

plunge in the tempting bath, we too endeavored to descend, but were some time before we found the means. At length we were fortunate enough to catch sight of a group of peasants as they began to descend, and were quickly beside them. They were all well dressed—cheerful and healthy in appearance. We told them of our wish to get to the water's edge, and they smilingly offered to guide us, and appeared highly delighted by our appreciation of the surrounding charms.

"Ah, yes!" they said, "our country is bright and beautiful and our homes dear to us. Our chestnuts are the sweetest, and our vines give us juicy grapes; our olives yield us precious oil; and we have pomegranates and melons to feast on, besides the golden orange and the figs."

We were soon at the desired spot, and surprised to find a number of people assembled on the narrow strip of verdant turf which bordered the lake. There were hearty greetings between our guides and those earlier in their arrival; and it was pleasant to us to note the sweet simplicity of life—

"Far from the din of folly's idle strife—"

simplicity wholly devoid of rude coarseness, but rich in the graceful expressions of kindly nature.

We soon understood that the groups of neighbors collected on the shore waited for their party to be completed, in order to cross the little lake in their boats for the purpose of attending a fete in honor of the marriage of the children of some friends on the other side. They were all in holiday attire, and all carried some little gift for the newly married pair. We were soon invited to become guests, and gladly accompanied the gay throng.

Finding us so much interested in the scenery of their beloved mountains, they steered for a particular point, and gave us a full opportunity for beholding the exquisite features of the surrounding shores. From the almost perpendicular cliffs which formed the chief portion of the lake's boundary arose hills clothed with richest verdure, and interspersed with villages, each having its picturesque little

church built on the highest point adjacent, their white walls glistening in the sun amongst the groves of fruit trees. The very rocks were draped with luxuriant vegetation, and the mountains clad to their tops in forests of walnut and chestnut trees. Then in the far distance, mingling with the clouds, were seen the eternal snows on the highest peaks of the mighty Alps, or the glaciers resplendent with sun-tints. After this friendly concession to our curiosity and rapt admiration of the scene, our kind conductors once more let go their strange little swallow-tailed sails, and we were quickly at the desired place. The boats being secured, the upward walk, or rather scramble, commenced. I confess to some little puffing and gasping as we struggled up the steep path; but it was amazing how the hardy mountaineers (even those amongst them who were no longer young) "stood the tug," in Fred's graphic phraseology. A couple of miles lay between the shore and the house in which the festival was to be held, and each step of the way seemed to present some charming variety in compensation for the ruggedness of the path. The luxuriant foliage, the rich velvety turf spangled with beauteous blossoms; the occasional savannas with their ever undulating verdure, from which arose at our approach large flights of birds; the glimpses of numerous villages with their unfailing spires rising from their little white churches, and the neat-looking cottages nestling amongst fruit-trees—all these, and many besides, were the minor fascinations of the way. But I must not attempt to describe the grander objects; everybody knows of their existence, and all may indulge imagination to the utmost limits, and yet fall far short of the glorious reality.

My astute brother, under the supposition that I meant to attempt a *minute* description in a letter for home, exclaimed impatiently,—

"What fudge! to try to cram an ostrich into a wren's nest. If they want to know anything about such scenery, let them come and look at it."

But, as an humbler topic, I may venture to tell of the little entertainment which we were climbing to join in.