

THE RHINE AND THE ALPS: OR, THE 'BEATEN TRACK'
IN 1851.

CHAPTER VI.

(Concluded from page 253.)

LE PAYS DE VAUD.—There is nothing in Europe more beautiful than the bold and broken masses of the mountains of Savoy, as seen from Lausanne on the opposite shore of the Lake; increasing in height and grandeur eastward towards the upper end, and gradually subsiding to the west—towards Geneva. Here is more softness in the sky than is to be seen in the more northern parts of Switzerland. Lake Lemman is a noble, bright, blue, clear, broad sheet of water,—wide and long, but not a whit too large and extended for the immense scale of the surrounding mountains—so often mirrored in it.

We will venture to express our preference for Lake Lemman before all rivals, even to the Lake of the Four Cantons. If their waters alone be compared, the former is a real sapphire, the latter is like an emerald of glass; and the mountains which border Lake Lemman appear to be all necessary to it and to each other, while the Lake of the Four Cantons is made up, as it were, of a confusion of Lakes and of several independent groups of mountains.

Though an unusual quantity of rain had fallen recently, and during the summer, Lake Lemman was subsiding, as it always does towards winter. Rain makes little difference to the larger lakes of Switzerland; it is the melting of Snow in Summer which fills them. In summer the Swiss rivers except those which issue from the larger lakes, are turbid and full of snow-water; in autumn and winter they are comparatively clear. The reverse of all this of course occurs in Great Britain, where the highest mountains do not exceed three or four thousand feet above the sea-level. It may easily be inferred that these Swiss phenomena are very unfavourable to the fly-fisher. Of those who despise the practical part of Isaac Walton we beg pardon for these and similar remarks.

The climate of Lausanne was not then so cold as that of Berne, Lucerne, etc. though the weather continued to be very unsettled. Our Doctor there condemned us to abide in a room which faced the south, and only to go out of doors in fine weather, and in the day time; we endeavoured to comply with these instructions, but not liking our quarters at Lausanne, removed a few days later to Vevey, about ten miles nearer the head of the Lake. The hills, along the base of which the road is carried, increase in height towards Vevey. The finest scenery of the Lake is before the traveller for the whole distance, and it is better to view that scenery from the road, than to look upon these hills from the Lake, for their slopes are covered with vineyards, the poorest and least beautiful of all vegetation. The road lies between them, bounded by low walls.