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FROM NICE TO GENOA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A WEEK IN JERUSALEM,' ETC., ETC., ETC.



MONACO.

WHEN we Americans wish to avoid the rigors of a winter climate, we go to Florida. Europeans, under similar circumstances, seek the Riviera. We all know what Florida is. But not everyone is familiar with the salubrious air, the picturesque scenery, the romantic old towns, and the groves of orange and lemon-trees which make what is called the Riviera not only desirable as a health-resort, but singularly attractive to travelers and pleasure-seekers.

This attractiveness, in fact, has made Cannes, Nice, Mentone, San Remo, and other towns along that coast, the headquarters of fashion during the winter months. Here come the favorites of fortune—those who dress in "purple and fine linen"—from England, France, Russia, Germany, and even America, to drink in the delicious air and keep "high festival." What London is in the spring and early summer, Nice and Cannes are in December, January, and February. Many of the visitors even go earlier and stay later; so that, to use the words of Holy Writ, "the sound of the lute never ceases there," day or night.

The Riviera—to speak of it in a broad sense—is that strip of country which skirts the northern shore of the Mediterranean between Marseilles, in France, and Spezzia, in Italy; but in the sense

in which it is generally alluded to, the name is confined to that smaller portion which lies between Nice—or perhaps Cannes—on the west and Genoa on the east. It owes its mild climate to the Maritime Alps, which, now coming close down to the coast, and now curving inland for twenty or thirty miles, serve as a wall to break the force of the cold northern winds. The face of the country is diversified into hills and val-

leys, that are studded with white villas, with here and there old castles and Roman ruins; while picturesque chapels, perched on airy heights, look down everywhere from what seem inaccessible precipices. The olive and palm flourish in this bit of earthly paradise as they flourish hardly anywhere else.

A railroad now runs the whole distance from Marseilles to Spezzia, generally following the line of the coast, and continually opening up delicious bits of landscape or of ocean-view; but less than twenty years ago the only way to traverse the Riviera was by carriage. For this purpose a road—originally projected by Napoleon I, and afterwards carried out by the Sardinian Government—was engineered along the coast: now zig-zaging boldly up a mountain-side, now carried on viaducts over valleys, now tunneling the mountains, and now skirting the ocean-beach. The boldness with which this highway often ran far up along the face of the cliffs won for it the name of the Cornice, from its resemblance, when viewed from below and at a distance, to the cornice of a house.

We were fortunate enough to drive along the Cornice, all the way to Spezzia, before the railroad was built. It was a fine morning in February that we started from Nice. We had engaged a

vetturino drawn by four horses; and, punctual to the hour, the carriage drove up to the door, with its jingling bells, the driver gayly cracking his whip, and the little dog at his side barking with excitement. The day, we have said, was in February; but it was more like one in New England in May. The air was full of perfume from the budding woods as we turned out of Nice and began the ascent of the mountain to the east; white blossoms drifted by us continually; birds were singing; the sun shone as it shines only in Italy; and the blue Mediterranean was seen, in glimpses here and there below, far away—now with fishing-boats drawn up on its tideless shores, now brightened with red and yellow lateen sails away in the dim distance.

Just after we had passed the highest point of the mountain, twenty-one hundred feet above the sea, we came to Turbia, and, rattling through the quaint old town, a splendid view of Monaco opened before us, lying below, on the coast—a rocky fortress, now turned into a sort of pagan paradise. This little principality, long the stronghold of the Grimaldis, will, on the death of the reigning prince, revert to France. Meantime it is the most famous gambling resort in Europe, and was even twenty years ago, though Baden, at that time, had not yet been shut up. To render it attractive, a superb casino has been erected, excellent hotels are provided, and walks have been laid out, terraces built, and trees and shrubs planted everywhere. We did not stop to



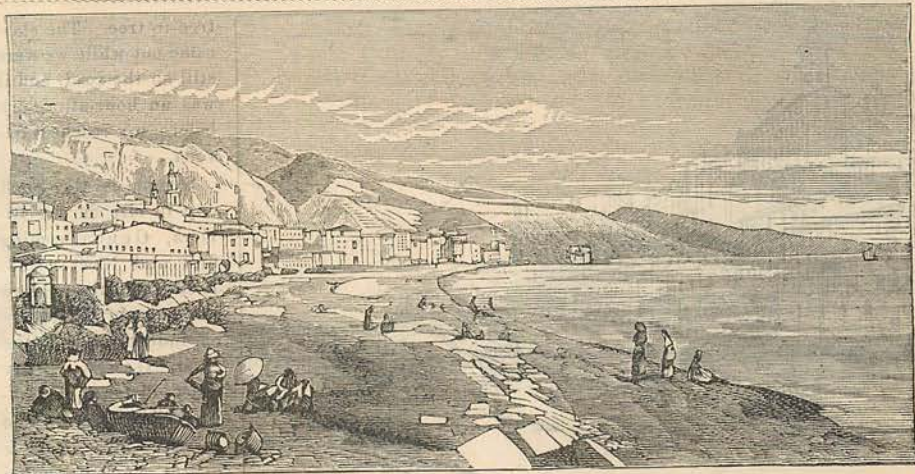
GRAND PROMENADE AT NICE.

visit it, but contented ourselves with the distant view, and drove on to Mentone, where we proposed to stop for the night.

This old town originally straggled along, shut in between the hills and the beach, so as to leave room for little more than a single street; but since the Riviera has grown so popular, villas have been built at both ends, on the shore, and even up on the rising ground above. Here the mistral—the one wind dreaded on this coast—never blows, the mountains on the north shutting it off completely. The orange and the lemon grow luxuriantly everywhere about. There is a local tradition—and a very poetical one—that when Eve was turned out of Paradise, she plucked a lemon at the gate, hiding it under her apron;

and that, afterwards, wandering to and fro on the earth, she came to Mentone, where she planted it, and that all the lemons now on the earth came from that one, and are the only things left of Paradise.

We left Mentone, after an early breakfast, still under the same brilliant sky, still with the perfume of oranges, lemons, and roses in the air. But the road now ran close to the shore, or in sight of it; and we could hear the faint ripple of the tideless Mediterranean, as it lapped, lazily, upon the sandy beach. Here and there a ruined wheel, which had been used to irrigate the fields, brought vividly up to us the Bible image of "broken cisterns that can hold no water." After a drive of a few miles, we came



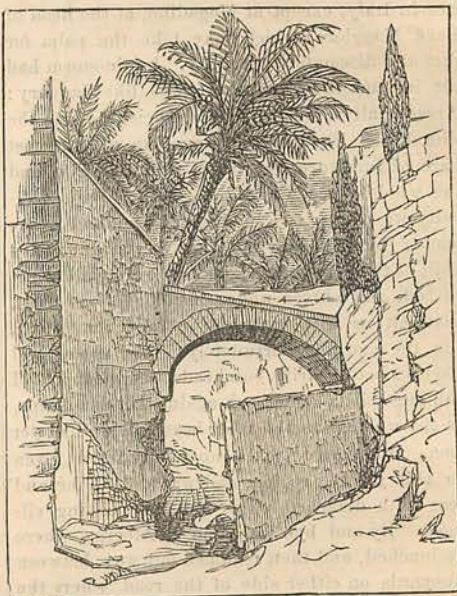
MENTONE.

to Ventimiglia, with its long bridge of stone, and its tier on tier of old houses, the churches and convents, the tall castle above, the purple mountains in the distance, and the sun-lit snow-peaks beyond. It was the first distinctively old-world Italian town that we had seen: built up on a seemingly inaccessible hill-side, like swallows' nests. We realized, as never before, the disturbed condition of the Middle Ages, especially on this coast, when every neighbor was an enemy, and when a Saracen descent might be expected at any moment.

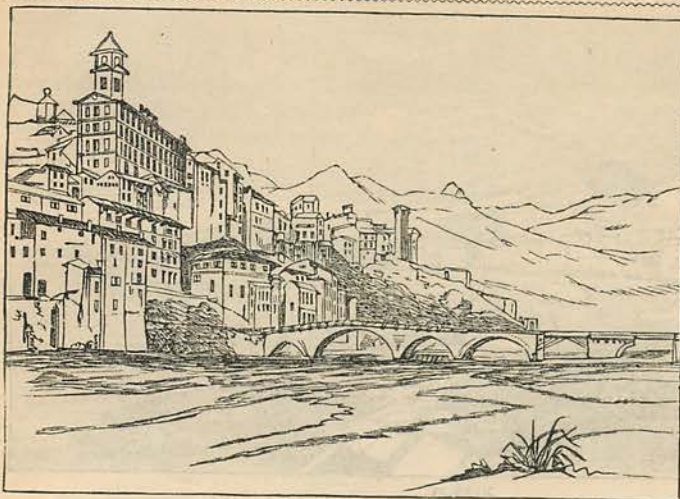
Awhile after passing Ventimiglia we came to Brodighera, best known to American readers by the novel of "Doctor Antonio." It is famous in Italy, however, for its palms, and for the story connected with them. Brodighera has the sole right to furnish palms for Palm-Sunday at Rome, and acquired this monopoly through the ready wit of a sailor belonging to the town. The story goes, at least, that when the obelisk now standing in the piazza of St. Peter's was being erected, the ropes suddenly slackened, to the consternation of the engineers, when a sailor from the crowd cried out: "Wet them! wet them!" This tightened them; the great stone shaft was successfully raised to its place; and the Pope, to repay the happy inspiration, ordered that all the palms required for the Easter ceremonies should thereafter be furnished from Brodighera. These date-palms, we may add, grow with greater luxuriance here than anywhere in Italy until the extreme southern latitude of Naples is reached, and everywhere, especially back of the town, form a principal and picturesque feature in the landscape.

Leaving Brodighera behind us, we descended to the shore amid a thick wood of olive-trees.

A low white-walled villa was on our left, and before us, through an avenue of the wood, we caught sight again of the blue Mediterranean. In a little while we were at San Remo, now as famous, as a health-resort, as Mentone or Nice, but then only beginning to be a favorite. The streets of the old town are narrow and steep, with buttresses everywhere flung across from house to house, looking like aerial bridges. With a sharp cry of warning from the *veturini*, peculiar to his class—for even the principal street was only wide enough for one carriage—our vehicle went clattering over the rocky pave-



BRODIGHERA.



VENTIMIGLIA.

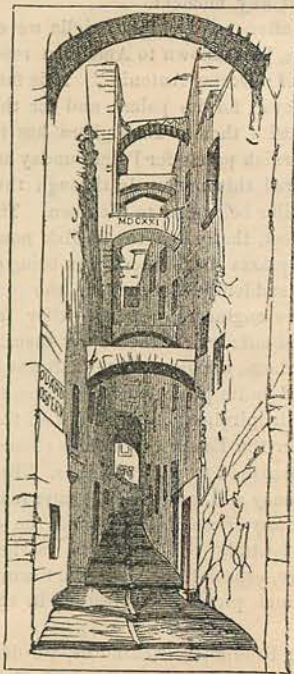
ment, the bells of our horses jingling, the little dog barking from the driver's seat, the foot-passengers pressing close to the wall as we passed, and old women with their distaffs coming lazily to the doorways to gaze idly at us. Thus from old-world town to town, and through streets that seemed ever to grow narrower, we went all through the long, drowsy afternoon, until, towards sunset, we drew up at Oneglia, where we were to spend the night.

Oneglia differed in no material respect from the other towns we had passed; but its hotel was the worst on the route, and the worst we ever saw in Italy, except at Magadino, at the head of Lake Maggiore, which may take the palm for dirt and discomfort generally. A rain-storm had set in, and the atmosphere was like January: Arcadia all at once had fled shrieking into the dim Past. The rooms at our inn were almost bare of furniture, the floors were of brick, and the whole place was like a vault. With difficulty we procured a few sticks, and had a fire made; but this did not remove the graveyard chill of the apartments; and we were glad to get to bed, and shiver under insufficient covering, that left us with a headache in the morning. But the morning, fortunately, broke clear; and after an hour's drive our headaches disappeared and our spirits came back again. The landscape, on the whole, was the most beautiful we had yet seen. It appeared to be unusually fertile, even for this favored region, and was dotted far and near with detached villas and gay-looking villages. By and bye we came to Alberga, where we lunched, and then resumed our way, between vineyards on either side of the road, where the vines, as around Naples, were festooned from

tree to tree. The stars came out while we were still on the road, and it was an hour after dark before we reached Savona.

Savona is the third city in size on the Riviera, Genoa coming first and Nice second. It stands at the western extremity of a great bay or indentation of the coast, Genoa, thirty miles distant, dominating like a queen the eastern end. It is a quaint, ancient-looking place even yet, notwithstanding its active stir

of business. The old tower at the end of the mole, which is also a light-house, quite carries one back to the Middle Ages. We sat until a late hour at the window, looking out over the gray walls towards the calm, silent sea beyond. The moon had come up, and threw a tremulous wake of light over the bay to the eastward, as if to "make a bridge of silver for us to Genoa," as one of our party said. "Very sentimental, perhaps poetical, but not original," remarked another. "It is too



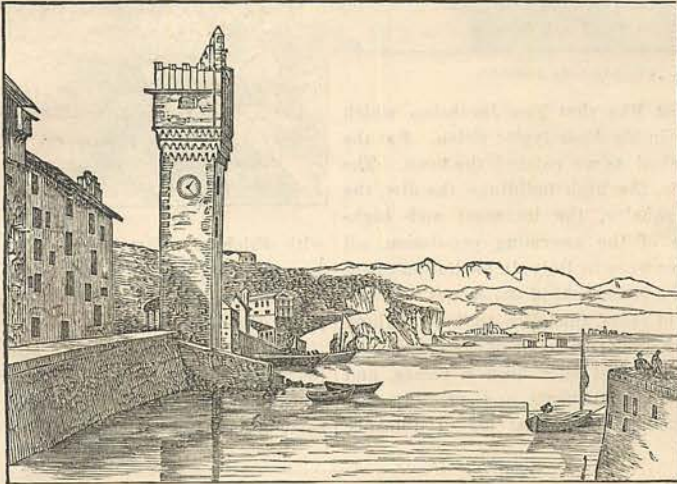
STREET IN SAN REMO.

much for me. I shall go to bed. I am sleepy." With that we all laughed, and retired for the night.

On our way to Genoa, the next morning, we stopped to see the Pallavaccini gardens, which are famous through all this part of Italy for their splendor and costliness. The road had run all day through what seemed almost a paradise. The country was even more picturesque than west of Savona. Woods of pine and oak were on every hand: beautiful heaths; and clumps of fragrant shrubs, with tall, snowy lilies in their midst. We passed Cogoletto, of special interest to us as Americans, because it was probably here that Columbus was born: certainly he first saw the light somewhere on this soft Ligurian coast, if not exactly at Cogoletto.

But to go back to these Pallavaccini gardens. Nowhere off the stage had we ever seen anything so like fairy-land. There were artificial grottoes, with stalactites brought from great distances, at enormous cost; subterranean lakes, over which you glided in a boat, and where everything was so dark and hushed that you might almost fancy you were crossing the Styx; picturesque clumps of trees and shrubs everywhere; marble terraces and staircases; aloes; palms; belvederes. It was, however, a little too theatrical, at least for our severe Northern taste. "Give me an English garden, such as there is at Munich," said one of our party, "rather than such a spic-and-span bit of gimcrackery as this."

But the Pallavaccini gardens are not the only sight to be seen on this road. The Villa Doria, on the whole, is far more imposing. The house,

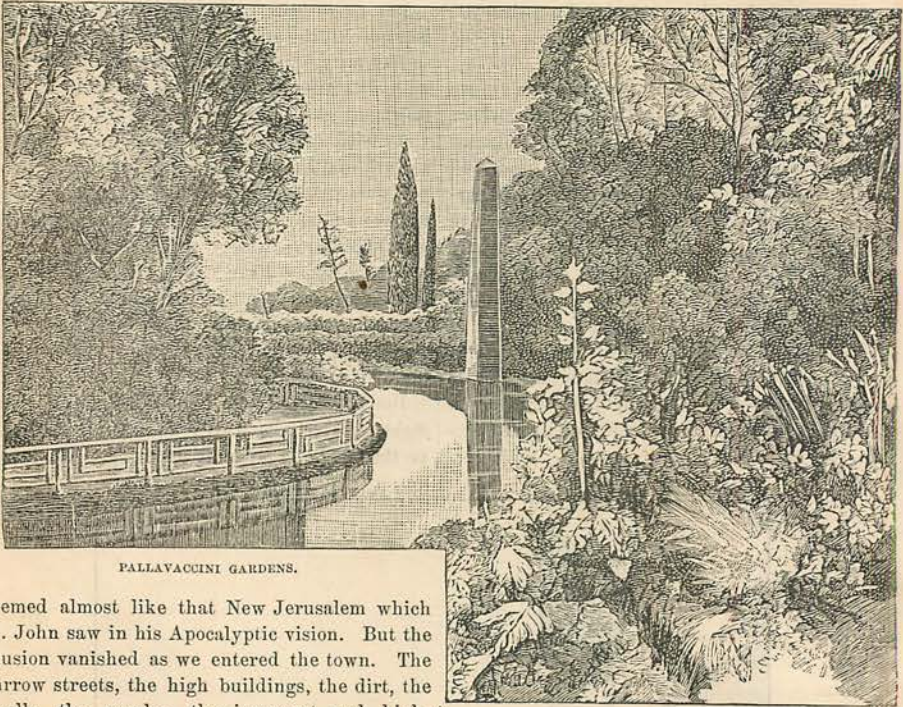


SAVONA.

or villa, at the Pallavaccini estate is indeed quite a secondary affair. We ought, perhaps, to state here, for the benefit of such of our readers as are untraveled, that the word "villa" has a different signification in Italy from what it has in the United States. Here it is confined to the smaller country-houses, the larger aspiring to be called mansions, as, in fact, they are; but in Italy it is applied to all rural dwellings not occupied by farmers or laborers, whether small or large. Some of the most palatial residences there, and which have no parallels here in size and grandeur—such as the Villa d'Este, near Tivoli, or the Villa Pamphili, just out of Rome—bear this name. These greater villas are quite a feature in Italy. Long before domestic architecture had made any advances in the north of Europe, and while even the most powerful nobles there were

living in inconvenient castles or rude baronial halls, the princes of the church, and the nobles, in imitation of them, were building villas all over Italy that almost recalled the splendors of the Golden House of Nero. It is, perhaps, a question whether domestic architecture ever died out there; whether there were not survivals of great houses, or parts of them, in Rome and elsewhere, far down to comparatively modern times; whether the first of these vast villas were not inspired by the ruins of palaces in which a Cæsar might have lived, a Lucullus feasted, a Julia held her court.

Genoa well deserves the epithet "*La Superba*," which has been applied to her. Standing on the shores of a semicircular bay, rising tier on tier from the water, her white palaces sparkling in the afternoon sunshine as we approached, she



PALLAVACCINI GARDENS.

seemed almost like that New Jerusalem which St. John saw in his Apocalyptic vision. But the illusion vanished as we entered the town. The narrow streets, the high buildings, the dirt, the smells, the squalor, the incessant and high-pitched cries of the swarming population, all told us that we were in Italy, in an Italian town, and, alas, for a time, behind the scenes. It was with a sense of relief, therefore, that we alighted from our *vetturino* at the door of the Hotel Gran Bretagne, which had once been a palace, and whose splendid apartments and princely surroundings brought back that air of romance

with which, at a distance, we had invested this favored land; and of which, after all, thanks to the climate, the atmosphere, the color, the old ruins, the blue skies, the purple seas, we continued to see so much, day after day, as we journeyed onward, past Sestri, Spezzia, Pisa, and Civita Vecchia, to Rome itself. But of this some other time, perhaps.

"DOMINE QUO VADIS."

BY CHARLES J. PETERSON.

In the chill dawn, just as the day was breaking;
 Along the Appian Way,
 St. Peter saw: the fog vague outlines taking,
 Like phantoms, in the gray.

He fled from death: not death with white-robed choir
 Soft singing by his bed;
 But on the cross, or else in flames of fire,
 With hooting mob, instead.

Sudden a form appeared: he started, faltered;
 There stood the One divine,
 Dim seen at first; but oh! His face how altered,
 How worn in ev'ry line!

Yes, worn with grief, tears infinite and pity,
 Unutterable pain;
 His sad eyes, as He came, fixed on the city
 Far off across the plain.

"Master, where goest Thou?" cried Peter, weeping.
 The Master made reply:
 "I go to tend my sheep thou shouldst be keeping;
 I go, again to die."

And then He turned a look on Peter: never
 Was look so sad before—
 Sadder than when we take farewell forever
 Of one we'll see no more.

Down, weeping at His feet, fell Peter, crying;
 "Try me again, dear Lord
 Than such reproach as this, oh! what were dying?
 What scourge, or rack, or sword?"

You know the rest: how Peter died unshaken.
 'Tis but a tale? What then?
 A tale through all the ages to awaken
 The martyr-soul in men.