

**CLASSICS TO GO**  
**BUBBLES FROM THE**  
**BRUNNENS OF NASSAU**



**SIR FRANCIS BOND HEAD**

**Bubbles from**  
**The Brunnens of Nassau**  
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## PREFACE.

THE writer of this trifling Volume was suddenly sentenced, in the cold evening of his life, to drink the mineral waters of one of the bubbling springs, or brunnens, of Nassau. In his own opinion, his constitution was not worth so troublesome a repair; but, being outvoted, he bowed and departed.

On reaching the point of his destination, he found not only water-bibbing—bathing—and ambulation to be the orders of the day, but it was moreover insisted upon, that the mind was to be relaxed inversely as the body was to be strengthened. During this severe regimen, he was driven to amuse himself in his old age by blowing, as he toddled about, a few literary Bubbles. His hasty sketches of whatever chanced for the moment to please either his eyes, or his mind, were only made—*because he had nothing else in the whole world to do*; and he now offers them to that vast and highly respectable class of people who read from exactly the self-same motive.

The critic must, of course, declare this production to be vain—empty—light—hollow—superficial ..... but it is the nature of Bubbles to be so.

“The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,  
And these are of them.”

MACBETH, *Act I., Scene 3.*

## THE VOYAGE.

By the time I reached the Custom-house Stairs, the paddles of the Rotterdam steam-boat were actually in motion, and I had scarcely hurried across a plank, when I heard it fall splash into the muddy water which separated me farther and farther from the wharf. Still later than myself, passengers were now seen chasing the vessel in boats, and there was a confusion on deck, which I gladly availed myself of, by securing, close to the helmsman, a corner, where, muffled in the ample folds of an old boat-cloak, I felt I might quietly enjoy an incognito; for, as the sole object of my expedition was to do myself as much good and as little harm as possible, I considered it would be a pity to wear out my constitution by any travelling exclamations in the Thames.

The hatches being now opened, the huge pile of trunks, black portmanteaus, and gaudy carpet-bags which had threatened at first to obstruct my prospect was rapidly stowed away; and, as the vessel, hissing and smoking, glided, or rather scuffled, by Deptford, Greenwich, Woolwich, &c., a very motley group of fellow-passengers were all occupied in making remarks of more or less importance. Some justly prided themselves on being able to read aloud inscriptions on shore, which others had declared, from their immense distance, to be illegible;—some, bending forward, modestly asked for information; some, standing particularly upright, pompously, imparted it; at times, wondering eyes, both male and female, were seen radiating in all directions; then all were concentrated on an approaching sister steam-boat, which, steering an opposite course, soon rapidly passed us; the gilt figure at her head,

the splashing of the paddles, and the name written over her stern, occasioning observations which burst into existence nearly as simultaneously as the thunder and lightning of heaven;—handkerchiefs were waved, and bipeds of both sexes seemed to be delighted, save and except one mild, gloomy, inquisitive little man, who went bleating like a lamb from one fellow-passenger to another, without getting even from me any answer to his harmless question, “whether we had or had not passed yet the men hanging in chains?”

As soon as we got below Gravesend, the small volume of life which, with feelings of good-fellowship to all men, I had thus been calmly reviewing, began to assume a graver tone; and, as page after page presented itself to my notice, I observed that notes of interrogation and marks of admiration were types not so often to be met with, as the comma, the colon—and, above all—the full stop.

The wind, as it freshened with the sun, seemed to check all exuberance of fancy; and, as the puny river-wave rose, conversation around me lulled and lulled into a dead calm. A few people, particularly some ladies, suddenly at last broke silence, giving utterance to a mass of heavy matter-of-fact ejaculations, directed rather to fishes than to men. Certain colours in the picture now began rapidly to alter—the red rose gradually looked like the lily—brown skin changed itself into dirty yellow, and I observed two heavy cheeks of warm, comfortable, fat flesh gradually assume the appearance of cold wrinkled tallow. Off Margate, a sort of hole-and-corner system very soon began to prevail, and one human being after another slowly descending heels foremost, vanished from deck into a sub-stratum, or infernal region, where there was moaning, and groaning, and gnashing of teeth; and, as head after head thus solemnly sunk from my view, I gradually threw aside the folds of my ægis, until finding myself alone, I hailed and inhaled with pleasure the cool

fresh breeze which had thus caused me to be left, as I wished to be, by myself.

The gale now delightfully increased—(ages ago I had been too often exposed to it to suffer from its effect);—and, as wave after wave became tipped with white, there flitted before my mind a hundred recollections chasing one another, which I never thought to have re-enjoyed; occasionally they were interrupted by the salt spray, and as it dashed into my face, I felt my grizzled eyebrows curl themselves up, as if they wished me once again to view the world in the prismatic colours of “Auld Lang Syne.” Already was my cure half effected; and the soot of London being thus washed from my brow, I felt a reanimation of mind and a vigour of frame which made me long for the moment when, like the sun bursting from behind a cloud, I might cast aside my shadowy mantle: however, I never moved from my nook, until the darkness of night at last encouraging me, without fear of observation, to walk the deck, “I paced along upon the giddy footing of the hatches,” till tired of these vibrations, I stood for a few moments at the gangway.

There was no moon—a star only here and there was to be seen; yet, as the fire-propelled vessel cut her way, the paddles, by shivering in succession each wave to atoms, produced a phosphoric sparkling, resembling immense lanterns at her side; and while these beacons distinctly proclaimed where the vessel actually was, a pale shining stream of light issued from her keel, which, for a ship’s length or two, told fainter and fainter where she *had been*.

The ideas which rush into the mind, on contemplating by night, out of sight of land, the sea, are as dark, as mysterious, as unfathomable, and as indescribable as the vast ocean itself. One sees but little,—yet that little, caught here and there, so much resembles some of the attributes of the Great Power which created us, that the mind,

trembling under the immensity of the conceptions it engenders, is lost in feelings which human beings cannot impart to each other. In the hurricane which one meets with in southern latitudes, most of us have probably looked in vain for the waves which have been described to be "mountain high;" but, though the outline has been exaggerated, is there not a terror in the filling in of the picture which no human artist can delineate? and in the raging of the tempest—in the darkness which the lightning makes visible—who is there among us that has not fancied he has caught a shadow of the wrath, and a momentary glimmering of the mercy, of the Almighty?

Impressed with these hackneyed feelings, I slowly returned to my nook, and all being obscure, except just the red, rough countenance of the helmsman, feebly illuminated by the light in the binnacle, I laid myself down, and sometimes nodding a little and sometimes dozing, I enjoyed for many hours a sort of half sleep, of which I stood in no little need.

As soon as we had crossed the Briell, the vessel being at once in smooth water, the passengers successively emerged from their graves below, until, in a couple of hours, their ghastly countenances all were on deck.

A bell, as if in hysterics, now rang most violently, as a signal to the town of Rotterdam. The word of command, "STOP HER!" was loudly vociferated by a bluff, short, Dirk Hatteraick-looking pilot, who had come on board off the Briell. "Stop her!" was just heard faintly echoed from below, by the invisible exhausted sallow being who had had, during the voyage, charge of the engine. The paddles, in obedience to the mandate, ceased—then gave two turns—ceased,—turned once again—paused,—gave one last struggle, when, our voyage being over, the vessel's side slightly bumped against the pier.

With a noise like one of Congreve's rockets, the now useless steam was immediately exploded by the pale being below, and, in a few seconds, half the passengers were seen on shore, hurrying in different directions about a town full of canals and spirit shops.

"Compared with Greece and Italy—Holland is but a platter-faced, cold-gin-and-water country, after all!" said I to myself, as I entered the great gate of the *Hôtel des Pays-Bas*; "and a heavy, barge-built, web-footed race are its inhabitants," I added, as I passed a huge amphibious wench on the stairs, who, with her stern towards me, was sluicing the windows with water: "however, there is fresh air, and that, with solitude, is all I here desire!" This frail sentimental sentence was hardly concluded, when a Dutch waiter (whose figure I will not misrepresent by calling him "garçon") popped a long carte, or bill of fare, into my hands, which severely reprov'd me for having many other wants besides those so simply expressed in my soliloquy.

As I did not feel equal to appearing in public, I had dinner apart in my own room; and, as soon as I came to that part of the ceremony called dessert, I gradually raised my eyes from the field of battle, until leaning backwards in my chair to ruminate, I could not help first admiring, for a few moments, the height and immense size of an apartment, in which there seemed to be elbow-room for a giant.

Close before the window was the great river upon whose glassy surface I had often and often been a traveller; and, flowing beneath me, it occurred to me, as I sipped my wine, that in its transit, or course of existence, it had attained at Rotterdam, as nearly as possible, the same period in its life as my own. Its birth, its froward infancy, and its wayward youth, were remote distances to which even fancy could now scarcely re-transport us. In its full vigour, the Rhine had been doomed turbulently to struggle with difficulties and



obstructions which had seemed almost capable of arresting it in its course; and if there was now nothing left in its existence worth admiring—if its best scenery had vanished—if its boundaries had become flat, and its banks insipid, still there was an expansion in its broader surface, and a deep-settled stillness in its course, which seemed to offer tranquillity instead of ecstasy, and perfect contentment instead of imperfect joy. I felt that in the whole course of the river there was no part of it I desired to exchange for the water flowing slowly before me; and though it must very shortly, I knew, be lost in the ocean, that great emblem of eternity, yet in every yard of its existence that fate had been foretold to it.

Not feeling disposed again so immediately to endure the confinement of a vessel, I walked out, and succeeded in hiring a carriage, which, in two days, took me to Cologne, and the following morning I accordingly embarked, *at six o'clock*, in a steam-boat, which was to reach Coblenz in eleven hours.

As everybody, now-a-days, has been up the Rhine, I will only say, that I started in a fog, and, for a couple of hours, was very coolly enveloped in it. My *compagnons de voyage* were tricolored—Dutch, German and French; and, excepting always myself, there was nothing English—nothing, at least, but a board, which sufficiently explained the hungry, insatiable inquisitiveness of our travellers. The black thing hung near the tiller, and upon it there was painted, in white letters, the following sentence, which I copied literatim:—

“Enfering any conversation with the Steersner and Pilotes is desired to be forborn.”

On account of the fog, we could see nothing, yet, once or twice, we steered towards the tinkling invitation of a bell; stopped for a moment—took in passengers, and proceeded. The manner in which these Rhine steam-vessels receive and

deliver passengers, carriages, and horses, is most admirable: at each little village, the birth of a new traveller, or the death or departure of an old one, does not detain the vessel ten seconds: but the little ceremony being over, on it instantly proceeds, worming and winding its way towards its destination.

Formerly, and until lately, a few barges, towed by horses, were occasionally seen toiling against the torrent of the Rhine, while immense rafts of timber, curiously connected together, floated indolently downward to their market: in history, therefore, this uncommercial river was known principally for its violence, its difficulties, and its dangers. Excepting to the painter, its points most distinguished were those where armies had succeeded in crossing, or where soldiers had perished in vainly attempting to do so; but the power of steam, bringing its real character into existence, has lately developed peaceful properties which it was not known to have possessed. The stream which once relentlessly destroyed mankind, now gives to thousands their bread;—that which once separated nations, now brings them together;—national prejudices, which, it was once impiously argued, this river was wisely intended to maintain, are, by its waters, now softened and decomposed: in short, the Rhine affords another proof that there is nothing really barren in creation but man's conceptions, nothing defective but his own judgment, and that what he looked upon as a barrier in Europe, was created to become one of the great pavés in the world.

As the vessel proceeded towards Coblenz, it continually paused in its fairy course, apparently to barter and traffic in the prisoners it contained—sometimes stopping off one little village, it exchanged an infirm old man for two country girls; and then, as if laughing at its bargain, gaily proceeding, it paused before another picturesque hamlet, to give three Prussian soldiers of the 36th regiment for a husband, a

mother, and a child; once it delivered an old woman, and got nothing;—then, luckily, it received two carriages for a horse, and next it stopped a second to take up a tall, thin, itinerant poet, who, as soon as he had collected from every passenger a small contribution, for having recited two or three little pieces, was dropped at the next village, ready to board the steam-vessel coming down from Mainz.

In one of these cartels, or exchanges of prisoners, we received on board Sir —— and Lady ——, a young fashionable English couple, who having had occasion, a fortnight before, to go together to St-George's Church, had (like dogs suffering from hydrophobia or tin canisters) been running straight forwards ever since. As hard as they could drive, they had posted to Dover—hurried across to Calais—thence to Brussels—snapped a glance at the ripe corn waving on the field of Waterloo,—stared at the relics of that great *Saint*, old Charlemagne, on the high altar of Aix-la-Chapelle, and at last sought for rest and connubial refuge at Coln; but the celebrated water of that town, having in its manufacture evidently abstracted all perfume from the atmosphere, they could not endure the dirt and smell of the place, and, therefore, had proceeded by land towards Coblenz; but, as they were changing horses at a small village, seeing our steam-boat in view, they ordered a party of peasants to draw their carriage to the banks of the river, and as soon as our vessel, which came smoking alongside, began to hiss, they, their rosy, fresh-coloured French maid, their dark, chocolate-coloured chariot, and their brown, ill-looking Italian courier, came on board.

As soon as this young London couple lightly stepped on deck, I saw, at one glance, that without at all priding themselves on their abilities, they fancied, and indeed justly fancied, that they belonged to that class of society which, in England, so modestly calls itself—*good*. That it was not healthy society—that its victims were exposed to late hours,

crowded rooms, and impure air, was evident enough from the contrast which existed between their complexions, and that of their healthy country attendant; however, they seemed not only to be perfectly satisfied with themselves, and the clique which they had left behind them, but to have a distaste for everything else they saw. Towards some German ladies, who had slightly bowed to them as they passed, they looked with a vacant haughty stare, as if they conceived there must be some mistake, and as if, at all events, it would be necessary to keep such people off. Yet, after all, there was no great harm in these two young people: that, in the countries which they were about to visit, they would be fitted only for each other, was sadly evident; however, on the other hand, it was also evidently their wish not to extend their acquaintance. Their heads were lanterns, illuminated with no more brains than barely sufficient to light them on their way; and so, like the babes in the wood, they sat together, hand-in-hand, regardless of everything in creation but themselves.

For running their carriage down to the shore, the brown confidential courier, whose maxim was, of course, to pay little and charge much, offered the gang of peasants some kreutzers, which amounted, in English currency, to about sixpence. This they refused, and the captain of the party, while arguing with the flint-skinning courier, was actually carried off by our steam-boat, which, like time and tide, waited for no man. The poor fellow, finding that the Italian was immoveable, came aft to the elegant English couple, who were still leaning towards each other like the Siamese boys. He pleaded his case, stated his services, declared his poverty, and, in a manly voice, prayed for redress. The dandy listened—looked at his boots, which were evidently pinching him,—listened—passed four white fingers through the curls of his jet-black hair—showed the point of a pink tongue gently playing with a front tooth, and when the

vulgar story was at an end, without moving a muscle in his countenance, in a sickly tone of voice, he pronounced his verdict as follows ..... "*Alley!*"

The creditor tried again, but the debtor sat as silent and as inanimate as a corpse. However, all this time the steam-boat dragging the poor peasant out of his way, he protested in a few angry exclamations against the injustice with which he had been treated (a sentiment I was very sorry to hear more than once mildly whispered by many a quiet-looking German), and descending the vessel's side into a small boat, which had just brought us a new captive, he landed at a village from which he had about eight miles to walk to join his comrades.

It is with no satirical feeling that I have related this little occurrence. To hurt the feelings of "gay beings born to flutter but a day"—to break such a pair of young, flimsy butterflies upon the wheel, affords me neither amusement nor delight; but the every-day occurrence of English travellers committing our well-earned national character for justice and liberality to the base, slave-driving hand of a courier, is a practice which, as well as the bad taste of acting the part of a London dandy on the great theatre of Europe, ought to be checked.

As we proceeded up the Rhine, there issued from one of the old romantic castles we were passing a party of young English lads, whose appearance (as soon as they came on board) did ample justice to their country; and, comparing them while they walked the deck, with the rest of their fellow-prisoners, I could not help more than once fancying that I saw a determination in their step, a latent character in their attitudes, and a vigour in their young frames, which being interpreted, said—

“We dare do all that doth become a man,  
He who dares more—is none!”

Besides these young collegians, an English gentleman came on board, who appeared quite delighted to join their party. He was a stout man, of about fifty, tall, well-dressed, evidently wealthy, and as ruddy as our mild wholesome air could make him. Not only had he a high colour, but there was a network of red veins in his cheeks, which seemed as if not even death could drive it away: his face shone from excessive cleanliness, and though his nose certainly was not long, there was a sort of round bull-dog honesty in his face, which it was quite delightful to gaze upon. I overheard this good man inform his countrymen, who had surrounded him in a group, that he had never before been out of England—and that, to tell the truth, he never wished to quit it again! “It’s surely beautiful scenery!” observed one of his auditors, pointing to the outline of a ruin which, with the rock upon which it stood, seemed flying away behind us. “Yes, yes!” replied the florid traveller. “But, sir! it’s the dirtiness of the people I complain of. Their cookery is dirty—they are dirty in their persons—dirty in their habits—that shocking trick of smoking (pointing to a fat German who was enjoying this pleasure close by his side, and who I rather suspect perfectly understood English) is dirty—depend upon it, they are what we should call, sir, a very dirty race!” “Do you speak the language?” said one of the young listeners with a smile which was very awkwardly repressed. “Oh, no!” replied the well-fed gentleman, laughing good-naturedly: “I know nothing of their language. I pay for all I eat, and I find, by paying, I can get anything I want. “*Mangez! changez!*” is quite foreign language enough, sir, for *me*,” and having to the first word suited his action, by pointing with his forefinger to his mouth, and to explain the second, having

rubbed his thumb against the self-same finger, as if it were counting out money, he joined the roar of laughter which his two French words had caused, and then very good-naturedly paced the deck by himself.

The jagged spires of Coblenz now came in sight, and every Englishman walked to the head of the vessel to see them, while several of the inhabitants of the city, with less curiosity, occupied themselves in leisurely getting together their luggage. For a moment, as we glided by the Moselle, on our right, we looked up the course of that lovely river, which here delivers up its waters to the Rhine; in a few minutes the bell on board rang, and continued to ring, until we found ourselves firmly moored to the pier of Coblenz. Most of the passengers went into the town. I, however, crossing the bridge of boats, took up my quarters at the Cheval Blanc, a large hotel, standing immediately beneath that towering rock so magnificently crowned by the celebrated fortress of Ehrenbreitstein.

## THE JOURNEY.

THE next day, starting from Coblenz while the morning air was still pure and fresh, I bade adieu to the picturesque river behind me, and travelling on a capital macadamized road which cuts across the duchy of Nassau from Coblenz to Mainz, I immediately began to ascend the mountains, which on all sides were beautifully covered with wood. In about two hours, descending into a narrow valley, I passed through Bad-Ems, a small village, which, composed of hovels for its inhabitants, and, comparatively speaking, palaces for its guests, is pleasantly enough situated on the bank of a stream of water (the Lahn), imprisoned on every side by mountains which I should think very few of its visitors would be disposed to scale; and, from the little I saw of this place, I must own I felt but little disposition to remain in it. Its outline, though much admired, gives a cramped, contracted picture of the resources and amusements of the place, and as I drove through it (my postilion, with huge orange-coloured worsted tassels at his back, proudly playing a discordant voluntary on his horn), I particularly remarked some stiff, formal little walks, up and down which many well-dressed strangers were slowly promenading; but the truth is, that Ems is a regular, fashionable watering-place.

Many people, I fully admit, go there to drink the waters only because they are salutary, but a very great many more visit it from far different motives; and it is sad, as well as odd enough, that young ladies who are in a consumption, and old ladies who have a number of gaudy bonnets to display, find it equally desirable to come to Bad-Ems. This mixture of sickness and finery—this confusion between the hectic flush and red and white ribands—in short, this dance of death, is



not the particular sort of folly I am fond of; and, though I wish to deprive no human being of his hobby-horse, yet I must repeat I was glad enough to leave dukes and duchesses, princes and ambassadors (whose carriages I saw standing in one single narrow street), to be cooped up together in the hot, expensive little valley of Ems,—an existence, to my humble taste, not altogether unlike that which the foul witch, Sycorax, inflicted upon Ariel, when, “in her most unmitigable rage,” she left him hitched in a cloven pine.

On leaving Ems, the road passing through the old mouldering town of Nassau, and under the beautiful ruins of the ducal Stamm-Schloß in its neighbourhood, by a very steep acclivity, continues to ascend until it mounts at last into a sort of upper country, from various points of which are to be seen extensive views of the exalted duchy of Nassau, the features of which are on a very large scale.

No one, I think, can breathe this dry, fresh air for a single moment, or gaze for an instant on the peculiar colour of the sky, without both smelling and seeing that he is in a country very considerably above the level of the sea; yet this upper story, when it be once attained is by no means what can be termed a mountainous country. On the contrary, the province is composed either of flat table-land abruptly intersected by valleys, or rather of an undulation of hills and dales on an immense scale. In the great tract thus displayed to view, scarcely a habitation is to be seen, and for a considerable time I could not help wondering what had become of the people who had sown the crops (as far I could see they were in solitude waving around me), and who of course were somewhere or other lurking in ambush for the harvest: however, their humble abodes are almost all concealed in steep ravines, or water-courses, which in every direction intersect the whole of the region I have described. A bird’s-eye view would of course detect these little villages,

but from any one point, as the eye roams over the surface, they are not to be seen. The duchy, which is completely unenclosed, for there is not even a fence to the orchards, appears like a royal park on a gigantic scale, about one-half being in corn-fields or uncultivated land, and the remainder in patches of woods and forests, which in shape and position resemble artificial plantations. The province, as far as one can see, thus seems to declare that it has but one lord and master, and the various views it presents are really very grand and imposing. A considerable portion of the wood grows among crags and rocks; and among the open land there is a great deal of what is evidently a mining country, with much indicating the existence of both iron and silver. The crops of wheat, oats, and barley, are rather light, yet they are very much better than one would expect from the ground from which they grow; but this is the effect of the extraordinary heavy dews which, during the whole summer, may be said, once in twenty-four hours, to irrigate the land.

The small steep ravines I have mentioned are the most romantic little spots that can well be conceived. The rugged sides of the hills which contain them are generally clothed with oak, or beech trees, feathering to the very bottom, where a strip of green, rich, grassy land full of springs, scarcely broader than, and very much resembling, the moat of an old castle, is all that divides the one wooded eminence from the other; and it is into these secluded gardens, these smiling happy valleys, that the inhabitants of Nassau have humbly crept for shelter. These valleys are often scarcely broad enough to contain the single street which forms the village, and from such little abodes, looking upwards, one would fancy that one were living in a mountainous country; but, climb the hill—break the little petty barrier that imprisons you, and from the height, gently undulating before you, is the vast, magnificent country I have described. In short, in the two prospects, one reads the old

story—one sees the common picture of human life. Beneath lies the little contracted nook in which we were born, studded with trifling objects, each of which we once fancied to be highly important; every little rock has its name, and every inch of ground belongs to one man, and therefore does not belong to another; but, lying prostrate before us, is a great picture of the world, and until he has seen it, no one born and bred below could fancy how vast are its dimensions, or how truly insignificant are the billows of that puddle in a storm from which he has somehow or other managed to escape. But, without metaphor, nothing can be more striking than the contrast which exists between the little valleys of this duchy, and the great country which soars above them!

With respect to the climate of Nassau, without presuming to dictate upon that subject, I will, while my postilion is jolting me along, request the reader to decipher for himself hieroglyphics which I think sufficiently explain it. In short, I beg leave to offer him the milk of information—warm as I suck it from the cow.

At this moment, everything, see! is smiling; the trees are in full leaf; the crops in full bearing. In no part of Devonshire or Herefordshire have I ever seen such rich crops of apples, the trees being here surrounded with a scaffolding of poles, which after all seem scarcely sufficient to save the boughs from breaking under their load; but I ask—How comes the vine to be absent from this gay scene? the low country and even the lower part of Nassau, we all know, teems with vineyards, and for some way have they crawled up the sides of the mountain; the reason, therefore, for their not appearing in the high ground is surely one very legible character of the climate.

Again, at all the bendings of the valleys, why do the trees appear so stunted in their growth, and why are so many of

them stag-headed? They must surely have some sad reason for wearing this appearance, and any one may guess what it is that in the winter rushes by them with such violence, that, instinctively, they seem more anxious to grow beneath the soil than above it. Again, under that hot, oppressive sun which is now hurrying every crop to maturity, why do not the inhabitants look like Neapolitans and other indolent Lazzaroni-living people?—how comes it that their features are so hard?—Can the *sun* have beaten them into that shape?

Why are the houses they live in huddled together in the valleys, instead of enjoying the magnificent prospect before me? Why do the wealthiest habitations look to the south, and why are the roofs of the houses built or pitched so perpendicularly that it seems as if nothing could rest upon their surface? Why are the windows so small and the walls so thick? I might torment my reader with many other questions, such as why, in this large country, is there scarcely a bird to be seen? but I dare say he has already determined for himself, whether the lofty province of Nassau, during the winter, be hot or cold; in short, what must be its climate at the moment when the Rhine and the expanse of low country, lying about 1200 feet beneath it, is frozen and covered with snow?

Yet whatever may be the climate of the upper country of Nassau, the duchy, taken altogether, may fairly be said to contribute more than an average share towards the luxuries and comforts of mankind. Besides fine timber-trees of oak, beech, birch, and fir, there are crops of corn of every sort, as well as potatoes which would not be despised in England; several of the wines (for instance, those on the estates of Hochheim, Eberbach, Rudesheim, and Johannisburg) are the finest on the Rhine, while there are fruits, such as apples, pears, cherries, apricots, strawberries, raspberries (the two latter growing wild), &c., &c. in the greatest abundance.

Not only are there mines of the precious metals and of iron, but there is also coal, which we all know will, when the gigantic powers of steam are developed, become the nucleus of every nation's wealth. In addition to all this, the duchy is celebrated over the whole of Germany for its mineral waters; and certainly if they be at all equal to the reputation they have acquired, Nassau may be said to contribute to mankind what is infinitely better than all wealth, namely—health.

From its hills burst mineral streams of various descriptions, and besides the Selters or Seltzer water, which is drunk as a luxury in every quarter of the globe, there are bright, sparkling remedies prescribed for almost every disorder under the sun;—for instance, should the reader be consumptive, or, what is much more probable, be dyspeptic, let him hurry to Ems; if he wishes to instil iron into his jaded system, and brace up his muscles, let him go to Langenschwalbach; if his brain should require calming, his nerves soothing, and his skin softening, let him glide onwards to Schlangenbad—the serpent's bath; but if he should be rheumatic in his limbs, or if mercury should be running riot in his system, let him hasten, “body and bones,” to Wiesbaden, where, they say, by being parboiled in the Kochbrunnen (boiling spring), all his troubles will evaporate.

To these different waters of Nassau flock annually thousands and thousands of people from all parts of Germany; and so celebrated are they for the cures which they have effected, that not only do people also come from Russia, Poland, Denmark, &c., but a vast quantity of the waters, in stone bottles, is annually sent to these remote countries. Yet it is odd enough, that the number of English, who have visited the mineral springs of Nassau, bears no proportion to that of any other nation of Europe, although Spa, and some other continental watering-places, have been much deserted by foreigners, on account of the quantity of the British who

have thronged there; but, somehow or other, our country people are like locusts, for they not only fly in myriads to distant countries, but, as they travel, they congregate in clouds, and, therefore, either are they found absolutely eating up a foreign country, or not one of them is to be seen there. How many thousands and hundreds of thousands of English, with their mouths, eyes, and purses wide open, have followed each other, in mournful succession, up and down the Rhine; and yet, though Nassau has stood absolutely in their path, I believe I may assert that not twenty families have taken up their abode at Langenschwalbach or Schlangenbad in the course of the last twenty years; and yet there is no country on earth that could turn out annually more consumptive, rheumatic, and dyspeptic patients than old England! In process of time, the little duchy will, no doubt, be as well known as Cheltenham, Malvern, &c.; however, until fashion, that painted direction-post, points her finger towards it, it will continue (so far as we are concerned) to exist, as it really does, *in nubibus*.

There are 56,712 human habitations in the duchy of Nassau, and 355,815 human beings to live in them. Of these, 188,244 are Protestants, 161,535 are Catholics; there are 191 Mennonitens or dissenters; and scattered among these bleak hills, just as their race is mysteriously scattered over the face of the globe, there are 5845 Jews. The Duke of Nassau is the cacique, king, emperor, or commander-in-chief of the province; and people here are everlastingly talking of THE Duke, as in England they talk of *the* sun, *the* moon, or any other luminary of which there exists only one in our system. He is certainly the sovereign lord of this lofty country; and travelling along, I have just observed a certain little bough sticking out of every tenth sheaf of corn, the meaning of which is, no doubt, perfectly well understood both by him and the peasant: in short, in all the principal

villages, there are barns built on purpose for receiving this tribute, with a man, paid by the Duke, for collecting it.

In approaching Langen-Schwalbach, being of course anxious, as early as possible, to get a glimpse of a town which I had already determined to inhabit for a few days, I did all in my power to explain this feeling to the dull, gaudy fellow who drove me; but whenever I inquired for Langen-Schwalbach, so often did the mute creature point with a long German whip to the open country, as if it existed directly before him; but, no, not a human habitation could I discover! However, as I proceeded onwards, the whip, in reply to my repeated interrogatories to its dumb owner, began to show a sort of magnetical dip, until, at last, it pointed almost perpendicularly downwards into a ravine, which was now immediately beneath me; yet though I could see, as I thought, almost to the bottom of it, still not a vestige of a town was to be seen. However, the whip was quite right, for, in a very few seconds, peeping up from the very bottom of the valley, I perceived, like poplar trees, a couple of church steeples; then suddenly came in sight a long narrow village of slated roofs, and, in a very few seconds more, I found my carriage rattling and trumpeting along a street, until it stopped at the Goldene Kette, or, as we should call it, the Golden Chain. The master of this hotel appeared to be a most civil, obliging person; and though his house was nearly full, yet he suddenly felt so much respect either for me or for the contents of my wallet, which, in descending from the carriage, I had placed, for a moment, in his hands, that he used many arguments to persuade us both to become noble appendages to his fine Golden Chain: yet there were certain noises, uncertain smells, and a degree of bustle in his house which did not at all suit me; and, therefore, at once mercifully annihilating his hopes by a grave bow which could not be misinterpreted, I slowly walked into the street to select for myself a private lodging,

and, for a considerable time, experienced very great difficulty. With hands clasped behind me, in vain did I slowly stroll about, looking out for any thing at all like a paper or a board in a window; and I was beginning to fear that there were no lodging-houses in the town, when I at last found out that there were very few which were not. I therefore selected a clean, quiet-looking dwelling; and, finding the inside equal to the out, I at once engaged apartments.

The next morning (having been refreshed by a good night's rest) I put a small note-book into my pocket, and having learnt that in the whole valley there was no English blood, except the little that was within my own black silk waistcoat, I felt that I might go where I liked, do what I liked, and sketch the outline of whatever either pleased my eye, or amused my fancy. My first duty, however, evidently was to understand the geography of the town, or rather village, of Langen-Schwalbach, which I found to be in the shape of the letter Y, or (throwing, as I wish to do, literature aside) of a long-handled two-pronged fork. The village is 1500 paces in length, that is to say, the prongs are each about 500 yards, and the lower street, or handle of the fork, is about 1000 yards.

On the first glimpse of the buildings from the heights, my eyes had been particularly attracted by high, irregular, slated roofs, many of which were fantastically ornamented with little spires, about two feet high, but it now appeared that the buildings themselves were constructed even more irregularly than their roofs. The village is composed of houses of all sizes, shapes, and colours: some, having been lately plastered, and painted yellow, white, or pale green, have a modern appearance, while others wear a dress about as old as the hills which surround them. Of these latter, some are standing with their sides towards the streets, others look at you with their gables; some overhang the passenger as if they intended to crush him; some shrink



backwards, as if, like misanthropes, they loathed him, or like maidens, they feared him; some lean sideways, as if they were suffering from a painful disorder in their hips; many, apparently from curiosity, have advanced, while a few, in disgust, have retired a step or two.

All the best dwellings in the towns are "hofs," or lodging-houses, having jalousies, or Venetian blinds, to the windows; and I must own I did not expect to find in so remote a situation houses of such large dimensions. For instance, the Allee Saal has nineteen windows in front; the great "Indien Hof" is three stories high, with sixteen windows in each; the Pariser Hof has twelve, and several others have eight and ten.

Of late years a number of the largest houses have been plastered on the outside, but the appearance of the rest is highly picturesque. They are built of wood and unburnt bricks, but the immense quantity of timber which has been consumed would clearly indicate the vicinity of a large forest, even if one could not see its dark foliage towering on every side above the town. Wood having been of so little value, it has been crammed into the houses, as if the builder's object had been to hide away as much of it as possible. The whole fabric is a network of timber of all lengths, shapes, and sizes; and these limbs, sometimes rudely sculptured, often bent into every possible contortion, form a confused picture of rustic architecture, which amid such wild mountain scenery one cannot refuse to admire. The interstices between all this woodwork are filled up with brown, unburnt bricks, so soft and porous, that in our moist climate they would in one winter be decomposed, while a very few seasons would also rot the timbers which they connect: however, such is evidently the dryness of mountain air, that buildings can exist here in this rude state, and, indeed, have existed, for several hundred years, with the woodwork unpainted.

In rambling about the three streets, one is surprised, at first, at observing that apparently there is scarcely a shop in the town! Before three or four windows carcasses of sheep, or of young calves but a few days old, are seen hanging by their heels; and loaves of bread are placed for sale before a very few doors: but, generally speaking, the dwellings are either "hofs" for lodgers, or they appear to be a set of nondescript private-houses; nevertheless, by patiently probing, the little shop is at last discovered. In one of these secluded dens one can buy coffee, sugar, butter, nails, cottons, chocolate, ribands, brandy, &c. Still, however, there is no external display of any such articles, for the crowd of rich people who, like the swallows, visit during the summer weeks the sparkling water of Langen-Schwalbach, live at "hofs," whose proprietors well enough know where to search for what they want. During so short a residence there, fashionable visitors require no new clothes, nails, brimstone, or coarse linen. It is, therefore, useless for the little shopkeeper to attempt to gain their custom; and as, during the rest of the year, the village exists in simplicity, quietness, and obscurity, the inhabitants, knowing each other, require neither signs nor inscriptions. Peasants come to Langen-Schwalbach from other villages, inquire for the sort of shop which will suit them; or if they want (as they generally do) tobacco, oil, or some rancid commodity, their noses are quite intelligent enough to lead them to the doors they ought to enter; indeed, I myself very soon found that it was quite possible thus to hunt for my own game.

I have already stated that Langen-Schwalbach is like a kitchen fork, the handle of which is the lower or old part of the town: the prongs representing two streets built in ravines, down each of which a small stream of water descends. The Stahl brunnen (steel spring) is at the head of the town, at the upper extremity of the right prong. Close to the point of the other prong is the Wein brunnen (wine

spring), and about 600 yards up the same valley is situated the fashionable brunnens of Pauline. Between these three points, brunnens, or wells, the visitors at Langen-Schwalbach, with proper intervals for rest and food, are everlastingly vibrating. Backwards and forwards, "down the middle and up again," the strangers are seen walking, or rather crawling, with a constancy that is really quite astonishing. Among the number there may be here and there a Cœlebs in search of a wife, and a very few *sets* of much smaller feet may, *impari passu*, be occasionally seen pursuing nothing but their mammas; however, generally speaking, the whole troop is chasing one and the same game; they are all searching for the same treasure—in short, they are seeking for health: but it is now necessary that the reader should be informed by what means they hope to attain it.

In the time of the Romans, Schwalbach, which means literally the swallow's stream, was a forest containing an immense sulphureous fountain famed for its medicinal effects. In proportion as it rose into notice, hovels, huts, and houses were erected; until a small street or village was thus gradually established on the north and south of the well. There was little to offer to the stranger but its waters; yet, health being a commodity which people have always been willing enough to purchase, the medicine was abundantly drunk, and in the same proportion the little hamlet continued to grow, until it justly attained and claimed for itself the appellation of Langen (long) Schwalbach.

About sixty years ago the Stahl and Wein brunnens were discovered. These springs were found to be quite different from the old one, inasmuch as, instead of being only sulphureous, they were but strongly impregnated with iron and carbonic acid gas. Instead, therefore, of merely purifying the blood, they boldly undertook to strengthen the human frame; and, in proportion as they attracted notice, so