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William George Clark
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VACATION TOURISTS, &c. IN 1860.

1. *NAPLES AND GARIBALDI.*

BY W. G. CLARK, M.A. F.R.G.S.

Through Turin to Naples.—I left London on the 18th of August, for the tour which has become a matter of annual recurrence. It had been my intention to go to Scotland, but the almost incessant rain which spoilt our last summer drove me to seek for sunshine in some southern land, and the interest attaching to Garibaldi's daring enterprise drew me irresistibly to Italy. The route from England to Naples, travelled every year by thousands of our countrymen and not new to myself, would, in ordinary circumstances, be too hackneyed a topic; and a writer who should suppose that he had anything to say about it which had not been said before—the only justification for writing at all—would show great confidence in his own powers of observation.

But I saw Naples under circumstances the reverse of ordinary—at that critical period when it was the centre of interest to all the nations of Europe; during the occurrence of events so strange and sudden that they resembled incidents of a romantic melodrama rather than real history. The achievements of Rollo and Robert Guiscard were repeated before the eyes of men who are never tired of saying that they live in a prosaic age. The interest of these events is scarcely abated, for they involve momentous consequences yet to come. The great captain who is now playing the part of Cincinnatus at

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Caprera has potentially—like another captain who once enjoyed a temporary repose in the neighbouring Elba—an army at his command. He is one of the great powers, who, though not officially represented, makes his presence felt in all the councils of Europe.

I reached Naples two days before the departure of the King. What I saw and heard during the eventful three weeks which followed, will form the main part of my story. I prefer to tell this story (at the risk of occasional repetition) in the words of a journal written on the spot, and at the first leisure hour after the occurrences. In this journal I have corrected nothing but slips of the pen. I have inserted no *ex post facto* prophecies. I have merely added a note here and there by way of correction or explanation.

As the political interest of the time is my only justification for writing at all, I have cut out from my narrative almost all that had not relation to passing events. The excavations at Pompeii and the treasures of the Museo Borbonico have, for the present, lost their interest. Besides, there would be an incongruity in thus mixing contemporary history with antiquarianism and dilettantism; nor would the space at my disposal allow me to do so, in any case. I might have touched in passing many such topics, and given conclusions without arguments; but I remember the warning, “*Brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio,*” and I have reason to think that a love of brevity is liable to be mistaken for an affectation of smartness and a tendency to dogmatism.

I crossed from Folkestone to Boulogne in a storm of wind and rain. The rain accompanied me to Paris, scarcely abated during the two days of my stay there, chased me in flying showers to Macon; then, withdrawing for a while, hung in masses of threatening cloud in front and flank as we crossed the plains and wound along the valleys, guarded with bastions of limestone crag on either hand, the first approaches to the great fortress of the Alps, to Culoz, now, alas! a frontier place no more, thence by the lake of Bourget and Chambéry, where we saw skeletons of triumphal arches destined for the recep-

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tion of the new master, to St. Jean de Maurienne, where we exchanged the railway for the diligence. The route of the Mont Cenis is, to my mind, the least picturesque of all the Alpine passes. But what it lacks in scenic beauty it makes up in historical interest, as being the route of Hannibal.* At Lanslebourg the clouds, which I had been comparing to hovering bodies of barbarians hanging on the line of the Carthaginians' march, burst upon us in a torrent of rain which lasted to Susa. When at length we reached Turin, at one A.M. (about thirty hours after leaving Paris), there was a cloudless sky overhead, and the soft sweet air of summer Italy to breathe and move in.

I had been much entertained by one of my companions in the banquette of the diligence—an Englishman going to join Garibaldi. Evidently a gentleman, he had “roughed it” through life with the strangest comrades. He had dug for gold in Australia, had driven an omnibus for six months in Melbourne, &c. &c., and now was about to seek his fortune in Italy. “Not,” he said, “that he cared a button for one side or the other; he wanted if possible to get a commission in the Sardinian army, and meanwhile, at all events, to have a lark.”

* This is conclusively established in a work entitled, “A Treatise on Hannibal’s Passage of the Alps,” by Robert Ellis, B.D. Fellow of St. John’s College, Cambridge, 1853. The subsidiary arguments derived from the Peutingerian table, the names of places, &c., however ingenious and probable, are less convincing than the main arguments, and tend, on a first reading, rather to invalidate the conclusions. I am disposed to think that Mr. Ellis lays rather too much stress on the fact that the plains of Italy are visible from a point near the summit of the pass. Polybius, from his language, seems to suppose that the plains would be visible, as a matter of course, from the summit of any pass, and he himself probably crossed the Alps only once in the way of business; and if he had such weather as has always been my fortune in crossing the Mont Cenis, he could not verify the fact. The story of Hannibal’s encouraging his men by showing them Italy is, perhaps, after all only a rhetorical figment. Everybody not familiar with Alpine travel would take it for granted that Italy was visible from the summit (not having a clear understanding of the distinction between “peaks” and “passes”), and the situation, “Hannibal pointing out Italy to his soldiers,” is too striking not to be accepted as true: “ut pueris placeat et declamatio fiat.” I doubt, too, whether we have got at the true signification of *λευκόπετρον*. However this may be, Mr. Ellis seems to me to have proved his point abundantly.

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I fancy that a good many of the volunteers, if they would confess it, were actuated by similar feelings.

I stayed nearly a week at Turin, where I found several old friends and acquaintances, several of them Neapolitan exiles, who gave me letters to their friends at home. Among them was Baron Charles Poerio, the gentlest and most innocent victim that was ever tortured by tyrant. I observed in him, as well as in others of his fellow-prisoners whom I saw at Naples afterwards, a subdued manner that was infinitely touching. It was as if long imprisonment had crushed their spirit and robbed life of its vitality. Poerio said that, during his short tenure of office, the king affected to treat him as a confidential friend, would offer him a cigar when he went for an audience, and so forth. On the anniversary of the day of his accepting office, he had the chains put on in the court of one of the prisons, the benevolent monarch looking on from a window.

I went one day to a charming villa on the "Collina," near Moncalieri, to visit an exile of a different race. I found him playing with his children, as youthful at heart as any of them. No prison had bowed his spirit down, and even eleven years of exile had not sickened his hope of triumphant return. He had not a shadow of doubt that the sword of Garibaldi would open through Venice a road to Hungary. "Shall we meet next year in London?" I said at parting. "We shall meet next year, if anywhere, at Pesth," was the reply.

On the 28th of August I went to Genoa, on the chance of finding a steamer for Livorno or Naples, there being no trustworthy information to be had in Turin. When I arrived there, I found that I had no choice but to wait till the 31st for the French boat. Three days soon passed among the varied sights of Genoa, the most beautiful as well as one of the busiest of the cities of the world. Garibaldi's portrait was in every window, ballad-singers were chanting his praises, and as you passed a group standing in the street or seated at the *café*, you were sure to hear the magic name. I was

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made all the more eager to get to Naples, fearing that he might get there before me.

I here insert some leaves of my journal, omitting, as I said, almost all that related merely to the regular "sights" on the way.

Aug. 23.—Turin is the most regularly built city in the world. It would have delighted an ancient Greek. Hippodamus himself might have planned it. Pausanias would have been in ecstasies if he had seen it, all its lines straight and all its angles right-angles. And in his eyes the beauty of the regular city would have been enhanced by contrast with the rough shapeless mountains, glimpses of which you get at the end of the streets that run towards the north and west. Only the Contrada del Po deviates somewhat from the due direction, but this is scarcely appreciable by the eye. The spacious porticoes are thronged with people, notwithstanding that this is the season of the *Villegiatura*, and there is "nobody in town."

I went this morning to call upon a friend at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is modestly lodged in a corner of the Piazza Castello. I was surprised with the quietness of the whole establishment. The porter was dozing at the door; my friend the *employé* was not at home, nobody was waiting for an audience, and M. de Cavour was "disengaged" in the inner room. "Did I want to see him?" asked the porter. Having no pretext for an interview with the great man, and having neither invention, nor impudence sufficient to extemporize one, I was obliged to decline the honour, and I went away wondering at the stillness which reigned at what may be called the central point of European diplomacy. It reminded me of the brain, which, though the source of all sensation, has no sensation itself.

Aug. 24.—This morning I had a call from Signor —, a ministerial deputy, and an able as well as honest man. He takes a gloomy view of the state of things in Italy. "The

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Ministry is excessively embarrassed by the exigencies of France, on the one hand; by the remonstrances of the great Powers, on the other; and by the popular enthusiasm for Garibaldi, on the third. (We may suppose an Executive to have *three* hands, at least: in this case all of them are tied.) Garibaldi is a brave man, but 'a fool' (*sic*); he is easily led by the people about him, and he is surrounded by the most worthless advisers—as, for example, Crespi. The Mazzini party are taking advantage of the discontent excited by the late measures of the Ministry against the volunteers, and of Garibaldi's easy temper, and hope to proclaim first the Dictatorship of Garibaldi, and then the Republic in Southern Italy. The ultra-liberals are blind to facts and consequences; they will not take account of the difficulties in their way; they menace Rome in spite of France and Venetia, in spite of Germany (for it is certain that Prussia has agreed to make common cause with Austria).

"Things are going from bad to worse, and we may lose all we have gained. Old animosities—*la politica di campanile*—are reviving again, and are fanned by the ultra-liberals for their own purposes. The people were humiliated at the loss of Savoy and Nice, but all reasonable men felt that the Government had no choice. The citizens of Turin cared much more for Savoy than Nice, because the change brought the French frontier within sight of their walls. Turin is now a defenceless frontier town, and can never be the capital of Italy."

Aug. 25.—I met another gentleman, neither deputy nor ministerial. He was enthusiastic for Garibaldi, "the honest man and great captain." "Cavour," he said, "has lost all his popularity, not so much from the cession of Savoy and Nice—for there was no resisting the armed brigand who took them—but from the way in which it was done. Cavour did it jauntily and unconcernedly, when, in decency, he ought to have worn an air of dejection. To parody what Jean Jacques said of a bishop: 'Quelque véridique qu'on soit, il faut bien mentir quelques fois quand on est diplomate;' but Cavour

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lied gratuitously. People have lost all confidence in him since he has sold himself to the devil.

“Garibaldi is true as steel; he will conquer Naples and proclaim the Ré Galantuomo King of Italy, who will then find some honester man than Cavour to be his prime minister.”

Aug 26.—Notes of a Conversation with ——. “The franchise in Piedmont is given to all who pay forty francs per annum in direct taxes, which, in a country divided into small holdings, is almost equivalent to universal suffrage. But all landholders are conservative, and those of Piedmont Proper exercise it admirably; they are the mainstay of the constitution.

“The so-called Tuscan autonomy is not an autonomy in fact; the word is misapplied. It means in this case that, for the present, the judicial system of Tuscany is maintained intact. For instance, if a dispute arises in Tuscany, it cannot be tried at Turin till they send it for trial.

“Ten years ago, I foresaw that the idea of Italian unity was mounting like a flood, and would sweep all before it. The existence of this idea is a great fact which people at home would not see; I mean, secretaries of state. Naples might have been saved to the king, if he had joined Piedmont. In March, 1859, Lord Malmesbury wanted Sir James Hudson to go to Naples and advise the king to grant a constitution. He said, ‘It is no use unless you allow me to advise his sending twenty thousand troops or so, to make a demonstration to the Italian side; a very small demonstration will suffice.’ Lord Malmesbury refused; ‘he did not wish Naples to be mixed up in the quarrel between Austria and France.’ Now the quarrel between Austria and France was ‘in the second plan.’ The battle of Italian unity was uppermost in men’s minds. The great Powers urged the Piedmontese Government to stop the departure of the volunteers as soon as Garibaldi turned his designs on the mainland. Legally, there is no distinction between Sicily and Naples, but morally there is a distinction, because the Sicilians had

been deluded by the Bourbons. The promise of a constitution, made in 1812, was never fulfilled. And, as you remind me, Lord Palmerston said in parliament, apropos of non-intervention, that there was no point of international law which is not liable to exceptions in practice. Farini's circular was the result of this diplomatic pressure. If after that he had not prevented the departure of the volunteers, the power of Minister of the Interior would have been at an end. He could not act otherwise than he did. The papers cry out, but their influence is almost *nil*, since Parliament has begun to perform its functions regularly. Ten years ago, the press was very powerful. Cavour himself used to write articles. Now each paper is the organ of some little knot of politicians. Like a volcano (as you say) where there are at first a number of little outlets which all cease when a great crater is formed. If Garibaldi is beaten, the Piedmontese Government will see that it must bide its time; it will still represent the idea of unity, which sooner or later will be realized in fact. The more moderate papers are beginning to see the necessity of waiting for an opportunity of getting Venetia.

“If Piedmont receives any further accession of territory, there is a notion afloat that France will demand the island of Sardinia as the price of her assent. The plains are enormously fertile, yielding, they say, forty-fold. A large outlay would be required for draining, &c. to bring land now idle under cultivation. The volcanic rocks and the high mountains which prevent a free current of wind from west to east, are the cause of the unhealthiness of the place. All the island is unhealthy part of the year, and part is unhealthy all the year round. Sardinia is the most retrograde portion of the kingdom, and disaffected because the high taxation has been most felt there. There is an English party and a French party eager for annexation to one or other country, which is rich, and, as they think, would spend money there, but it would not strengthen either. The Bay of La Maddalena was of service to England in the former war, when they were blockading Toulon; but now that steam-vessels have taken

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the place of sailing-vessels and can keep the sea in any wind, it will no longer be of service even in war. But politicians at home are governed by traditional views about British interests. That is why we stick to the Ionian Islands, which are no use to us. If we could only get rid of the notion that France is our natural enemy, and that we are bound to keep up posts of possible annoyance to her! The Ionian Islands are a perpetual sore between England and Greece. With Malta it is different. It is an island-fortress—prize of war—and I am for keeping it as long as we can. It would be ridiculous at Malta, or Gibraltar, to submit the question of ownership to universal suffrage.

“The notion prevalent in Germany that the line of the Mincio, or at all events that of the Adige, is necessary to their security in a strategical point of view, is quite unfounded. It has not even the excuse of tradition. Read Metternich’s letters, written at the time of the Congress of Vienna, and you will see that he was unwilling to accept the fatal gift of Northern Italy. But now that they have got the four fortresses, and that the Germans conceive their honour as well as their safety involved in the Austrian retention of Venetia, they will keep it as long as they can.

“After all, we must submit all questions at last to the inexorable logic of facts (as the French say).”

GENOA. *Aug. 29.*—Walked for an hour after sunset with a French gentleman, whose acquaintance I had made at dinner, up and down the delightful promenade of the *Acqua Sola*. It occupies an elevated platform on the eastern side of the city, flanked externally by the walls of the inner circle of fortification, and looking over a valley set thick with painted houses and gardens, the sea to the right, and on the left the hills crowned with fortresses. It is planted with rows of ilex, acacia and plane, and in the centre is an oval pond with a fountain, set round with weeping willows. It is well provided with stone seats. As we sat upon one of these, looking towards the sea, still lighted with reflected splendour from

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the west—"It is a shame," said the Frenchman, "to talk politics in so lovely a place, and at such a time. We ought to talk poetry."

"It is your restless Emperor," said I, "who forces everybody to think and to talk politics at all places and times."

"Maybe so," he replied; "but his view is the true view, namely, that there will be no secure and lasting peace for Europe until its political system is based upon the principle of nationalities. It may cost us years of disturbance to establish this principle, but it will be the best for peace in the long run. Europe will then be in a position of stable equilibrium (as the mathematicians say). This is the object of French policy. Surely it is nobler and wiser than the hand-to-mouth purblind policy of your Government, which huddles up all quarrels, and has for its object only the adjournment of war in the interest of merchants and fundholders."

He spoke as volubly and rapidly as an actor in a Greek comedy delivering the *πνῆγος*. When at last he paused for breath, I interposed: "Stop! what do you mean by 'the principle of nationalities?'"

"What do I mean! Surely it is clear enough. It is a phrase universally used. Everybody knows it."

"But if it has a definite meaning, it is capable of definition."

"Well, I suppose we may express it thus: Every nation has a right to belong to itself, and to choose its own form of government, and its own governors."

"What do you mean by a nation?"

"Diable! mon cher Monsieur, comme vous vous posez en Socrate! The words of which one knows the meaning best are precisely those which one feels it most difficult to define. Of such words no one asks for a definition in good faith, but only for the sake of puzzling you, and in order to divert a question of facts into a question of words."

"Don't be angry! In all good faith, I do not know in what sense you use the word 'nation.' Its etymology—"

"Oh, confound etymology—je m'en soucie guère. I use the