popular history of his native island in dialect. The task of writing a History of Sicily under the Normans would be the most praiseworthy that could be undertaken by the Deputation for National History, whose President is at present (1887) the honoured patriot the Marchese di Torrearsa.



later at Messina, only two-and-thirty years old. The tragic end of the Hohenstaufens closely resembles the fate of the Normans. Manfred, a bastard, like Tancred before him, equally brave and high-minded, fell in the battle of Benevento; his wife, Helena, with her four children, escaped to the fortress of Trani, just as in former days Sibylla had fled with her four children to Calatabellota; like Sibylla, Helena found herself deserted by everyone, and like Sibylla, she too was kept in prison with her children. She died a captive; her daughter Beatrix lived eighteen years in the Castel dell' Ovo at Naples; Helena's three sons, Henry, Frederick and Anselino, languished for more than thirty years in captivity; finally Conradin ended his life on the scaffold.

And again the justice of avenging fate was stirred by the blood that was shed, and fell on the house of Anjou in the Sicilian Vespers. Here is surely the ebb and flow of tragic destiny.

For the rest, the Hohenstaufens found the island in a prosperous condition; a paradise by nature, it had grown wealthy under Norman rule owing to commerce and industry. No enemy had invaded the cities, but from the coasts of the East and of Africa a wealth of precious things had been imported. When Henry VI. made his entry into Palermo, he was astonished at the splendour of the beautiful city, and in the palace of the Norman kings found great treasure, which he sent away. Arnold of Lübeck says: "The Emperor Henry entered the Aula of the dead Tancred and found there beds, seats and tables of silver, and vessels of

finest gold, also hidden treasures, valuable stones and splendid jewels, so that he loaded one hundred and fifty beasts of burden with gold and silver, jewels and silk garments, and thus richly laden, returned in glory to his own country."

On this occasion the coronation robe, embroidered in Arabic characters, of Roger I. was brought to Germany, where in 1424 by command of the Emperor Sigismund it was placed along with the rest of the Regalia at Nuremberg, and there believed to be the pallium of Charles the Great.

In recent times Reynaud has translated the Arabic inscription on Roger's robe as follows: "Worked in the royal factory, the seat of fortune, of enlightenment and of glory, of perfection, of duration, of well-doing, of good reception, of happiness, of liberality, of splendour and respect, of beauty, of the realisation of all wishes and hopes, of the pleasure of the day and night, without cessation and without change, with the feeling of honour, of devotion, of maintenance, of sympathy, of fortune, of health, of help and satisfaction; in the town of Sicily in the year 528 (1133 after Christ)." This pompous and ridiculous inscription in the spirit of the East on the coronation mantle of the Christian king, shows how readily the Normans had adapted the Arab characteristics.

We have some ancient descriptions of Palermo.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The topographical study of so ancient a city affords a wide field for inquiry. One of the best informed scholars of Palermo has lately earned our gratitude by his researches: Vincenzo di Giovanni, *La Topografia antica di Palermo dal secolo X. al XV.* Palermo, 1884 and 1885.

Already about the middle of the tenth century Ibn-Haukal of Bagdad described the city in a geographical work (*Description de Palerme au milieu du X siècle de l'ère vulgaire, par Ebn-Haukal, traduite par Michel Amari. Paris 1854*).<sup>1</sup> He divides it into five districts. In the Al-Kassar (the Palæopolis of Polybius) he admired the great mosque for festivals, the former cathedral of the Christians, where he was shown a chapel, in which the coffin of Aristotle hung suspended in the air. According to his view, the Christians had formerly prayed to it for rain.

The residence of the Emir was in Khalessah. The harbour was in Sakalibah (according to Amari, the quarter of the Slavonians). The fourth quarter was that of the mosques, Ibn-Saktab. Finally El-Jadid, the present Albergaria, lay to the south of the city.

He speaks of the numerous merchants and of their shops and also of the preparation of papyrus. But he dwells more particularly on the fountains, among which he mentions the Favara.

I have already spoken of the travels of Mohamed-Ibn-Dgubair, which also contain interesting descriptions of the city in the Norman period. He compares Palermo and especially the ancient town (Al-Kassar), on account of its beautiful palaces and towers, with Cordova. "The city is marvellously built in the style of Cordova, entirely out of hewn stone, of the kind that is called El-

<sup>1</sup> The passages of the Arab author concerning Sicily have been translated into Italian by Amari and added to his *Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula* (Turin and Rome, 1880).

Kiddan. The palaces of the king are built round it, and hang like the necklace that encircles the neck of a young girl."

The accounts of these two Arabs and that of Benjamin of Tudela are supplemented by a little pamphlet of Ugo Falcando, an intellectual and classically educated Norman, who long dwelt in Palermo under William the Bad and afterwards returned to Normandy. When Roger's dynasty was nearing its end, he wrote a letter to Peter, Treasurer of the Church of Palermo, in which he bewailed the approaching fall of Sicily under the yoke of the Germans and erected a monument to the beauty of Norman Palermo, which is now of great value. He gives a detailed account of most of the buildings, and the city had at this time reached its utmost splendour; the Arab names of the quarters and of many of the squares, streets and gates still survived. Those buildings of architectural importance that now attract our attention are mainly of Norman origin.

At the end of the Via Cassaro and where this street joins the Piazza Reale, stands the Royal Castle, which is believed to be the oldest building in the city. For here Carthaginian, Roman and Gothic rulers are all supposed to have had their seat of government. It was undoubtedly the palace of the Arab Emirs and hence called Cassaro. The name was then extended to the whole of the ancient city and is still retained in the principal street. The building, which is ascribed to the Saracen Adelmam, was enlarged by Roger I. and his successors, and here dwelt Frederick, Manfred and all the

later rulers of Sicily, who by adding to it have given it its present irregular form, so that it has become a cross between fortress and palace.

Falcando has described the castle as it appeared at the time of William the Bad. "The splendid building is formed of beautiful square blocks, worked with consummate skill; it is enclosed by thick walls; inside the palace is resplendent with gold and silver. Two towers stand at the end, the Pisana, destined for the custody of the royal treasures, and the Greca, which dominates the quarter of the city called Khemonia. The centre is adorned by a construction which is distinguished by the diversity of its ornaments and is called Joaria; here the king is accustomed to spend his leisure hours. The rest of the palace is divided into the quarters occupied by the women, the maidens and the eunuchs. There are moreover very beautiful miniature palaces, where the king discusses affairs of state with his confidants, or gives audience to the barons, to take counsel on public matters concerning the kingdom."

Of the buildings then existing almost every trace has disappeared, with the exception of the tower S. Ninfa, supposed to be the oldest part of the palace, and the celebrated Cappella Palatina. On the summit of the tower now stands the Observatory, whence Piazzzi discovered the new planet [Ceres] on June 1, 1801, which in consequence justly received the name of the tutelary goddess of Sicily.

The courtyard has three modern *loggie* over one another, continued round all four sides. In the



first stands the Cappella Palatina, one of the best monuments of the Norman period. King Roger caused this basilica to be erected in 1132 and dedicated to S. Peter. Inserted, as it is, in the palace, it has no independent façade. A portico of eight columns of Egyptian granite leads to the entrance door, displaying on the upper part of the wall modern mosaics, which depict scenes from the Old Testament bearing reference to Roger's coronation. At the entrance an inscription in Latin, Greek and Arabic informs us that Roger had erected an excellent sundial in the palace. The Arabic inscription runs: "The order is issued by his Royal Majesty, the Magnificent Roger, the Exalted One, to whom may God grant everlasting days and whose sign may He confirm, that this instrument be constructed for recording the hours. In the metropolis of Sicily (by God) protected in the 536th year (of the Hegira)."

Entirely foreign and unlike anything of the kind seen in the rest of Italy, is this basilica scantily illuminated by the light of day, on whose walls covered with marble or with gold, mosaic figures melt into one another in the twilight, or flash out brightly in some chance ray of sun. As I entered the church a mass was being celebrated for the dead king. A catafalque covered with black velvet had been erected in the middle, whereon lay a gold crown, and candles stood burning round, while the priests were singing and filling the church with clouds of incense. In the midst of the mysterious splendour of the mosaics and Arabic ornaments the spectacle was one calculated completely to

transport the beholder back to the times of King Roger.

The beautiful chapel is in the form of a basilica with a tribune and cupola over the choir. Ten Corinthian columns supporting arches, divide it into three naves. The pavement is inlaid with coloured marbles. The walls to the height of twelve palms are adorned with variegated marbles, above covered with mosaics, representing Biblical subjects, so arranged that the walls of the nave display scenes taken from the Old Testament, the tribune and the naves others from the life of Christ and the Apostles. On the triumphal arch is the Annunciation; in the tribune itself a half-length figure of Christ, whose hand is raised in blessing. The figures bear Greek and Latin inscriptions. These mosaics are to be ascribed to William I., that is, if we may believe the assertion of Romuald of Salerno, who says: "William caused the chapel of S. Peter in the palace to be painted in mosaics and its walls covered with costly marbles." Nevertheless it is probable that the mosaic decorations were begun by the builder of the chapel.

A Greek school of mosaic work seems to have survived in Sicily and Southern Italy from ancient times and to have imparted a more life-like character to the Byzantine style. The Sicilian mosaics have a strikingly soft character in colouring, and both in drawing and expression are devoid of the hardness of Byzantine art; but they belong of course to a later period. While the Venetians imported mosaic workers from Constantinople to decorate S. Marco, the Normans found a mosaic

school already existing in Sicily. It is possible that it traced its origin to Hellenic times, when the art of mosaic flourished in the Alexandrian period, as is proved by the state galley of Hiero of Syracuse, on the floor of which the whole of the Iliad was illustrated in mosaic. And at no period does the art seem to have been entirely lost. At the end of the fourth century after the birth of Christ, Sicilian surpassed Roman artists in mosaic work, so that Pope Symmachus wrote to a certain Antiochus in Sicily, to ask him to send an example of his art to the Roman workers. His words are: "The elegance of thy genius and the delicacy of thy creations are highly to be prized, for thou hast discovered a new kind of mosaic, that had not previously been attempted; it will also seek to employ our want of skill in the decoration of rooms; if we have either on tablets or plates a specimen of the work that thou hast contrived."

Mosaic art was not lost in Sicily even during the Saracen period. It had previously found encouragement and support, owing to the permanent connection with Byzantium; it was afterwards employed by the Arabs, who were accustomed to decorate their dwellings with mosaics, if not with figures at least with arabesques. It is probable that the mosaic work in the Cathedral of Salerno, that in Palermo and Monreale are products of a native school in Southern Italy. Of King Roger himself it is recorded that he founded an important mosaic factory in the palace.

The interior of the roof of the chapel is also beautifully decorated and doubly heightens the im-

pression of mysterious splendour and enchantment. Here in 1798 was discovered a great Arabic inscription on twenty Gothic rosettes and in Kufic characters, which as far as has been deciphered, contains exaggerated praise and blessings, probably referring to the builder of the chapel and the sumptuous work. Since this inscription, like all other Arabic inscriptions in the churches of Palermo, is of Christian origin, it is surprising to find the language and characters of the Koran employed, and that too at a time when the fanaticism of the Crusades had reached its zenith. That none of the Arabic inscriptions is taken from the Koran is self-evident; but wherever Arabic characters are employed the mode of expression invariably reflects a Mohammedan colouring. The Arab character was at that time held no less noble, nor in less high esteem, than the Greek, and the East outshone the West both in luxury and culture. The knowledge of a great part of Greek literature was transmitted to the West by means of Arab writing. The proud thought of having subjugated a portion of the great Semitic race, no less than pleasure in what was foreign, or political astuteness, must have encouraged the official use of the Arab tongue. The Oriental characters possess a somewhat enigmatical aspect, and being in themselves geometrical arabesque figures, they lend themselves naturally to the decoration of the walls of these Sicilian basilicas, which form a union between Christianity and the East, just as the churches of Rome combine Christianity with antiquity.

Many diplomas in Greek, Latin and Arabic

writing have been preserved from Norman times in the archives of this chapel, as also a valuable casket, surrounded with Kufic inscriptions.

We leave the ancient church to mount to the neighbouring *loggia* of the palace. Here there are several richly decorated rooms, with which the history of the rulers of Sicily is connected; among them the Hall of Parliament, the Throne Room and Audience Chamber. In the last now stands one only of the two celebrated bronze rams that formerly adorned a gate of Syracuse; the other perished in a fire.<sup>1</sup> The Hall of the Viceroys contains the portraits of all the regents from the year 1488 down to recent times.

But more attractive than these modern state rooms is Roger's tasteful chamber, covered with mosaics. Here we see combats of the centaurs, birds, and a hunt depicted in very archaic style. Why this room should be called *Stanza di Ruggieri* is difficult to say; the mosaics are the work of the twelfth century, but the original form of all these rooms has suffered the most drastic change. In vain we seek for the rooms of Frederick II., although in order to do him honour, one has been named after him. And what name could more fitly adorn the castle than that of Frederick? Many princes from remote lands, Saracens, Normans, Swabians, Spaniards, Angevins, Bourbons have ruled from this palace and filled these rooms with mirth and misery; but all other memories vanish into the background when we recollect that within these walls the great emperor passed his youth.

<sup>1</sup> In 1887 I found the Ram exhibited in the National Museum.



## III

## THE CATHEDRAL OF MONREALE

Many influences combined to produce and develop in Sicily a magnificent ecclesiastical architecture ; in general, the spirit of an age, when Christendom in enthusiastic vigour confronted Islam in a struggle for life and death ; in particular, the rivalry in which the new ruling dynasty of the Normans found itself placed towards the religion of Mohammed. After a glorious triumph in Sicily, the Church had to be re-erected and her supremacy made manifest to the world. Cathedrals, marvels of an art inspired by Christianity and yet breathing of the East, arose in many places, as so many monuments of the great victory achieved over the religion of Islam.

In similar historic conditions Sicily had passed through her first great architectural period. The Hellenes had vanquished the Carthaginians in the battle of Himera, and had covered the liberated island with their sumptuous temples. The gods of Greece, Zeus, Apollo, Ceres and Aphrodite had overcome the Moloch of Africa, and in the most memorable way the Greeks had given expression to the contrast between their civilised religion and culture and those of the East ; for one of the conditions of the peace, dictated to the Carthaginians by Gelo of Syracuse, was the abolition of human sacrifices.

After more than fifteen hundred years the same conditions were repeated in the second great archi-

tectural period of the island—a singular circumstance—such as no other country can show, and at the same time a proof that human culture develops according to eternal laws, in essence the same, differing in form according to the ever new expression of the times and of the prevailing thought. As in the first period the Hellenes built the celebrated temples of Segesta, Selinus, Agrigentum and Syracuse, so after having delivered Sicily from the hands of the modern Carthaginians of Africa, the Normans built the cathedrals of Monreale, Palermo, Cefalù and Messina. In the former period the stream of civilisation had set more towards the south of the island, the north being only partially affected; it now spread over the north also, while the south and south-east sank into unimportance.

Close to the Doric temple arose the Christian cathedral, beside the severe marble splendour of the temple to Juno at Agrigentum stood the church, resplendent in gold, to the Virgin Mary at Monreale, monuments of two memorable phases of civilisation. Both reveal depths of the mind; one as well as the other indicative of a splendid efflorescence. Both impress us like everything that is original, inspired and historically inevitable; nevertheless the impression produced is essentially different. Who can describe the sensation of the beholder as he stands lost in contemplation of one of the sublime temples at Agrigentum? We might well suppose that man could produce nothing more perfect, nothing more beautiful than these harmonious outlines; but when we enter one of the

Norman basilicas, and stand in the beautiful dimly lit nave, the arches and walls of which glitter with mosaics, forgetful of the antique, we feel here also in a new sphere of harmony and beauty.

The religious sense from which this Norman architecture took its rise—a style which on account of its essentially Eastern origin we may call the architecture of the Crusades—was already deeply implanted in the Normans, owing to their having brought the Northern temperament with them to the South. And to this, other circumstances contributed. The Roman Church as opposed to Byzantium, which claimed Sicily as its own property, was obliged to give a sacred right and a higher consecration to the conquest. The Pope had appointed the Norman counts apostolic legates and had bestowed spiritual insignia on King Roger, in token of the ratification of his sovereignty by the Church. The kings themselves ascribed their crowns not to the favour of the Pope, but to the grace of Christ; in many of the churches we see mosaics representing Christ Himself placing the crown on the head of Roger or William. These adventurers called themselves kings by the grace of God. They were therefore obliged to justify their rule by the zeal with which they restored Christianity in Sicily. Malaterra, the historian of the two Rogers, says of the conqueror of Sicily: “When Count Roger saw, that owing to the favour of God the whole of Sicily did homage to his rule, not wishing to show himself ungrateful for so great a benefit, he began to dedicate himself to God, to render just judgment, to strive after the truth, to visit the churches

frequently, piously to listen to the sacred hymns, to give the tenth of all his revenues to the churches, and to be the comforter of the widows and orphans and the distressed. And here and there throughout Sicily he restored the churches."

For the rest the piety of the age of the Crusades had borne no greater share than political considerations in zeal for the Church; the new princely house that in virtue of conquest only, occupied the fairest throne of Europe, had need of the Pope and of the clergy in order to maintain itself. Without their friendship the Normans had been lost, as were after them the Hohenstaufens, who, in their struggle with the Church, forfeited Naples and Sicily, and were themselves utterly shipwrecked. To these influences were united the natural strivings of a victorious house to immortalise its rule in monuments. Ecclesiastical architecture in Sicily consequently received a mighty impulse. It was determined to surpass everything on the mainland, the churches were to be entirely inlaid with gold, even that church of S. Sophia, and that Byzantium, from whose orthodox emperors the fair kingdom had been wrested, were to be outshone. Within an incredibly short time—it is said, a year—Roger built the cathedral at Cefalù, also the church at Messina and the chapel in the palace. The development of art was as rapid as was the Norman supremacy itself.

All these buildings were, however, surpassed by the pious William II., the last legitimate ruler of the Norman house; who in the Cathedral of Monreale erected the grandest monument to his family and

at the same time one of the most remarkable memorials of mediæval architecture in general. The work was finished in six years (1170-1176), and the fame of its beauty spread rapidly through every land. As early as the year 1182, Pope Lucius III. raised Monreale to an archbishopric, and in his bull he says of King William: "In a short time he built a marvellous temple to the Lord, endowed it with fortresses and revenues, and provided it with books and sacred vestments, decorated it with silver and gold; lastly he brought thither a company of monks of the order of La Cava and improved the place itself by buildings and other things to such a degree, that never since ancient times has a similar work been erected by a king, and even the mere description of all that has been done awakens our admiration."

The celebrated cathedral is the standard example of Norman-Sicilian ecclesiastical architecture. The Normans, coming from the West, where the form of the Roman basilica still prevailed, found not only Byzantine traditions but also Saracen models in Sicily. The island had been for centuries in the hands of the Byzantines; language and ritual were both Greek, Greek was also the architecture, the characteristics of which were the quadrangular ground-plan, the cupola and the raised sanctuary, in the form of a triple apse, the emblem of the three persons of the Godhead; for at the side of the choir stand the lower semicircular recesses, the Prothesis and the Diakonikon. The Byzantines also adorned with mosaics the cupolas, arches and walls of their sacred buildings.



The Normans adopted these forms, but from the Saracens took the pointed arch and the arabesques.

Lastly they retained the type of the Roman basilica prevalent in Europe; that is to say, a long nave divided by rows of columns and with a raftered roof. This Latin nave stood in front of the sanctuary, and while the architect did not follow the design of many ancient basilicas in placing an architrave on the columns, but made them support a pointed arch, he united these three forms of architecture, producing the peculiar hybrid style that was adopted throughout the whole of Sicily, that gradually merged into the Gothic and indeed helped to determine its character.

On this subject we may consult the work of Serra di Falco on Monreale and other Sicilian-Norman churches, the writings of Hittdorf and Zanth on the modern architecture of Sicily; also Lelli and del Giudice's descriptions of Monreale.<sup>1</sup>

The cathedral, which unites the three characteristics of which we have spoken, is 372,6 palms long, 174 wide, and the towers 154 palms high. A bronze door of artistic workmanship attracts our attention to the façade. It is surrounded by numerous arches, only slightly interlacing, in rich arabesque work, resting on pilasters which are also adorned with mosaics and marble sculpture. A Latin inscription of the year 1186 speaks of the metal founder Bonannus of Pisa as

<sup>1</sup> Hittdorf and Zanth, *Architecture moderne de la Sicile*, and Lelli and del Giudice, *Descrizione del Real Tempio di Monreale* (sic). Lastly, the splendid work of Dom. Ben. Gravina, *Il duomo di Monreale*. Palermo, 1859.

the maker of the doors, the same artist who cast those for the porch of the Cathedral of Pisa. The reliefs depict in forty-two panels scenes from the Old and New Testaments. The artistic merit of the work rivals that of the Byzantine mosaics. The figures are stiff and constrained but attractive in their childish naïveté. The inscriptions in the *Lingua Volgare* of the period, with which the figures are provided, deserve attention; they entirely correspond to the language of contemporary Sicilian poets. On one of the lateral walls is another bronze door, a work of Barisanus of Trani.

The interior is noble, lofty and magnificent, not it is true, sublime, as are the Gothic cathedrals, in whose soaring spaces the soul is lost in the idea of the infinite; nor is it of the gigantic proportions of S. Peter's, where the triumphant splendour of the Papacy overpowers the sense; neither does it possess the gloomy majesty of the Byzantine basilicas. In Monreale we have moderate, but pleasing proportions, a free and attractive spaciousness and a dignified solemnity, clothed in the splendour of graceful art. The pointed arches, resting on nine Corinthian columns of Oriental granite, impart a charming effect of movement to the central nave. The magnificence of the pavement, crowded with figures, the splendour of the gilded beams, the coloured wainscoting of the roof, and everywhere on the arches and walls of the nave mosaics and arabesques, this whole space embroidered as it were with pictures on a gold background, produces a beautiful effect. A temple so brilliantly coloured and adorned would be little fitted

for the God of Northern lands; for the deity of the South it seems eminently adapted. The temple must be entered from the radiant landscape of Monreale; occasionally the impression of a church is entirely forgotten, and the traveller may believe himself in some vast palace, the walls of which sparkle with pearls and precious stones.

The mosaics in the central nave begin with the small architraves resting on the capitals of the pillars. The entire wall above the columns is divided into two by a cornice. In the lower half perpendicular mosaic bands divide the wall from one end of the arch to the other into compartments, which are decorated with symbolical representations on a gold background. In the upper stand the windows ending in pointed arches, the intervening space being again filled with mosaics. Below the roof is a broad frieze adorned with arabesques, alternating with circles which enclose half-length figures of angels. Wherever the glance rests, be it on the apses, on the walls of the sanctuary or the nave, it encounters mosaics, here depicting scenes in sacred history, there figures from God the Father and the angels down to Greek and Latin saints, and extending over the entire picturesque kingdom of the Old and New Testaments. Here on the walls of a cathedral is depicted the legendary cycle of the Mosaic and Christian religion. Even the two hostile communions of the Church are united, and it is highly significant to behold Greek and Roman saints together in the same temple.

The immense expenditure of the most laborious art strikes us less here than the power of representa-

tion displayed by religious and artistic thought, which could embrace the entire system of the Christian religion, and could unite and depict its endless variety. The art of present days is no longer capable of such a comprehensive grasp of the spiritual history of mankind. All similar representations that have from time to time been made in recent years in fresco-painting have only produced lifeless allegories, that appeal to the reason but remain spiritually ineffective. These mosaics, Giotto's sculptures on the Campanile in Florence, which depict the history of human civilisation, and Dante's poem may be classed together as the homogeneous and spiritually related monuments of a time when the Christian idea called forth the most comprehensive forms of art. We must not forget that this cycle of mosaics in Monreale preceded Giotto and Dante by a century. When we further consider that the *Divina Commedia* made its influence felt on art down to the time of Michael Angelo and inspired painters to represent epic cycles in frescoes, we are all the more astonished that the system of Christianity was grasped in a noble unity at so early a period as in these mosaics.

We do not know with whom the conception originated. Since in other and earlier churches in Palermo, belonging to Norman times, the same current of ideas is also represented in mosaic, though on a smaller scale, it is possible that it may be based on Byzantine traditions. Neither do we know who directed the works. If three years were spent on the mosaic decorations of Monreale, 150 mosaic artists must, according to Serra di Falco's

calculation, have been constantly engaged. And we can scarcely imagine a more laborious undertaking.

The system of distribution is as follows: While all the representations and every sacred transaction or figure refers to Christ, whose gigantic form is depicted in the tribune as the Divine issue, centre and end of the Kosmos, the cycle begins with the Creation and extends to Jacob's struggle with the Angel. The central nave is dedicated to the Old Testament. The history of the life of Christ is illustrated in the sanctuary and in the side aisles, and is continued in the two lateral naves; here, however, are also introduced such patriarchs and prophets as foretold the coming of Christ; and lastly is depicted the mythology, almost too extensive for the eye to follow, of martyrs and saints. Peter and Paul as the chief princes of the Church are placed in the apse alongside of Christ; on the right Peter, seated on the episcopal chair, his left hand resting on a book, the right raised in blessing. Above and sideways are scenes taken from his life. In like manner on the left we also see S. Paul seated on a chair, and above him the representation of his execution. In the middle of the tribune shines the colossal bust of the Saviour; a Greek cross projects in a halo behind His head, His hair falls in long locks on His shoulders. His beard is thick and long. His right hand is raised as if in the act of teaching; He holds a book in His left. The inscription in Greek capitals calls him Jesus Christ Pantokrator. The impression made by this colossal countenance is one of supernatural power



and gloomy majesty. The Byzantine heads of Christ have in general something dæmonic, as the Byzantine character in its feeling for the Divine tends towards the pagan. This type leads us into a realm of ideas from which we of the present time are farther removed than from antiquity. It is a terribly abstract region, in which Necessity rules and from which all that is human, all that is imaginative, all that is accidental and all independent living impulse is excluded. From such a representation of Christ emanates, as from the head of Medusa, a petrifying breath. I cannot contemplate such pictures without reading in the terribly superhuman countenance as in a prophetic mirror the history of the Christian Church, the fanatical asceticism, the monasticism, the hatred of the Jews, the persecutions of heretics, the dogmatic struggles, the supremacy of the popes. Nothing indeed serves so strongly to bring symbolically to sight the negative as well as the positive power of the Christian religion. For the development of art in the course of centuries nothing again is more significant than the comparison of such a representation of Christ with that by Raffaele or Titian; the two extremes of men's view of the Divine are here expressed.

We observe in general that the whole effect produced by the sanctuary tends to the pathetic, the superhuman, the highest ecstasy of religious feeling, and consequently the expression must be supernatural. On the other hand, the mode in which the scenes from the Old Testament are depicted is less exalted, and here is displayed a cheerful

human life, a character of naïveté, in which even plants and the animal kingdom are introduced. We stand on the plane of nature and of human history. Many of the scenes are very original. We see for example the Sacrifice of Isaac represented with prosaic bluntness; Isaac lying on the pile of wood, Abraham seizing him by the head and raising a knife which is half as long as the boy; behind him are two men with clubs; below a saddled horse is grazing, and above hovers an angel. The drawing is frequently very defective, that of the animals is especially clumsy; the camels, to which Rebecca is offering water, are utterly comic. The mosaics as a whole are subdued in their colour scheme.

On November 11, 1811, the beautiful temple of Monreale was in danger of falling a prey to fire. A chorister had placed a lighted candle beside a cupboard, and thereby set flame to some stuffs inside. The little Herostratus tried to extinguish the flames; shut the cupboard door and in his terror went off quietly. About midday thick smoke was seen issuing from the doors and windows of the cathedral; the people rushed into the church and found the choir already in flames. After four hours the fire was extinguished; but the destruction was great: both organs had been melted, the rafters had been destroyed; the falling beams had shattered the tombs of William I. and William II., and a great part of the mosaics was ruined. The devastated portions have been restored since 1816, and happily the tribunes and the naves had remained untouched by the flames.

The tombs of the two Williams and their family,

which were injured, stand in the right wing of the choir. William the Bad rests in a porphyry sarcophagus; and his wife Margaret with his three sons, Roger, Duke of Apulia (who died in 1164), Henry, Prince of Capua (died 1179) and William the Good, lie buried here; so that of the Norman dynasty, only Roger I., Simon and Tancred are absent. William the Good, the builder of the beautiful church, whose figure is twice depicted in mosaic, once over the royal throne, where he is crowned by Christ, and again over the episcopal chair, where he hands the Madonna the effigy of the temple, lies in a tasteful sarcophagus of white marble, adorned with arabesques on a gold background. This tomb was only erected in the year 1575 by Archbishop Ludovico de Torres; for the pious king had commanded that his remains should be placed in a simple case of brick and mortar beside his father's magnificent sarcophagus. This was done, and for centuries William II. had no other tomb.

The same king, not satisfied with building the cathedral, had added to it a large convent, where he installed Benedictines from the Abbey of La Cava; he found recreation in the society of the pious fathers and in gazing on the sumptuous buildings, round which in time the town of Monreale arose. The ancient convent has disappeared, a new one has arisen on its ruins, a magnificent Benedictine house resplendent in marble, as are all the convents of this illustrious order in Italy, resembling rather palaces for princes than dwellings for monks.

The ancient convent must have been one of the

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stateliest of buildings, far surpassing S. Martino. It stood near the cathedral and commanded the plain of Palermo. From its garden there is an enchanting view over sea and land. William had strengthened the building with walls and towers, of which only ruins now remain. The convent itself has been destroyed down to the fragments of some walls, which still allow us to recognise the Norman style of architecture, and to the cloister, which is unrivalled—a great square surrounded by an arcade. Two hundred and sixteen fantastic columns, each two of which are united, support the pointed arches inlaid with mosaics. At the corners four of these columns are grouped together, the capitals of which are worked with particular care. The sight of these innumerable slender, miniature columns, each of which is treated differently, some being twisted, some straight, some fluted, some smooth, with wavy lines, inlaid now with spiral ornament and again with mosaic, is surprisingly beautiful. Art has here made variety its law and abandoned itself to a charming caprice. All is naïve, graceful and childlike, glittering and fantastic. The miniature scale of the dimensions lends itself to the style, for the diminutive prevails. These arcades are the most complete contrast to the Doric colonnades, and it would be difficult to find two forms more entirely opposed to one another in architecture. The endless wealth of beautiful forms, the infinite variety of manifestations in which poetry can find expression from tragedy to fairy tale, is here exhibited.

The capitals of the columns merit the closest



attention. The same law of fantastic caprice prevails here; no two are the same; it would seem that the artist had vied with nature in reproducing the diversity of its botanic forms. From the Corinthian acanthus leaves, which, disposed in various ways, form the calyx of the miniature capitals, rise like flowers the fantastic representation of some animal, vegetable or human form, presented as a fable in miniature. Here are actual figures, which at the same time support like caryatides the abacus; there arabesque-like forms, lions, horses, dolphins, winged genii, dragons, harpies, griffins, curious creatures, springing from the flowers and supporting the ever varying abacus of the capitals, of various coloured mosaics and whimsical design. Many display scenes from the Old and New Testaments, which even if of faulty drawing are invariably of the most naïve character. On one capital King William himself is depicted, handing the effigy of the building to the Madonna; on another are seen the kings from the East offering the gifts to the Holy Child. There are contests of chivalry, where knights in armour attack one another with lances, and the representations of archers, so popular among the Normans even in mosaic, are repeated here and recall the Northern legends of the Edda concerning Egil the Archer, which the Northerners had not forgotten even in the distant South. Here consequently we find secular and sacred, the Bible and the fairy tales of nature associated in a picture gallery of stone around the cloisters, a *pendant* to the mosaic cycle in the cathedral itself.



As earnestness and mirth are found side by side in the human character, so Monreale shows that the lofty demands the puerile as its contrast. Such is in general the character of Gothic architecture, which in its universal expression is infinitely richer than the Greek, resting as it does on a more comprehensive view of nature.

The cloisters of Monreale are one of the best monuments of those early Middle Ages, in which the human intellect began to express itself in an almost mysterious wealth of forms in architecture, sculpture and poetry. As in culture the outward forms of every department are related to one another, so the expressions of romantic poetry—sonnets, canzoni, madrigals, terzine and all the countless varieties of metre—correspond to the mosaics, arabesques and sculptures of this age. And as we more clearly understand the character of the tragedies of Æschylus, when we have seen their corporeal architectural counterparts, the Doric temples of Pæstum and Sicily, so after having beheld the cathedrals of Italy and Germany, will the inner meaning of the great poems of Dante and Wolfram von Eschenbach be the more intelligible.

#### IV

### THE CATHEDRAL AND OTHER CHURCHES OF PALERMO

Even before Saracen times the Cathedral of Palermo was the principal church of the city and was dedicated to Maria Assunta. The Arabs transformed

it into a mosque, the Normans restored it to the Christian worship and removed all traces of the Saracen. Only on one single column of the southern porch may still be read an Arab inscription, the 55th verse of the 7th Sura, which says: "Your God has created the day, which is followed by the night, and the moon and the stars are added to the work according to His command. Is not the creation His own and is not His the dominion? Praised be God, the Lord of the centuries!"

The ancient church was sumptuously built by Archbishop Walter Offamil (Gualterius Offamilus), a relation of Roger, between 1170 and 1194, and by him endowed with the severe Gothic character, which in spite of all later disfigurements the cathedral still essentially retains. Of the early building all that he allowed to remain was the Chapel of S. Maria Incoronata, in which Roger, as all succeeding kings of Sicily, received the crown, as the inscription *Hic Regi Corona Datur* informs us. In 1781 the cathedral was restored and disfigured in the most senseless manner, by the tasteless cupola, a work of the Neapolitan architect Fernando Fuga, by which the unity of the original style was destroyed. Nevertheless the cathedral produces a powerful impression, uniting to Gothic sublimity the grace of Saracenic arches and arabesques, and no other building of Palermo reflects so clearly the contrasts in which the history of the island is so rich.

The cathedral stands alone on a spacious piazza, surrounded by a marble balustrade with baroque statues. In the middle on a triangular base is the figure of S. Rosalia, who averted the plague. She

is to Palermo what S. Gennaro, who protects the city against the demon of Vesuvius, is to Naples.

Four towers of beautiful workmanship rise at the corners of the cathedral, and little cupolas along the side. The old, square, unrestored bell-tower standing beside it in the Tuscan style, is connected with the church by arches. The semicircular tribune is stencilled with black arabesques on the exterior. Everywhere on the outer walls, in porticoes, on windows, friezes and cornices, the eye rejoices in the exquisite chiselling of the ornaments and in the fantastic forms of columns and pinnacles. The most painstaking art has been expended on the portals ; especially worthy of note are the arabesque carving on the principal door and the character of the portico on the southern side. This portico dates from the year 1430. It is surmounted by three pointed arches resting on four pillars and is of highly artistic workmanship. On the inner wall of the atrium are two modern sculptures, illustrating the coronation of Charles III. and of Victor Amadeus of Sardinia, who had previously been King of Sicily.

The interior, entirely modernised, consists of three naves, and is in the form of a Latin cross, with round arches supported by pillars. Chapels and altars are glaring in their over-decoration and baroque want of taste. Marble and porphyry have been lavishly employed, but neither painting nor sculpture deserves attention, that is, if we except the two artistically wrought marble basins, one of which belongs to the school of Antonio Gagini, the pupil of Michael Angelo and the best sculptor that Sicily has produced. Many other monuments in

the cathedral are also due to this talented artist, conspicuously some tombs in the crypt. This lower church was built during Norman times and has retained its original character, that of a basilica with pointed arches, supported by massive granite columns. Round the walls stand the tombs of the archbishops of Palermo, in part ancient sarcophagi of mediocre Roman workmanship, on which the recumbent figures of the archbishops were later placed. The severe simplicity of the masses of primitive masonry produces a deep impression.

The most important feature in the interior of the cathedral, however, are the tombs of the Norman and Hohenstaufen kings, monuments of the history of Sicily and at the same time of Germany. They stand in two chapels of the right aisle, huge sarcophagi of porphyry or marble, partly surmounted by porphyry sepulchral temples. Never have I seen any royal tombs of Christian times that are so majestically simple and imposing, destined apparently to last until the end of time. In tombs of like majesty Nibelung kings might fitly repose. These sarcophagi further prove, that the Sicilians of this period still understood the art of treating porphyry, an art that had already been lost throughout Italy, and as Vasari tells us, was only re-introduced in the middle of the sixteenth century by Francesco del Tadda.

Here lie buried King Roger, his daughter Constance, her husband Henry VI., their son Frederick II., the most gifted prince to whom Germany has given birth, and his first wife, Constance of Aragon.

The tomb of Frederick deserves our chief atten-

tion. The emperor died at Firenzuola near Lucera in Apulia on Dec. 13, 1250, only fifty-six years of age. His remains were brought to Sicily under the escort of six squadrons of cavalry and his Saracen bodyguard, and were interred in the same church where as a child he had received the crown, and where his son Manfred was also to receive it in later years. Manfred commissioned the sculptor Arnolfo di Lapo, pupil of the celebrated Nicolo Pisano, to design a tomb for the emperor; the commission, however, remained unfulfilled. Who the artist was by whom the monument was executed, whether a Tuscan or a Sicilian, remains unknown. The coffin, the cover of which is ornamented by eagle and griffin, rests on four lions, which hold figures of slaves in their claws. Above it stands the roof of a temple upheld by columns resting on a basement of three steps, all hewn in porphyry.

In 1491 the Spanish Viceroy Fernando d'Acunha ventured to open the tombs. This he did in presence of the archbishops of Palermo and Messina and in that of the Senate. He caused the sarcophagus of Henry VI. and that of Frederick's wife to be broken open, and was only withheld by the indignation of the bystanders from breaking open the others also. When in 1781 the cathedral was restored all these tombs still stood in a chapel near the choir; they were then removed to their present site, and on this occasion all were opened. Prince Torremuzza, who was present on the 11th August, says in his autobiography: "The bodies of Roger I., Henry VI. and his wife Constanza had almost entirely crumbled away, and little was to be seen of their ornaments;



but the bodies of Frederick II. and Constanza II. excited universal admiration on account of the magnificence of their robes and the beautiful jewelled ornaments in which they had been buried. On the crown of Henry VI. and on the alb, which Frederick II. wore beneath his robe, were found several Arabic Kufic characters *a ricamo*, of which an accurate drawing was taken and at my suggestion was sent to Prof. Tychsen at Bützow, in order to get his explanation."

This statement does not entirely agree with the account of the Neapolitan historian Daniele (*I reali sepolcri del duomo di Palermo illustrati*). "The body of Frederick II. was clad in magnificent vestments and was well preserved, although, with but little reverence, two other corpses had been placed in the coffin beside him; one was believed to be Peter II. of Aragon, who died in 1342, the other remained unrecognised. The emperor's crown, set with pearls, lay on his leather pillow, and at the left side of his head the orb of empire. He wore an emerald ring on his finger, had his sword by his side, and round his waist a silk girdle with a silver clasp, on his feet silken boots embroidered in colours, and gold spurs."

Unfortunately no likeness of the great prince has come down to us beyond those on coins and a ring which Daniele had engraved after a stucco cast of a head of the emperor. For the citizens of Capua had erected statues to Frederick and his counsellors, Thaddeus of Suessa and Peter de Vinea, on the bridge over the Volturmo; that of the emperor alone remains, mutilated however, for Raumer relates

that rude soldiers had broken the arms and feet and had even thrown down the head.

What sensations must not the German experience standing in these later days in presence of the coffin of the great emperor, on this far distant shore? What account does he render? What tidings does he bring? This tomb wakens great memories—who is there that can stand before it without reverence and love? Other princes, even when centuries have gone by, cast dark shadows across the world, but this prince throws a ray of inextinguishable light over Germany and Italy. The genius and energy that lay in the soul of this single man merit eternal admiration. Great impulses emanated from him, which borne onward by time, were brought to realisation, although the man himself remained apparently defeated in the fight. He was the first to break and weaken the Papacy, with which he was at life-long war. In this struggle the noblest race of Germany was sacrificed, but not without lasting result. Frederick II. was a predecessor of the Reformation. Far in advance of his time, he gave utterance to the ideas of Humanism, of culture and reason, which made war on the sacerdotal-feudal barbarism of the Middle Ages, and which enlightened the world. To his peoples he gave a code of laws, such as they had not hitherto possessed. He was the first to establish the idea of popular representation in giving the third estate a seat and a voice in parliament. He fostered science, of which he was a connoisseur.

We shall now proceed to other churches of Palermo belonging to Norman times. Chief of these the

Martorana (or S. Maria dell' Ammiraglio) deserves our attention. It was built by George Grand Admiral before the year 1143. The Campanile of Arab-Norman character, divided by small columns, rises close beside it ; we pass through a porch into the interior, where we are surprised by a splendour such as we have seen in the Cappella Palatina. The choir has eight granite columns, with gilt Corinthian capitals, supporting the arches. The choir, the cupola, and the walls half-way up are covered with mosaics on a gold background and divided by arabesques, while the pavement is inlaid with various marbles. Here also we discover Arab inscriptions on some of the columns.

Among the excellent mosaic pictures, two are especially conspicuous. In one of the chapels we see the Grand Admiral on his knees at the feet of the Virgin and above him the inscription  $\Delta\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\delta\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \sigma\epsilon\ \Gamma\epsilon\omega\rho\gamma\iota\varsigma\ \text{Αμμηρ}$ . (Prayer of thy Servant George the Admiral.) The Virgin modestly clad and wearing a veil, holds an open scroll, while Christ from on high points downwards with a sceptre. On the Roll stands inscribed in Greek : " Defend, O Son, the Word in all things, defend from all offence George the first of all princes, who has built me this temple from the beginning, and give him remission of sins, for as God alone hast thou power." Another mosaic of still better execution represents Christ placing the crown on the head of King Roger. The king's figure is a portrait : a fine head, with the hair falling on the neck and a pointed beard. He wears a long blue garment, and over it a blue tunic embroidered in gold, on his shoulders a blue and gold

stole, which crossing on his breast, falls over his left arm ; on his head a crown, or rather a square berretta, and rose-coloured shoes on his feet. Such was also the attire of Frederick II. when his coffin was opened ; such also was that of Henry VI. and William I. Morso correctly holds that all these symbols of royal dignity were spiritual insignia, and he recalls the fact that Roger had received them from Pope Lucius II. in order to endow his kingship with a higher consecration. These insignia were, according to Otto of Freising, sceptre, ring, dalmatica, mitre and sandals.

Unfortunately the mosaics of the tribune were destroyed in a restoration of the sixteenth century, and the form of the tribune itself has been transformed in baroque taste. The Martorana is further worthy of attention from the fact, that here after the Vespers the parliament assembled that elected Peter of Aragon king.

Another little church, S. Giovanni degli Eremiti, is still older, being supposed to have been built by Roger in 1132. It has four blue entirely Arabic cupolas of strange aspect. The interior is very small and, the church having been long abandoned, has nothing to show but bare walls. Close by stand the ruins of a picturesque cloister in Arab-Norman style, likewise of diminutive proportions.

The third church of early Norman times is S. Catalda ; it is of Greek character, almost rectangular, and with three semicircular cupolas supported on pointed arches. Its mosaics have been destroyed. It is said to have been built by the Admiral Majone.

Many Norman churches, such as S. Giacomo la Magara and S. Pietro la Bagnara, have perished leaving scarcely a trace, others were transformed by the Spaniards at a later time. The fact that the Hohenstaufens built scarcely any churches in Sicily is easily explained by their history; on the other hand ecclesiastical architecture seems to have flourished again in the early days of the Aragonese sovereigns. This is shown by S. Agostino and S. Francesco, more especially the latter, the year of whose foundation is indeed not quite certain. Its portico is adorned with twisted columns, dating back perhaps to Arab times and formerly belonging to some mosque, since the Kufic inscription on one is entirely Mohammedan: "In the name of God the Merciful, God the Compassionate. There is no God but God and Mohammed is His Prophet."

The façade of the little Church of S. Maria della Catena of the fourteenth century is also beautiful and picturesque. Its portico is formed of three arches, divided from one another by two columns. A frieze of arabesque work runs above them. S. Maria Nuova has a similar portico. I might mention several other churches deserving a visit, such as the splendid Olivella, but this would lead us to other periods, and no other church has any decided character, for with the fifteenth century the Norman arch disappeared to make way for the round arch and the heavy pilaster. Thus we have no longer any pleasure in visiting these motley-coloured and gaudy churches. The artistic character of mosaic has vanished; the walls are tastelessly overladen



with various stones. And good pictures are sought in vain ; the only great masterpiece of which Palermo could boast, the Spasimo of Raffaello, formerly exhibited in S. Maria dello Spasimo, now adorns the Museum at Madrid.

**AGRIGENTUM IN 1853**



## AGRIGENTUM IN 1853

ON September 4, with my travelling companion I left Palermo to ride to ancient Agrigentum. Giuseppe Campo, the best of all Sicilian guides, a citizen of the old Saracen town of Misilmeri, had provided us with two splendid mules, while he himself rode another that also carried our baggage. It was a glorious day when we set forth ; passing by Monreale, we proceeded amid rocks through desolate mountain country, where we met no living thing beyond the eagles of Jupiter, which looked down solemnly and silently, or circled round in flight above us. Some hours thus passed away until the plain of Partinico and Sala, rich cultivated country on the gulf of San Vito, came in sight. On the right stood Borghetto, the ancient Hyccara, the birthplace of the most beautiful woman of Greece, that Lais, who when a child was stolen by the Hellenes under Nikias and carried off to Athens.

The outlines of the gulf of San Vito are grand and beautiful, like those of Cefalù ; the plain, one of the finest in Sicily, rejoices in a tropical wealth of vegetation. We halted for our midday rest in the little village of Sala, and then rode through plains, flowing with oil and wine, towards Alcamo, a town standing high in the mountains. As we advanced

the scenery became of a strongly marked Doric character, mountains sloping magnificently in long-drawn lines, dark red and warm, the undertones a blackish brown. The autumn rendered the aspect of this district the more severe, and the gigantic pines, black cypresses, slender palms and tall flowering spikes of the aloes harmonised characteristically with one another. All was in monochrome, brown on brown ; and we observed with delight the effect that nature can produce with one single colour.

After a fatiguing ride of nine German miles we reached Alcamo in the evening, with the disconcerting prospect of being obliged to accomplish ten miles the following day, eleven the day after, and ten again the fourth day before reaching Agrigentum. Alcamo is a cheerful-looking town of 15,000 inhabitants, with ancient fortresses. I can say nothing more concerning it, beyond the fact that the mosquitoes attacked me in my sleep during the night in the miserable inn with such ferocity that I bore their marks as a memorial for four weeks. In the evening the Captain of the Guardie sent offering a military escort to Segesta, which we declined.

In order to see the celebrated temple we got up with Orion and set off in the morning twilight to ride nine miles through the desolate mountain district. The morning is in fact heralded here by that most beautiful constellation of our Northern sky, a genuine Sicilian constellation, the scene of whose myth is laid at Messina. I had frequently admired it in Corsica, where the people call it the Three Kings from the East, or the Three Magi, but it was in Sicily that I first saw it in its full heavenly



splendour, like a candelabrum of the gods, which the Horæ light in the azure. Its lamps flicker and flame like Bengal fire; the air quivers, and from the east gushes a crocus-coloured radiance; the mountains begin to breathe, they raise and let fall the mist like wings; the sea grows a purple red, and all the air exhales a purple atmosphere. Orion, however, extinguishes his tapers after what a blissful night of the gods!

Behold the temple of ancient Segesta! While still three miles distant we beheld it in front of us, a beautiful spectacle, for it remains entirely erect, with all its columns and its two façades, standing alone on the brown mountains and towering majestically over the wild landscape. The way leading to it, a shepherd's path, little trodden, was lined for the distance of a mile with aloes in flower. These plants lifting by hundreds on each side their twenty-foot flower shafts out of their gigantic framework of leaves, formed an avenue, through which we looked straight to the temple. This celebrated sanctuary stands on a bare hill. The yellow-brown mountain solitude, covered with arid thistles and with flocks of goats grazing, the loneliness, the memory of the ancient Trojan legends, the beautiful verses of Virgil, lastly the wars of the Segestans with Selinus, which resulted in the expedition of the Athenians against Syracuse and was productive of such serious historic consequences, here filled the imagination. The utter desertion that reigns everywhere surpasses even that of Pæstum. The entire atmosphere is impregnated with myth and with strange and legendary forms. Seated in the

ancient theatre (excavated by Hittorf) a marvellous view over this lonely wilderness lay before us. On one side the Gulf of Castellamare, on the other the mountains of Alcamo ; at our feet the uncultivated valley, traversed by the river Crimisu, opposite the alabaster hill of Calatafimi, the town, black and monotonous, crowning its summit. Turning to the west, we look over the yellow hills to a blue peak. This is Eryx, where once stood the temple to Venus. There, too, the Ægatic Sea glistens, directing our gaze towards Carthage and our imagination back to the times of the Punic wars.

I shall say nothing more of the Temple of Segesta ; it is already sufficiently well known. Passing behind it we rode on along the mountains of Pispisa, through the sun-scorched solitude, where shepherds clothed in sheepskins drove their flocks. Our way led over uncultivated country, that yielded nothing beyond brown thistles, and covered with such millions of snails that the plants looked as if fossilised ; on and on, no road, nor even track through fields split and cracked by the sun. All at once the wide stretch of western shore, the sea, the pyramid of Eryx, Drepanum, now called Trapani, at its feet, the Ægatic islands and the entire coast to Lilybæum, Marsala and Mazara lay before our eyes. Breezes from Carthage were wafted across, and the vessel sailing for Africa would have borne us to Tunis and the Punic people in twelve hours.

At midday and in intolerable scorching heat we reached Vita, a wretched heap of stones, inhabited by poverty-stricken people, whose dialect I could not understand. We halted at a shoemaker's, ate

the provisions that Campo set before us, and then rode on to Castel Vetrano, where we were to pass the night. Beautiful though these districts were, fatigue in great part prevented our enjoyment of the scenery. After a ride of ten (German) miles, we reached Castel Vetrano, but I was no longer in a condition to dismount and had to be lifted from the saddle. While the appalling certainty of having to ride eleven miles the following day stood before me, I believed myself no longer capable of such Xenophon-like marches; nevertheless experience proved that man is capable of doing anything that he earnestly wills, and that philosophy can even overcome the obstinacy of a mule. For the next day I rode the eleven miles without difficulty, and the last ten to Agrigentum even with comfort. Not so, however, my companion, who suffered a sunstroke on the second day, and who was only saved by a hasty bleeding in the sulphur mines at Alcara, and remained several weeks afterwards ill in Palermo.<sup>1</sup>

On September 6 we set forth by dawn from Castel Vetrano to ride along the coast of the African sea to Selinus. Again the morning was of such beauty as is nowhere seen but in Sicily and Greece. Could anyone find words to describe the stream of colours that poured from the east over the silent waters and through the atmosphere? Riding on in advance of the others, in order to enjoy the spectacle in solitude, I halted at the outskirts of the town under trees and beside an ancient church, and thence looked across the sea to Selinus which lay

<sup>1</sup> The well-known archæologist, Professor Conrad Bursian.

before us at a distance of six miles. Orion again glowed in the purple haze, and the sky was of that inexpressible purity that can be described by no other word than the Greek "ether." I dedicated the following sonnet to this beautiful morning:—

When through the purple night on stealthy wings  
 Death and his brother Sleep the tired Earth bear,  
 As though in Chaos fain their booty fair  
 To hide, sly thieves, ere Dawn upon them springs;  
 Orion then from sleep Aurora brings,  
 And high in heaven the flaming portals glare;—  
 So Helios comes in wrath, with blazing hair,  
 And with his vengeful shafts the ether rings.

Then laughing he into Earth's bosom shakes  
 Life's horn of plenty, and in joyous sound  
 Bids the young Hours to dance, with roses crowned,  
 Till out of deathly swoon the bride awakes,  
 And from her heart what spacious rapture breaks  
 To find the great god's arms about her wound!

H. I. B.

We rode from Castel Vetrano through flat, well-cultivated country down to the sea, and in the distance already saw the immense piles of ruins of the temples of Selinus; how vast these are, the following incident will show. Riding onwards in the dawn, I perceived on the distant shore a town, from which shattered round towers stood forth, among them one in particular rising tall and slender like a minaret in the air. I said to the guide that it would be well to ride straight to the town, which struck me as so imposing that I hoped it would provide us with a *sorbetto*. Giuseppe laughed and answered: "What looks to you a town are the ruins of the temples of Selinus."

The sight of these ruins by the sea, standing in their utter loneliness, is one, perhaps unrivalled in the world. Here for the first time I fully understood what is meant by the term "classic ruins." Seen from a distance as well as close by, these desolate remains of Hellenic greatness excite a mixed feeling of sadness and admiration. These ruins, under their mantle of luxuriant vegetation, are indescribably picturesque, all the more from the fact that the gigantic blocks everywhere display form and outline. Nothing but triglyphs, metopes, fragments of fluted columns, Doric capitals of immense size, nevertheless light in form and outline, all lie in confusion like blocks of ice on a frozen river. The stream of time has here flowed with ruins and thrown them over one another in majestic confusion. Some masses still lie arranged as it were in the chaos of destruction; thus in the celebrated Temple of the Olympian Zeus, we see the gigantic columns thrown from their bases, lying in rows in the order in which they stood, laid like giants, whose limbs had been severed, outstretched on the field of battle. Only a few stumps of columns remain erect, called by the people *Pileri dei Giganti*, giant columns; among them one, the highest, like a tower and without a capital, standing out singly from amid the rubbish, a king of ruins, ruling far and wide over the desolate land.

Two of these piles of ruins standing on slight elevations close to the sea mark the site of the ancient Selinus. The eastern group consists of remains of temples only; the other, the western, of those of the Acropolis, where four temples may



still be distinguished. We climb upwards between blocks over architraves and friezes, as in a labyrinth made denser by brushwood, and clothed with climbing plants, at almost every step disturbing black snakes, the only inhabitants of this world of the past. The Selinus, now called the Madiuni, flows between these two groups of ruins into the adjacent sea. The entire strand is low, the river marshy; at each side dry moorland covered with the foreign-looking dwarf palm and carpeted with blue flowers and scented lilies. Even in antiquity the marshy air, to which Selinus was exposed by its low-lying situation, caused pestilential illnesses among the population. Empedocles was on this account summoned from Agrigentum to combat the evil, and he rescued the city by the canals which he constructed.

I shall not linger to give a description of the temples, but only cursorily remind the reader that it was here that the celebrated Metopes were found, which have become of such great importance for the history of ancient art, and which are now seen in the Museum of Palermo. I may also mention that Tommaso Fazello, the learned Dominican of the sixteenth century, who was the creator of the modern school of Sicilian historians, was born in the neighbourhood of ancient Selinus.

Throughout the rest of Italy we see modern life either settled among the ruins of antiquity, as particularly in the Roman Campagna, or behold ruins of various periods side by side; at Selinus, however, one period alone is represented; here there is no trace of life around, nothing but the most

solemn desertion, the most utter desolation; the sea's horizon vanishing away, profoundest silence, and an Odyssean solitude.

Riding farther eastwards over flat country we crossed the river Belici, the ancient Hypsa Potamos, and journeyed on through extensive cork woods and over sandy tracts of shore until we reached Menfrici. Thence our road lay over flat, uncultivated country to Sciacca (Thermæ Selinuntiaë), an animated town of 16,000 inhabitants, with a picturesque castle, standing on hills by the sea. Here we stayed the night.

From Sciacca we rode for nearly four German miles along the shore over pebbles and shells, over tracts of moorland, now crossing streams; never a road or track. We saw many dried-up brooks, which in the autumn rains swell to rushing torrents. One of the largest is the Platani, the ancient Halycus, over which we rode. We found several herds of long-horned cattle, which in Sicily, as far as I could see, are not white as in Italy, but red, the true cows of Helios. The cowherds, a wild and wretched-looking set, ride on horseback, as on the Roman Campagna and in the Pontine marshes.

After leaving the shore we proceeded onwards over hilly ground. Never a village; everywhere the most utter desolation. In the midst of a heath we were surprised by the sight of a lake, which level and dried up, lay before us white as snow, its banks fringed by tall dry reeds.

At length, after a ride of twenty-four miles,<sup>1</sup> we

<sup>1</sup> [Presumably Italian miles. The author has hitherto reckoned in German.—TRANSLATOR.]

reached Monte Allegro. The place does not correspond to its name; since lying in an utterly barren district, encompassed solely by some miserable vines and a few olive trees, it might more appropriately be called Monte Triste. The former town stood on the hill but was abandoned a hundred years ago on account of the dearth of water. We consequently beheld the unusual sight of two towns—mother and daughter—before us. The former stood with houses and streets erect on the mountain, a mummy of a town, while its modern successor, no less uncivilised in aspect, lay at its feet. All the houses are built of grey calcareous alabaster. In the neighbourhood of Monte Allegro, formerly stood beside the Halycus the ancient Heraclea Minoa, which took its name from Minos; for after King Minos came to Italy in pursuit of the artist Dædalus and was killed by the daughters of Cocalus, his Cretan followers built Minoa. Some grottos and caves in the rocks are held to be its remains.

Leaving Monte Allegro in the oppressive heat of the afternoon sun, we rode across desolate fields to Siculiana. The grey town stands on a bare hill, no green around it beyond that of the prickly cactus, which grows wild among the rocks. The poverty of the people is very great. The women here wear black or white cloth veils, drawn mantilla fashion over their heads; the men high pointed caps, likewise black or white. The entire country reeks of sulphur, and here and there smoke is seen issuing from the mines. In ancient times Ancyra stood in front of Siculiana. Now followed a shore of volcanic formation, consisting of a series of

cones, black or sulphurous white. Under the enchanting moonlight and through the appalling solitude, greeted everywhere by the hooting of owls, we rode silently along the melancholy strand until we reached the Molo di Girgenti, a small harbour three miles distant from Agrigentum. And not until night did we reach the native city of Empedocles, the now wretched town of Girgenti. A ruinous classic wilderness lay stretched around us in the twilight of the stars, and when on the following morning I stood outside the gate of the town, I beheld a landscape, the solemn grandeur of which is scarcely surpassed even by the fields of Syracuse.

We are in Agrigentum, and I must fulfil my task in giving a short description of the great city and its monuments. It is well to choose a spot that affords a general view. I take one in the middle, before the Temple of Juno, on the southern wall of the city. The land here descends as an inclined slope of rocky hills in grand lines towards the sea, which is only two and a half miles distant. This slope is enclosed east and west by two rivers, the Acragas (now San Biagio) and the Hypsa (now Drago). These form the confines of the city territory and unite under the southern wall as the river Acragas. The entire circumference of ancient Agrigentum lay consequently between these two arms of the river, an irregular triangle, the high base of which, facing north, was formed by two steep rocky hills, the Camicus, on which stands the present Girgenti, and by the hill of Minerva at its side. There stood the Temple of Zeus Polieus, here that



of Zeus Atabirius and that of Minerva. This was the actual city of Agrigentum ; but the suburbs or the Neapolis stretched on below the Camicus and embraced the whole of the lofty plateau, the natural cliffs and gorges of which formed at the same time the city walls. These are most clearly recognised at the eastern and southern sides. And here above, on the southern wall of the city, let us take our seat in the midst of a series of Doric temples, which more or less erect, tower one behind another ; a sight concerning whose melancholy beauty and grandeur, silence is more fitting than wordy description. The land slopes steeply towards the sea. On all sides are seen huge masses, long lines, a reddish brown of warmest hue, an almost African aridity, broken only by the silvery grey of the olives. Round the line of temples, hundreds of graves, *loculi* and niches, here and there upright columns, or gigantic architraves lying stretched over the ground.

It is scarcely possible to survey a ruined city or to speak of its monuments without recalling its fortunes. I shall therefore give a hurried sketch of the history of ancient Agrigentum, in the hope that the reader of these pages may gladly linger in a city of such world-wide fame and fill in for himself the outlines that I may give. A wealth of great figures, whose names survive in the mouths of all, played a part in the life of Agrigentum. For Agrigentum was one of the most glorious of Hellenic cities, and if not as powerful as Syracuse, was no less intellectually or happily dowered.

Long before the time of the Greeks it was one of



the chief cities of the Sicani. According to the account of Diodorus, Dædalus, flying from Crete, was received here by Cocalus, its king, and built a fortress for him on the Camicus, to which the only access was by a tortuously constructed path. To this impregnable fortress Cocalus removed his treasures. Hellenic Agrigentum only arose in the second year of the 49th Olympiad (582) as a colony of the neighbouring Gela, but soon surpassed her mother in size, her trade with Carthage endowing her with rapid growth.

The Agrigentans had first an oligarchic form of government under the laws of Charondas of Catana, until Phalaris set up as tyrant. This extraordinary man was a Cretan by birth. Entrusted with the task of building the temple to Zeus Polieus, he made use of the commission, which placed men and money as also the strongest point of the city at his disposal. He hired soldiers, armed the prisoners, and while the populace were engaged in celebrating the festival of Ceres, he made himself master and tyrant of Agrigentum. Monarchy was held in such detestation by the Greeks that they have perverted Phalaris into a legendary monster and his cruelty has become proverbial. Everyone is acquainted with the legend of the red-hot bronze bull, which Perillus is said to have manufactured for the tyrant, and in which foreigners and his enemies were put to death. The bull of Agrigentum points back to Crete and to the bull of Dædalus, and also to neighbouring Carthage, where men were sacrificed to Moloch as represented in the form of a red-hot bull. That the bull of Phalaris actually existed

we are told by Diodorus. He relates that after the conquest of Agrigentum, Himilco sent it to Carthage, but that 260 years later, after the destruction of Carthage, Scipio restored it to the people of Agrigentum. The bull of Phalaris has served Lucian as the subject of two satiric dialogues, in which he causes delegates of the tyrant to appear at Delphi, who offer the diabolical invention as a gift to the god and represent the cruel tyrant as an upright man ; he further causes the priests to pronounce the gift of the ruthless monster as a pious sacrifice. It is scarcely possible to push malice against the Church—to use modern language—farther than Lucian has done in this case.

Phalaris was forceful and cruel ; but even at this remote period—somewhere about the middle of the sixth century B.C.—showed himself like all Greek tyrants, a man of intellect, one who enjoyed the society of sages and artists. Traits of magnanimity and nobility are recorded of him, as of Dionysius, particularly the story of Menalippus and Chariton, which recalls that of Damon and Pythias, and that concerning the celebrated Stesichorus. Phalaris, who had subjugated so many cities, proposed an alliance with the people of Himera ; he wished them to elect him as their leader, in order that they might avenge themselves on their enemies. Stesichorus, however, interposed ; presenting himself before the people, he told them a fable. He described how the horse once grazed alone on a field ; the stronger stag came and chased it away. The horse hurried to man and implored him to punish the stag. “ Good,” said the man, “ but you

must carry me on your back." The horse agreed ; with the help of the man, it completely avenged itself on the stag, but ever after had to bear the bridle and a despotic yoke. " Thus," said Stesichorus, " would you also, O men of Himera, be like the horse, if you accepted the yoke of Phalaris." The people reflected and refused the proffered alliance, and the tyrant was very indignant with Stesichorus. The poet soon after fell into his power and was brought before him. Phalaris, however, did not do him any injury, but offered him hospitality and handsome gifts, took pleasure in the sagacity of his conversation and in the music of his songs, and dismissed him with honour.

The relations between the philosophers and the tyrants of Sicily, and especially those of Syracuse, were remarkable. As in the fabulous past heroes traversed different countries to extirpate monsters, so at a later age philosophers wandered through the world to deliver it from tyrants. It is indeed the task of philosophy to rescue mankind from every species of tyranny ; in the ancient accounts of those memorable missions of the Pythagorean and Eleatic philosophers, this is clearly and well set forth. Demoteles, Zeno of Elea and Pythagoras journeyed to Phalaris to exhort him to renounce the tyranny and to return to virtue. Iamblichus tells of this mission in the life of Pythagoras and invents much wise conversation that the philosopher held with Phalaris. He compares the good with the evil mode of life ; explains the capacities, the sins and passions of the soul, demonstrates from their works the omnipotence of the gods, and thereby

convinces the incredulous tyrant. He is not silent concerning the judgment that awaits the evil-doer at the hands of the law, and he dwells at length on the divine reason and virtue, on the vicissitudes of fortune and the desire of men for possessions and unlimited authority.

The gifted tyrant replied to the discourse of the philosopher; as regarded unlimited authority it was the same as with life. No one would desire to be born did he know beforehand the sufferings life entailed, but once a man was born, he did not want to die. Neither would anyone desire to be a tyrant, did he know beforehand the sufferings that tyrants endure; as soon, however, as a man became a tyrant, he could not cease to be one.

We may recall the spirited words used by a native of Syracuse to Dionysius. When Dionysius was once in doubt as to whether he should renounce the sovereignty or not, one of his friends said: "Oh, Dionysius, after all the tyranny is a beautiful shroud."

Our own days, it seems to me, vividly recall, by an obvious example, these times of ancient tyranny, and show that human nature ever remains the same.<sup>1</sup> If we compare the two great periods of the tyrants—that of the Hellenic-Sicilian and that of the Italian Middle Ages, which entirely resemble one another—with our most recent reappearance of tyranny in all its intrigues and machinations, we see that there is indeed nothing new under the sun. The ancient freedom of philosophic speech, how-

<sup>1</sup> [Written 1853, when Napoleon III.'s *coup d'état* was still fresh in the public mind.—TRANSLATOR.]



ever, no longer exists, and our own professors of philosophy only weave and make war on chimeras and systems that have no influence on the happiness of nations.

Legend relates that Phalaris lost his life in consequence of a parable told by Pythagoras. In presence of the tyrant and that of the citizens, the great philosopher was discoursing of the fear of tyrants entertained by mankind, and showed how groundless it was by the example of doves, which flew in terror before the sparrow-hawk and yet would put him to flight if they boldly turned against him. The discourse excited a citizen to such a degree, that he took up a stone and threw it at the tyrant; other people followed his example and Phalaris was stoned to death. Others say that Zeno, the Eleate, stirred up the people of Agrigentum to rebellion.

The memory of Phalaris has been preserved, and so remarkable did he appear in antiquity, that 140 letters of a moral and philosophic nature have been attributed to him, about the authenticity of which there was a long dispute among scholars.

On his death the democracy was restored; two sages appeared at the head of the government, Alcemenes and Alcander, under whose guidance the republic flourished and grew so rich, that the citizens began to wear purple-dyed garments. Their luxury and their intellectual sophistical character seem to have been the cause of their decadence.

In the time of Gelo of Syracuse, however, Theron,



a very vigorous man, obtained the tyranny at Agrigentum. He was father-in-law of Gelo, and the two men—the rulers of Sicily—aided one another in their designs. Then, after the Carthaginians had suffered the great defeat at Himera in 480, began the brief period of Sicily's prosperity. Agrigentum had captured the greater number of Carthaginian prisoners, and many citizens kept five hundred captives in their houses. The majority, however, were assigned to the municipality. These captives were compelled to hew the stone with which the temples of Agrigentum were at that time built, also to work at the subterranean canals constructed by Phæax, the celebrated architect. The Agrigentans moreover constructed a fish-pond, to fatten valuable fish for their luxurious banquets. According to Diodorus it made a beautiful object, since a great number of swans settled on it. The citizens planted their entire territory with vines and fruit trees.

Under Theron's rule Agrigentum reached its zenith. The city grew rich owing to trade and agriculture, and beautiful with sumptuous works of architecture, sculpture and painting; magnificent festivals delighted the populace, and at the court of the mild ruler were seen the sages and poets of Greece. Pindar, Bacchylides, Æschylus went to and fro; and when strained relations threatened war between Hiero and Theron, a peace was negotiated by the great poet Simonides. Pindar on this occasion wrote his Olympian triumphal ode on Theron the Agrigentan, who had won the chariot race, and in the Isthmian eulogy

on Xenocrates extolled Acragas as the most beautiful of cities built by man.

Theron reigned for sixteen years. On his death in 472, the people erected him a magnificent tomb and awarded him the honours due to a hero. His son Thrasydæus did not resemble him; he was hated by the citizens, was banished and afterwards executed at Megara. The Agrigentans thus threw off the tyranny and gave the signal for emancipation to the rest of Sicily. While democracy was everywhere introduced into the cities, Empedocles established a mixed constitution at Agrigentum, which gave the aristocrats equal rights with the people.

It would appear that the political principles of the great philosopher were based on the equality of all classes of citizens; it is however said that he regarded himself as a god. He dressed in purple and wore a gold wreath on his long and flowing hair, and when he solemnly walked forth, he was followed by a band of beautifully attired youths. The ancients consequently describe him as a hero, on whom nature had bestowed her highest worth. Empedocles is one of the most brilliant figures, in whom the Greeks beheld genius; later biographers depict him as penetrated with the conviction of the divinity of human genius and place in his mouth the following lines:—

“ Ye friends, who in the mighty city dwell  
Along the yellow Acragas hard by  
The Acropolis, ye stewards of good works,  
The stranger's refuge venerable and kind,  
All hail, O friends! But unto ye I walk  
As god immortal now, no more as man,

On all sides honoured fittingly and well,  
 Crowned both with fillets and with flowering wreaths.  
 When with my throngs of men and women I come  
 To thriving cities, I am sought by prayers,  
 And thousands follow me that they may ask  
 The path to weal and vantage, craving some  
 For oracles, whilst others seek to hear  
 A healing word 'gainst many a foul disease  
 That all too long hath pierced with grievous pains."

(From *The Fragments of Empedocles*, translated into English Verse, by William Ellery Leonard, Ph.D., Chicago, The Open Court Publishing Company, 1908, p. 53 f.)

The philosophy of nature, of which Empedocles was a master, did not remain for him a mere abstraction; he applied it to life and was one of the greatest of physicians. He had delivered Selinus from the pestilence, and so marvellous seemed the cures that he performed, that it was reported of him that he could even raise the dead. Medicine had become one of the favourite studies of the Sicilians; the island had produced other distinguished physicians, among them Empedocles's friend Pausanias, and his rival Acron of Agrigentum. Later Herodicus, brother of Gorgias, is renowned for his knowledge of medicine, and Menecrates of Syracuse in the time of Aristotle. Menecrates rivalled Empedocles in his vanity, and the most absurd tales are told concerning him. He took no payment for his treatment, but only required that his patients should call themselves his slaves. After having cured two invalids with great skill, they were obliged to follow him everywhere; he called one Hercules, the other Apollo, himself however Jupiter. He is said to have written the following letter to Philip of Macedon:—

“ Menecrates Jupiter to Philip, Greeting ! Thou reignest in Macedonia, but I reign in medicine. Thou canst cause the death of those for whom it seems good, and I can make those who are ill feel well until they grow old, if they but obey me. Thy bodyguards are the Macedonians ; mine are those whom I have cured. For I, Jupiter, have given them back life.” On which the king replied :

“ Philip wishes Menecrates sound understanding. I counsel thee to make a journey to Anticyra.”

Plutarch also relates that a letter from Menecrates to Agesilaus of Sparta elicited a like answer : “ King Agesilaus to Menecrates health.” We see how charlatantry began to invade the province of natural science, of which Sicily was the birthplace, as sophistry had invaded that of philosophy. Sicily, the native land of sophistry, was also that of charlatantry, and even at the present day the island is distinguished by sophistic intellect and charlatantry of various kinds, inclining to extremes. Moreover, my opinion is that these characteristics are indigenous products of her volcanic soil, and will permanently remain.

Empedocles himself has already appeared in his verses as a god in the guise of a charlatan, and it is necessary to have studied the life of the populace in Sicilian towns to recognise the qualities and defects that, under the same forms, recur in every age. Empedocles gives a foretaste of the tales of the spells and enchantments of following ages. Around his death legend of later times shed a fabulous halo, like that respecting the celebrated Apollonius of Tyana and so many Christian demi-

gods and prophets, who are still worshipped. It is said, that Empedocles had recalled a dead woman to life, and had with many friends gone to the villa of Peisanax to offer sacrifice. The banquet over, the guests scattered, some under the trees, others in various places, and went to sleep. When they awoke in the early morning Empedocles was missing. The slaves were questioned; one said, that during the night he had heard a superhuman voice calling Empedocles by name, and that when he awoke he had seen a celestial light, the gleam of torches, nothing more. Empedocles had thus been placed among the gods. According to another legend, the philosopher climbed up Etna and threw himself into the crater. One of his sandals was cast forth by the volcano. It was said that after the people of Selinus had awarded him divine honours he had chosen this death in order to confirm the belief that he was a god. According to the account of Diogenes, Empedocles however died in the Peloponnesus. The people of Agrigentum erected a monument to him, which the Romans afterwards brought to Rome and placed in front of the Curia.

The moderate democracy, which Empedocles had introduced, long survived at Agrigentum. The character of the city, however, shows many points of resemblance to that of Sybaris and Tarentum. With little inclination to warfare, the Agrigentans held themselves generally neutral, even in the conflict between Syracuse and Athens. Their self-indulgence was unbounded. They built, as Empedocles said, as were they to live for ever, and feasted as if they must die on the morrow. "The luxury



of the Agrigentan table " was celebrated throughout the entire world. As Diodorus dwells at length on the mode of life at Agrigentum shortly before the destruction of the city, we can form a lively idea of the wealth and effeminacy of the citizens. They owned horses of the finest breed, which were famous throughout the whole of Hellas. Magnificent tombs were erected not only to horses, but also to tiny birds, kept as pets by boys and girls. On one occasion when Exænteus was victor in the chariot races, he was escorted to the city by three hundred chariots, each drawn by a pair of white horses, all from Agrigentum. The wealth of individual citizens was surprisingly great. Antisthenes celebrated his daughter's marriage by entertaining the entire population in the streets; the bride was accompanied by eight hundred chariots and numerous horsemen. In the evening her father provided an illumination with the scanty means at hand at the time. He caused the altars of all the temples to be covered with wood, and at the moment that a fire was lighted on the summit of the fortress, these other fires were set ablaze also. People did as best they were able, and even at this time the natives were acquainted with, and loved, illuminations, just as they do at the present day in South Italy, where the passion for fireworks excites the wonder of the northerner.

Gellias was still more wealthy than Antisthenes. All foreigners he treated as his guests. Others at Agrigentum did likewise, and according to ancient custom gave a friendly invitation to everyone. Empedocles hence said of his native city: " It is a

blessed port for strangers, and deceit dwells far from it."

Five hundred horsemen once arrived from Gela in bad weather. Gellias gave them all shelter, and from his wardrobe provided a change of garments for each. In his cellars were 300 stone vessels, each of which contained 100 measures of wine; beside them stood a stone vat of 1000 measures, from which the wine flowed into the casks. We may hence form an idea of the splendour of the houses and of the banquets that took place. "Men there," says Diodorus, "were accustomed from childhood to luxury; they wore the finest clothes and ornaments, especially delighted in combs for the hair and silver or gold scent-bottles." A resolution of the people at the time the city was besieged by the Carthaginians, especially testifies to the self-indulgence of Agrigentum, for it expressly ordained that no sentry was to take with him to his bivouac more than one mattress, an under mattress, a coverlet and two pillows. Who can blame these fortunate beings, who under the most beautiful of skies, in nature's utmost luxury, rich in learning and art, Greeks and free citizens, spent their short life in pleasure; but who can compassionate them, or can wonder that this self-indulgent city, in spite of its 800,000 inhabitants, was so quickly defeated by the Carthaginians?

There are few events in history that so strikingly testify to the instability of all human things as the sudden fall of Agrigentum. After the defeat of the Athenians before Syracuse the city of Segesta had summoned the Carthaginians. They appeared in

great power in 409 under Hannibal, son of Giscon, and had already destroyed Selinus and Himera. Syracuse, which not unwillingly beheld the fall of these cities, did not hasten to the aid of Agrigentum or Gela, and this period is consequently the most disgraceful in the history of the Sicilian Hellenes, darkening, as it does, the fame of the Greeks, whose worst fault, as it is also that of all Southern nations, was party hatred. The Carthaginians returned with renewed force in 406. The Agrigentans, who had to dread their first attack, took the Spartan Dexippus with 1500 men into their pay and also brought mercenaries from Campania.

Hannibal and Himilco already stood before the city, and encamped to the east of the hill of Minerva and beyond the Acragas ; they caused a wall to be built and with this object the tombs to be destroyed. Lightning, however, shattered the monument to Theron ; pestilence broke out in the camp and carried off Hannibal himself, while the entire army fell a prey to superstitious terror occasioned by evil omens. Himilco hereupon forbade the destruction of the tombs ; to appease the gods offered a boy as sacrifice to Moloch, and to satisfy Neptune, drowned many animals in the sea.

While the Carthaginians laid siege to Agrigentum, the Syracusans sent their general Daphnæus with troops to its relief. Daphnæus defeated the Africans who advanced against him, and Agrigentum would have been saved, had but the venal commanders in the city made a sally. Instead, however, they facilitated the entrance of the enemy. The people rose and stoned the traitors. Daphnæus

having surrounded the Carthaginians they were in danger of starvation. Accident, however, willed that Carthaginian vessels should seize the fleet that was bringing corn to Agrigentum. The citizens, not being used to privation and reckoning on the siege being speedily raised, had dealt extravagantly with their supplies. The provisions were now exhausted. Nevertheless, it was not owing to want, but to their own lack of capacity for defence that the fall of the city was due. It was betrayed by the mercenaries. The Campanians first went over to the enemy, then Dexippus and Daphnæus, under pretext that their term of service was ended. The Agrigentans lost courage. After their generals had convinced themselves that the supplies were exhausted, they ordered the people one and all to leave the city the following night. This amazing step was actually taken; the numerous inhabitants so quickly lost heart, that instead of making every effort, as Syracuse and Carthage did later, they, to their shame, abandoned the well-defended city with all its treasures to the enemy. When night arrived they issued forth, men, women and children, filling the air with their lamentations. So great was the terror and so disgraceful the haste, that people took no thought either of their invalids or of the aged and feeble. Many citizens, however, remained to die by their own hand in the dwellings of their fathers. The bulk of the people withdrew to Gela under the escort of soldiers, and even delicately nurtured maidens set forth on foot.

After an eight months' siege, Himilco entered the deserted city. All who were found there were put



to death. It is said that the wealthy Gellias had remained and had fled to the Temple of Athena ; when he saw that the Africans did not even spare the gods, he set fire to the temple, and himself perished with the consecrated votive offerings. The spoils at Agrigentum, which had not hitherto been sacked by any enemy, and which, according to the statement of Diodorus, was at that time almost the richest of Hellenic cities, must have been incalculable. The most valuable works of art were sent by Himilco to Carthage, where they afterwards fell into the hands of the Romans. Agrigentum, however, he laid waste and burnt the temples ; traces of fire may still be seen on many of the stones. But not until after the Carthaginians had passed the winter there, did Himilco allow the city to be completely destroyed. Diodorus tells us that when he found that fire had not sufficiently accomplished its task, he caused the works of art in the temples to be broken to pieces. Culture suffered an inestimable loss, and that too at the zenith of the age of Pericles. After Sicily had been visited by many other devastating wars, the soil was left poor in treasures. The peoples who destroyed Greek Sicily, Carthaginians and Romans were alike barbarians.

Agrigentum suffered this terrible fate in the autumn of 406 B.C., and although the city became repopulated, it never afterwards recovered. Until the time of Timoleon it lay desolate, even though not uninhabited. The great Corinthian repopulated it in 341, planting a colony there, and in the course of time it was rebuilt. During the tyranny of Agathocles of Syracuse it even rose to the idea



of making itself master of the whole of Sicily while Agathocles was occupied with his adventurous expedition into Africa. The scheme, however, failed and Agrigentum fell again into the power of the Africans.

Herewith Phinzas, a new Phalaris, set up as tyrant. The Agrigentans drove him forth, and surrendered themselves to Pyrrhus of Epirus, whose rule, however, only lasted a short time. The city again became Carthaginian, and one of the most important places of the Africans in their wars with the Romans; they retained this great military centre even after the fall of Syracuse. In the first Punic war another Hannibal, the son of Giscon, appeared at Agrigentum with 50,000 men, and the citizens were then able to furnish a force of 25,000. With 100,000 the Consuls L. Posthumius and Q. Emilius surrounded Agrigentum, where Hannibal made a brilliant defence. Since Hanno, however, who advanced to its relief, was defeated, the Carthaginians were obliged to abandon the city. The siege had lasted seven months, when the Romans entered; with savage ruthlessness they slaughtered the inhabitants and showed themselves more barbarous than the Carthaginians had formerly done. The surviving citizens were one and all made slaves (262 B.C.). But not long afterwards Agrigentum fell into the power of the Carthaginian general Carthalus, who burnt and destroyed the unfortunate city. Nevertheless she did not cease to exist. For after the fall of Syracuse, Epicides, Hanno and Mutines held out against Marcellus in Agrigentum. Mutines was a Carthaginian from Hippo, whom the

great Hannibal had sent over from Italy, and who performed such bold feats with his cavalry that the whole of Sicily resounded with his name. The envious Hanno deprived him of the command, and in revenge Mutines betrayed Agrigentum. He opened the gates of the city at night to the Consul Laevinus. Hanno and Epicides had barely time to escape by sea. The Romans punished Agrigentum with their accustomed cruelty; the principal inhabitants were executed, the others all sold into slavery. Thus with Agrigentum, the whole of Sicily fell under the yoke of Rome in the year 211.

Henceforward the beautiful city of Empedocles and Theron disappears from history. In Hellenic times it had also been illustrious on account of the celebrated men who had flourished there. Empedocles, Pausanias, Acron the philosopher, orator and physician, Protus the pupil of Gorgias, Dinolochus the writer of comedies and pupil of Epicharmus, Carcinus the tragic poet, Phæax the architect, Metellus, Plato's instructor in music, Philenus the historian, and even in the time of her misery—when Verres robbed decayed Agrigentum of the last treasures that had been spared by the generosity of the conqueror of Carthage—Sophocles did honour to his native city in defending them in presence of the Romans against this robber.

We may assume that even before the last conquest the city of Agrigentum had been reduced to the Camicus, where it has stood for more than two thousand years, more long-lived in its misery than in its splendour. In 825 it was conquered by the Saracens, the successors of the Carthaginians and

dwellers on the same coasts, whose last Emir, Kamul, was driven forth by Count Roger in 1086. Agrigentum then became a fief of noble families, and sank into ever deeper decay, until its population dwindled to only sixteen thousand souls.

Below the present Girgenti stand the remaining monuments of the great Acragas, those Doric temples which, in spite of time and the hand of the enemy, remain in fair preservation, while the temples of Selinus lie prone on the ground, while other flourishing towns of Sicily, the corn-producing Gela of Æschylus, Himera and Camarina have entirely disappeared, and while Syracuse herself has been unable to preserve anything comparable to the ruins of Agrigentum.

The Porta di Ponte, the eastern gate of the city, leads to the rock of Minerva (Rupe Atenea) opposite—a picturesque height. There stands the Convent of S. Vito, beside a public garden in which the bust of Empedocles has been erected. In ancient times the Temple of Zeus Atabirius and that of Minerva stood on this hill; nothing of either remains; but on the southern slope traces of the temples of Ceres and Proserpine, on whose foundations now stands the Church of S. Biagio, may still be perceived.

Passing by the hill of Minerva, the traveller reaches the series of temples that stand along the edge of the southern wall of the city. Their aspect against the background of the Libyan Sea, especially when the yellow stone warms, and the massive columns glow, in the sunlight, is still enchanting. How glorious must it have been in antiquity!

The beautiful Temple of Juno Lucina is the first of the series. It stands on a hill of moderate height, and is half in ruins; for only on one side do its thirteen Doric columns remain erect supporting the entablature. Of the façade only two columns with a portion of the architrave remain; the others have either lost their capitals or been overthrown and destroyed. The temple stands on a high substructure of four steps. It was surrounded by thirty-four Doric columns, of twenty flutings, so disposed that thirteen stood at the sides and six at each end. The columns are five palms in diameter, and their height is almost five times their diameter. Their capitals are of beautiful outline, but unfortunately of their pediments and cornices nothing remains. Traces of fire are evident. Fazello, the historian, was the first to bestow a name not only on this temple but also on the others; until his time it had been called *Torre delle pulselle* (the Maiden's Tower). According to Pliny it was for this Temple to Juno that Zeuxis painted his celebrated picture of the goddess, for which the Agrigentans gave him as models the five most beautiful girls in the town. Cicero, however, tells the same story concerning the Temple of Juno at Croton and the picture of Helen.

The traveller obtains the best view of the circumference of the ancient city from the steps of this temple. Close in front is the southern wall, formed by the natural rock, just as in ancient Syracuse also the cliffs serve in places as walls. Many rock tombs, niches, columbaria and circular graves are found along the line of walls.



The Temple of Concord also stands on a hill picturesquely surrounded by ruins and cactuses. Except for its roof, which is lacking, it is perfect, retaining both façades and all its columns. It likewise stands on four steps, and has thirty-four columns. Undestroyed by the Carthaginians, it has triumphantly bid defiance to time, and in the Middle Ages was used as a church, a circumstance that averted its ruin. When in the fifteenth century the cella was transformed into a chapel, the twelve arches still to be seen were broken into the lateral walls. The church was afterwards abandoned, and in 1748 the temple was restored by Prince Torremuzza. Fazello calls it the Temple of Concord, a name, however, which has no connection with a Doric sanctuary. Of all the temples of Italy and Sicily, none retains its cella in such preservation; for even to the steps leading from the eastern entrance to the roof, each part remains erect, and it thus presents a complete example of the Doric building.

It is altogether the most perfect of all the temples of Sicily; that of Segesta, where no trace of a cella has been discovered, having remained incomplete. The majestic columns, the far-projecting capitals, the beautiful proportions of the entablature, which has preserved the decoration of its triglyphs, the simple grandeur of the architecture produce the most perfect harmony. The Doric building, the most beautiful of ancient forms, shows no less clearly than sculpture and poetry the vigour and purity with which the Greek intellect must have been endowed, when it was capable of discovering



these, the simplest of architectural laws. In contemplating a Doric temple, the traveller cannot refrain from observing to what grand and simple rhythmic measures the life of the Greeks must have moved, when the collective national sentiment—a sentiment that is most universally and clearly expressed by every nation in its religious architecture—could be represented in such form. We can well understand this harmony, which is as simple as a geometrical principle, but the entire comprehension of its inner dependence on the character of the people it is impossible for us any longer to possess. I hold at least that the Christian cathedral of Monreale—the most beautiful counterpart to this Temple of Concord—in its connection with the life of the Middle Ages must remain more intelligible to us. Did Sicily possess nothing beyond these two buildings, the monuments of two great periods of culture, it would on their account still remain a marvellous country. The Doric temple is the corporeal embodiment of that severe cosmic system of the Greeks and of its tragic necessity; all that is accidental, all that is fantastic is excluded from this severe form; no idea that is predominantly picturesque, no pretext of drawing, nor play of imagination is allowed to dominate. The Doric temple is unadorned except for its triglyphs, the sculptures in the metopes and pediments and the beautiful designs of foliage and scrolls on the cornices; it does not, however, exclude polychrome painting, the employment of which may be proved in many of the Sicilian temples. Lastly, what can be more devoid of ornament than the Doric column,

whose massive capital is more imposing than the later forms of Ionic and Corinthian style? The Doric temple is characteristic of the Sicilian mind, of which a talent for the severe science of mathematics was a national endowment.

The third temple is that of Hercules, formerly one of the most splendid of Agrigentum, now a colossal mass of ruins, lying in wild confusion. One fluted column alone towers headless from this wilderness. We look with amazement on these immense blocks of stone, the magnificent capitals, fragments of the frieze and cornices, still retaining traces of the purple with which they were coloured, and those fluted members of columns, which like gigantic millstones lie overturned, half buried in the soil or overgrown with vegetation. Next to the Olympion this temple was the largest of the city and was world-renowned, a *Hexastylos peripteros* of thirty-eight Doric columns, six in width and fifteen in length, reckoning the columns at the corners. Their diameter was 8, <sub>5.10</sub> palms, their height including the capital a little more than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  times the diameter. They must have produced a strangely powerful effect. The entablature was decorated with the most vivid reds and blues, with blacks and whites; the cornices with lion's heads on the conduits and with floral decorations. The length is estimated by Serra di Falco at 259, <sub>2.8</sub>, the width at 97, <sub>10.6</sub> palms. The cella was open to the day, and in it stood the bronze Hercules of Myron, concerning which Cicero observes that the chin of the statue had been worn away by the kisses of the worshippers in the temple. He might now

make the like statement concerning the statue of S. Peter in Rome, where the kisses of the faithful have worn the bronze foot of the saint entirely smooth. Can we blame time and the elements for destroying works of art, when even works of bronze are kissed to their detriment? This curious repetition of custom is for the rest not the only usage that the Roman Church has inherited from paganism.

The beautiful figure of Hercules excited the cupidity of Verres, who resolved to steal the statue since the Agrigentans refused to give it up. One stormy night he caused the temple to be burst open by armed slaves, who were in the act of removing the bronze god from the place to which he was strongly affixed, when the populace ran to his succour. "There was no one in Agrigentum," says Cicero, "too weak from age or too feeble, that, terrified by the news, did not rise and seize a weapon that night. Thus in a short time the whole population had rushed to the temple." The robbers were driven to flight and only carried off two statues. The Sicilians made a witticism on the unsuccessful attempt, saying, that "among the labours of Hercules must now be reckoned the conquest of the monster Verres."

In the same temple is said to have stood the Alcmena of Zeuxis, in which the artist had been so marvellously successful that he held it above all price and dedicated it to the divinity. In 1836 the headless figure of Æsculapius, which now stands in the Museum of Palermo, was found amid the ruins.

Farther on we reach the most celebrated of all

the temples of Sicily, and moreover one of the greatest works of antiquity. The Olympion was built after the victory of Himera, and at the same period as the Temple of Jupiter at Selinus, the Parthenon at Athens, the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, that of Apollo at Phigalia, and the Temple of Juno at Argos, a period when the Doric style had reached perfection in every Hellenic land. The Agrigentans had almost finished the gigantic building, which only lacked its roof, when the war with Carthage and the destruction of the city made impossible its completion. Himilco sacked the Olympion ; but although the barbarians laid waste the interior, the size and strength of the building must have prevented them contemplating its destruction. The character of its architecture also protected it, since it was not enclosed by a peristyle of isolated columns, but by walls in which the columns were half encased. Polybius saw the wondrous building still erect, and falling ever more to decay, it survived far on into the Middle Ages, suffering from storms, earthquakes and the hands of barbarians, who made use of its blocks as building materials, until the last upright fragment fell to the ground. This we are told by Fazello, who rediscovered the temple, the name and even the situation of which had utterly vanished from popular recollection. "Although the remains of the building fell in the course of time, a portion, supported by three giants and some columns, remained erect for a long period. This fragment is preserved as a memorial in the city of Agrigentum even to the present day and has been



placed in the city's coat of arms. But even this portion fell owing to the negligence of the Agrigentans on December 9, 1401." A contemporary poet sang of this ruin in the following Leonine lines :—

*“ Ardua bellorum fuit gens Agrigentinarum,  
Tu sola digna Siculorum tollere signa  
Gigantum trina cunctorum forma sublima  
Paries alta ruit, civibus incognita fuit.  
Magna gigantea cunctis videbatur ut dea.  
Quadricenteno primo sub anno milleno  
Nona decembris deficit undique membris.  
Talis ruina fuit indictione quinquina.”*

Girgenti still quarters three giants in its armorial bearings ; the ruins of the Olympion were called by the people *Palazzo dei Giganti*.

Of all this huge temple nothing can now be seen beyond its ground-plan, which has been brought to light by excavations, and the size of which awakes the surprise of the beholder. Round its sides débris and rubbish have risen forming walls, which are overgrown with vegetation ; and olive trees have thrust their roots between the ruins. The greatest mass of these remains is on the western side, where the colossal limbs lie overthrown in confusion, among them fragments of half-columns, within whose flutings a man might easily find standing room. Great, however, though this mass of ruins is, it appears so insignificant when compared with the whole, that we are forced to conclude that the greater portion of the material has been removed. From the blocks of this one temple the Mole of the present Girgenti was built in the reign of Charles III. In the midst of the now open space one of these giants, that served as caryatides,



has been laid. It consists of several fragments of shell-limestone pieced together. The gigantic head, now shapeless owing to its fall and to the vicissitudes of weather, has curled hair and a cap of Phrygian style ; the arms are raised as if to support a weight, as are those of caryatides. The figure, which is almost 30 palms long, is of strictly Egyptian style ; the feet held close together, it diminishes to a point. It reminds us throughout of the gigantic stone effigies of Memphis and Thebes ; this strange outstretched figure here seems like the god himself, lying amid the ruins of his temple in his eternal sleep, which neither earthquakes, the war of the elements, nor the doings of the petty human race can disturb.

Diodorus has described the wonderful building. " The sacred temples and especially that of Zeus reveal the splendour of the city of that age. All the other buildings have perished, been burnt or destroyed, for Agrigentum was frequently conquered. The Olympion remained without a roof, a war having intervened. After the destruction of the city, however, the Agrigentans never succeeded in finishing the temple. It is 340 feet long, 60 (according to Winckelmann correctly 160) feet wide and 120 high, without reckoning the base. It is the largest in Sicily, and on the strength of its substructure we may boldly compare it with other temples elsewhere. For although the building was not completed, its plan is quite clear. While other temples are surrounded only by walls, or the sanctuary by columns, this possesses both. There are, that is to say, columns, round on the

outside, square in the inside, inserted in the walls. The outer portion of the columns, the flutings of which are so wide that a man can stand within one, has a circumference of 20 feet, the inside one of 12. In the unusually large and lofty panel eastwards the War of the Giants is finely represented in relief, westwards the conquest of Troy, and the figure of each of the heroes answers to his character."

The ruins and the area of the Olympion entirely confirm the statements of Diodorus. The temple standing on five steps, consequently on a pedestal, that corresponded to its proportions, faced east and west, was 417 palms long and 203 wide. It was the sole example of the form known as Pseudoperipteros, that is to say, it was surrounded by walls, in which fourteen fluted half-columns were inserted on each long side, the diameter of which consisted of  $13\frac{1}{2}$  palms, and which reached the enormous height of  $65\frac{3}{4}$  palms. To the half-columns on the exterior, square pilasters corresponded in the interior. On the east side, where the entrance to temples is usually found, Serra di Falco reckoned the uneven number of seven half-columns, an unusual arrangement. His opinion is that the entrance was on the west side, and that the architect had removed the middle column on that side, in order to make way for the doors. For whereas in Doric temples the width of the doors was generally greater than the double intercolumnar space, this was not possible in the case of the Pseudoperipteros, on which account the architect had adopted the plan here set forth.

The length of the interior was divided into three

portions by two rows of pilasters, united by walls, so that the middle was destined for the cella, while the sides served as peristyles. Where the giants, among whom are represented some female figures with long hair, took their stand, whether beside the pilasters, whether supporting the cella, cannot now be determined. They were fourteen in number. Since of the large reliefs in the pediments nothing remains but miserable fragments, this single Caryatid is the sole surviving relic of the sculptures of the Olympion. It must not, however, be assumed that this Caryatid is necessarily illustrative of the sculptor's art of this period in Sicily. The loss of these sculptures is to be deplored; had they been preserved, taken in conjunction with the metopes of Selinus, they would have been of the utmost value in the history of art. It is possible that some day an accident may bring more of their remains to light.

In the little museum of Politi, the painter, at Girgenti may be found the models of the Olympion framed after the statements of Diodorus and the discoveries of modern antiquaries. They give a clear conception of the building, the size of which will have appeared the greater owing to the surface of the enclosing walls. But precisely because the columns did not stand isolated, the building must have lacked the audacity and beauty that distinguished the Olympion at Selinus, probably the grandest of all Sicilian temples, on account of its columns being isolated. And how greatly columns half inserted in the wall or merely standing against it, lose in plastic effect, may be judged from the

clumsy façade of S. Peter's, which slightly surpasses in extent even the Doric façades of Selinus and Agrigentum.

The proportions of the Olympion at Selinus, which likewise remained unfinished, are according to Serra di Falco as follows: length 425,<sub>2</sub> palms, width 192,<sub>6</sub>; diameter of the columns nearly 13 palms, with the immense height of 68,<sub>2</sub> palms. There were eight columns in the façade and seventeen at each side. Realising in imagination such a building in all its completeness, there is scarcely anything in the world to approach it. The Temple of Zeus at Olympia was only 274 palms long; the Temple of Diana at Ephesus 445; that of Apollo at Didyma 407; the Temple of Neptune at Pæstum measured 242 palms in length, 165 in width; the great temple at Edfu in Egypt was 378 palms long.

Farther west beyond the Olympion stand the highly picturesque remains of the Temple of Castor and Pollux, for so Fazello has named these ruins, which until quite lately lay on the ground. For the four magnificent columns with their entablature remained unheeded until Serra di Falco and Cavallari excavated and successfully re-erected them. They are Doric, fluted and overlaid with white stucco. The temple was thirteen columns in length and six in width. Since each separate member of this beautiful building was forthcoming, it has been found possible to piece them together, so that the character of the whole is clear. It was polychrome; traces of painting are still evident on the entablature. The cornice is of especially graceful design, lion's heads are introduced along the



conduits. Serra di Falco considers the temple undoubtedly Greek, but nevertheless a Roman restoration.

The last monument in the southern series on the western side is the so-called Temple of Vulcan, a mass of ruins, from which only two stumps of columns, showing Roman flutings, are prominent.

Returning to the Temple of Hercules and through the opening in the south wall of the city, where are found the traces of an ancient gate (*Porta aurea*), outside the wall, though close beside it, we see before us the Tomb of Theron. A square monument of two stories built of limestone blocks, the lower story is undivided and separated by a cornice from the upper, which diminishes and ends in a platform. Each corner has a fluted column with an Ionic capital and an Attic base. Probably this building is a cenotaph of Roman times, and those who assert that it is a monument to a horse may well be justified in the assertion.

Still farther south towards the sea are the ruins of the Temple of Æsculapius, where once stood Myron's Apollo, taken by Himilco to Carthage; Scipio afterwards restored it to Agrigentum, but it was finally stolen by Verres.

Such are the remains of ancient Agrigentum outside the walls. The long line of temples which stood there must have presented the most stupendous sight, especially to the traveller coming from Heraclea, that is from the sea, who, first traversing the orchard-like fields, saw before him high above the walls, the temples, the sacred guardians of the populous city, which with its streets and sumptuous



buildings covered the hill, and ended on the highest eastern summit in the Temple of Minerva and on the west in the Acropolis.

Inside the city little or nothing remains. Vineyards cover the entire soil, from which coins, vases and other antiques are constantly extracted. Somewhere about the middle of the ancient civic territory stands the villa of Cianfro Panitteri, where a few antiquities are preserved. In its neighbourhood we are shown the so-called Oratory of Phalaris, a curious name for a building in connection with this tyrant. The little structure, an oblong of pilasters with Attic bases and Doric capitals, is undoubtedly of Roman origin. It is now transformed into a Christian church by the monks of S. Niccolò.

It is the only fragment of antiquity that remains between the Camicus and the southern wall of the city. For in the town itself nothing ancient exists beyond the so-called remains of the Temple of Zeus Polieus, on the foundations of which S. Maria dei Greci is believed to stand. These foundations are below ground. Descending with torches, some steps and stumps of Doric columns may still be seen.

The cathedral, however, an imposing building on the Camicus, contains a glorious treasure in the celebrated sarcophagus, now used as a font, the reliefs of which depict scenes from the Phædra of Euripides. The Roman museums abound in beautiful sarcophagi, but as a rule their reliefs after the Greek period are more important as regards the motive represented than for any beauty of execution. On the sarcophagus at Agrigentum, on the contrary,

the sculptor has vied with the poet, and the scene of the tragedy where Phædra falls unconscious could scarcely have been more gracefully depicted than it is here. The devotion of Sicilians to Euripides is well known ; the poet's verses sufficed to throw the Syracusans into ecstasies, and after the fall of Nicias, it was owing to the declamation of such verses that several Athenian prisoners owed their freedom. Hence we may conclude that this sarcophagus is a work of Sicilian art. The work displayed in the reliefs on the sides of the sarcophagus is unequal ; it would seem that the artist was not everywhere inspired to the same degree. As on few other sarcophagi the drama is developed in successive scenes. It begins with Hippolytus at the chase, to which Euripides too attributes the hatred of Venus. The beautiful youth is on horseback, hurling the lance at the boar, which is attacked by hounds. Three other huntsmen take part with clubs, spears and stones. A fourth leads a dog. Amid the foliage we see the cactus of Sicily. The second scene, the crowning point and spirit of the whole, follows at the right end, a relief of rare beauty and grace. Phædra, a classic figure of ideal beauty, has sunk on a chair ; behind stands the nurse veiling her ; a woman-servant holds her drooping right arm ; the left appears warding off the shaft of Eros, who with bow already bent, seems directing his aim against her. The sculptor has beautifully depicted in this way the cause of the swoon, the pangs of love and the moral struggle in Phædra's soul, the description of which is the finest achievement of Euripides also, and in which he becomes as

lyrical as Calderon. Young girls, beautiful figures, hold lyres out to the love-sick Phædra as if to distract her, and this motive is also charming; the figures are light and tender, similar to ancient frescoes. While strong contrasts are combined—the fainting Phædra, the devotion of her serving-women, the old nurse, the young girls playing the lyre—the entire work is animated with dramatic genius. The trait of melancholy grace in the conception of Phædra is especially attractive. It is the most touching poem on the power of Eros, and the composition of this relief may rank alongside the most beautiful frescoes of Pompeii. The third scene shows on the front of the sarcophagus, Hippolytus, lance in hand, his friends with horses and hounds beside him, and his head turned away in sadness; the nurse showing him a stepmother's love. The last scene at the end of the sarcophagus is the least finished. Hippolytus lies on the ground, thrown from the chariot; the driver tries to hold in the horses; the sea monster, only slightly indicated, stares from behind the car.

Many of the heads and figures in this masterly work have been seriously injured, but on the whole it is well preserved. In the midst of the glaring caricatures that hang round the cathedral, illustrating the morbid mythology of Christianity, this ancient sarcophagus stands like a stranger from another world, celebrating the silent triumph of Greek genius over Christianity.

With it I bring to an end this sketch of Agrigentum.

I cast a longing glance towards the beautiful

shore, and would gladly have pursued my journey along the southern coast towards Noto, but I had attained my object ; I rode back across the island to Palermo, making the journey in Xenophon-like marches in two days, the first of which was marked by the most oppressive sirocco, the like of which I never remember. Here in the immediate neighbourhood of Africa I encountered it, as it were, at first hand.

Six miles<sup>1</sup> distant from Girgenti stands the mud volcano of Maccaluba in an entirely barren district, intersected by desolate hills. The volcano itself is a little hill, with several openings, from which hydrogen-gas issues and a bluish mud flows. We rode past Aragona, a place distinguished by a stately baronial castle. Opposite lies Comiteni, with inexhaustible sulphur mines. We met a great many mules laden with sulphur, which, in square-shaped blocks of a deep yellow colour, are beautiful to look on. All along the road was strewn with broken pieces of sulphur, and here and there in the hills we saw thick columns of vapour issuing from the smoking mines ; the atmosphere is impregnated with the smell of sulphur ; the traveller is physically conscious that he is on the island of Etna. Its greatest industry, yea, the actual means of support of impoverished Sicily is the sulphur, which is exported in large quantities, especially to England.

We crossed the stream of S. Pietro, which flows into the Platani, innumerable times. It winds and bends through a melancholy rocky valley, or flows between quiet meadows, on which the red cattle

<sup>1</sup> [Italian miles.—TRANSLATOR.]



of the sun <sup>1</sup> were grazing ; nowhere is it spanned by a bridge. It was a source of pleasure to me to ride through it repeatedly. Giuseppe Campo assured me with arithmetic certainty that we had crossed it thirty-six times. The heat of the sirocco in this valley was such as to produce giddiness. We thirsted for some refreshment, more especially for a revivifying draught of *sorbetto* ; but nowhere was a house in sight. Only twice did we halt at lonely dwellings on the campagna, where blacksmiths to shoe the mules had made their abode. Half-way between Girgenti and Palermo the landscape grew more striking and picturesque. Lofty pines and cypresses, huge carob trees broke the monotony, which exhausted and silent we now traversed by the light of the Sicilian moon. Who can find words to describe such a moonlit night in such a Homeric solitude, where no sound is heard but the tramp of the mules and now and then the lament of the bird sacred to Minerva ? So we journeyed on over desolate mountains to the sulphur mines of Lercara, where we were to pass the night.

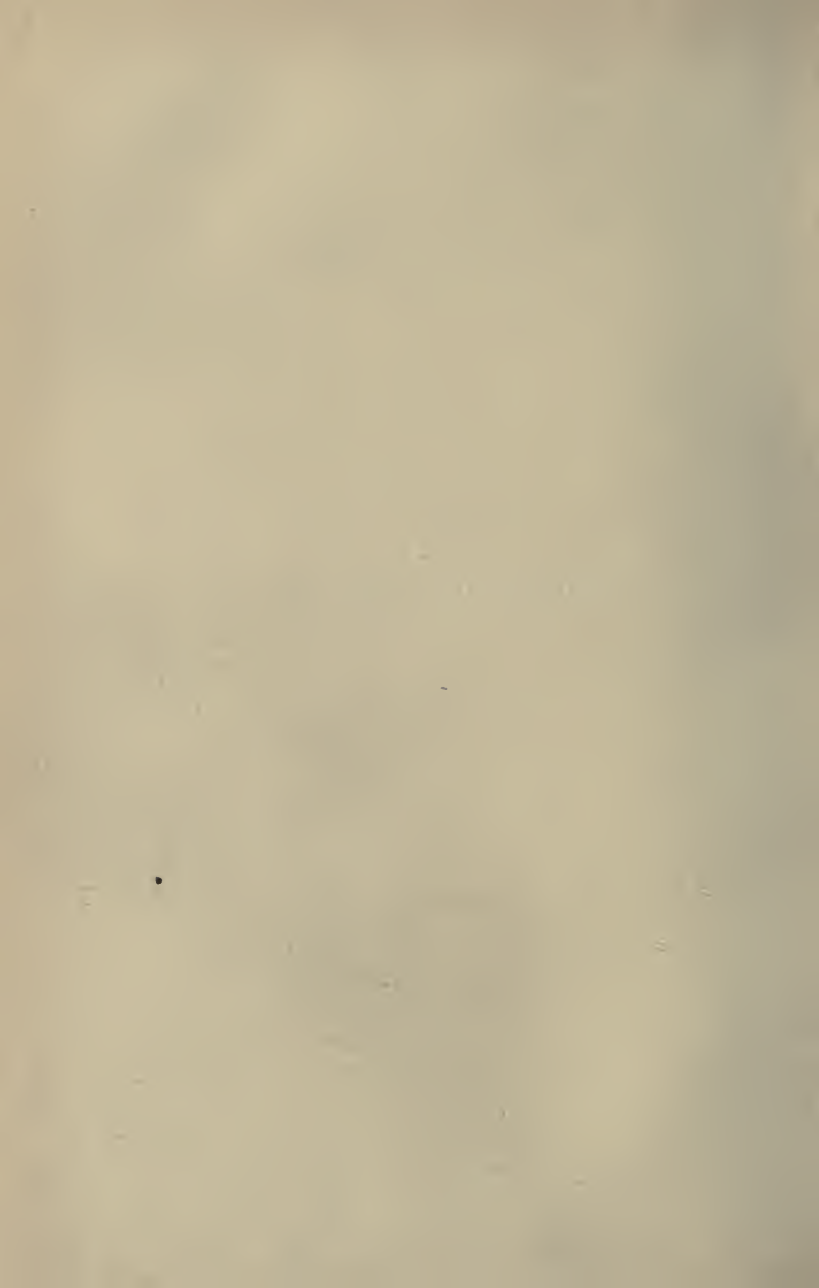
From little Lercara the carriage road leads to Palermo, and the traveller may make use of the post. I rode on, however, in the early morning, while my now invalid companion followed in a carriage. The day was delightfully fine and clear. We proceeded onwards past Belle Fratte and past the ruinous Palazzo Adriano to Misilmeri, the beautiful dwelling-place of our valiant Campo. He, the best of all muleteers, regaled me with *sorbetto*, loaded the mule with a basket of the most delicious grapes,

<sup>1</sup> [An allusion to the incident in the Odyssey.—TRANSLATOR.]



which he had brought from Prince Buongiorno's garden, and dismissed me under the escort of his son, with whom I covered the remaining nine miles to Palermo. A good road leads across the luxuriant plain to the city, through a fertile country, the orange gardens of which stretch to the very gates of ancient Panormus.

**SYRACUSE, 1853**



## SYRACUSE

I BEHELD the sublime landscape of Syracuse for the first time as the sun was setting, and the whole country from the Ionian Sea to the mountains of Hybla lay bathed in that deep glow that can only be produced by a Sicilian sky. Not even on the summit of Etna, when the entire island, three seas and the coast of Italy lay shimmering in light before me, was I so profoundly impressed as I was by the evening silence on this vast plain of the dead at Syracuse. The spectacles afforded by nature make less appeal to the imagination than do those of history; the former awake no memories, and it is by memory that the mind is invigorated and animated.

I had arrived from the ancient Leontium (Lentini), the birthplace of the sophist Gorgias, had travelled by the Catania road, past the peninsula of Magnesi, the ancient Thapsus, and along by the harbour of Trogilus (Lo Stentino). There, stretching immediately in front of this basin, rises a lofty plateau about 200 feet in height of bare limestone rock, descending precipitously on all sides; an imposing triangle, the acute angle of which stretches landwards as far as the hill of Euryalus, and whose base sinks towards the sea. On this wide and lofty plain

stood ancient Syracuse; the city, however, then extended as far as the island of Ortygia, which was united to the coast by an embankment.

Having ascended the plateau, I beheld the vast territory of the city, the island with the wretched modern town, at its sides the two harbours and behind Cape Plemmyrium; a solemn, majestic landscape, which in grandeur is perhaps surpassed by none other in the world except the Roman Campagna! Inland it is bounded by the imposing outlines of the mountains of Hybla, at its feet lies the Ionian Sea, once alive with fleets and the scene of naval battles, than which the history of England scarcely records any greater. The silver-grey olive trees sparsely scattered over the brown earth alone enliven this classic solitude. As far as the eye can see, it is furrowed from end to end by the traces of past centuries and the footprints of countless generations and resembles some huge battlefield of history. For miles around not a living thing save hawks, perched on the yellow stone or seeking for prey. No less rocky and arid than the plateau looks Cape Plemmyrium opposite, between which and Ortygia is the entrance to the harbour, once barred to Nicias by the Syracusans with vessels and chains. The whole beautifully curving line of coast is entirely lifeless; where the wreath of luxurious gardens and villas stretched in far-off times, scarcely a shed or the solitary house of a fisherman is to be seen. Everywhere desertion, or flat marsh-land and bare yellow masses of stone; only there, where the Anapus flows into the harbour, reeds and poplars mark the course of the stream, the



site of the Fountain of Cyane and the marsh of Syraca, from which the city originally derived its name.

I thus drove to the island city, my gaze constantly riveted on the countless tombs excavated in the rocky ground on each side of the way, and by the quarries which here and there stood forth in the most curious disorder. Some cultivation begins in front of the little harbour ; a few vineyards and gardens, where was once produced the celebrated nectar of Syracuse, which gladdened the heart of Gelo, Hiero and Pindar. A single column standing opposite the island is all that the glance discovers of the ruins ; this column stands like the genius of death in this plain of tombs and mocks at the traveller, before whose mind hovers the vision of the city, that great and celebrated Syracuse that is said once to have numbered more than a million inhabitants.

I shall try to frame an accurate picture of this ancient city, according to its present outlines. We know that Syracuse consisted of five towns, of which Cicero only enumerates four. His estimate does not include Epipolæ, the highest part, which probably consisted of nothing beyond fortifications and walls. These four towns were Ortygia, Achradina, Neapolis and Tycha. Thanks to the researches of Fazello, Cluvers, Mirabella and the investigations of Serra di Falco and Cavallari, the positions of these separate portions have been ascertained beyond a doubt ; and not only their confines but also the remains of ancient buildings or their sites have been determined.

## I

## ORTYGiA

The island of Ortygia is a triangle, the acute end of which points to Cape Plemmyrium. It is now entirely covered by modern Syracuse and its strong fortifications. It was the most ancient part of the city, was consecrated by myth, a seat of Artemis, and called Ortygia, since the island of Delos also bore the name. It was already inhabited by the Sicani when the Corinthians arrived under Archias; the Corinthians drove away the Sicani and founded Syracuse. In the course of time the city spread beyond the island and over the opposite coasts. On Ortygia consequently stood the most ancient sanctuaries; first of all at the extreme point the Temple to Juno, farther on the Temples to Diana and Minerva. The island was surrounded by strong fortifications, even before the time of Dionysius I., who built a wall with towers and a fortress on the isthmus, probably on the same spot where Hiero's palace had formerly stood. To Dionysius the strongest fortifications of Ortygia were due, also the docks in the little harbour, which was henceforth called the Marble Harbour. Ortygia, however, later suffered great alterations, for Timoleon pulled down the fortress of Dionysius and built the Court of Justice in its place. He was himself buried there, and the Timoleonium, a gymnasium for youths, was erected over his grave. At the time of the siege under the Romans, however, a fortress again stood on the isthmus.

Except for a few scanty remains, all the ancient monuments of Ortygia have now disappeared. The modern town covers the entire island, and strong walls and citadels of Byzantine times, as also of those of the Emperor Charles v. and of Charles III. of Naples, render it, on account of its position, one of the strongest fortresses of the kingdom. On the extremest point rises the tower of the Byzantine George Maniaces, that general of the Emperor Constantine the Paphlagonian, who in the beginning of the eleventh century wrested Syracuse from the Saracens and built this strong fortress. Over its door he placed the celebrated bronze rams, works of the time of Dionysius; these were afterwards brought to Palermo, where one is still preserved in the castle, while the other perished during a fire.

Not far off rises the Fountain of Arethusa. It flows from two ancient vaulted caves, to which the traveller has access through a dirty dwelling-house. We experience a melancholy impression in descending to these sacred waters, accompanied by a troop of ragged beggar children beating the tambourine, and by half-clad washerwomen; who with disgusting naïveté wade about in the crystal basin, offering water to the stranger—miserable caricatures of those nymphs of Diana who once bathed in these springs. At the spot where Arethusa issues from this grotto, she is (only recently) encompassed by a semicircular wall, in the middle of which a pedestal has been erected for the expected statue of the nymph of the fountain. The *Occhio della Zilica* was also pointed out close by in the

sea, that spring of sweet water that gushes forth amid the salt waves, and which, according to legend, is the river god Alpheus who here overtook the fugitive nymph.

The most beautiful remains not only of Ortygia, but of ancient Syracuse in general, is the Temple of Minerva. The cathedral, which is built within it, has saved it from destruction. The twenty-two columns of the peristyle, thirteen on the northern and nine on the southern side, with their architraves and frieze, now, sad to say, incorporated in the walls of a musty church, still produce a deep impression. They are Doric columns, each of twenty flutings, with magnificent capitals. The temple was a *Hexastylos peripteros* of thirty-six columns, standing on a base of three steps. Since according to the statement of Diodorus, the Geomori of Syracuse confiscated the possessions of the builder Agathocles, because he had erected a house for himself out of the best materials, it follows that the temple belongs to the time of Gelo, when the Geomori were not yet ousted by the plebeians. Cicero describes the magnificent sanctuary in his speeches against Verres. He extols the doors of the temple as the most artistic that could be found. They displayed costly sculptures in gold and ivory, and above was a beautiful head of Medusa. In the interior the war of King Agathocles with the Carthaginians was depicted on the walls, and the portraits of twenty-seven rulers of Sicily in painting; perhaps arranged in a series like those of the popes that decorate the basilica of S. Paul outside the walls of Rome. According to the account of Athenæus,



the pediment of the temple was adorned with a gold shield of Minerva, the glitter of which was seen by sailors from afar ; and it was the custom for such as embarked from the harbour of Syracuse to take a vase filled with burning embers from the altar of the Olympian Zeus and hold this vase in their hands as long as this sacred shield remained in sight. Marcellus spared the temple, its consecrated gifts and statues, but Verres robbed it of all the paintings that it contained, tore the sculptures and the head of Medusa from the doors and carried away many other treasures of art.

Remains of the Temple of Diana have also been discovered at Ortygia. In a courtyard belonging to the Casa Santoro are two fluted Doric columns. They stand unusually close together, the intervening space being less than the diameter of a column.

Such are the remains of the ancient island city. Of other buildings not a trace remains, and miserable indeed does modern Syracuse appear, more wretched even than modern Agrigentum. Its narrow streets display at every step dirt, poverty and discomfort. Never have I seen a place that appeared so unutterably melancholy. The two splendid harbours, like the town, are silent as the grave and as the field of Achradina, against whose cavernous limestone coast the waves wash incessantly to and fro. In order to realise all the awe of the past we must stand on the shore by the Fountain of Arethusa and gaze in the silence of the moonlight on this marvellous panorama. Night here seemed to me even more ghostlike than in the Palace of the Cæsars in Rome. The feeling aroused here is love of Hellas,



the native land of every thoughtful soul. Along the quay of the great harbour at night, lamps flicker between the trees of the single promenade of the townsfolk; there stand on their plinths wretched statues of Hiero and Archimedes; and here saunter the modern race of Syracusans, melancholy, indigent, devoid of education, of art, of industry. Not a single handsome face did I see among them; scarcely a gleam from the eyes of any passing black-veiled signora.

When I gazed from the quay on the harbour in this state of desolation (only two Turkish vessels were anchored outside Ortygia) Cicero's exclamation recurred to my mind: "*Nihil pulcrius quam Syracusanorum portus et mœnia videri potuisse.*" And the commerce of ancient Syracuse was probably as great as that of Constantinople at the height of its prosperity.

We must visit the museum of the present city, which stands opposite the Temple of Minerva, here also to experience a sense of melancholy. All that it contains of the innumerable works of art, with which Syracuse was once adorned, seems a heap of fragments, arranged along the walls of a dismal room. The celebrated Venus which stands here, headless and with mutilated right arm, is in the act of rising from her bath. Her left hand holds the drapery round her body, the right covers her breast. Her frame is stoutly built, the lower part surprisingly strong and powerful—a Venus for Michael Angelo. Of all the celebrated representations of the Goddess of Love, that of Milo, of Capua, of the Capitol, of Florence, the Venus of Syracuse is the least

distinguished by charm, the most by the full development of feminine beauty. The discovery of the beautiful statue in the Bonavia garden (how it must have excited the insolent eyes of Verres!) was due to the Cavaliere Landolina in 1804, and gave rise to the foundation of this museum, which was the work of this meritorious emulator of Mirabella and of the Bishop Filippo Maria Trigona in 1809. A few vases, statues, Greek inscriptions, bronzes and a heterogeneous collection of antiquities make it up. Sicily has no national museum; were the many scattered collections of Noto, Syracuse, Agrigentum, that of Biscari at Catania and that of Palermo, so important on account of the Metopes of Selinus, but united, they would form a magnificent collection, and as regards coins, one probably unrivalled elsewhere.

## II

## ACHRADINA

The most beautiful part of ancient Syracuse was Achradina. It immediately adjoined Ortygia, and was reached from the island by the embankment, which probably led first of all to the Forum. Achradina extended along the eastern coast, and both east and north the quarter was washed by the sea, while on the west it was bounded by Tycha and Neapolis, and on the south by the island and the two harbours. It was encompassed on all sides by a strong wall; which must have been strong indeed, for after Marcellus had subdued Epipolæ,

Tycha and Neapolis, Achradina would still have yielded prolonged resistance, had not the treachery of the Spaniard Mericus surrendered the island to the Romans and left the Syracusans of Achradina a prey to despair. Towards the sea the town was protected by those walls, which Archimedes had provided with the loopholes necessary to the employment of his wonderful engines.

Cicero says: The second town of Syracuse is called Achradina; in it is found the principal forum, most beautiful halls, a splendidly decorated Pyrtaneum, a spacious Curia and a sumptuous temple to the Olympian Zeus; the remaining quarters of the city are occupied by a wide street that intersects them and by many cross streets and private buildings.

Even now Achradina is the most important portion of the immeasurable field of ruins of Syracuse. It rises in the form of a high plateau of brown calcareous rock, lying almost everywhere bare, seared by the elements and furrowed by countless streets, by the traces of chariot wheels, by graves, quarries, foundations of houses in the natural rock and by squares, and where we even now follow the Via Lata in its course.

Achradina is reached from the island either by the three drawbridges of the fortress on the isthmus, or by boat across the little harbour, when the passenger is landed below the Convent of the Capucini. A few small churches and convents, Maria di Gesù, S. Lucia and the Church of the Cappucini stand on the plateau in melancholy desertion. On this side of the embankment lie on level ground first

the *Fonte degli Ingegneri*, and beside it that solitary column, of which I have already spoken, as one of the isolated landmarks of the ancient city. Since this column has an Attic base, no flutings and consequently is not Doric, Serra di Falco believes that it may perhaps have belonged to the Temple of Zeus which Hiero II. built on the Forum. The insignificant proportions of the column, however, contradict this supposition. That the Forum stood here is evident from the situation, no other being better adapted for it than this, which unites the towns of Ortygia and Achradina. A gate of five arches led to the Forum, which was entirely surrounded by arcades. Here also stood the Pyrtaneum and the Curia, of which not a trace is found, also the so-called *casa de' sessanta letti*, the remains of an ancient building which is called without any reason the Palace of Agathocles.

In the middle of Achradina, and about the highest point of the plateau, lie the renowned Latomiaë, or stone quarries, which are called after the Capucini; Capuchin monks having laid them out as gardens. Opposite the entrance stands the now abandoned convent, which commands a beautiful view over Syracuse and the sea. All around extends in deathlike silence the desolate waste of Achradina; it would seem as if Nature had gazed on the head of the Gorgon and been turned to stone. How beautiful is the Roman Campagna with its ever varying carpet of vegetation, its charming hills, its ivy-clad tombs and solitary towers,—the finest possible theatre for the grandest epic of world history. Here, on the contrary, reigns unspeakable desola-

tion ; interminable stony plains, or wild labyrinths, traversed by the hermit-like Capuchins. I had formed high expectations of these Latomiæ, but they surpassed my wildest imagination. A monk opened the door, and I suddenly descended into the immense hollow that human hands had hewn in the rock. Before me lay halls as large as a small market-place, enclosed by perpendicular stone walls eighty feet in height. These are here black, here the golden yellow of the Hellenic ruins, elsewhere a soft rose-red. They are picturesquely clothed with a mass of ivy, which climbing up the walls soars to the light, and again hangs in Bacchantic festoons ; the clefts are filled with flowering plants, and in the cracks nestle laurels, pines and oleanders. The Latomiæ were formerly covered, natural pillars had been left standing, but earthquakes, storms and the weight above having broken these pillars, the roof almost everywhere fell in, leaving masses of stone lying about in vast groups, and forming ravines and gorges as in natural hills. Within the spaces now open to the light the Capuchins have laid out their gardens ; a counterpart to the hanging gardens of Semiramis, since they lie from 60 to 80 feet below the level of the ground ; and there amid the unique stone enclosures, orange trees, laden with a rare wealth of fruit, pomegranates with their flame-coloured flowers, vines, myrtles, cypresses, sweet-scented plants of every kind and the most succulent vegetables, cultivated by the monks for their own table, are found. In the midst of one of these gardens I was surprised by a fascinating sight ; surrounded by darkest green, the convent stood



directly before me high above the edge of the Latomiæ; at each side towered the stone walls covered with ivy and overshadowed by a solitary pine. We are tempted to forget that this Paradise was once a hideous prison and that after the fall of Nicias and Demosthenes, the unfortunate Athenians here dwelt in captivity. Many fell victims to fever, sorrow or hunger. The Latomiæ might easily hold six thousand people, and apparently no prison could be more secure. Standing, as they do, in the middle of Achradina, they date back to an early period before this district was entirely included within the city. After the battle of Himera it is probable that Carthaginian prisoners were employed in hewing out these quarries to provide building material for the houses and temples of Syracuse. Gradual accumulations of débris have raised the level of the soil thirty-two feet, so that the original depth was extraordinarily great. The stone seems to have been worked not only downwards from above, but also in a horizontal direction. We still see many covered corridors like galleries, halls with square-shaped rooms, also vaulted chambers, which cannot therefore be of Greek origin, and which like the Catacombs reveal the marks of Christianity.

Proceeding from the Latomiæ on through Achradina, we see everywhere traces of ancient streets and the marks of chariot wheels as in the pavement of Pompeii. These traces frequently run confusedly in and out, as if carriages had crossed one another on a sandy soil. The fact is singular, since the limestone of Syracuse does not take the impress of wheels so easily as the Roman tufa. In the neigh-

bourhood of the *Latomia* I found these tracks especially numerous, and was consequently led to the conclusion that they were those of waggons on which the stone had been conveyed to the city. For the rest, even in the most flourishing period of Achradina's history these quarries must have greatly detracted from the aspect of the city, causing it to look like a vast building ground, where troops of labourers were daily employed, or a convict settlement with galley-slaves in clanking fetters. The *Latomia* were the galleys of Syracuse. For miles around the rocky soil has been excavated, and countless are the square tombs which, in the form of crypts, have been hewn in the living rock. The extent to which this work of excavation has been carried is impossible to say, for besides the tombs, which stretch horizontally and vertically, and the numerous *Latomia*, gigantic catacombs cut in the rock stretch for miles and miles under the soil of Syracuse.

I saw many square-shaped spaces that seemed to have been destined in former days for houses. The houses in Achradina stood on bare rock, which served here, as it still serves in so many towns of Sicily, as pavement also. The traveller may wander for hours on this field of stones, may search along the sea for the site of the ancient walls, may go westwards towards Tycha, where the city adjoined this quarter and Neapolis, and where, it would appear, an uncultivated space lay between—everywhere are seen the same deep tracks.

It seems incomprehensible how the materials of so immense a city should have vanished to the

uttermost fragment ; all that was movable having disappeared, as if a storm had swept away temples, walls, towers and colonnades like sand from the desert. True that for centuries these structures provided building material, all the fortifications of Syracuse were constructed from them, and even the modern towns of East Sicily have carried off shiploads from the ruins of Syracuse ; nevertheless such complete annihilation remains inexplicable.

Achradina slopes away towards the south in deep ravine-like declivities, in the sides of which many rock tombs have been discovered ; for the most part *Columbaria* and *Loculi* of Roman style. In this direction lie also the Catacombs stretching towards Neapolis. Their entrance stands close to the earliest Christian church of Sicily, that of S. Giovanni. It is a singular little building with a portico, the outer wall of which is broken by three Byzantine arches, supported by columns and resting on pillars with capitals, pieced together, of the early Middle Ages. The church unfortunately is in ruinous condition. Its crypt is of still earlier date and contains some Byzantine frescoes. A door beside the church leads to the Catacombs. Neither those of Naples nor Rome have been constructed on such a systematic plan. We suddenly find ourselves in a perfectly organised city of the dead, where an entire population seems to have slept in their stone coffins ; there are endless streets and lanes, chambers, niches, squares and halls, where the dead once dwelt in profoundest peace, while above raged the revolutions of the living. How many deaths the life of a great city must daily

yield, may be seen at Naples at the present day ; we may consequently imagine how many of her inhabitants Syracuse, with so vast a population, must have cast into this yawning under-world !

Like all other catacombs throughout the world, these were once quarries, were then converted into a necropolis ; quarrying was continued for centuries and evidently according to a plan. For all the galleries lead at intervals to a central hall, a large, circular and vaulted room, which contains niches and numbers either one, two or three arched doors. Here also the style shows a later period than the Greek. At present four have been excavated, but according to the ancient, though unverified, legend, they must altogether number three hundred and sixty. It is even asserted that the Catacombs stretch not only to Sebetos, but also extend underground to Catania, and far surpass in extent all the tunnels of modern times. It is true that the greater portion, even the lower story itself, remains blocked with rubbish, nevertheless a distance of several miles has been rendered accessible. Twenty years ago a tutor with six pupils, to whom he was explaining the wonders of this city of tombs, lost his way. The party wandered about in despair seeking for the exit, then died of exhaustion and terror ; they were found lying close together, four miles from the entrance. Since then apertures giving light and air have been made in the galleries, through which day dimly penetrates to this fearful Hades. The width of the galleries amounts as a rule to from 12 to 16 palms, the height from 8 to 12 palms ; their length seems interminable : and the



sight of these long corridors of graves stretching endlessly on in the dim twilight, as terribly monotonous as eternity, is utterly indescribable. Only here and there are the corridors broken by niches for graves, which are adorned with ancient pictures and with stucco of warm Pompeian red. Streets of tombs, containing grave upon grave, divided from one another like the rungs of a ladder or the cells of a honeycomb, open into these corridors. Death seems to have crept like a worm into the earth and worked his way through these labyrinthine passages. He has carried generation after generation into these vaults, and millions have here crumbled into dust. I stood shuddering in these yawning streets and realised the utterly boundless depth of the night over which hangs our petty human life. Neither skulls nor bones are any longer to be seen ; where they remain I cannot say. All is hollow and dark as nothingness. Time, which has destroyed every vestige of life above in Achradina, has killed death itself here below—Greeks, Romans, Christians have here been buried in succession. Pagan idols, miniature bronzes, lacrimaries, as well as Christian symbols of death, have been found here. A relief representing the Twelve Apostles, which was excavated here, is now preserved in the Cathedral of Syracuse. That the earliest inhabitants of this district buried their dead here, even in pre-Christian times, is with justice asserted, since even in the troglodyte town of Ispica graves have been discovered in the rock. The custom is a primitive one, as we see in Egypt, in India, and even in the America of prehistoric times.



At the point where Achradina adjoins Neapolis and so many monuments of great importance are crowded together, we find above the old theatre, the ancient Street of Tombs, and here and there scattered in the rocks sepulchres excavated during the Greek period. The Street of Tombs itself, twenty feet wide and with walls of equal height, has been cut in the rock ; the soil has been furrowed by the deep traces of chariot wheels. At each side stands grave upon grave in the perpendicular walls. They have all been hewn in the rock and reveal sepulchral chambers of various size and arrangement. Outside we can still see the places in which epitaphs were affixed. The architectural decorations appear to have been Doric, which as a rule consisted of a façade resting on fluted columns ; it no longer remains, but its traces are nevertheless recognisable. If we can imagine this Street of Tombs with all its monuments in its original form, we shall have a series of façades of temples at each side, interrupted by small and insignificant vaults, for this burial-place outside Achradina seems to have been used by all classes of people. It can hardly have given the pleasing impression made by the Street of Tombs at Pompeii, for the walls have something hard, a character that recalls the unnatural and monotonous style of Egypt. Moreover, the entire district, where Achradina, Tycha and Neapolis adjoin one another, with, as it seems, a neutral space between, is filled with vaults above ground. Their vast number, for at almost every step the traveller encounters a tomb, and these tombs stretch on for more than the distance of a German mile along the

road to Catania, more than any other remains of antiquity, serves to recall the past greatness of Syracuse.

Some of these sepulchres attract attention by reason of their richer architecture and their picturesque isolation, and lead to the conclusion that distinguished personages or families were buried within them. In the same neighbourhood stood also the tomb of Gelo and his wife Demarata, which was erected by the people of Syracuse with great splendour. Its site has not, however, yet been discovered. Two rock tombs more especially rivet the attention. They stand at a short distance from one another in the neighbourhood of a rather small but most remarkable quarry, on the yellow floor of which innumerable graves are scattered, and through which a branch of the ancient aqueduct of Tycha flows amid the stony desert. They are hewn in curiously formed cones rising in steps or terraces, and show that stone for building was formerly severed from them, their form being irregular and accidental. On the outer side of the most considerable of these blocks of stone a Doric, now half-destroyed frontispiece has been hewn; it rested on two fluted columns, of which only one is preserved. The architrave and frieze with triglyphs and metopes is in great part still recognisable. But although the architecture is Doric, it deviates from the traditional system, since pediment as well as columns appear of very lofty proportions. From this fact alone it follows that the tomb—to which the people with reverent homage have given the name of Tomb of Archimedes, with undoubtedly

as much right as the Agrigentans have called an ancient monument the Tomb of Theron—belongs to the later period.

It is well known that the great mathematician gave instructions that a column should be erected on his tomb, on which was to be represented the relation of the cylinder to the cone, in honourable memory of his favourite theory. When, during his quæstorship in Syracuse, Cicero instituted inquiries concerning the tomb of Archimedes, he was guided by these emblems, and after tedious efforts he discovered in the thicket the spot and the inscription in *senarii*. Proud of his discovery, the old Roman exclaimed that it had been the will of fate that the tomb of the great Syracusan should be discovered by the man of Arpinum. At that time, although only one hundred and fifty years had passed since the conquest of Sicily by Marcellus, the city had already become so deserted that the grave of its greatest citizen lay buried under thorns and thistles. Cicero coming from Rome, seeking for the tomb of Archimedes amid rubbish and underwood, conducted by the ciceroni of Syracuse and local traditions, personates the archæologist as well as any of the present searchers for antiquities or learned bookworms of Bonn or Berlin.

We must renounce the search for the tomb of Archimedes, and the day will come when the traveller will also seek in vain for the site of Humboldt's monument. The names of the Immortals live, however, in the records of time; and the beautiful words of Pericles in his funeral oration

on the fallen Athenians are justified: "The burial-place of great men is the world." The mystery surrounding the Syracusan tomb, over which hovers the recollection of a great genius, is fascinating, especially in the midst of this depopulated wilderness. Sitting in the stillness of noonday or the silence of evening in this barren desert, now surveying the intricate labyrinths, now the rock tombs, shades of the departed rise before us as they did before Ulysses in Hades—shades of men greater than any of our generation. I saw these honoured tombs animated over and over again; on their steps lay children and men of most wretched aspect, with yellow, fever-stricken faces, tangled hair, burning eyes and tattered clothes; to me they represented the present history of Sicily, the horrors of the Bourbon police-governed state. When will the time come for the deliverance of this glorious land? *Que Dieu la rende aux Musulmans!*<sup>1</sup> A modern Archimedes with innumerable catapults and burning glasses is necessary to drive from the field the locust swarm of priests that covers the whole of Sicily.

With the tombs, however, I shall now conclude. Not far off we reach a garden of olives and vines, where my countryman Platen lies buried. As I stood by his grave and laid a wreath of vine leaves on the steps of the monument, all the associations that connected him with Heine came back to my recollection in that pure Hellenic air and transplanted me back to that unedifying literary atmo-

<sup>1</sup> When writing these pages, I little foresaw how soon this time would come.

sphere of my native country, that over-excited, unreal, unmanly, Jewish or Judaising time that worked such disastrous effect on our poetry. How different was the fate of Heine from that of Platen ! Had God but given Heine the power of expressing his sufferings, and not merely that of childishly and insolently turning himself and mankind to derision, he would have been a hero of his time. In talent he was immeasurably Platen's superior. And yet he—Platen's bitter enemy—lived to see a public statue erected to his rival. Such is the power of Form ! and what it is, we perhaps only completely understand in the South. It was a happy thought of Platen to die in Syracuse. A short time before, as the gardener informed me, the King of Bavaria had stood at the poet's grave and had promised that it, which was already falling to decay, should be restored. "*Augusto Comiti Platen Hallermunde. Anspachiensi. Germaniæ Horatio*" : so runs the magniloquent inscription placed here by the Cavaliere Landolina. Did the cold versifier Platen deserve to lie here in such solitude amid the dead of Syracuse, beside Hiero and Gelo, Archimedes and Timoleon, as the sole representative of that nation, that more than any other is steeped in Hellenic thought ? Yes ! this wild spot seemed to me the most beautiful grave for a poet on earth, almost more poetical than that beside the Pyramid of Cestius, under the lofty cypresses that overshadow the grave of Shelley, one of the last divinely inspired poets that modern times has produced.

So must we pray the gods for a threefold boon : beautiful life, beautiful death, a beautiful grave.



## III

## NEAPOLIS

We are already in Neapolis, that quarter of the city which, as its name implies, was the latest. Both Tycha and Neapolis were originally suburbs of Achradina. The former extended from the harbour of Trogilus westwards and upwards, the latter down to the great harbour to the south-western side of the high plateau on which stood Syracuse, and undoubtedly descended, protected in the direction of Tycha by walls along the precipice of rock, as far into the plain as the marshes of the Anapus. A gate called Menetides or Temenetides led into the open country. The entire quarter of the city was also called Temenites after a statue of Apollo which bore the name. Cicero mentions the theatre and the two temples to Ceres and Proserpine as standing on the height within it. Gelo had erected these buildings out of the spoils of Carthage, and in front of them stood his tomb and that of Demarata, which was later destroyed by the Carthaginian Himilco.

There is no spot in Syracuse where memories and monuments are so closely packed as on the rocky corner of Neapolis, where this quarter of the city adjoined Achradina above. Within a somewhat restricted space stand the *Latomixæ* of Dionysius, the Theatre, the Street of Tombs, the Amphitheatre, the ancient Aqueduct.

The celebrated *Latomixæ* called the Ear of Dionysius are as large in circumference as those of Achradina, and are no less picturesque, in some

places are even more beautiful and remarkable. They form an immense square, in whose depths is an ever verdant garden. Somewhere about the middle rises an isolated rock like a pillar, which perhaps once supported the roof of the Latomiæ, bearing on its summit the remains of a tower, and soaring above the trees and piles of ruins. On the left side stand those rooms excavated in the rock, one of which bears the name of "Ear of Dionysius." This name was bestowed on it by Michael Angelo da Caravaggio, who in company of the learned Syracusan Mirabella visited these Latomiæ and who, owing to the form of the cavity, was accidentally induced to bestow on the hall a name which afterwards gave rise to the most curious legends.

The steep wall in which this gigantic ear has been cut, is covered on the outside with ivy, lichens and the delicate maiden-hair, and standing high on the edge of the steepest part rises a pine tree. The form of this lofty stone hall produces that acoustic phenomenon which encouraged the legend that Dionysius was able to overhear the talk of his prisoners. In 1840 Serra di Falco discovered an opening, through which the Latomiæ can be overlooked, as from a box in a theatre, where the tyrant is said to have listened. A word whispered far below, a crackling sheet of paper, can be distinctly heard, and the guide never fails to indulge in the innocent pleasure of repeating over and over again his "*Dionisio era un tiranno.*" A pistol-shot reverberates from the walls with hundredfold effect, sounding like a peal of thunder.

Another portion of the Latomiæ, close to the Ear of Dionysius, is called *del Paradiso*. It consists of huge square rooms with flat roofs. Some of the walls are covered with a delicate rose red, others are deep black, or dark brownish yellow. They are often found cracked, often overthrown; for the pillars, which formerly upheld the roof, have sunk and thus produced the weirdest formations: frequently portions of the rock itself are seen hanging suspended from the roof like wild ruffled curtains of stone. In one part of the room opens a bold arch, supported by a natural pillar, through which we look at fragments of rocks lying in picturesque confusion, the dark foliage of the orange trees, the flowers of the pomegranate and the sky of Syracuse. The strength of man in excavating such vast spaces by means of iron seems here to have vanquished Nature, in creating veritable caves of Fingal, while Nature again overthrew all this Sisyphean work and destroyed the artificial in restoring the elementary and accidental.

A rope factory has from an early date been installed in the longest covered room; poor men, pale children and women pass away their lives spinning in this prison. I frequently sat at the entrance to this dismal corridor looking at these uncouth people, tattered successors of the Parcæ. Everything in Sicily wears a mythic aspect. The mind goes back to earlier times than it does in Roman territory; in the latter dwells the spirit of history, in Sicily, however, the mysterious spirit of fable. It is the land of Typhon, of the Cyclops, of Dædalus.

There still remain other smaller quarries at Syracuse, which owing to the juxtaposition of masses of rock and vegetation are of a highly romantic character, for instance the Latomiæ of Count Casale. They consist of two rooms joined by a covered corridor about seven feet in height. A huge hall stands at one end, 108 palms high, of equal length and 62 palms wide. The perpendicular walls are of a roseate colour. They contain numerous holes ascending in curved lines, which apparently held iron clamps that served as a sort of ladder to the slaves who quarried the stone. The plan of the halls is fairly regular and shows that they were purposely made in this form. Here also stand the remains of an ancient watchtower on the summit of a steep wall. Many rooms have been destroyed by earthquakes; in 1853 great blocks of stone were thrown down, covering a part of the garden with débris. But all the space that remains uncovered is filled with a wealth of luxurious vegetation. The leaves put forth by the fig tree are so large that they might be used as dinner plates. Here may be seen the trees and plants of India, the curiously formed fruits and flowers of which I had never beheld before, nor did I know their names. With its moss and ivy-covered walls of rock, its artistic alleys and ruins, the garden presented such a fairy-like aspect that it might have been that of Oberon and Titania.

Close to the Ear of Dionysius stand the huge remains of the Syracusan theatre, one of the largest of antiquity, called even by Cicero *maximum*. Serra di Falco believes that it was contemporary

with the Theatre of Athens, which was the first stone theatre of Greece and was erected by Themistocles. The Theatre of Syracuse is a building of admirable simplicity and strength, nevertheless nothing remains of the stage but a heap of ruins overgrown with brushwood. The somewhat elongated semicircles of rows of seats ascend on the natural slope of Neapolis and are hewn in the living stone. They number 46 rows, and are interrupted by a broad passage and divided into nine sections by eight staircases intersecting the building. If we reckon these actual 46 rows of seats, it would follow that the theatre must have had a diameter of 404 palms, on which account Serra di Falco is of opinion that it contained a still greater number of rows, which continued farther upwards. He gives it a diameter of 504 palms, in which case it must have been larger than any of the theatres of Greece, except that of Miletus. Why indeed in the passage of Cicero *quam ad summam theatrum est maximum* the last word should be translated "greatest of all" and not merely "very great," I fail to understand.

Two corridors lead from the stage to the orchestra; the stage itself, at the sides of which stand two square buildings, is traversed by a tiny stream of water, an offshoot of the adjacent aqueduct. Many have racked their brains over the Greek inscriptions "*Basilissas Nereidos*" and "*Basilissas Philistidos*," which are still legible on the surrounding cornice, the names of these queens being unknown in the history of Syracuse. According to latest opinions Nereis is supposed to have



been the daughter of Pyrrhus of Epirus, who was married to Gelo, son of Hiero II. Philistis on the other hand is believed to have been the daughter of Leptines and the wife of Hiero. Beyond this, there is nothing else in the theatre to excite special attention; a very few fragments of sculpture have been found, among them one valuable for the subject depicted: a cippus of white marble, on which is represented the legend from Homer of the snake and the sparrow's nest in Aulis, from which Calchas predicted the duration of the Trojan War.

But the entire aspect, the position, the importance of the theatre form a source of far greater pleasure. We stand on one of the most brilliantly illuminated spots of the Hellenic intellect, a centre of human culture. Here on these grass-grown steps once sat Plato, Æschylus, Aristippus, Pindar; there in the orchestra once stood the captive and condemned Athenians; here Timoleon discoursed, and here, blind and old, he sat listening to the political debates. The entire history of Syracuse from its most brilliant period was enacted here in speeches and affairs of state more dramatically than the pieces which were represented on the stage, for the theatre was both the stage of public life and the stage of poetry; and where did actuality and poetry interact so completely as in Hellenic life? The national importance of the theatre was also increased to the utmost by the very position it occupied. It stood midway between Neapolis, Tycha and Achradina, and not too far from Ortygia. From its lofty height it looked down on the immense city and the sea, which served it as scenic decora-

tions. The panorama is fascinating even now ; the most beautiful view that we enjoy of Syracuse, for we overlook both harbours and the sea, the entire coast as far as the mountains of Hybla, and in the background see the immeasurable summit of Etna and the coast of the Ionian Sea as far as the rocks of Taormina. On what a spectacle must the eye have rested, when it fell on the city itself, on this great world of temples, halls and sumptuous buildings, and on the harbour filled with masts, that reminded the citizens of the glorious deeds of their republic ! What effect must not the " Persians " of Æschylus, in which the Syracusans poetically celebrated the victory at Himera, or the trilogy of Prometheus, have produced on such a background ?

Above, where the steps end on the hill, stands a Nymphæum, a grotto clothed with moss and lichens, in which a spring gushes forth. I was vividly reminded of the Grotto of Egeria. At each side stand smaller niches. Women may generally be found washing at this spring, and the solemn stillness of the place resounds with their melancholy song.

To the left and close by, the Street of Tombs stretches upwards ; at the right descends a branch of the aqueduct of Tycha, driving the wheel of a mill, from which the whole district is called *i mulini di Galerme*. The modern part of the aqueduct, which is continued for a short distance on arches, greatly adds to the picturesque effect of the rocky landscape. The aqueduct, which runs underground for the rest of its course, was perhaps a work of the Carthaginian prisoners of war and was no less great an undertaking than the Cloacæ of Rome or

the Emissary of Albano. In many places it is uncovered, and the water may be seen rushing in its full force in this indestructible canal. It is conveyed for a distance of six miles from the mountains to the town.

South-east from the theatre in a grove of pomegranate trees, stands a building in fair preservation, the Amphitheatre of Syracuse, larger than those of Verona, Pola or Pompeii, since the greater axis reached 272 palms, the smaller 164. It is chiefly hewn in stone. Four doors for the four towns of Syracuse stood at the extremities of the two axes. Serra di Falco caused this theatre to be excavated in 1840. The steps of the rows of seats and a great part of the walls are very ruinous, nevertheless the building is fairly well preserved. Since the Greeks were unacquainted with the barbarous amusement of combats between gladiators and animals, it follows that the amphitheatre must have been of Roman origin. Cicero does not mention it, but it was known to Tacitus. The building shows that under Augustus and Tiberius, Syracuse, as seat of the Roman Prætor, was populated afresh by a Roman colony, and reached another period of prosperity.

The last of the remains of antiquity on this side and close to the theatres is a large substructure of three steps of a long narrow building, of which nothing remains beyond the plan and a few fragments of cornices, adorned with heads of lions. Serra di Falco discovered this substructure in 1839, and holds it to be that Altar of Hiero which surpassed in size that even of Olympia.

## IV

## TYCHA AND EPIPOLÆ

We have found the most important buildings of ancient Syracuse standing together within a relatively small space. Proceeding northward along the aqueduct, we discover a barren rocky plain, intersected by the road to Catania. Here stood Tycha, once a populous place with numerous buildings, deriving its name from the Tycheion, the temple dedicated to the goddess of Fortune. This quarter reached on the north to the sea at the harbour of Trogius and formed the farthest extremity of the town on the northern edge of the rocky plateau. On the west Tycha ended at the fortress of Epipolæ. Cicero speaks of a gymnasium (*amplissimum*) and of many temples existing there. At present, however, nothing is seen beyond some tombs cut horizontally in the soil and still retaining the marks where the tablets were affixed. We frequently find the tracks of chariot wheels interrupted by these excavations, a proof that the tombs are of very late origin.

The expedition from Neapolis along the Florida road to Epipolæ, the highest part of the city, which lies in a quite inland situation, is very fatiguing either on horseback or on foot. For we are obliged to climb laboriously onwards over a stony road. Epipolæ occupied the highest point of the lofty plateau, and ended with the hill of Euryalus, in the acute point of the triangle, while below lay a second hill, the Labdalon. These two, now



called the Belvedere and Mongibellisi, may still be recognised as the undoubted characteristics of this ancient fortress city.

The Labdalon was built by the Athenians under Nicias to dominate the city; they had established themselves in Epipolæ generally, until driven thence by the Syracusans under Gylippus, who then destroyed the walls along the entire height. And henceforward the Labdalon is never again mentioned as a fortress. In building his walls on the northern side of Epipolæ, which were 30 stades—almost a German mile—in length, Dionysius caused these ancient works to be pulled down. These walls were provided with many towers, and built of such huge blocks that it would have been impossible to take them by assault. Whether Dionysius also erected fortresses on the Labdalon and Euryalus is unknown; we do know, however, that that Hexapylon, through which the Romans entered the city, lay to the north of Epipolæ, and without a doubt the tower of Gallagra, which the Romans climbed during the festival of Diana, also stood in the same wall. What is now shown as the Labdalon, those immense blocks from 14 to 16 palms long, a substructure of towers, tombs, subterranean passages cut in the rock, convinced me that here must have stood a fortress, more carefully planned than the Athenians could have constructed for the purpose of the siege. According to the ancient Greek custom, the gigantic blocks are placed one upon another without any mortar, and in one place especially still form a highly imposing mass. Long galleries of from 9 to 10



feet high and 8 feet wide, hewn out of the living rock, may still be seen, and with their subterranean chambers form a second and very extensive fortress. The height of these passages gives rise to the supposition that the cavalry was stationed here. The subterranean fortress was probably united to the town and country by postern gates. Here also the absence of vaulted construction testifies to its Greek origin.

Looking down from the ruins of the Labdalon on the stony desert of Epipolæ, we see on all sides the huge stones of the walls of Dionysius, here those of the ruins of fortresses, here the abrupt precipice of the limestone cliffs. We find *latomix* here also ; those curious quarries in which Dionysius kept Philoxenus a prisoner, and where Philoxenus wrote his *Cyclopes*. From here various cities procured their building materials, a great part of the modern fortifications having been constructed from the ruins of the Dionysian wall, and the real destroyer of ancient Syracuse was Charles III. of Naples. When we survey the interminable masses of stone, our surprise is aroused by the quantity of beautiful material. This wealth of stone which is so easily worked with the chisel, first made possible the spread of the city, as the similar adaptability of the Neapolitan stone facilitated the growth of Naples and its suburbs.

A rough road leads on to Euryalus, the end of the rocky plain of Syracuse. The melodious name sounds pleasant and distinguished in this solitude. A wretched hamlet has sprung up at the foot of the limestone rock ; above stands the telegraph

station. The only ruins in sight are those of a cistern and an ancient wall of doubtful origin. That a fortress stood here is seen by the position of the hill, which commands the entire territory of the city. It is uncertain whether Dionysius built the fortress of Euryalus, which is not mentioned at the time of the siege by the Athenians. On the other hand it was of great importance at the time when Marcellus attacked Syracuse. After Tycha and Neapolis had fallen into his power, Euryalus, which Livy calls a hill and fortress, threatened his position from behind. He himself was, as it were, shut up within the walls of those quarters, and when Hippocrates and Himilco approached from the landward side to throw themselves into Euryalus, he ran the danger of finding himself enclosed between it and Achradina. All hope of relief having vanished, Philodemus at length surrendered the impregnable fortress.

The hill is now justly called Belvedere, since its summit commands the most glorious of panoramas. In front the horizon is formed by the line of the Ionian Sea ; behind rises " the heavenly column " of Etna ; magnificent chains of mountains stretch towards the interior of the island, while to the east is seen the coast with its bays and promontories, to where far beyond Agosta, Catania is lost in mist. Below the glance ranges over the plain of Syracuse, sinking down miles away to Ortygia. When we conceive this territory covered by ancient Syracuse and in addition the gulf surrounded by villas and hamlets, the sight of so vast a city, rising landwards in terraces, a town in stories or steps, the

view transcends our imagination, and the statement that Syracuse in its prime numbered one and a half million inhabitants seems no exaggeration.

At present this plain is like a Syrian desert stretching as far as the island, which is of very insignificant aspect. Only southwards from the rocky edge of Neapolis is seen a green depression, and the eye can follow the course of the Cyane and the Anapus.

## V

## THE ANAPUS AND THE OLYMPION

From Neapolis the road to Helorus leads through the marsh of Lysimelia and Syraca and to a bridge over the Anapus, on the other side of which rises the hill of Polychne. On it stood the Temple of the Olympian Zeus and a place called Olympicon. Not only the Athenians but repeatedly the Carthaginians encamped here, and each time pestilence, arising from the marsh, devastated the army. The few shattered columns of the Olympion that remain standing are seen for miles around; they and that at the Fonte degli Ingegneri are the only columns that meet the eye erect in the territory of ancient Syracuse.

In order to reach the Anapus, we must take a boat from the island and be rowed across the great harbour to the marshy river, which flows under a bridge into the sea. The farther we go, the narrower grows the stream, until at length the boat entirely fills it. The oars are laid aside, and boatmen

push it along with poles, or tow it onwards with a rope. The stream is overgrown with reeds twenty feet in height, and these, almost as thick as a man's arm, are wreathed with climbing and flowering plants hanging in festoons in every direction. The mystic scent of the wilderness and the water make as sharp an impression on the senses as the sultry, motionless atmosphere. So surprising is the wealth of vegetation, that we are tempted to believe that we have been transported to some river landscape in the tropics. Unknown aquatic birds of varied plumage fly around us, or skim the water like swallows. After the Helorine road is passed the Anapus divides, or rather the classic Cyane, which has its rise in the circular basin of La Pisma, flows into it. According to legend the nymph Cyane here encountered Pluto, as he was carrying Proserpine off to the nether world, and was changed into the azure fountain. The Syracusans yearly celebrated the memory of Proserpine by sacrifices, when a bull and a cow were thrown into the fountain. It is truly a wondrous spot, where surrounded by the whispering reeds on the waters, we can imagine ourselves in the realm of myth. How all those reliefs on ancient sarcophagi that depict the rape of Proserpine seem to come to life; how these creations of Greek imagination float before the eyes like arabesques! And how has not Ceres adorned the fountain as compensation for the tears she shed for Proserpine. Along its shores grow the stems of the Papyrus! which since it has disappeared from the banks of the Orethos at Palermo, is found growing wild in no other place

in Europe. I was entirely beside myself with joy when I saw the first wild papyrus stems shooting up from the blue water—lost children of the Nile. The beautiful reeds rise from the water with a gentle bend, about fifteen feet high, triangular, smooth, of a dark glossy green, bearing on their crests a rich crown of countless green filaments, that hang like flowing hair. The people aptly call this tuft *La Perrucca*. The graceful form of the plant, the true paper nymph of learning, delights the book-worm coming from the Cimmerian darkness of the North; these stems clustered together in a thicket and growing in picturesque confusion, great and small, old loftily towering and tender youthful plants, in and out, all with their crown of tufts dreamily bending and reflected in the Cyane, present an entirely fantastic aspect. As under the spell of the enchanter everything Greek has vanished, and suddenly we stand on the banks of the mysterious Nile, in sight of pyramids, beside mummies and sphinxes and strangely inscribed rolls of papyrus. On the banks of the Syracusan Cyane this plant seemed itself like a myth, like that for example which asserts that the origin of all civilisation and literature has come to us from the fabled land of Egypt. I looked now on these papyrus plants, now on those Doric columns of the Olympian Zeus, and they both seemed to me emblems of the union of the culture of West and East.

Landolina and Politi have attempted to manufacture paper from the papyrus of Syracuse, and have succeeded so well that the papyrus sheets of Sicily can only be distinguished from those of



Egypt by their fresher colour. The tender fibres of the stalk are employed for the purpose, are cut into the thinnest slices, then stuck together and pressed.

I left the boat in order to ascend the neighbouring hill of Polychne. The two remaining columns of the Olympion are fluted and retain their bases, but lack their capitals. The temple existed before the battle of Himera, but its size was inconsiderable, the diameter of the columns only amounting to six palms. Gelo presented the figure of Zeus with a gold mantle; Dionysius took it from the shoulders of the god, saying as a free-thinker that "the gold mantle was too heavy in summer and too cold in winter." Verres afterwards stole the celebrated statue itself. A register of the names of all the citizens of Syracuse was kept in the Olympion; this register fell into the hands of the Athenians when they took possession of the temple. The view of Syracuse is also beautiful from this hill. At its feet lies the meadow through which flows the Cyane, the legendary grave consecrated to Hades of so many thousands of Athenians and Carthaginians. There is no spot so idyllic nor at the same time so melancholy in Syracuse. After having traversed the desolate rocky waste of Achradina as far as Epipolæ, wearied by the sight of the stony field of death, we are glad to seat ourselves on the ruins of the Olympion and refresh our eyes on the green carpet of the Anapus and the serpentine Cyane.

A shower drove me away, and when rowing down the Anapus forced me to take shelter under the Helorine bridge. I remained there a long time,

as in a vaulted tomb, like a soul on the Styx, indifferent to life, or rather thoroughly chilled by the damp. There is, however, as Cicero says, no day when the sun does not shine at Syracuse; in the course of half an hour it came forth and I beheld Iris, the heavenly messenger, wander across the sea and draw her radiant bow over Ortygia, so that the whole island seemed encompassed in her seven-coloured halo.

It was a beautiful farewell to Syracuse; the following morning I was to leave, Heaven knows with what reluctance!

Before my departure I had to go once again to the theatre, to take a last look at Syracuse. And now: Farewell Arethusa! "Adieu, ye streams, pouring the delicious waters from the Thymbris!"



SEGESTA, SELINUS AND MOUNT  
ERYX, 1886





## SEGESTA, SELINUS AND MOUNT ERYX IN 1886

THE object of my stay at Palermo in the spring of 1886 was to make some researches in the State Archives of Sicily, which (in passing be it said) have been installed in the ancient monastic buildings of the beautiful Church of S. Maria della Catena and placed under the direction of the Commendatore Giuseppe Silvestri. Any idea of further travel in the country lay far from my thoughts ; but Opportunity, the seductive goddess, knocked at my door and induced me to bid farewell for a few days to the archives.

The Prince of Scalea was so kind as to invite me to take part in an official journey to Segesta, Selinus and Trapani. The Prince, a native of Palermo, the second son of the ducal house of Trabia, is Royal Commissioner for the antiquities of Sicily. He consequently fills an office of the greatest importance for the preservation of the national antiquarian treasures of his native country, and thus continues the honourable traditions of Serra di Falco, of his own family, as of the Sicilian nobility in general, who, more especially since the eighteenth century, have been distinguished by their patriotic encouragement of art and learning.

The Prince had just returned with other delegates of the Government from Syracuse, where the ceremony of opening the lately organised National Museum had taken place. This collection, celebrated owing to its Venus, now belongs to the State, and Saverio Cavallari, the well-known topographer of ancient Syracuse, one of the most meritorious antiquaries of whom Sicily can boast, has been appointed its Director.

Some of the other gentlemen who came from Syracuse to Palermo were members of a Commission charged by the Italian Ministry to inspect the arts and crafts schools of Calabria and Sicily. They informed themselves at the same time of the progress of important excavations. The friendly invitation given me to join one of their excursions promised as much social enjoyment as intellectual gain. For amongst these men were recognised authorities of the first rank in knowledge of the country and its antiquities. For who besides Scalea is more thoroughly versed in the subject than Antonino Salinas, author of *Le Monete delle antiche città di Sicilia*, the present Prefect of the Palermo National Museum? Or who has more profoundly studied the mediæval buildings of the island in particular than the architect Patricolo, the restorer of the Martorana? These three gentlemen of Palermo were now joined by the Roman antiquary Barnabei, whom I had known for years, and by the engineer Bongiovanelli, both of whom hold posts under Fiorelli in the Ministry of Education in Rome; lastly, two renowned architects of North Italy, Camillo Boito of Milan

and Alfredo d'Andrade of Genoa. Boito is also famous as a gifted writer on art, more especially as the author of *Architettura del Medio evo in Italia* (1880) and *Gite di un artista* (1884). In this account of an artist's travels he has described with no less vivacity than insight the impressions made on him by the art treasures and monuments of German towns, particularly those of Munich.

Any visitor to the last Turin Exhibition will remember the remarkable castle, in the style of the Piedmontese Middle Ages, which was erected there and which excited universal attention. This was the work of Signor d'Andrade, a Portuguese from Lisbon, now long naturalised as an Italian. The castle was bought by the Municipality of Turin, and the artist presented with the Freedom of the City. From the society of so many learned men—seven in all—much profit might indeed be mine.

At 5 a.m. on April 19 at the Palermo-Lolli Station we entered the saloon carriage which the authorities of the West Sicilian Railways had placed at the disposal of my companions. The western part of the island, the land rich in wine and oil of the Elymi in antiquity, the Valle di Mazzara in the Middle Ages, has now railways connecting it with Palermo. They describe its circumference in an elongated square, on the seaward side of which stand the two headlands of Drepanum and Lilybæum and the seaports of Trapani, Marsala and Mazzara. Landwards the line touches the inland towns of Calatafimi, Salemi and Castelvetro.

The railway follows the southern slopes of Monte Pellegrino, then runs along the beautiful Cape of

San Gallo, through a desolate tract of mountains, until it again approaches the sea, where the Isola delle Femmine (*Isle of Women*), guarded by a watch-tower, comes in sight and the Gulf of Castellamare opens out. Here along the shore lie the fields of Partinico and Sala, of Carini and the ancient Hyccara, the native city of the beautiful courtesan Lais, a glorious landscape, covered for miles with lemon and orange gardens.

Here and there, runs alongside the railway the white carriage road that leads to Palermo, and on this I continually gazed with that half-melancholy, half-joyous feeling that the sight of a road traversed long years before calls forth. I beheld myself once more, riding a stubborn mule ; beside me, an equally bad rider, a young compatriot from Saxony. This was Conrad Bursian, who afterwards acquired an honoured name as an authority on the geography of Greece, as philologist and antiquary. Three-and-thirty years have passed since we travelled together in Sicily, and meanwhile, what no mortal could then foresee, astounding revolutions of peoples and states in Sicily and in Italy, in Germany and throughout half the world have taken place, while the whole culture of the human race has entered on a new, and we may almost say marvellous, development. My excellent travelling-companion has, alas ! already descended to join the shades of his beloved Homer on the great meadows of asphodel. But I still journey on, and a happy accident has led me back to the same track, though no longer as then on a mule in wearisome Xenophon-like marches, but reclined in a railway carriage, fitted with every

modern comfort, and in the society of intellectual and distinguished men. Which of the two situations is to be pronounced the better and more enviable in my case? Be that as it may, I must say to-day with the ancients: “*Χρόνος σωτήρ ἄριστος.*”

In my book *Siciliana* I described my ride of September 1853 through the enchanting country to Alcamo, Segesta, Selinus and Agrigentum. I shall not therefore repeat myself in these pages, but shall merely amplify by a few strokes, tints and observation from the life of the present those impressions of the past.

All too quickly does the train rush through these gardens of the Hesperides, for which it is not adapted, and I have to say to myself repeatedly, that the furious haste with which we are now carried across the earth threatens to blunt the senses of the traveller. Spontaneity of mind ceases; in place of experience acquired, we receive merely passive and fleeting visions of transient and disconnected phenomena.

Signor Salinas showed me Canisi, a little village with white flat-roofed houses in a beautiful valley, where he told me that Giovanni Meli, the renowned Sicilian poet, had lived as doctor and where he had written his idylls! A doctor in the Garden of Eden! Presumably he was not much occupied with prescriptions. A few doses of quinine, and a few bleedings to cool the hot Sicilian blood; such was sufficient in his day, and Meli had abundant leisure to become the modern Theocritus of Sicily. But neither pills nor poetry brought him wealth. He remained poor as Anacreon's grasshopper, of which



he too sang so well, but not so devoid of wants as it, since in numerous sonnets he laments his scanty share of this world's goods.

Spring was now in its full splendour and displayed a vegetation of entirely tropical wealth. Geraniums, camellias, marguerites here grow into thick and lofty shrubs. Where the hills are not green with vines, they are covered with purple-red clover. At Zucco I saw the first storehouses for wine, long low buildings, and later came across many of the kind. I perceived that Marsala does not take its name from the place where the wine is produced, but from the great central depots of the harbour town. The whole of Western Sicily produces this strong kind of wine. Dealers everywhere buy the grapes from the peasants, press them and store the wine in vats.

Formerly the Englishmen Woodhouse, Ingham and Whittaker, foreigners who came to settle here, were the sole monarchs of the wine trade; but now Florio of Palermo, the well-known shipowner, who has united his firm with that of the Rubattino Company, brandishes the thyrsus over Sicily. Even on the shore at Selinus, only a short distance from the venerable ruins of the Doric temples, I came across Florio's wine-stores. If this dynasty of the modern Dionysus is not drowned—and we will not wish it—like the Duke of Clarence in malmsey, as his shade bitterly bewailed (“wash'd to death with fulsome wine”), it will acquire the wealth of Cræsus. Were the farmer not oppressed by taxes, had not the great proprietor swallowed up the small, had not the baron or bishop or abbot

of former days given place to the insignificant, but speaking economically no less dangerous, figure of the speculator and *mercante di campagna*, the entire island—owing to its wine and oil—ought again to become, as it was in ancient times, the richest land in Europe.

The traveller who from the heights of Partinico surveys this magnificent agricultural country with its fields of corn and its vineyards, its fields of cotton and sumach, its gardens of oranges, figs and olives, imagines that he sees before him an Eldorado. But let no one be deluded by this succulent green, which veils the misery of the labouring class. The small peasant proprietor is once more swallowed up by the wealthy capitalist. Villari's *Lettere meridionali* are applicable even to-day.

Behind Ballestrate are again seen desolate tracts, covered with drifting sand through which it has been found necessary to protect the railway line by wooden fences. These continue almost to the town of Castellamare, the ancient emporium of the Segestans, whose line of white houses stretches along the beautiful gulf. The river Freddo, the ancient Cremisos, here falls into the sea. The railway line proceeds along it upwards into the hilly corn-growing country to Alcamo, the native town of Ciullo, one of the earliest poets in the Sicilian vernacular.

At the station, which is that also for Calatafimi, we found carriages waiting, and at once drove across the mountains to this loftily situated spot, thence to visit the Temple of Segesta. I recollected the impression of endless desolation and solitude which

this mountain district had made when I rode with Bursian from Alcamo to the temple in 1853. Now also I was again struck by the same character of impressive wildness, of utter solitude and Doric sternness; only that spring clothed nature in the beauty of flowers and verdure, while vineyards spreading up the mountain slopes showed that agriculture has made progress even here. The well-kept carriage road to Calatafimi is enclosed for the most part between hedges of aloes, which plants, native to America, seem to flourish here to an exceptional degree.

Since events in the world are linked to one another by invisible chains of cause and effect, I venture to assert that the entire present agricultural progress of Sicily stands in causal nexus to a single battle; and this battle was fought on May 15, 1860, amid the mountains of Calatafimi. On May 11, Garibaldi had landed with the Thousand at Marsala, and reinforced by the Sicilian contingent, had pushed on into the interior, to gain the road from Salemi to Palermo. Near Vita, below Calatafimi, his way was barred by the Bourbon army, threefold more numerous than his own. He dispersed it, and by May 26 stood before Palermo. This glorious combat decided in the first place the deliverance of Sicily, then the union of Italy as a national monarchy.

The latest hero of this island had an ancient predecessor on the same stage or in its immediate neighbourhood. This was the Corinthian Timoleon, who by his victory on the Cremisos 342 B.C. freed Sicily from the yoke of the Carthaginians. The

Carthaginians left the island, as the Bourbons were obliged to leave it, in consequence of their defeat. By Garibaldi's march from Marsala to Palermo was added another brilliant episode to the heroic memories of classic, Saracenic and Norman times in Sicily, this land of heroic adventures. It even surpassed in audacity all preceding enterprises of conquering warriors in this district, and is the more surprising from the fact that this singular achievement, which resembles an adventure of chivalrous romance, was accomplished in recent times, in an age of political constitutions, of scientifically ordered military and police systems, of peaceful citizenship, of steam and machinery.

Compared to the gigantic struggles which later convulsed the world, the courageous fight of the Thousand was merely a petty affray of volunteers; it nevertheless sufficed to produce immense consequences. For hence issued threads which were woven into the entire world fabric, that was spun in Italy, France and Germany from 1860 until 1870, so that from the defeat of the Bourbon general a far-seeing philosopher might have predicted, if not the fall of Napoleon, that at all events of the Pope. We, for we have all the data to hand, do that now *post festum et bellum*. Events, however, might have turned out quite otherwise. For what would have happened, had General Landi, on May 15, 1860, massacred these volunteers and shot their leader simply as a brigand chief in the fortress of Calatafimi? It is good that this did not happen. Does not the course of the world's history hang, however, on the smallest accident? And does not

the fate of entire generations and peoples lie in the barrels of wretched guns ?

Calatafimi stands on a considerable height, so that its mass of grey houses and its fortress may be seen from afar. Even the provincial towns of Sicily show a marked improvement from the ædile's point of view ; the pavement of the streets is now better, and more attention is paid to the "*nettezza pubblica.*" True that places in the interior are not always kept as clean as in the neighbourhood of Palermo, where the cleanliness of Monreale particularly impressed me.

A priest, the well-informed *Genius loci*, was our guide in this lonely spot. We viewed a few churches, some antiquities and inscriptions, then got into our carriages outside the gate in the ancient walls of the town, to drive to Segesta. Some distance on we found horses awaiting us in the valley, on which we proceeded along a road impossible to carriages.

Seen over a hill amid grey mountains with reddish cliffs, the lonely temple in the distance looks like some strange form from an unknown world of the gods. The grim amphitheatre sinks towards Calatafimi into open meadowlike ground, traversed by the river Pispisa. In the absence of any bridge we rode through the stream, swollen by the rains of spring. Neither is there any carriage road here, ancient Segesta not having given place to any modern town. Here, not taking into account the cornfields which have been cultivated by wealthy owners from Trapani, nothing has changed for thirty years.

A few minutes' distance from the temple stands



under Monte Barbaro a farm and the house of the curator, which also serves as shelter for studious bookworms. Practical arrangements of this kind may be found throughout Italy wherever any excavations of importance exist. Since Ficrelli has been Director of Antiquities and of Fine Arts, the Italian Government has tried to unify and systematise this department, that also of the administration of the national property, and to equalise the various laws which it has taken over from the administration of the former Italian States. The reader anxious for further information on the subject may turn to Fiorelli's report, *Sull' ordinamento del servizio archeologico*, of 1883 and 1885. The uniformity of the system is outwardly evident in the mere fact that the curators wear everywhere the same clothing.

The Temple of Segesta is the best preserved, but not the most beautiful of the old Doric buildings of Sicily. Its architectural effect is considerably increased by its situation and surroundings. As if preserved by some miracle, it stands, a deserted and nameless work of art, in contrast to, but not at variance with, the surrounding wildness of nature; for its calm, simple outlines are in as complete harmony with the majestic mountains that encompass it, as are the yellow tints of its stone. It stands on an artificially levelled height, which declines westwards to a deep ravine, intersected by a noisy brook.

It is unfinished and has no *cella*; the two pediments have remained without ornament; the columns pieced together from drums are not fluted.

Since the stylobate remains defective, the highest step of the temple being unfinished, the Doric columns seem to rest on square bases. Acquainted, as I was, with the temples of Athens, that of Segesta looked to me now somewhat heavy and squat ; the columns clumsy and very close together ; and this impression would be still stronger if the interior were completed. As the temple stands, it consists only of a hall resting on four steps, resembling a Belvedere for the sublime landscape. In this Doric construction also Saverio Cavallari has confirmed optical effect of the slight curve of all the horizontal lines, which the architects Pennethorn and Schaubert first discovered in the Parthenon at Athens in 1837.

We rode up to the ruins of the town by the rough paths of Monte Barbaro, across desolate heaths, covered with palmetto, borax, asphodel and yellow fennel. Of ancient Segesta and its acropolis nothing beyond the theatre is seen above-ground, if we except some remains of the double line of walls with their entrances and the foundations of their towers ; streets with their rock pavements may also be detected. The excavation of the theatre first undertaken by Serra di Falco, then by Hittorf and Zanth, and lastly by Cavallari, has produced no results worth mentioning. The beautiful building, whose six rows of seats, with the walls of support, are still preserved with that of Taormina, affords, as is well known, the clearest representation of the arrangement of the ancient Greek theatre. Since the spectators sat high on the north-west slope of the mountain, the most magnificent

natural scenery lay spread before their eyes. Northwards, enclosed by the blue line of coast, lay the glittering sea ; on the west rose the summit of Eryx ; below stretched smiling valleys embedded between savage mountains.

As leaving Segesta, we again crossed the river, Signor d'Andrade, who rode beside me, turned and said, " Do you know that you have rendered the Genoese a good service ? If the Palace of the Bank of S. George still stands erect, you have contributed to the result."

" Oh ! How is that possible ? "

" Well, exactly ten years ago did you not respond to an invitation addressed to you by the Genoese Commission for the Preservation of the Monuments and exert yourself to save this threatened palace ? "

" Undoubtedly, I went with Monteverde to Depretis, the Prime Minister ; we laid the matter urgently before him, and it is to that distinguished sculptor that his native city owes the preservation of the Palazzo delle Compere."

" We published your letter to us at the time and it made an impression ; consequently, you yourself rendered a service to the palace."

" Well, then, the saying is true, that any, even the most insignificant instrument, a nail, a stone that one casually picks up from the ground, may occasionally be of use."

I now called to mind that I had already a link with my amiable companion, remembered that the invitation of the Commission had been signed among others by Signor d'Andrade. In recounting

this conversation with him, I do it for the following reason. Shortly before my arrival at Palermo I had addressed an open letter to the President of the Academy of S. Luke, concerning the ruthless transformation of Rome in the rebuilding of the city. I had never imagined it possible to stem a stream by a blade of straw; but grief for the destruction of the Villa Ludovisi and the Convent of Aracœli, and my former enthusiasm for Rome, had called forth the letter, which signified little else than a pardonable lament over so much that was beautiful in Rome that now fell a sacrifice to the all-transforming time. And just at this moment, during my absence in Sicily, this letter provoked a violent outburst in many of the Roman papers, an outburst not raised by the Romans, who have always shown themselves kindly and well disposed towards me, but by others whom I shall not further designate. Hence d'Andrade's words, and the recollections they awoke, were doubly welcome just now.

Scarcely had we crossed the river, when the surprising sight of a festal procession in this uninhabited country met our eyes. A long file of horsemen, also of high-wheeled carriages, filled, as it appeared, with merry people, moved along the road to Calatafimi. Any archæologist, sunk in dreamlike recollections of antiquity, might have imagined that this was a procession of men escorting an athlete or charioteer crowned with the olive wreath from the public games. The hero of this ceremony, however, was no subject for an ode of Pindar's, but as was explained to my sur-

prise, a man who had been tried as a criminal, had received his acquittal, and who was being escorted home from his trial by his fellow-citizens. The escort of rejoicing friends had already passed, before I could approach near enough to judge from the face of the fortunate man, whether the procession had been one of triumph for justice or the reverse, and whether also after the decision of the judge, incorruptible Nemesis would have any score to settle with the man.

There are examples enough of the intimidation of jurors, more especially during the period of the violent struggle of legal authority with the Sicilian Maffia. The Government has been occasionally obliged to bring men, accused of serious crimes, to be tried before tribunals on the mainland. When a few weeks later I took ship in the harbour of Palermo for Naples, I saw men in handcuffs brought on board the steamer, and among them some with such savage and brutal countenances that I could only gaze on them with horror. If the condition of Sicily has in general greatly improved, and if the country has been cleared of brigands of the road, nevertheless the Hydra of the Maffia has been by no means stifled. It still survives as the client system which tyrannises over social relations, and the sense of law has not yet penetrated the consciousness of the people. The judge lacks the respect which is the outcome of incorruptibility, and the law that halo of fear and reverence which ought to encompass its sacred power. In this respect church, school and society have still much to do in Southern lands.



At four in the afternoon we again took the railway at the station of Alcamo-Calatafimi, and passing by Gibellina and Santa Ninfa, proceeded to Castelvetro. Gibellina more probably derives its name from the Arabic *Gebel* than from the faction of the Ghibellines. Here the country already slopes down towards the sea; it is bare and devoid of trees, devoid also of vines and olives, but green with standing corn. Instead of the succession of prosperous villages that the traveller expects to find, only scattered farmhouses are seen, signs that the peasant proprietors have long since been degraded into *Coloni* of the *Latifundia*.

After little more than an hour we reached Castelvetro. Again I recalled the time, when thirty-three years before I had arrived here with Bursian, so tired after the long ride that I could not dismount from the mule without help. We had then only remained the night at Castelvetro, and early the next morning had gone on to Selinus and Sciacca.

Two smart carriages with servants in livery were at the station, and several gentlemen, among them the Syndic of the town, Baron Saporito, received the company with considerate courtesy. Before going to the Hotel Bixio, they invited us to visit the Civic Museum. This little collection, formed of antiquities which have accidentally been found within the communal district, is exhibited in the upper rooms of the ruinous Dominican Convent; figures of clay and bronze, fragments of sculpture, vases large and small, and so forth. Some painted Greek vessels attracted our attention; on the white

ground of one was depicted the figure of a woman seated and weaving a wreath ; the form, drawn in black, is of the most beautiful classic simplicity. Another *lekythos* is decorated with the representation of a woman engaged on her toilet. Among the bronzes we found an archaic figure three-quarters the size of life, apparently representing Apollo.

People censure the establishment of small civic museums, because the treasures of art are thus removed from the hands of the State and are divided. Such collections, however, are always ornaments of the municipalities, the intellectual importance of which they increase. In the age of railways, moreover, the inconvenience of visiting such collections on the original spot is minimised ; and the traveller interested in art can now go without difficulty from Naples to Ruvo, to see the celebrated Jatta collection of vases, as he can go from Palermo to Syracuse, Noto and Castelvetro.

In the same Dominican Convent elementary schools have also been established, and even a "*Ginnasio*" (upper school) with five professors, and this is indeed more praiseworthy and important than a museum of pictures or antiquities ; for that which is above all necessary in this island, so long steeped in the darkness of ignorance and superstition, is the enlightenment of the people by education. I looked with special interest at the Library, arranged in three neat rooms, and there found to my surprise some valuable early *incunabula*, for instance a Bible printed by Gallus in Vienna, and a Latin Josephus from the celebrated press of Pannartz in Rome *in domo Maximorum*.

In spite of the gathering darkness, we still had time to visit the imposing Cathedral of S. Giovanni Battista, and by the light of candles, behind the High Altar admired even from a mere sense of duty, the, as a matter of fact, excellent marble figure of the Baptist, a work of Antonio Gagini. This, the most celebrated of the Renaissance sculptors of Sicily, was born at Palermo in 1480. He and his talented sons adorned the churches of this and other towns of their native country with many statues, reliefs and other sculptural works.

As we spent two nights at Castelvetro, I had ample time to see this spacious town. Its open situation on a long stretch of rising ground, rich in gardens, above the extensive lowland extending towards the sea, reminds the traveller closely of Velletri. True that here there is not the interesting landscape, formed in Latium by the beautiful Volscian Mountains, the Pontine Marshes and the Circean Cape. Castelvetro, however, is a much more considerable place; a town of 30,000 inhabitants, prosperous by reason of its agriculture and wine, with wide straight streets, many imposing palaces and ancient churches of the Norman period. In former times the Duke of Monteleone was ruler of the place. To his once powerful family the huge baronial palace still belongs. A glance at the now ruinous castle with its crenelated walls and lofty tower, and at the coat of arms, effaced in some tumult, over the doorway, shows that even in Sicily the feudal period is happily a thing of the past. The Monteleone-Pignatelli from having been great feudal lords have become landed

proprietors. Other favourites of fortune, of speculation and work, have arisen beside them, such as the brothers Saporito, who own extensive estates in the neighbourhood of Castelvetro.

On April 20, at 6 a.m., we started for Selinus and accomplished the distance by carriage in one and a half hours. The construction of a railway to the ruins of the temples is proposed. The road we took leads to Sciacca, which is seen standing eastwards on a hill of moderate height. The road leads at first through country, rich in vineyards and olive groves, past country houses, then to a desolate tract of coast, to which we turned to the right. The vast ruins of Selinus rose before us and above the strand in two separate groups; they seemed the remains, heaped indiscriminately together, of the entire town, nevertheless are merely the ruins of seven of its Doric temples.

Nothing else remains of that ancient Selinus, which bore such a fateful part in the fortunes of Sicily and Greece. The historic life of this city, whose inhabitants were sufficiently wealthy and artistic to build to the gods these gigantic temples, which seemed destined to endure for ever, is to us as entirely obscure and impersonal as that of its enemy Segesta. Both cities fell victims to internal dissension, to narrow-minded jealousy, and to the lack of feeling for the higher good of their common fatherland. The conception of the fatherland was indeed absent in these Greek colonies, each of which formed a state of itself.

The bitter war, which arose concerning disputes about their boundaries, between Segesta and Seli-

nus, and in which Syracuse was also implicated, resulted in the Segestans invoking the aid of the Athenians. The Athenians were defeated in the terrible disaster of Nicias before Syracuse. Segesta then unfortunately summoned the Carthaginians, and Hannibal, son of Giscon, the grandson and avenger of Hamilcar, who had been defeated at Himera, conquered and, after only a nine days' siege, destroyed Selinus in 409 B.C.

This city, founded in 628 B.C., a colony of the Doric Megara-Hyblæ, wealthy by its trade and agriculture, probably reached its greatest prosperity within the short space comprised between the years 480 and 409, from the time of the great victory of the Greeks over the Carthaginians at Himera until the fatal return of this Punic people. Within this period not only the most ancient but also the most beautiful of the Doric temples were built, the remains of which now form the incomparable picture of a ruined Greek city, standing in deathlike silence and desertion by the sea. In the course of time even the very name of Selinus so utterly died away that it was only rediscovered by the Sicilian historian Fazello in the sixteenth century.

The first excavations were made in 1822 by two Englishmen, Samuel Angell and William Harris; then in 1824 Hittorf and his pupil Zanth instituted their epoch-making researches amid the ruins, but without making excavations. Excavations, however, were continued in 1831 by the Duke of Serra di Falco and the Prince of Trabia under Cavallari, a young architect. The result was published by Serra



di Falco in the second volume of his work on the antiquities of Sicily. Cavallari continued the excavations from 1865 until 1872, and they are now prosecuted with fresh zeal under Scalea's guidance. To me it was an immense advantage to be a witness of their progress.

The plan of the city of Selinus, which Cavallari and Schubring topographically established in 1865, falls into two districts, each of which comprises a high stretch of land extending from the north to the coast at the south. These are separated by the Vallara, a long valley, a thousand paces wide. Eastwards, on some lower ridges, stand the immense ruins of the temples. The terrace on the west approaches closer and more steeply to the sea, and above the shore displays the ruins of the Acropolis. It is interrupted at the north wall of these ruins by a trench-like cutting in the ground, above which it is continued northwards as a high-lying tract covered with brushwood and shifting sand. Here stood the greater part of the city itself. From this hill the traveller descends westwards to the marshy plain, through which the river Selinus or Madiuni falls into the sea. This river is said to have given its name to the town. The Selinon (wild celery or smallage) is found in quantities here. The graceful, finely modelled leaf of the plant must have attracted the attention of the artists of antiquity, since it became the ordinary emblem of the silver drachma of Selinus. On the obverse is seen the celery leaf behind the horned river-god Selinos or behind Hypsas, beside the image of a bull, or that of some striding bird of the marsh, or a team of four horses.

When I visited Selinus in 1853, the remains of the temple on the eastern hill had been made accessible by Serra di Falco's excavations; but as these had not been continued further, the ruins still presented the spectacle of beautiful desolation in the natural wilderness. Myrtles, mastic and fan-palms rose everywhere between the huge blocks of stone, and the steps of the clambering visitor roused the variously spotted snakes. To-day the excavator, at war with the savagery of nature, is again victorious, and as almost everywhere in the classic ruins which learning has recovered, the poetry of these ruins has been utterly destroyed. Instead of vegetation clothing the blocks of stone of the overthrown temples,—for whose tragic destruction Nature herself seemed to atone, burying the ruined splendour under flowers,—the artistic or poetic feeling of travellers sees with sorrow only bare, carefully cleansed architraves, metopes, triglyphs, pieces of columns arranged in groups on the bare ground, and it only requires numbers or labels on the blocks to persuade him that he has before him the contents of a well-arranged archæological museum.

The gain to learning is occasionally a loss to imagination; for poetry and art derive their inner life from the mysterious. Naked reality shocks them as the tyranny of fact, and Homer would never have written the Iliad had an archæologist or an anthropologist shown him the mummies of Agamemnon and Achilles, and demonstrated that each of these heroes had indeed been over six feet in height, but that the formation of their skulls

presupposed a very small amount of brain, and that the Trojan War was thus explained. For given more brain, these kings would not have warred against Troy for ten long years on account of a dissolute princess, who had run away. So contradictory is our attitude to the things of the world. When Fiorelli and Schliemann find cause for rejoicing, spirits such as Lord Byron and Claude Lorraine perhaps mourn.

I admit the first impression on seeing Selinus again gave me no pleasure. These majestic ruins, older and more important than those of Baalbek, seemed to me not only robbed of their consecration, but diminished and shrunk into heaps of rubbish piled together. Nevertheless, after I had solaced myself with the reflection of having known this wondrous world of ruins while it still remained to a great extent in the neglected condition in which it had stood for centuries, I was obliged to confess myself satisfied to see it now subjected to the servants of a science which can at least trace the development of art before our eyes, and if imbued by the mind of a Winckelmann, is capable of disclosing realms of celestial beauty.

Excavations amid ruins are first made by seekers for treasure; and it was only after the systematised plunder of those who sought for valuable metals and stones—a search such as is never accomplished without a wanton destruction of the ruins—that the scientific inquiry of the Renaissance took place. It ceased during the intellectual barbarism of the seventeenth century, and after it had been resumed in the following century it

received—owing principally to the liberation of Greece—fresh impulse in the nineteenth and passed through several phases of fluctuation and caprice in the treatment of the excavations, until, with the aid of historic criticism, it reached its present method. The aim of excavation is now simply to make ruined monuments accessible to learning. Nothing of them ought to be changed or rebuilt, unless where portions of architecture require a support for their preservation. When, consequently, the Commission of Excavation has finished its task, then does the work of the scientific inquirer begin.

At Selinus it was not easy to free such huge masses of ruins from the vegetation, the dust and shifting sand in such a manner that the blocks that had fallen one upon the other were not moved. In order to prevent this, the holes that were made in the process of digging were filled up with supporting stones, and care was taken to perpetuate as it were the historic moment of the fall. If the effort was not invariably successful, the visitor to the ruins may at any rate behold the remains of the temples in the same corners and on the same lines of direction on which they fell.

The eastern terrace lies at such a distance from the Acropolis that it may be regarded as a specially sacred precinct of the city, and here stands the grandest mass of ruins, not of Selinus alone, but of Greek antiquity. Excavations have not added anything to its three temples, no remains of any other buildings having been discovered. Since all the temples of Selinus remained nameless until



the year 1865, they have been marked with the letters of the alphabet in the topographical plan. The foremost temple (G) is the largest of all, standing with regard to size next to the Temple of Zeus at Girgenti. Unfortunately the earthquake did not overthrow it all in one direction, but in the most utter and bewildering confusion. From out this chaos of huge architraves and capitals and drums of columns, four metres in diameter, only one of the antæ-columns and a single headless pillar rise towerlike. Since only two columns have been found with flutings, it follows that this temple was not finished. In 1871 Cavallari found here an ancient Doric votive inscription, which Holm was the first to decipher. It proves that the temple was dedicated to Apollo, who was consequently the tutelary deity of Selinus. Hittorf calls the temple the most perfect religious monument of Greek antiquity, and Benndorf the Parthenon of Selinus. Like the Parthenon it had seventeen columns at the side and eight at the front.

The second group of ruins has remained nameless ; the third (E) has been identified by an inscription, discovered in 1865, as the Temple of Hera. It still forms a strikingly picturesque group of ruins. For its mighty columns (it had thirty-eight) fell for the most part inwards, on to the wall of the *cella*, and the drums of one still lie in order of succession, just like those of the overthrown columns of the Olympieion at Athens. Three lofty stumps still stand erect. Between 1831 and 1833 Cavallari here excavated the five metope plinths, the figures on which show an already developed style ; those of



Zeus and Hera closely approach in classic beauty the sculptures of the Parthenon.

When these three buildings of ancient Doric art stood erect in a line above the sea, they must have presented a more solemn aspect than the three temples of Pæstum, which stood at a greater distance from one another. The tragic solemnity of their simple and strongly framed masses was relieved by polychrome painting. For not only the surfaces of the pediments, the ground of the metopes, the triglyphs and the cornices were painted in red or blue, black or green, but the capitals also and the hollow lines of the stucco-covered columns were brightly coloured.

We went over the eastern hill across the desolate plain covered with wild flowers and palm bushes to the sea. Virgil called Selinus "*palmosa*," the coast even in his time being covered with the same "*Chamærops humilis*." I never saw the plant in such amazing quantities. The strongly rooted dwarf palm spreads its beautiful stiff fans scarcely a foot from the ground, and like grass overgrows the land far and wide. Naturalists can scarcely say whether it is native to the soil, or has come over from Africa. I imagined that a breath of warm air, which lightly stirred this deep blue, wide and lifeless sea reached me from thence. A line drawn from this spot to the south-west touches the Cape of Mercury at the Gulf of Carthage. Selinus was the furthest Greek colony on the southern coast of Sicily, and the proximity of Carthage was the cause of her ruin.

The coast here is really devoid of a harbour ;

and from the lack of any large harbour the historic unimportance of Selinus is explained. The slight projection of the Acropolis forms a place of but scanty anchorage for trading vessels. We crossed red-coloured dunes to the sea, and found at the opening of the fever-stricken valley workmen occupied in excavating from the sand walls of yellow stone, which are believed to be the mole of the harbour. The excavations, however, had not proceeded far enough to allow us to form any correct opinion.

The hill of the Acropolis approaches close to the sea, and on its southern edge are some houses, also the roomy dwelling of the curator, fitted for the reception of students, and a mediæval watch-tower, which of old must have served rather as a signal station than as a defence against pirates. The entire stretch of high-lying ground only rises thirty metres above the sea. It is so extensive that besides the temples it must have embraced the ancient city itself. Its site now belongs almost entirely to the State, so that the Commission of Antiquities can here rule unhindered. Since 1875 their excavations have ranked not only among the most difficult, but among the most successful in Italy. Only a part of the western side remains to be uncovered.

An ancient road on the rocky ground leads right through the middle of the Acropolis; this is crossed by another road, so that from all sides the traveller has convenient access to the piles of ruins. Since this fortress terrace was not sufficiently strong by nature, it required massive walls, especially on the

landward side towards the north, its weakest point. The entire Acropolis was also surrounded by walls, which consist for the most part of oblong blocks of stone, and reveal various periods of construction. On the west side they have been laid entirely bare; on the east they are in great part still covered with rubbish and brushwood.

The main entrance, which corresponds to the line of the ancient street, stands at the north-east. Here excavations have just been made, and under the entrance a lower wall of squared stones, with apparently a postern gate, have been brought to light. The terrace of the Acropolis is broken at this spot by a cutting in the ground. It was here that, in 1872, Cavallari discovered the foundations of a building, describing a curve, which in spite of the smallness of its circumference and of the fact that it differs from the usual arrangement of a Greek theatre, he held to be a theatre. And as such it is designated in his topographical map. Later excavations, however, contradict this view. This perplexing building seemed to us a bulwark destined for the protection of the city gate, and corresponding to it at the side is an elevation of the ground, which has still to be excavated, and which apparently conceals the remains of a second flanking tower.

Four temples, less gigantic than those of the east hill, lie in ruins on the Acropolis. The smallest is believed by Hittorf to be a heroon of Empedocles, who had rendered good service to the fever-stricken city, in draining the marshes. Hittorf's studies of Selinus were called forth by these ruins. The

many painted fragments of architecture which he found here gave rise to his celebrated work on the polychrome architecture of the Greeks (Paris, 1851). Farther up, on the highest point of the Acropolis, stood its largest temple, which from its style must also be the oldest of Selinus (Temple C). Its columns have fallen inwards in a row and have overthrown the walls of the temple. In order that they might not fall deeper, they have been supported by stones, and thus a gigantic piece of the architrave lies lengthwards.

Amid these vast heaps of ruins Harris and Angell discovered the celebrated metopes, depicting Perseus and Medusa, Hercules with the captive Cercopes and a team of four horses ; the most ancient sculptures of Sicily, the style of which seems much earlier than that of the sculptures of Ægina, and betrays the influence of Assyria. All the metopes of Selinus are chiselled in the grey calcareous tufa of Menfrici ; it is only in a few that the nude limbs of the female figures have been inlaid in white marble. Such of these sculptures as have been found in three temples are exhibited in the National Museum at Palermo, of which they form the most important treasure in art history, as those of Ægina are the most valuable jewel of the Munich Glyptothek. They have been illustrated by Benndorf (*Die Metopen von Selinunt*, Berlin, 1873).

While this colossal temple still remained erect, Christians founded their chapels in its peristyle, and Christian tombs have even been discovered here. The bronze lamps, now preserved in the Museum at Palermo, belonging to the time of the flight of

the Donatists from Africa, were found amidst these ruins. On portions of the architrave Greek crosses may be seen engraved. A prehistoric stratum of civilisation lies buried moreover beneath that of the ancient Doric culture on the Acropolis: this was shown by an arrow belonging to the Stone Age, which Signor Salinas accidentally picked up from the ground.

The great northern terrace on the other side of the Acropolis displays no traces of temples or other buildings, so that no excavations have been made here. At its extreme end Schubring was the first to discover an ancient necropolis with graves hewn in the calcareous tufa, in which there were many painted vases of white clay. A second cemetery was found to the west of the river Madiuni.

No historian has informed us at what period these colossal temples were destroyed. They survived classic antiquity, probably also several centuries of Christianity. If, as has been shown, from ancient Selinus the more easily portable material has been purloined for the building of bridges and country houses, and has even been taken to larger places, of which Castelvetro is the nearest, the gigantic columns could neither be carried away nor turned to any suitable purpose. The churches in Castelvetro, I was told, do not contain any ancient column. It was only the frightful force of nature in an earthquake that destroyed the temples and deprived after ages of the sight of the most majestic monuments that the Doric national spirit had been able to create, and which even now in their remains fill us with reverence



and astonishment. The city which erected these costly monuments numbered scarcely twenty thousand free citizens. Our capitals number millions ; but what dressed-up, mortal and yet pretentious things are on the whole their latest churches, palaces, opera-houses, town halls, museums, compared to these temples of Selinus ! At least I may here say with Boito : “ The only classic art is that of the Greeks ; it always remains beautiful, like the poetry of Homer.”

In the afternoon we drove from Castelvetrano into the country, to see a Norman church that had lately been discovered. As there were only field tracks, we were obliged to take one of the carts peculiar to the country. This is a conveyance of such primitive Doric design that it seems not far removed from the war-chariots of Hector and Diomedes. Three boards, daubed with yellow, and painted according to the pattern chosen, with mythological, sacred, profane or romantic figures, enclose the accommodation for seats, which is fastened between two high wheels. The pictures displayed are not exactly as beautiful as the scenes on the ancient vases, but like them they have inscriptions, and the name of the artist or that of the manufactory is also given. Our carts had come from Catania. Scarcely were they in motion, when the jolting and shaking extorted from us those dolorous sounds that Dante calls “ *dolenti note.*” The combination of two periods of civilisation, severed by tens of centuries, such as a saloon carriage on the railway and a Sicilian cart on the rough field track, gave me no small degree of pleasure.

The Church of Santa Trinità di Delia, the property of Baron Saporito, was, so to say, excavated in a farm belonging to him, three kilometres distant from Castelvetro, from a block of houses that had hitherto concealed it. When Patricolo, the architect, began to pull down these houses, to the astonishment of every one a jewel of architecture was brought to light : a small, perfectly preserved Arabic-Byzantine church of the twelfth century. It is a regular quadrangle of square limestone blocks, with façades to correspond and a cupola, resting on four columns of cipolin and red granite in the entirely unadorned interior, while over these columns stretch Arabic pointed arches. The plan is exactly that of the churches of S. Giovanni degli Eremiti and of the Martorana at Palermo, and also that of the Metropolitan church at Athens.

No other country shows a like wealth of periods in the history of art as does Sicily. The progressive steps of design of Greeks, Phœnicians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Italians are found here side by side. We had just now been contemplating Doric temples, on which lies a reflex of ancient Egyptian art, and a church now showed us the artistic connection of the Byzantine East and of Arabic Egypt with Sicily. Signor Patricolo dedicated to his splendid discovery a treatise in the *Archivio Storico Siciliano* (New Series, Ann. 5), and in the same archives the reader will find other instructive contributions of the same architect, among others on the Martorana. At present he is erecting a theatre in the Doric style at Castelvetro.

Our architectural studies in the church of Delia were suddenly and very pleasantly interrupted, by peasants bringing in great baskets filled with fragrant oranges, which had been freshly gathered in the garden. We found the excellent fruit so delicious as to justify the name of Baron Saporito. In the evening, after our return to the Hotel Bixio, we partook of an excellent meal, to which the Prince had also invited a German ex-diplomat, who a few years before had been my chance companion on board a vessel between Smyrna and Constantinople, and who now unexpectedly met me again under the ruins of Selinus. Rejecting all the fiery wines of Sicily at our symposium, we drank the mild Chianti of Tuscany, which has since become naturalised on the island.

The following morning we visited the quarries of Selinus, which lie in the neighbourhood of the station of Campobello, not far from Castelvetro on the road to Trapani. These *latomie* do not equal those of Syracuse, and seemed to me merely like toys when compared to the rock galleries at Heluan on the Nile, from which were hewn the blocks of stone for the Pyramids. Nowhere in Italy, however, can be found another studio such as this, where the original materials for the temples of Selinus in the first rough stages of the quarrying and chiselling lie open to the day. A sudden catastrophe more than two thousand years ago, interrupted these works intended either for the completion of the temples of the gods already constructed, or for the erection of others in contemplation. The material in consequence lay here neglected like

the blocks of marble in the Emporium of the Tiber in Rome, or the columns of granite in the Egyptian desert city of Mons Claudianus, which was visited by Schweinfurth. The catastrophe in the present case was the siege and destruction of Selinus by Hannibal.

These art-loving Dorian people were mowed down by the swords of the Africans or carried into slavery by the thousand, and a splendid and entire civilisation thus perished here in a single day. A similar fate befell the flourishing Greek cities of Asia Minor in later centuries at the hands of Mongols and Turks.

Hittorf was acquainted with a portion of the quarries; Scalea and Patricolo discovered others two years ago. They have been bought by the Italian Government, and Rau the engineer, who is employed at Selinus, is making a plan of them. The quarries extend across waste ground, covered with brushwood of palms, in greater or lesser hollows, where are seen vertical walls of calcareous tufa, and several fragments of columns, either partly cut from the rock or completely severed from it, so that they have only now to be removed. In many places we even see traced only the first circular lines, and the column to be cut thus merely outlined. Some pieces have a circumference of ten metres. The traveller stands on grey drums of columns, on which cactus, wild figs and olive trees have taken root. Since the quarries are ten kilometres distant from Selinus the transport of such immense blocks must have been sufficiently difficult. Here also probably thousands of prisoners of war were obliged to render compulsory service.

The railway line proceeds in a curve from Campobello along the coast to Trapani, and the journey consequently is exceedingly pleasant. The western coasts in the Mediterranean are for the most part more broken and therefore more picturesque than the eastern; in Sicily, however, this is not the case, for here in the west a plain, miles in width, descends to the Libyan Sea; on the line of which, stretching from the headland of Lilybæum as far as Trapani, a wreath of islands rising up out of the sea (the Ægates) have severed themselves from the mainland. This plain with its gardens, its fields of grain, its flocks of thick-wooled sheep and herds of red cows, seems incalculably rich. But here also the villages are few; the population has withdrawn to the coast, where the seaports stand ranged in long white lines, and since remote antiquity have carried on the trade of the island with Africa.

As the east coast of Sicily on the Ionian Sea was of necessity obliged to receive the greater number of the Hellenic colonists, so naturally the western shore attracted the neighbouring Phœnicians from Africa, and afterwards the Saracens. Here the Carthaginians, extending their sway as far as Panormus and Soluntum in the North, founded their greatest emporia: Lilybæum, Motya, Drepanum and Eryx. Here also the fiercest conflicts between Punic and Roman peoples have had to take place, and the question to be decided, which of the two nations was to control the commerce of the world. In the Middle Ages the same conditions were also to be repeated; for the



Semitic race fought again with Greeks and Latins for the possession of the most important island of the Mediterranean, which in ancient times had been a Phœnician lake. On these very shores, near Mazzara in 827, the Arabs landed from Africa to conquer, colonise and spread over the whole of Byzantine Sicily.

Owing to so many historic associations, the journey to Trapani is in the highest degree interesting; but it was only hurriedly in passing that I surveyed these beautiful fields, their soft lines of coast and the effects of light on the glittering stretch of emerald sea. Thus I journeyed on past Mazzara, which with its harbour, its grey fortress, its towers and walls, looked an imposing place. Thus also I beheld but as a fleeting apparition Marsala, the ancient and much-fought-for Lilybæum, its harbour filled with vessels come to carry away the fiery wine, thus also saw the Ægates rising out of the haze of the sea. The audacious landing of Garibaldi, favoured by a perfectly fabulous degree of fortune, ought to be perpetuated here by a colossal lion in stone, represented in the act of springing from the sea to the land.

Trapani, with its sickle-shaped harbour, is seen stretching far into the sea, beside Drepanum, the north-western point of Sicily. White salt-works and dunes extend along the level strand, which Virgil calls joyless (*illætabilis*). The numerous windmills also give the impression that this Drepanum is a wind-swept place and that it is more especially exposed to the mistral. Landwards above a long aqueduct towers a lofty

mountain crowned by a grey town; this is Eryx, the object of our journey.

Everyone knows from Virgil that next to Segesta, the most important scene of the *Æneid* is Drepanum, and that because of its ancient cult of Aphrodite, the divine mother of the Trojan hero. Anchises dies at Drepanum; *Æneas* buries him and sails to Africa. The founder of Rome brings the future mistress of the world into connection with Carthage, and the Carthaginians have to avenge the insult to the forsaken Dido in terrible wars on the descendants of the transgressor. From Africa *Æneas* returns to Drepanum, where he honours the memory of his father with funeral games.

A devotee of Virgil will consequently wander round the foot of Mount Eryx with the same reverence that he would visit Ardea, Lavinium and Alba Longa. I found myself, however, in an entirely heretical state of indifference towards this memorable spot, in so far that is as regards Virgil. And yet I have hailed various coasts and islands of the Ionian Sea and even the fabulous Cape of Circe with almost devout reverence, on account of the spell of Homeric poetry under which they lie. The difference of mood is easily explained. The Homeric epic is old and original; it is the witness to a bygone heroic age, to the first beginnings of history and the dawn of religion and culture. The scenes on which it was enacted lie more or less in a world of enchantment removed from the west, and are even now full of mystery. The poetry of Virgil lacks all this charm. It is modern and secondary, a work of the schools and of

reflection; frequently chilling as an imitation of Homer. It arose in the full daylight of the Roman State, in the midst of an already philologically developed literature, and is so little national that we may even call it the product of the rising Cæsarism. For the aim of the *Æneid* is the glorification of the Julian family, who were descended from *Æneas* and *Venus*. Virgil, it is true, did not invent the legend of *Æneas*, which is of Greek origin. But with the instinct of genius he seized and artistically developed it. He blended Troy with Rome, the Homeric with the Latin world; he even introduced a third civilisation, that of Semitic Carthage, in his ethnographic circle, and thus created the greatest monument of Roman literature, a work which forms at the same time the close of the ancient epic in general. May the shade of the immortal poet then forgive my heresy!

Carriages took us without delay from the station of Trapani in little more than two hours up to Eryx. Eryx is not upheld by any range of hills, but rises solitary like an island, in the most beautiful pyramidal outline. I consider it therefore as the very ideal of a mountain, as the masterpiece of nature in mountain formation. There must necessarily an august goddess, the most beautiful of heaven, have her seat. Not only the zigzags of the road, which wound along the rocky walls, but Eryx herself reminded me strongly of Monte Gargano, the most eastern headland of Apulia. On the summit of each, high above the sea, stands a curious town with a sacred sanctuary of widespread fame.

Christians went on pilgrimages throughout the Middle Ages, and still resort to the shrine of the Archangel Michael on Monte Gargano ; and the pious in antiquity travelled to the temple of Venus Urania on Mount Eryx. Both cults are derived from Asia.

Eryx was the most western point of departure in Europe for the service of Aphrodite, which had travelled thence. Here stood her temple, equally celebrated with that of Paphos and Cythera. After the Carthaginians had destroyed the Elymean town of Eryx on the east side of the mountain, and had transplanted its inhabitants to Drepanum, they worshipped the Phœnician Venus or Astarte, the great tutelary goddess of the Mediterranean, in a sumptuous temple on the mountain above, and the worship was afterwards also continued by the Romans. The sailors of Africa, Spain, Gaul, Italy and Greece, all did homage to her, brought offerings to her temple and solemnised Bacchanalia with the Hieroduli. Thousands of voluptuous women-servants of the temple here did honour to their mistress.

Grey mediæval towers and high weather-beaten walls now stand around the entrance of the curious town, which with its Cyclopean-looking streets rises above the sharp corner of the rocky mountain. The town is called San Giulano, and a recollection of the Julian family thus survives at least in its name. Immediately to the left stands the cathedral, a building of the beginning of the fourteenth century, with crenelated battlements, a tower of blackish stone and a beautiful porch of pointed arches. Nine

Byzantine crosses are immured in the lateral wall of the cathedral, and a Latin inscription of the year 1685 says that these crosses had been consecrated by the Emperor Constantine to the honoured Mother of God in "the temple of Venus in his native country" and had thence been brought here. Thus the Virgin Mary drove Astarte away from Eryx and the cult of the pagan goddess became transformed into the worship of her successor. After the ideal of Venus in antiquity, art has produced nothing more beautiful than the Madonna of the Renaissance; Eryx would have been the ideal earthly pedestal for the Assumption of Titian, where the Madonna soars to the glory of heaven. I saw in the church an ancient picture of the Madonna, and it being Easter week the grave of Christ had been represented in a chapel and decorated with a wealth of flowers. Thus also in former times was adored in the temple of Aphrodite her ancient and holy image, when in the spring month of April was celebrated her floral festival, or the death and resurrection of Adonis. There is in truth nothing new in the world; everything has previously existed.

We proceeded to the left from the cathedral to the celebrated walls, which on the side towards the sea stretch in long lines and are still in the main well preserved. Although they were restored in the Middle Ages, the Cyclopean remains of a hoary antiquity are evident here and there in their ponderous limestone blocks; fourteen square towers still remain. Signor Salinas, who sometimes spends the summer in the fresh air of San



Giuliano, has examined these walls and discovered Phœnician characters upon them. He drew my attention to these characters, but my unpractised eye had difficulty in recognising them as such. He has published an account, which is worth reading, of his discovery (*Le mura fenicie di Erice, Accad. dei Lincei, Notizie degli scavi*, April, 1883).

We followed these venerable walls up and down along horrible paths until we reached a gate and again entered the town. Its low houses built of grey stone with but few windows, and with rudely built dark courtyards, present a spectacle of truly primitive conditions. Men live here, in the main, as they lived a thousand years ago. There are indeed some houses built on modern lines, frequently even picturesque, with outside stone staircases. The little city of Eryx is an inexhaustible store of wealth for the painter of the most curious architectural subjects imaginable. It can accommodate 4000 inhabitants. The men here as at Monte Gargano, and for the same reasons of climate, wear the dark Capuchin cloak, and the women, who at the present day, as in the time of Aphrodite, are said to be endowed with a rare degree of beauty, cover themselves with long black veils. The city was indeed strangely devoid of men. As ever increasing numbers of the inhabitants descend from the inhospitable mountain to the plains, to cultivate their land, San Giuliano will in time become utterly depopulated, like other high-lying places on the mountains of Sicily and Italy, which are now covered with ivy.

We walked along a ledge of rock at the eastern

end of the town, where owing to an ancient architectural substructure, an artificial level had been restored and a little public garden with seats been made by the Municipality. Hence we looked at the glistening sea far below, while in front to our right stood the huge castle of Eryx, divided into two groups. The outer portion of the fortress is formed of stone towers, some lofty, others stunted; the building then continues along to the farthest peak of rock, which it crowns. The sight of the towered colossus, gloomily rising at this height against the blue sky, is incomparably beautiful. From the fortress is seen a panorama of sea and coast, the splendour of whose colour baffles all description. Next to that of Taormina it is undoubtedly the most beautiful in Sicily.

The fortress stands on the spot formerly occupied by the Temple of Venus. This sanctuary was consequently visible to the longing eyes of sailors at a distance of many miles. Concerning the form of the temple and the date of its destruction, no tidings have come down to us. Its last vestiges were buried in the mediæval castle. In the front part of this castle the Marchese Pepoli has some rooms fitted up as a summer dwelling. His family belongs to the well-known Bolognese Pepoli, a branch of which settled at Trapani in the sixteenth century. Sig. Pepoli conducted us to his romantic abode, which is arranged with modern comfort, pictures, antiquities and books. It seemed to me the most interesting home that a man in the full enjoyment of life could choose, when at intervals he wishes to withdraw from the great world

into solitude. Here, on the mysterious site of the Temple to Astarte, when the moon illumines the ancient towers, the pale-coloured walls of the Phœnicians, the wild rocky shore and endless sea, he, like Byron's Manfred, may conjure up this goddess and other spirits of the fallen religions. In all my travels I have never seen anything so weirdly fantastic and at the same time so enchanting as the summit of Mount Eryx.

Exhausted by prolonged wanderings amid the stony labyrinths, we closed this wonderful day by a banquet, given by the Marchese and the Municipality of Eryx to their guests. On the well-spread table two good-sized Easter lambs in confectionery, decorated with flags of various colours and gold threads, more especially arrested my attention. At Easter-time such tasteful erections in *Marzipan* are seen in large numbers in every pastry-cook's shop of Palermo. They are sent far and wide, also to the mainland. I freely confess that they attracted my eyes more than my palate; for these figures are invariably filled with *ricotta*. It is possible that the ancient Erycinians may have partaken of similar pastry at the Easter of their Adonis.

Trapani I only saw by gas-light. We walked along the harbour and through several streets, and I regretted being unable to see much that was worthy of note by day. We also visited an arts and crafts school, and at a late hour found the studios filled with diligent artists, who, in alabaster and marble, in motley-coloured shells and black coral, were diligently prosecuting the

traditional art for which Trapani has been famous since the days of the Renaissance.

The following morning we started on our return journey to Palermo, and thus I owe to the kindness of my distinguished companions one of the most enjoyable expeditions that I have ever made in this, the most beautiful country of Europe.

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