

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Maupassant Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle Willis
Baum Henry Nietzsche Dumas Flaubert Turgenev Balzac
Leslie Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Scott
Kant London Descartes Cervantes Burton Harte
Poe Aristotle Wells Voltaire Hesse
Hale James Hastings Cooke
Bunner Shakespeare Chambers Irving
Richter Chekhov da Shaw Wodehouse
Doré Dante Pushkin Alcott
Swift Chekhov Newton



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A Year's Journey through France and Part of Spain, 1777 Volume 1

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LETTER I

Calais, June 20th, 1775

Dear Sir,

As you are kind enough to say, that those letters which I wrote from this kingdom, nine or ten years ago, were of some use to you, in the little tour you made through France soon after, and as they have been considered in some degree to be so to many other persons, (since their publication) who were unacquainted with the manners and customs of the French nation, I shall endeavour to bring together, in this second correspondence with you, not only some of the former hints I gave you, but such other remarks as a longer acquaintance with the country, and a more extensive tour, may furnish me with; but before I proceed any further, let me remind you, of one great fault I was then guilty of; for though your partiality to me might induce you to overlook it, the public did not, I mean that of writing when my temper was disturbed, either by cross incidents I met with upon the road, or disagreeable news which often followed me from my own country into this. I need not tell a man of your discernment, in what a different light all objects, whether animate, or inanimate, appear to those, whose temper is disturbed, either by ill health, ill treatment, or, what is perhaps more prevalent than either, the chagrin he may feel at not being rated in the estimation of others, according to that value he puts upon himself. Could Dr. Smollett rise from the dead, and sit down in perfect health, and good temper, and read his travels through France and Italy, he would probably find most of his anger turned upon himself. But, poor man! he was ill; and meeting with, what every stranger must expect to meet at most French inns, want of cleanliness, imposition, and incivility; he was so much disturbed by those incidents, that to say no more of the writings of an ingenious and deceased author, his travels into France, and Italy, are the least entertaining, in my humble opinion, of all his works. Indeed I have observed that most travellers fall into one extreme, or the other, and either are all panegyric or all censure; in which case, all they say cannot be just; for, as all nations are governed by men, and the bulk of men of all nations live by artifice of one kind or other, the few men who pass among them, without any sinister views, cannot

avoid feeling, and but few from complaining of the ill treatment they meet with; not considering one of Swift's shrewd remarks; *I never said he, knew a man who could not bear the misfortunes of another perfectly like a Christian.*

Remember therefore, when I tell you how ill I have been treated either by *Lords* or *Aubergists*, or how dirtily served by either, it is to prepare myself and you too, to be content with neighbours' fare.

When a man writes remarks upon the manners and customs of other nations, he should endeavour to wean himself from all partiality for his own; and I need not tell you that I am in *full possession* of that single qualification, which I hope will make you some amends for my defects in all the others; for it is certainly unjust, uncandid, and illiberal, to pronounce a custom or fashion absurd, because it does not coincide with our ideas of propriety. A Turk who travelled into England, would, upon his return to Constantinople, tell his countrymen, that at Canterbury; (bring out of *opium*,) his host did not know even what he demanded; and that it was with some difficulty he found out, that there were shops in the town where *opium* was sold, and even then, it was with greater, he could prevail upon the vender of it to let him have above half an ounce: if he were questioned, why all these precautions? he would tell them, laughingly, that Englishmen believe *opium* to be a deadly poison, and those people suspected that he either meant to kill himself, or to poison another man with it.

A French gentleman, who travelled some years since into Spain, had letters of recommendation to a Spanish Bishop, who received him with every mark of politeness, and treated him with much hospitality: soon after he retired to his bedchamber, a priest entered it, [A] holding a vessel in his hand, which was covered with a clean napkin; he said something; but the Frenchman understanding but little Spanish, intimated by signs his thanks, and desired him to put it down, believing, that his friend, the Bishop, had sent him a plate of sweetmeats, fruit, iced cream, or some kind of refreshment to eat before he went to bed, or to refresh his exhausted spirits in the night; but his astonishment was great indeed, when he found the priest put the present under the side of the bed; and more so, when he perceived that it was only a *pot de chambre*;—for, says the

Frenchman, "in Spain, they do not use the *chaise percee!*" The Frenchman is surprized at the Spaniard, for not using so convenient a vehicle; the Englishman is equally surprized, that the Frenchman does;—the Frenchman is always attentive to his own person, and scarce ever appears but clean and well dressed; while his house and private apartments are perhaps covered with litter and dirt, and in the utmost confusion;—the Englishman, on the other hand, often neglects his external dress; but his house is always exquisitely clean, and every thing in it kept in the nicest order; and who shall say, which of the two judge the best for their own ease and happiness? I am sure the Frenchman will not give up his powdered hair, and laced coat, for a clean house; nor do I believe those fineries would sit quietly upon the back of an Englishman, in a dirty one. In short, my dear sir, we must take the world, and the things in it, as they are; it is a dirty world, but like France, has a vast number of good things in it, and such as I meet with, in this my third tour, which shall be a long one, if I am not *stopped* by the way, you shall have such an account of as I am able to convey to you: I will not attempt to *top the traveller* upon you, nor raise monuments of wonder, where none are to be seen; there is real matter enough to be found upon this great continent, to amuse a man who travels slowly over it, to see what is to be seen, and who wishes not to be seen himself. My style of travelling is such, that I can never be disturbed in mind for want of respect, but rather be surprized when I meet with even common civility. And, after all, what does it signify, whether Monsieur *ou Tel* travels in a laced coat *et très bien mis*, attended by half a dozen servants, or, as Pope says,

"will run The Lord knows whither in a chaise and one."

I am, your's &c.

LETTER II.

June 25th, 1766.

Before I leave Calais, let me remind you, that an English guinea is worth more than a *Louis d'or*; and observe, that the first question *my*

friend Mons. Dessein, at the Hotel D'Angleterre will put to you, (after he has made his bow, and given you a side look, as a cock does at a barley-corn) is, whether you have any guineas to change? because he gets by each guinea, full weight, ten Sols. By this hint, you will conclude, he will not, upon your return, ask you for your French Gold; but in this too you will be mistaken, for he finds an advantage in that also; he will, not indeed give you guineas, but, in lieu thereof, he has always a large quantity of Birmingham Shillings, to truck with you for your Louis d'ors. I am afraid, when Lord North took into consideration the state of the gold coin, he did not know, that the better state it is put into in England, is the surest means of transporting it into France, and other countries; and that scarce a single guinea which travellers carry with them to France, (and many hundred go every week) ever returns to England: Beside this, the quantity of gold carried over to the ports of Dunkirk, Boulogne, and Calais, by the Smugglers, who always pay ready money, is incredible; but as money, and matters of that kind, are what I have but little concern in, I will not enlarge upon a subject no way interesting to me, and shall only observe, that my landlord, Mons. Dessein, who was behind-hand with the world ten years ago, is now become one of the richest men in Calais, has built a little Theatre in his garden, and has united the profitable business of a Banker, to that of a Publican; and by studying the Gout of the English nation, and changing their gold into French currency, has made, they say, a Demi Plumb.

Notwithstanding the contiguity of Calais to England, and the great quantity of poultry, vegetables, game, &c. which are bought up every market-day, and conveyed to your coast, I am inclined to believe, there are not many parts of France where a man, who has but little money, can make it go further than in this town; nor is there any town in England, where the fishery is conducted with so much industry.

Yesterday I visited my unfortunate daughter, at the convent at Ardres;—but why do I say unfortunate? She is unfortunate only, in the eyes of the world, not in her own; nor indeed in mine, because she assured me she is happy. I left her here, you know, ten years ago, by way of education, and learning the language; but the small-pox, which seized her soon after, made such havock on a face, rather favoured by nature, that she desired to hide it from the world,

and spend her life in that retirement, which I had chosen only to qualify her *for* the world. I left her a child; I found her a sensible woman; full of affection and duty; and her mangled and seamed face, so softened by an easy mind, and a good conscience, that she appeared in my partial eyes, rather an agreeable than a plain woman; but she did not omit to signify to me, that what others considered her misfortune, she considered (as it was not her fault) a happy circumstance; "if my face is plain (said she) my heart is light, and I am sure it will make as good a figure in the earth, as the fairest, and most beautiful." My only concern is, that I find the *Prieure* of this convent, either for want of more knowledge, or more money, or both, had received, as parlour boarders, some English ladies of very suspicious characters. As the conversation of such women might interrupt, and disturb that peace and tranquillity of mind, in which I found my daughter, I told the *Prieure* my sentiments on that subject, not only with freedom, but with some degree of severity; and endeavoured to convince her, how very unwarrantably, if not irreligiously she acted. An abandoned, or vicious woman, may paint the pleasures of this world in such gaudy colours, to a poor innocent Nun, so as to induce her to forget, or become less attentive to the professions she has made to the next.

It was near this town, you know, that the famous interview passed between Henry the Eighth, and *Francis* the First, in the year 1520; and though it lasted twenty-eight days, and was an event which produced at that time so many amusements to all present, and so much conversation throughout Europe, the inhabitants of this, town, or Calais, seem to know little of it, but that one of the bastions at *Ardres* is called the Bastion of the Two Kings.—There still remains, however, in the front of one of the houses in *Calais*, upon an ornamented stone, cut in old letter,

God Save the King;

And I suppose that stone was put, where it now remains, by some loyal subject, before the King arrived, as it is in a street which leads from the gate (now stopped up) which Henry passed through.

LETTER III.

In a very few days I shall leave this town, and having procured letters of recommendation from some men of fashion, now in England, to their friends in *Spain*, I am determined to traverse this, and make a little tour into that kingdom; so you may expect something more from me, than merely such remarks as may be useful to you on any future tour you make in France; I mean to conduct you at least over the *Pyrenean* hills to *Barcelona*; for, though I have been two or three times before in Spain, it was early in life, and when my mind was more employed in observing the *customs* and *manors* of the birds, and beasts of the field, than of their lords and masters, and made too, on the other side of that kingdom. Having seen as much of Paris as I desired, some years ago, I intend to pass through the provinces of *Artois*, *Champaigne*, *Bourgogne*, and so on to *Lyons*; by which route you will perceive, I shall leave the capital of this kingdom many leagues on my right hand, and see some considerable towns, and taste now and then of the most delicious wines, on the spots which produce them; beside this, I have a great desire to see the remains of a Roman subterranean town, lately discovered in *Champaigne*, which perhaps may gratify my curiosity in some degree, and thereby lessen that desire I have: long had of visiting *Herculaneum*, an *under-ground* town you know, I always said I would visit, if a certain person happened to be put *under-ground* before me; but the Cause, and the event, in all human affairs, are not to be fathomed by men; for though the event happened, the *cause* frustrated my design; and I must cross the *Pyrenean* not the *Alpian* hills. But lest I forget it, let me tell you, that as my travelling must be upon the frugal plan, I have sold my four-wheel post-chaise, to *Mons. Dessein*, for twenty-two guineas, and bought a French *cabriolet*, for ten, and likewise a very handsome English coach-horse, (a little touched in the wind indeed) for seven. This equipage I have fitted up with every convenience I can contrive, to carry me, my wife, two daughters, and all my *other* baggage; you will conclude therefore, *light* as the latter may be, we are *bien charge*; but as we move slowly, not above seven leagues a day, I shall have the more leisure to look about me, and to consider what sort of remarks may prove most worthy of communicating from time to time to you. I shall be glad to leave this town, though it is in one respect, some-

thing like your's, [B] everyday producing many *strange faces*, and some very agreeable acquaintance. The arrival of the packet-boats from Dover constitutes the principal amusement of this town.

The greater part of the English *transports* who come over, do not proceed much further than to see the tobacco plantations near *St. Omer's*; nor is their return home less entertaining than their arrival, as many of them are people of such *quick parts*, that they acquire, in a week's tour to *Dunkirk*, *Bologne*, and *St. Omer's*, the *language*, dress and manners of the country. You must not, however, expect to hear again from me, till I am further *a-field*. But lest I forget to mention it in a future letter, let me refresh your memory, as to your conduct at Dover, at Sea, and at *Calais*. In the first of these three disagreeable places, (and the first is the worst) you will soon be applied to by one of the Captains of the packets, or bye-boats, and if you hire the boat to yourself, he will demand five guineas; if you treat with another, it is all one, because they are all, except one, partners and equally interested; and therefore will abate nothing. Captain Watson is the only one who *swims upon his own bottom*; and as he is a good seaman, and has a clean, convenient, nay an elegant vessel, I would rather turn the scale in his favour, because I am, as you will be, an enemy to all associations which have a tendency to imposition upon the public, and oppression to such who will not join in the general confederacy; yet I must, in justice to the Captains of the confederate party, acknowledge, that their vessels are all good; *well found*; and that they are civil, decent-behaved men. As it is natural for them to endeavour to make the most of each *trip*, they will, if they can, foist a few passengers upon you, even after you have taken the vessel to your own use only. If you are alone, this intrusion is not agreeable, but if you have ladies with you, never submit to it; if they introduce men, who appear like gentlemen upon your vessel, you cannot avoid treating them as such; if women, you cannot avoid them treating them with more attention than may be convenient, because they *are women*; but were it only in consideration of the sea-sickness and its *consequences*, can any thing be more disagreeable than to admit people to *pot* and *porringer* with you, in a small close cabin, with whom you would neither eat, drink, or converse, in any other place? but these are not the only reasons; every gentleman going to France should avoid making new acquaintance, at Dover, at Sea, or

at *Calais*: many *adventurers* are always passing, and many honest men are often led into grievous and dangerous situations by such inconsiderate connections; nay, the best, and wisest men, are the most liable to be off their guard, and therefore you will excuse my pointing it out to you.

I could indeed relate some alarming consequences, nay, some fatal ones, which have befallen men of honour and character in this country, from such unguarded connections; and such as they would not have been drawn into, on the other side of the "*invidious Streight*." When an Englishman leaves his own country, and is got no further from it than to this town, he looks back upon it with an eye of partial affection; no wonder then, if he feels more disposed to be kind to a countryman and a stranger he may meet in this. — I do not think it would be difficult to point out, what degree of intimacy would arise between two men who knew but little of each other, according to the part of the world they were to meet in. — I remember the time, when I only knew your person, and coveted your acquaintance; at that time we lived in the same town, knew each other's general character, but passed without speaking, or even the compliment of the hat; yet had we met in London, we should certainly have taken some civil notice of each other: had the interview been at York, it is five to one but it would have produced a conversation: at Edinburgh, or Dublin, we should have dined, or gone to the play together: but if we had met at Barbadoes, I should have been invited to spend a month at your Penn, and experienced many of those marks of hospitality, friendship, and generosity, I have found from the Creoles in general. When you get upon the French coast, the packet brings to, and is soon boarded by a French boat, to carry the passengers on shore; this passage is much longer than it appears to be, is always disagreeable, and sometimes dangerous; and the landing, if the water be very low, intolerable: in this case, never mind the advice of the Captain; his advice is, and must be regulated by his *own* and his owner's interest, more than your convenience; therefore stay on board till there is water enough to sail up to the town, and be landed by a plank laid from the packet to the shore, and do not suffer any body to persuade you to go into a boat, or to be put on shore, by any other method, tho' the *packet-men* and the *Frenchmen* unite to persuade you so to do, because they are mu-

tually benefited by putting you to more expence, and the latter are entertained with seeing your cloaths dirted, or the ladies *frighted*. If most of the packet-boats are in *Calais* harbour, your Captain will use every argument in his power to persuade you to go on shore, in the French boat, because he will, in that case, return directly to Dover, and thereby save eight-and-twenty shillings port duty. When we came over, I prevailed upon a large company to stay on board till there was water enough to sail into the harbour: it is not in the power of the Captain to deceive you as to that matter, because there is a red flag hoisted gradually higher and higher, as the water flows into the harbour, at a little fort which stands upon *stilts* near the entrance of it. When you are got on shore, go directly to *Dessein's*; and be in no trouble about your baggage, horses, or coach; the former will be all carried, by men appointed for that purpose, safely to the Custom-house, and the latter wheeled up to your *Hotel*, where you will sit down more quietly, and be entertained more decently, than at Dover.

LETTER IV.

Rheims, in Champagne.

Little or nothing occurred to me worth remarking to you on my journey hither, but that the province of *Artois* is a fine corn country, and that the French farmers seem to understand that business perfectly well. I was surprised to find, near *St. Omer's*, large plantations of tobacco, which had all the vigour and healthy appearance of that which I have seen grow in *poor* America. On my way here, (like the countryman in London, in gazing about) I missed my road; but a civil, and, in appearance, a substantial farmer, conducted us half a league over the fields, and marked out the course to get into it again, without returning directly back, a circumstance I much hate, though perhaps it might have been the shorter way. However, before I gained the high road, I stumbled upon a private one, which led us into a little village pleasantly situated, and inhabited by none other but the poorest peasants; whose tattered habits, wretched houses, and smiling countenances, convinced me, that cheerfulness and contentment shake hands oftener under thatched than painted roofs. We found one of these villagers as ready to boil our tea-kettle, provide butter, milk, &c. as we were for our breakfasts; and during

the preparation of it, I believe every man, woman, and child of the hamlet, was come down to *look at us*; for beside that wonderful curiosity common to this whole nation, the inhabitants of this village had never before seen an Englishman; they had heard indeed often of the country, they said, and that it was *un pays très riche*. There was such a general delight in the faces of every age, and so much civility, I was going to say politeness, shewn to us, that I caught a temporary chearfulness in this village, which I had not felt for some months before, and which I intend to carry with me. I therefore took out my guittar, and played till I set the whole assembly in motion; and some, in spite of their wooden shoes, and others without any, danced in a manner not to be seen among our English peasants. They had "shoes like a sauce-boat," but no "steeple-clock'd hose." While we breakfasted, one of the villagers fed my horse with some fresh-mowed hay, and it was with some difficulty I could prevail upon him to be paid for it, because the trifle I offered was much more than his *Court of Conscience* informed him it was worth. I could moralize here a little; but I will only ask you, in which state think you man is best; the untaught man, in that of nature, or the man whose mind is enlarged by education and a knowledge of the world? The behaviour of the inhabitants of this little hamlet had a very forcible effect upon me; because it brought me back to my earlier days, and reminded me of the reception I met with in America by what we now call the *Savage* Indians; yet I have been received in the same courteous manner in a little hamlet, unarmed, and without any other protection but by the law of nature, by those *savages*;—indeed it was before the *Savages of Europe* had instructed them in the art of war, or Mr. Whitfield had preached *methodism* among them. Therefore, I only tell you what they *were* in 1735, not what they *are at present*. When I visited them, they walked in the flowery paths of Nature; now, I fear, they tread the polluted roads of blood. Perhaps of all the uncivilized nations under the sun, the native Indians of America *were* the most humane; I have seen an hundred instances of their humanity and integrity;—when a white man was under the lash of the executioner, at *Savannah in Georgia*, for using an Indian woman ill, I saw *Torno Chaci*, their King, run in between the offender and the corrector, saying, "*whip me, not him*;"—the King was the complainant, indeed, but the man deserved a

much severer chastisement. This was a *Savage King*. Christian Kings too often care not who is whipt, so they escape the smart.

LETTER V.

Rheims.

We arrived at this city before the bustle which the coronation of *Louis* the 16th occasioned was quite over; I am sorry I did not see it, because I now find it worth seeing; but I staid at *Calais* on purpose to avoid it; for having paid two guineas to see the coronation of *George* the Third, I determined never more to be put to any extraordinary expence on the score of *crowned heads*. However, my curiosity has been well gratified in hearing it talked over, and over again, and in reading *Marmontell's* letter to a friend upon that subject; but I will not repeat what he, or others have said upon the occasion, because you have, no doubt, seen in the English papers a tolerably good one; only that the Queen was so overcome with the repeated shouts and plaudits of her new subjects, that she was obliged to retire. The fine Gothic cathedral, in which the ceremony was performed, is indeed a church worthy of such a solemnity; the portal is the finest I ever beheld; the windows are painted in the very best manner; nor is there any thing within the church but what should be there. I need not tell you that this is the province which produces the most delicious wine in the world; but I will assure you, that I should have drank it with more pleasure, had you been here to have partook of it. In the cellars of one wine-merchant, I was conducted through long passages more like streets than caves; on each side of which, bottled *Champaigne* was piled up some feet higher than my head, and at least twelve deep. I bought two bottles to taste, of that which the merchant assured me was each of the best sort he had, and for which I paid him six livres: if he sells all he had in bottles at that time, and at the same price, I shall not exceed the bounds of truth if I say, I saw ten thousand pounds worth of bottled *Champaigne* in his cellars. Neither of the bottles, however, contained wine so good as I often drank in England; but perhaps we are deceived, and find it more palatable by having sugar in it; for I suspect that most of the *Champaigne* which is bottled for the use of English consumption, is so prepared. That you may know however, for the future, whether *Champaigne* or any other wine is so adulterated, I

will give you an infallible method to prove:—fill a small long-necked bottle with the wine you would prove, and invert the neck of it into a tumbler of clear water; if the wine be genuine, it will all remain in the bottle; if adulterated, with sugar, honey, or any other sweet substance, the sweets will all pass into the tumbler of water, and leave the genuine wine behind. The difference between still *Champaigne*, and that which is *mousser*, is owing to nothing more than the time of the year in which it is bottled.

I found in this town an English gentleman, from whom we received many civilities, and who made us acquainted with a French gentleman and lady, whose partiality to the English nation is so great, that their neighbours call their house "The English Hotel." The partiality of such a family is a very flattering, as well as a very pleasing circumstance, to those who are so happy to be known to them, because they are not only the first people in the town, but the *best*; and in point of talents, inferior to none, perhaps, in the kingdom. I must not, after saying so much, omit to tell you, it is *Monsieur & Madame de Jardin*, of whom I speak; they live in the Grande Place, *vis-a-vis* the statue of the King; and if ever you come to Rheims, be assured you will find it a Good Place. *Madame de Jardin* is not only one of the highest-bred women in France, but one of the first in point of letters, and that is saying a great deal, for France abounds more with women of that turn than England. Mrs. Macaulay, Mrs. Carter, Miss Aikin, and Mrs. Montague, are the only four ladies I can recollect in England who are celebrated for their literary genius; in France, I could find you a score or two. To give you some idea of the regard and affection *Mons. de Jardin* has for his wife,—for French husbands, now and then, love their wives as well as we Englishmen do,—I send you a line I found in his study, wrote under his lady's miniature picture:

"Chaque instant à mes yeux la rend
Plus estimable."

This town stands in a vast plain, is of great extent, and enclosed within high walls, and a deep ditch. The public walks are of great extent, nobly planted, and the finest in the whole kingdom. It is,

indeed, a large and opulent city, and abounds not only with the best wine, but every thing that is good; and every thing is plenty, and consequently cheap. The fruit market, in particular, is superior to every thing of the kind I ever beheld; but I will not tantalize you by saying any more upon that subject. Adieu!

P.S. The Antiquarian will find amusement in this town. There are some Roman remains worthy of notice; but such as require the information of the inhabitant to be seen.

LETTER VI.

Dijon.

You will laugh, perhaps, when I tell you, I could hardly refrain from tears when I took leave of the *De Jardin* family at *Rheims*,—but so it was. Good-breeding, and attention, have so much the appearance of friendship, that they may, and often do, deceive the most discerning men;—no wonder, then, if I was unhappy in leaving a town, where I am sure I met with the first, and had some reason to believe I should have found the latter, had we staid to cultivate it. *Bourgogne* is, however, a much finer province than *Champaigne*; and this town is delightfully situated; that it is a cheap province, you will not doubt, even to English travellers, when I tell you, that I had a good supper for four persons, three decent beds, good hay, and plenty of corn, for my horse, at an inn upon this road, and was charged only four livres ten sols! not quite four shillings. Nor was it owing to any mistake; for I lay the following night at just such another inn, and was charged just the same price for nearly the same entertainment. They were carriers' inns, indeed, but I know not whether they were not, upon the whole, better, and cleaner too, than some of the town *auberges*. I need not therefore tell you, I was straggled a little out of *le Route Anglois*, when I found such a *bon Marche*.

Dijon is pleasantly situated, well built, and the country round about it is as beautiful as nature could well make it. The shady walks round the whole town are very pleasing, and command a view of the adjacent country. The excellence of the wine of this province, you are better acquainted with than I am; though I must confess, I have drank better burgundy in England than I have yet

tasted here: but I am not surprized at that; for at Madeira I could not get wine that was even tolerable.

I found here, two genteel English gentlemen, Mess. Plowden and Smyth, from whom we received many marks of attention and politeness.—Here, I imagined I should be able to bear seeing the execution of a man, whose crimes merited, I thought, the severest punishment. He was broke upon the wheel; so it is called; but the wheel is what the body is fixed upon to be exposed on the high road after the execution. This man's body, however, was burnt. The miserable wretch (a young strong man) was brought in the evening, by a faint torch light, to a chapel near the place of execution, where he might have continued in prayer till midnight; but after one hour spent there, he walked to, and mounted the scaffold, accompanied by his confessor, who with great earnestness continually presented to him, and bade him kiss, the crucifix he carried in his hand. When the prisoner came upon the scaffold, he very willingly laid himself upon his back, and extended his arms and legs over a cross, that was laid flat and fixed fast upon the scaffold for that purpose, and to which he was securely tied by the executioner and his mother, who assisted her son in this horrid business. Part of the cross was cut away, in eight places, so as to leave a hollow vacancy where the blows were to be given, which are, between the shoulder and elbow, elbow and wrist, thigh and knee, and knee and ancle. When the man was securely tied down, the end of a rope which was round his neck, with a running noose, was brought through a hole in and under the scaffold; this was to give the *Coup de Grace*, after breaking: a *Coup* which relieved him, and all the agitated spectators, from an infinite degree of misery, except only, the executioner and his mother, for they both seemed to enjoy the deadly office. When the blows were given, which were made with a heavy piece of iron, in the form of a butcher's cleaver without an edge, the bones of the arms and legs were broke in eight places; at each blow, the sufferer called out, O God! without saying another word, or even uttering a groan. During all this time, the Confessor called upon him continually to kiss the cross, and to remember Christ, his Redeemer. Indeed, there was infinite address, as well as piety, in the conduct of the Confessor; for he would not permit this miserable wretch to have one moment's reflection about his bodily sufferings, while a

matter of so much more importance was depending; but even those eight blows seemed nothing to two dreadful after-claps, for the executioner then untied the body, turned his back upwards, and gave him two blows on the small of the back with the same iron weapon; and yet even that did not put an end to the life and sufferings of the malefactor! for the finishing stroke was, after all this, done by the halter, and then the body was thrown into a great fire, and consumed to ashes. There were two or three executions soon after, but of a more moderate kind. Yet I hope I need not tell you, that I shall never attend another; and would feign have made my escape from this, but it was impossible. — Here, too, I saw upwards of fourscore criminals linked together, by one long chain, and so they were to continue till they arrived in the galleys at *Marseilles*. Now I am sure you will be, as I was, astonished to think, an old woman, the mother of the executioner, should willingly assist in a business of so horrid a nature; and I dare say, you will be equally astonished that the magistrates of the city permitted it. Decency, and regard to the sex, alone, one would think, should have put a stop to a practice so repugnant to both; and yet perhaps, not one person in the town considered it in that light. Indeed, no other person would have assisted, and the executioner must have done all the business himself, if his mother had not been one of that part of the *fair sex*, which Addison pleasantly mentions, "*as rakers of cinders*;" for the executioner could not have found a single person to have given him any assistance. There was a guard of the *Marechaussee*, to prevent the prisoners' escape; but none that would have lifted up a little finger towards forwarding the execution; the office is hereditary and infamous, and the officer is shut out of all society. His perquisites, however, were considerable; near ten pounds, I think, for this single execution; and he had a great deal more business coming on. I would not have given myself the pain of relating, nor you the reading, the particulars of this horrid affair, but to observe, that it is such examples as these, that render travelling in France, in general, secure. I say, in general; for there are, nevertheless, murders committed very frequently upon the high roads in France; and were those murders to be made known by news-papers, as ours are in England, perhaps it would greatly intimidate travellers of their own, as well as other nations. But as the murdered, and murderers, are generally foot-travellers, though the dead body is found, the

murderer is escaped; and as nobody knows either party, nobody troubles themselves about it. All over France, you meet with an infinite number of people travelling on foot, much better dressed than you find, in general, the stagecoach gentry in England. Most of these foot-travellers are young expensive tradesmen, and artists, who have paid their debts by a light pair of heels; when their money is exhausted, the stronger falls upon the weaker, knocks out his brains, and furnishes himself with a little money; and these murders are never scarce heard of above a league from the place where they are committed; for which reason, you never meet a foot-traveller in France, without arms, of one kind or other, and carried for one *purpose*, or the *other*. Gentlemen, however, who travel only in the day-time, and who are armed, have but little danger to apprehend; yet it is necessary to be upon their guard when they pass through great woods, and to keep in the *middle* of the road, so as not to be too suddenly surprized; because a *convenient* opportunity may induce two or three *honest* travellers to embrace a favourable occasion of replenishing their purses; and as they always murder those whom they attack, if they can, those who are attacked should never submit, but defend themselves to the utmost of their power. Though the woods are dangerous, there are, in my opinion, plains which are much more so; a high hill which commands an extensive plain, from which there is a view of the road some miles, both ways, is a place where a robber has nothing to fear but from those whom he attacks; and he is morally certain of making his escape one way or the other: but in a wood, he may be as suddenly surprized, as he is in a situation to surprize others; for this reason, I have been more on my guard when I have seen people approach me on an extensive plain, than when I have passed through deep woods; nor would I ever let any of those people come too near my chaise; I always shewed them the *utmost distance*, and made them return the compliment, by bidding them, if they offered to come out of their line, to keep off: this said in a peremptory manner, and with a stern look, is never taken ill by honest men, and has a forcible effect upon rascals, for they immediately conclude you think yourself superior to them, and then they will think so too: whatever comes unexpected, is apt to dismay; whole armies have been seized with a panic from the most trifling artifice of the opposite general, and such as, by a minute's reflection, would have produced a contrary effect: the