

bler old villagers; work-boxes, samplers, books, testaments, prayer books, &c. &c. for the school; the sight of which, I can assure the reader, made Kate far happier than if they had been the costliest articles of dress and jewelry.

The next day was a pleasant one for travelling—"frosty but kindly." About one o'clock there might have been seen standing before the door the roomy yellow family carriage, with four post horses, all in travelling trim. In the rumble sat Mr. Aubrey's valet and Mrs. Aubrey's maid—Miss Aubrey's, and one of the nursery maids, going down by the coach which had carried Sam—the Tally-ho. The coach-box was piled up with that sort of luggage which, by its lightness and bulk, denotes lady travelling; inside were Mrs. and Miss Aubrey, muffled in furs, shawls, and pelisses; a nursery maid, with little Master and Miss Aubrey, equally well protected from the cold; and the vacant seat awaited Mr. Aubrey, who at length made his appearance, having been engaged in giving specific instructions concerning the forwarding of his letters and papers. As soon as he had taken his place, and all had been snugly disposed within, the steps were doubled up—crack! crack! went the whips of the two postillions, and away rolled the carriage over the dry hard pavement.

"Now that's what I call doing it uncommon comfortable," said a pot-boy to one of the footmen at an adjoining house, where he was delivering the porter for the servants' dinner; "how werry nice and snug them two looks in the rumble behind."

"He goes to-morrow," carelessly replied the gentleman he was addressing.

"It's a fine thing to be gentlefolk," said the boy, taking up his pot-board.

"Ya-as," drawled the footman, twitching up his shirt collar.

On drawing up to the posting house, which was within about forty miles of Yatton, the Aubreys found a carriage and four just ready to start, after changing horses; and whose should this prove to be but Lord De la Zouch's, containing himself, his lady, and his son, Mr. Delamere. His lordship and his son both alighted on accidentally discovering who had overtaken them; and coming up to Mr. Aubrey's carriage windows, exchanged surprised and cordial greetings with its occupants, whom Lord De la Zouch imagined to have been by this time on their way to Shropshire. Mr. Delamere manifested a surprising eagerness about the welfare of little Agnes Aubrey, who happened to be lying fast asleep in Miss Aubrey's lap; but the evening was fast advancing, and both the travelling parties had before them a considerable portion of their journey. After a hasty promise on the part of each to dine with the other before returning to town for the season—a promise which Mr. Delamere at all events resolved should not be lost sight of—they parted.

ARRIVING AT THE MANSION.

'Twas eight o'clock before Mr. Aubrey's eye, which had been for some time on the look out, caught sight of Yatton woods; and when it did, his heart yearned towards them. The moon shone brightly and cheerily, and it was pleasant to listen to the quickening clattering tramp of the horses upon the dry hard highway, as the travellers rapidly neared a spot endeared to them by every tender association. When within half a mile of the village they overtook the worthy Vicar, who had mounted his nag, and been out on the road to meet the expected comers for an hour before. Aubrey roused Mrs. Aubrey from her nap, to point out Dr. Tatham, who at that time was cantering along beside the open window. 'Twas refreshing to see the cheerful old man—who looked as ruddy and hearty as ever.

"All well?" he exclaimed, riding close to the window.

"Yes,—but how is my mother?" enquired Aubrey.

"High spirits—high spirits: was with her this afternoon. I have not seen her better for years. So surprised. Ah! here's an old friend—Hector!"

"Bow-wow-wow! Bow!—Bow-wow!"

"Papa! papa!" exclaimed the voice of little Aubrey, struggling to get on his father's lap to look out of the window. "that is Hector! I know it is! He is come to see me! I want to look at him!"

Mr. Aubrey lifted him up as he desired, and a huge black and white Newfoundland dog almost leaped up to the window at sight of him clapping his little hands, as if in eager recognition, and then scampered and bounded about in all directions, barking most boisterously, to the infinite delight of little Aubrey. This messenger had been sent on by Sam, the groom, who had been on the look-out for the travellers for some time; and the moment he caught sight of the carriage, pelted down the village, through the park at top speed, up to the hall, there to communicate the good news. The travellers thought that the village had never looked so pretty and picturesque before. The sound of the carriage dashing through it called all the cottagers to their doors, where they stood bowing and curtsying. They soon reached the park gates, which were thrown wide open in readiness for its entrance. As they passed the church, they heard its little bells ringing a merry peal to welcome their arrival: its faint chimings went to their very hearts.

"My darling Agnes, here we are again in the old place," said Mr. Aubrey, in a joyous tone, affectionately kissing Mrs. Aubrey and his sister, as, after having wound their way up the park at almost a gallop, they heard themselves rattling over the stone pavement immediately under the old turret gateway. In approaching it, they saw lights glancing about in the hall windows; and before

they had drawn up, the great door was thrown open, and several servants (one or two of them grey-headed) made their appearance, eager to release the travellers from their long confinement. A great wood fire was crackling and blazing in the fire place opposite the door, casting a right pleasant and cheerful light over the various antique objects ranged around the walls; but the object on which Mr. Aubrey's eye instantly settled was the venerable figure of his mother, standing beside the fire-place with one or two female attendants. The moment that the carriage door was opened, he stepped quickly out, (nearly tumbling, by the way, over Hector, who appeared to think that the carriage door was opened only to enable him to jump in, which he was prepared to do.)

"God bless you, Madame," faltered Aubrey, his eyes filling with tears as he received his mother's fervent, but silent greeting, and imagined that the arms folded around him were somewhat feebler than when he had last felt them embracing him. With similar affection was the good old lady received by her daughter and daughter-in-law.

"Where is my pony, grandmamma?" quoth little Aubrey, running up to her, (he had been kept quiet for the last eighty miles or so, by the mention of the aforesaid pony.) "Where is it? I want to see my little pony directly! Mamma says you have got a little pony for me with a long tail; I must see it before I go to bed; I must indeed, is it in the stable?"

"You shall see it in the morning, my darling—the very first thing," said Mrs. Aubrey, fervently kissing her beautiful little grandson, while tears of pride and joy ran down her cheek. She then pressed her lips on the delicate but flushed face of little Agnes, who was fast asleep; and as soon as they had been conducted towards their nursery, Mrs. Aubrey, followed by her children, led the way to the dining room—the dear delightful old dining room, in which all of them had passed so many happy hours of their lives. It was large and lofty; and two antique branch silver candlesticks, standing on sconces upon each side of a strange old straggling carved mantelpiece of inlaid oak, aided by the blaze given out by two immense logs of wood burning beneath, thoroughly illuminated it. The walls were oak-paneled, containing many pictures, several of them of great value; and the floor also was of polished oak, over the centre of which, however, was spread a rich, thickly covered turkey carpet. Opposite the door was a large mullioned bay-window, then, however, concealed behind an ample flowing crimson curtain. On the further side of the fireplace stood a high backed and roomy arm chair, almost covered with Kate's embroidery, and in which Mrs. Aubrey had evidently, as usual, been sitting till the moment of their arrival—for on a small ebony table beside it lay her spectacles, and an open volume. Nearly fronting the fireplace was a recess, in which stood an exquisitely black carved ebony cabinet, inlaid with white and red ivory. This Miss Aubrey claimed as her own, and had appropriated it to her purposes ever since she was seven years old. "You dear old thing," said she, throwing open the folding doors—"Everything just as I left it! Really, dear mamma, I could skip about the room for joy! I wish Charles would never leave Yatton again."

"It's rather lonely, my love, when none of you are with me," said Mrs. Aubrey. "I feel getting older!"

"Dearest mamma," interrupted Miss Aubrey, quickly, "I won't leave you again! I'm quite tired of town—I am indeed!"

Though fires were lit in their several dressing rooms, of which they were more than once reminded by their respective attendants, they all remained seated before the fire in carriage costume, (except that Kate had thrown aside her bonnet, her half-uncurled tresses hanging in negligent profusion over her thickly-furred pelisse,) eagerly conversing about the incidents of their journey, and the events which had transpired at Yatton since they had quitted it. At length, however, they retired to perform the refreshing duties of the dressing room, before sitting down to supper.

FINE ARTS.

PANORAMA OF VERSAILLES.

Mr. Burford has opened a sunny spot in the midst of the wintry gloom; and those who in their passage through Leicester Square step aside and enter the magic circle drawn by his pencil, will find themselves surrounded with the splendour and gaiety of the Palace and Gardens of St. Louis on the Fete of St. Louis. Versailles, to be seen in its glory—we might almost say to be seen at all—should be viewed on a fete-day, one of those rare occasions here presented; when the eight grand fountains, as well as the minor jets d'eau, are in full play; and the stately parterres and terraces of Le Notre—the statues that line the clipped hedges interspersed with orange and pomegranate trees—are thronged with the motley groups that make up a Parisian multitude: the rushing and plashing of the numerous cascades—their silvery spray cooling the air, and reflecting in rainbow hues the rays of light—the hum and movement of the crowds, the gay dresses and animated faces—these are essential accompaniments to the delights of Versailles. Without them, the formal avenues, the broad gravel-walks and spacious grass-plots, connected by marble steps and bordered by vases and statues, look vacant and triste like an empty ball-room: the solitude is chilling; you wander about in a waste of grandeur, as if roaming over an empty mansion. It is a scene of art, though out of doors; the waving foliage overtopping the verdurous walls of the alleys seems but a few stray locks of Nature's tresses suffered to se-

cape in order to set off the skill of the friseur. The basins look like huge cisterns; and the plumbers-work that obtrudes in the midst of gods and goddesses, destroys by its mechanicalness the effect of the sculpture, wanting the glassy forms of the falling water, to veil those contrivances and give completeness to the design. Retirement is out of the question: if you find a nook to repose in, a fac-simile of it stares you in the face; and threading the alleys is like walking through a problem in geometry. The gardens, however, are in accordance with the Palace, to which they form a verdant fringe or bordering, cut out of the landscape to adorn the building.

The scene is animated and characteristic of the French. The visiter is supposed to stand in the central walk of the terrace called the Parterre d'Eau; on one side stretches out the grand façade, or Western front of the palace; on the other the lengthened perspective of the gardens opens to view the great fountains of Latona and Apollo, the *tapis vert*, and the grand canal—a glimpse of the country beyond terminating the vista. The sky is bright and almost cloudless: the slant rays of a declining August sun light up the yet summer greenness of the foliage, and are reflected from the red glare of the gravel, which by contrast lends a cooler freshness to the shady spots, and brings out the marbles in all their whiteness. The groups of Parisian promenaders are judiciously distributed, so as to enliven the scene without being too prominent, and heightening by the colours of the costumes the pictorial effect: the figures are admirably painted from sketches made on the spot, and stand out in bold relief; and their perspective is managed with great tact, so as to represent the descent of the garden from the terrace, and the spaciousness of the promenades. Here a fierce dandy of La Jeune France, with long hair and "bearded like the pard," is escorting a Parisian *élégante*; there a dragoon, with blood-red trousers and facings, struts along with a white-capped soubrette on each arm; children in fantastic dresses are seen flocking round the "limonadier," or vender of sweetmeats; and workmen and peasants, wearing the "blouse," mingle with the gayly dressed throng, among whom may be seen, conspicuous by his "bow window," the brave Englishman. The white spires of the jets d'eau peeping above the trees in other parts of the gardens, convey an idea of their extent; and the houses of the town and distant heights seen beyond indicate the character of the surrounding country.

The palace itself is, as in the reality, the least striking feature: its immense extent diminishes the apparent height of the building, which thus fails to produce an effect of grandeur commensurate with its magnificence. Its magnitude only becomes evident upon a calculation of its superficial dimensions; and as we arrive at this knowledge only by detail, the whole is not impressive. The long centre and the two long wings, made up of a continuous reiteration of the same parts, without even a portico to vary the monotony of the elevation, and with neither dome nor tower to break the line of the roof, are any thing but imposing: seen at a distance necessary to embrace the whole length of the façade, the edifice looks low; and the multiplicity of windows destroys the beauty of the architectural details. The whole scheme, in effect, is on a scale so vast, that it defeats the intention: as an effort of aggrandizement, it is a signal failure—a huge "too much." Versailles is the "folly" of Louis le Grand; for though he finished it by draining the wealth of the country, it is too big to be used; and the very greatness of the palace makes the court seem little that cannot fill it. It is said to have accommodated at one time 20,000 persons, in the reign of Louis the Fourteenth; but the experiment was too costly to be repeated. So enormous was the outlay for its erection, that even the pampered prodigal who built it feared to let the sum be known, and ordered the accounts to be burnt; so that the estimate of forty millions sterling is only conjectural. Louis Philippe has wisely converted it into a museum of paintings and sculpture commemorating the events of French history, reserving only a suite of state apartments for his own use. The sumptuous theatre cannot be lighted up without an expenditure so large that it is scarcely ever used: the great fountains, too, waste such deluges of water, that they can only be made to flow altogether twice a year—and then but for half an hour at a time. Nor is the splendour of "ce pompeux Versailles," as old Deille properly terms it, enhanced by the associations connected with the place: it was natural that this monument of the extravagance and luxury of a profligate king should be the scene of those terrible outbreaks of retributive vengeance, when the people became as mad as their Grand Monarque.—*London Spectator*.

PANORAMA OF BENARES.

Benares, the Holy City of the Hindoos, now occupies the place of Rome, in the large circle of Burford's Panorama. The sacred waters of the Ganges roll their broad and rapid flood where the yellow Tiber sluggishly crept along its narrow channel; Moslem mosques and minarets and Brahmin ghauts and pagodas taking the place of Christian domes and steeples and crumbling colonnades of heathen temples. The scene is striking from its novelty and strangeness no less than its picturesqueness, and the fancy is excited while the eye is gratified. The grand attraction of a panorama—namely, the power of placing you, as it were, bodily in a new world—is felt in a remarkable degree in this instance: scarcely a single object reminds one of Europe; you are at once transported into the midst of Asia, and live an hour in idea under an Indian climate and among a different race of men.