

DESCRIPTION OF THE ALPS.

[From Mrs. Piazzi's *Journey through France, Italy and Germany*, just published.]

WE have at length passed the Alps, and are safely arrived at this lovely little city, whence I look back on the majestic boundaries of Italy, with amazement at his courage who first profaned them: surely the immediate sensation conveyed to the mind by the sight of such tremendous appearances must be in every traveller the same, a sensation of fulness never experienced before, a satisfaction that there is something great to be seen on earth—some object capable of contenting even fancy. Who he was who first of all people pervaded these fortifications, raised by nature for the defence of her European Paradise, is not ascertained; but the great Duke of Savoy has wisely left his name engraved on a monument upon the first considerable ascent from Pont Bonvoison, as being author of a beautiful road cut through the solid stone for a great length of way, and having by this means encouraged others to assist in facilitating a passage so truly desirable, till one of the great wonders now to be observed among the Alps, is the ease with which even a delicate traveller may cross them. In these prospects, colouring is carried to its utmost point of perfection, particularly at the time I found it, variegated with golden touches of autumnal tints; immense cascades meantime bursting from the mountains on the one side; cultivated fields, rich with vineyards, on the other, and tufted with elegant shrubs that invite one to pluck and carry them away to where

they would be treated with much more respect. Little towns sticking in the clefts, where one would imagine it was impossible to clamber; light clouds often sailing under the feet of the high-perched inhabitants, while the sound of a deep and rapid though narrow river, dashing with violence among the insolently impeding rocks at the bottom, and bells in thickly-scattered spires calling the quiet Savoyards to church upon the steep sides of every hill—fill one's mind with such mutable, such various ideas, as no other place can ever possibly afford.

I had the satisfaction of seeing a chamois at a distance, and spoke with a fellow who had killed five hungry bears that made depredation on his pastures; we looked on him with reverence as a monster-tamer of antiquity, Hercules or Cadmus; he had the skin of a beast wrapt round his middle, which confirmed the fancy—but our servants, who borrowed from no fictitious records, the few ideas that adorned their talk, told us he reminded them of *John the Baptist*. I had scarce recovered the shock of this too sublime comparison, when we approached his cottage, and found the felons nailed against the wall, like foxes heads or spread kites in England. Here are many goats, but neither white nor large, like those which browse upon the steeps of Snowdon, or clamber among the cliffs of Plinlimmon.

ITALIAN CICISBEISM.

[From the same.]

WE have all heard much of Italian cicisbeism; I had a mind to know how matters really stood; and took the nearest way to information by asking a mighty beautiful and apparently artless young creature, *not noble*, how that affair was managed, for there is no harm done I am sure, said I; 'Why no,' replied she, 'no great harm to be sure: except wearing some attentions from a man one cares little about: for my own part,' continued she, 'I detest the custom, as I happen to love my husband excessively, and desire nobody's company in the world but his. We are not people of fashion though, you know, nor at all rich; so how

should we set fashions for our betters? They would only say, see how jealous he is! if Mr. Such-a-one sat much with me at home, or went with me to the Corso; and I *must* go with some gentleman you know; and the men are such ungenerous creatures, and have such ways with them: I want money often, and this *cavalierservente* pays the bills, and so the connection draws closer—that's all.' And your husband, I said I—'Oh, why he likes to see me well dressed; he is very good-natured, and very charming; I love him to my heart.' And your confessor cried I—'Oh, why he is used to it,'—in the Milanese dialect—*e affuefà*.