

POETRY.

THE EVENING HOUR.

Sweet evening hour ! sweet evening hour !
That calms the air, and shuts the flower ;
That brings the wild bee to its nest,
The infant to its mother's breast.

Sweet hour ! that bids the labourer cease :
That gives the weary team repose,
And leads them home, and crowns them there
With rest and shelter, food and care.

O ! season of soft zounds and hues,
Of twilight walks among the dews,
Of feelings calm, and converse sweet,
And thoughts too shadowy to repeat !

Yes lovely hour ! thou art the time
When feelings flow, and wishes climb,
When timid souls began to dare,
And God receives and answers prayer.

When trembling through the dewy skies
Look out the stars, like thoughtful eyes
Of angles, calm reclining there,
And gazing on this world of care.

Sweet hour ! for heavenly musing made—
When Isaac walked and Daniel prayed,
When Abraham's offering God did own,
And Jesus loved to be alone.

QUEBEC.

The capital of the Province of Lower Canada, and the principal seat of British dominion in America, cannot be approached by the intelligent stranger without emotions of respect and admiration. It is situated on the north-west side of the great River St. Lawrence, in latitude 46 50 15, and longitude 71 13. A ridge of high land commencing at Cap Rouge, and extending for about eight miles along its bank, terminates at the eastern extremity in a lofty promontory, three hundred and fifty feet high above the water, rising in front of the beautiful basin formed by the confluence of the little River St. Charles with the St. Lawrence. There stands Quebec, formerly the seat of the French empire in the west—purchased for England by the blood of the heroic Wolfe, shed in the decisive battle of the Plains of Abraham. A commodious harbor, which can afford a safe anchorage for several fleets—a magnificent river whose banks are secured by steep cliffs—a position on a lofty rock, which bids defiance to external violence, together with extraordinary beauty of scenery, are some of the natural advantages which distinguish the City of Quebec. The River St. Lawrence, which flows majestically before the town, is one of the greatest, most noble and beautiful of rivers; and at the same time, the furthest navigable for vessels of a large size of any in the universe. From its mouth in the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the harbor of Quebec is three hundred and sixty miles; and vessels from Europe ascend to Montreal, which is one hundred and eighty miles higher up its course. A precipice of naked and rugged rock, nearly three hundred feet high, divides the Upper from

the Lower Town. The latter embracing the foot of the precipice, and skirting the base of the promontory to a considerable extent on both sides, is the mart of foreign trade and the principal place of business. It is built on ground made partly by excavations from the rock, or redeemed from the water; and contains numerous and convenient wharfs and store houses, for the accommodation of trade and navigation. The channel before the town is rapid—its breadth is about eleven hundred and thirty-four yards. The depth of the river opposite the city is about thirty fathoms and good anchorage is every where to be found. The Upper Town presents the picturesque appearance of a fortified city—whose houses rise gradually above each other in the form of an amphitheatre—embellished and diversified by large buildings and lofty spires, pouring a flood of light and splendor from their bright tiled roofs.—*Hawkins' Picture of Quebec.*

PARIS AND LONDON.

“In making a survey of both capitals, one cannot help being struck with the distinctive differences of national character, which are so strongly marked in the leading features of the one and the other. *Comfort* seems to have presided at the buildings of London, and *show* at that of Paris. A drive through the streets of Paris will explain to you at once, that it is the capital of a people who have no taste for the privacy of home; but who prefer to live in the glare and glitter of public amusements. The houses are of an immense height, but then no man's house is his castle; each story has its tenants, and if the effect of such wholesale buildings be magnificent, it is obtained at a prodigious sacrifice of domestic comfort. But, to make comfortable homes is not the object of Paris; on the contrary, it is upon the public places that attention and expense are almost exclusively employed; and these are made as luxurious as possible. The *cafés*, the *restaurants*, and the thousand establishments for the entertainment of the public, will be found in the highest state of perfection; and it is to enjoy themselves in such places, that the French escape from the comfortless retreat of their own dwellings. In London we find the reverse of all this. For, though our public buildings are in the grandest style of magnificence, yet perhaps the most striking feature in London is the evident and paramount object of all the vast sums expended in its improvement, namely, the individual comfort of the inhabitants. Witness the paving and lighting the streets! the admirable, though invisible works, by means of which water is circulated through all the veins of the metropolis, works of which Paris is wholly destitute, and the capacious laying out of the squares, which, splendid as they are, seem less intended for show, than for the health and enjoyment of those that live in them.”

POMPEII.—BY N. P. WILLIS.

We have just returned from our first excursion to Pompeii. It lies on the southern part of the bay, just below the volcano which overwhelmed it, about twelve miles from Naples. The road by along the shore, and is lined with villages which are only separated by name. The first is Portici, where the King has a summer palace, through the court of which the road passes. It is built over Herculaneum, and the danger of undermining it has stopped the excavations of unquestionably the richest city buried by Vesuvius. We stopped at a little distance in the midst of the village, and taking a guide and two porters, descended to the only part of it now visible, by near a hundred steps. We found ourselves in the back of an amphitheatre. We entered the narrow passage, and the guide pointed to several of the upper seats for the spectators, which had been partially dug out. They were lined with marble, as the whole amphitheatre appears to have been. To realise the effect of these ruins, it is to be remembered that they are embedded in solid lava, like rock, near a hundred feet deep, and that a city which is itself ancient, is built above them. The carriage in which we came stood high over our heads, in a time-worn street, and ages had passed, and many generations of men had lived and died over a splendid city, whose very name had been forgotten! It was discovered in sinking a well, which struck the door of the amphitheatre. The guide took us through several other long passages, dug across and around it, showing us the orchestra, the stage, the numerous entrances, and the bases of several statues which are taken to the museum of Naples. This is the only part of the excavation that remains open, the others having been filled with rubbish. The noise of the carriages overhead in the street of Portici was like a deafening thunder.

In a hurry to get to Pompeii, which is much more interesting, we ascended to day-light, and drove on. Coasting along the curve of the bay, with only a succession of villas and gardens between us and the beach, we soon came to Torro del Greco, a small town which was overwhelmed by an eruption thirty-nine years ago. Vesuvius here rises gradually on the left, the crater being at a distance of five miles. The road crossed the bed of dry lava, which extends to the sea in a broad black mass of cinders, giving the country the most desolate aspect. The town is rebuilt just beyond the ashes, and the streets are crowded with the thoughtless inhabitants who buy and sell and lounge in the sun with no more remembrance or fear of the volcano than the people of a city in America.

Another half hour brought us to a long, high bank of earth and ashes thrown out from the excavations; and, passing on, we stopped at the gate of Pompeii. A guide met us, and we entered. We found ourselves in the ruins of a public square, surrounded with small low columns of red marble. On the right were several small prisons, in one of which was found the skeleton of a man with his feet in iron stocks. The cell was very small, and the poor fellow must have been suffocated without even a hope of escape. The columns just in front were scratched with ancient names, possibly those of the guard stationed at the door of the prison. This square is surrounded with shops which were found the relics and riches of trade, consisting of an immense variety.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

† Pompeii, as my readers know, was buried by an eruption of Vesuvius about thirty years after the crucifixion of our Saviour, and was accidentally discovered some eighty years ago, by the laborers in a vineyard over it, after lying forgotten near seventeen centuries? The shower of “cinders, hot water and ashes,” which buried it, settled into a loose mass, which was easily removed, and about one-third of the town is now cleared and open to the sky.

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