

## LAUSANNE AND ITS ENVIRONS,

INCLUDING

### THE TOWNS WHICH SCREEN THE EASTERN EXTREMITY OF THE LAKE OF GENEVA.

AGREEABLY seated as Lausanne is, on the declivity of the hill Jorat, about four hundred and fifty feet above the surface of the lake, it offers, from its environs, two noble and magnificent, and at the same time dissimilar, prospects, though equally commanding a view of the whole extent of the lake, both on its eastern and western banks. (*Vide N° XVI.*)

The part which looks towards the east possesses the combined properties of the majestic and beautiful; for the water, reflecting the stupendous mountains which serve as its barrier, contributes apparently to enlarge their bulk; while an assemblage of hills, meadows, and villages, increase, by the varied effects of light and shade, the beauty and animation of that delightful landscape, of which a pile of abrupt rocks and tremendous mountains, crowned by the great St. Bernard, terminate, at no considerable distance, the horizon. The western view, although varying from the preceding, is by no means less interesting, for there the lake appears to lose itself in the horizon; while, in several places, when the clouds conceal the top of the mountains which skirt this noble basin on the right and left, it exhibits the appearance of an arm of the sea, such as at Southampton, when viewed from Spithead. This appearance does not, however, confine the eye from wandering on its fertile banks to a considerable extent, taking in the rich and abundant plains of Chablais, visible in the back-ground. But as history ought to precede description, I shall here, in conformity with the plan of this work, present my readers with a sketch of the history of this city, from its origin to its present state.

Lausanne, otherwise *Lausodunum*, or *Lausonna*, according to Antoninus's Itinerary, is of ancient date, as is evident not only from the medals which have been dug up in its neighbourhood, but also from a Roman inscription discovered at Vidy, a small hamlet

about a mile from the town, among many fragments of antiquity, in which mention is made of the inhabitants by the appellation of *Lausonenses*. And it also appears, by the Theodosian table, that, at the time of the lower empire, this part of the lake was called *Lacus Lausoniis*. Some historians have supposed that the present is not the original site of the town, but that, on the contrary, it formerly occupied the spot where the little village of Ouchie, or port of Lausanne, now is, which lies on the edge of the lake, about a mile and a half from the city, and, as it were, directly under it: not, however, knowing any fact which gives probability to this supposition, I shall content myself with this slight mention of it. Certain it is, that Lausanne has not been exempt from calamities similar to those which desolated the Pays-de-Vaud, and the major part of Switzerland, &c. at the commencement of the present æra, and that it then ended, like many other cities, in becoming a province belonging to the German empire. In the year 450, the city of Avanche was entirely destroyed by Attila, and the bishop's see was removed to Lausanne at the beginning of the sixth century, where the prelates, in imitation of those of Geneva and Sion, soon after succeeded in appropriating to themselves the whole jurisdiction, both temporal and spiritual, of their different dioceses—extending even the latter over the whole of the Pays-de-Vaud, the greater part of the Swiss cantons, and some of the French provinces.

Respecting the temporal jurisdiction (in the sequel ceded to this city by the emperors, as well as the right of coining money), its inhabitants enjoyed greater privileges than those of Geneva and Sion, privileges granted by the empire at different times; besides, after the extinction of the ancient family of the Zeringhens, emerging again from under the sovereignty of the House of Savoy, they were particularly indulged by their bishop, who, towards the eleventh century, took the title of Prince of the Roman Empire and Count of Lausanne. This did not, however, prevent the people themselves from forming, in 1368, their laws into a code, called *placitum generale*, the *general decree* or *resolution*. These laws continued in force until the introduction of the reformed religion, in 1536, by Pierre Viret and Farel, which obliging the bishop to retire, he went to Freyburg, to which the episcopal see was soon after transferred; and the inhabitants quietly gave themselves up, with the town and territory thereunto belonging, to the canton of Berne, who, on the reduction of the Pays-de-Vaud, not only confirmed this city in all its ancient privileges, but granted many in addition. Among these were the high and low jurisdiction, both civil and criminal, as well as the enjoyment of different



portions of church-land ; so that the government of Berne reserved to themselves only the right of sovereignty, with power to pardon *en dernier ressort*, and to coin their money.

This town likewise appoints its own magistracy, consisting of a burgomaster, five bannerets\* or *venner*, three councils, viz. the Lesser, that of Sixty, and the Great Council, besides other inferior officers. The Lesser Council is composed of five bannerets, twenty counsellors, one secretary, the great *sceautier* or keeper of the seals, and comptroller, over which presides the burgomaster. Its members are elected by the Grand Council, who appoint them by a majority of votes ; and these, in their turn, have the privilege of naming the one of Sixty, consisting of five bannerets, twenty counsellors, and thirty-five members. To the latter council is confined the decision of civil causes not exceeding two thousand livres in value ; for, beyond this sum, the senate of Berne is referred to. As for the Grand Council, or that of Two Hundred, which is considered as the first of the three, it is also formed of five bannerets and twenty counsellors, with the addition of seventy members taken from the two former, and one hundred and five other members, over whom presides the burgomaster, accompanied by his secretary and keeper of the seals.

This council assembles once a year only, in order to appoint to the vacant seats in the jurisdiction of the town, &c. ; besides, there is a particular tribunal for criminal causes, which are afterwards decided in the Lesser Council by a kind of jury, chosen from among the proprietors of the Rue-du-bourg, who have that exclusive privilege : sentence of death, however, cannot be pronounced, except by the senate of Berne, who judge, as before observed, *en dernier ressort*. As Lausanne, in consequence of the privileges enjoyed by its inhabitants, and its forming one of the principal bailiwics in the Pays-de-Vaud, the bailiff, on his arrival, takes an oath, in the presence of the council and *bourgeoisie* of the town, to maintain their rights and franchises †, and not allow them to be violated or infringed without opposing such measures. His residence is in the

\* In German *venner*, a title given in Switzerland to civil magistrates, according to an ancient custom of carrying the colours or banner of the city or district at the federalisation or confederation of the cantons, as well as in the wars they had to sustain, in order to establish their liberty. These magistrates are four years in office, and are charged with inspecting the civil and military police of their respective districts.

† Since the French revolution, the inhabitants of Lausanne have unfortunately lost a part of those privileges, owing to the indiscretion of a few individuals, who, being ill-advised, endeavoured to stir up the people against the senate of Berne.

château heretofore belonging to the bishops, which commands the city, from its elevated situation.

This town is celebrated, in history, as the place of the interview, in 1275, between the pontif, Gregory X. and Rodolphus I. king of the Romans, who had previously refused to proceed to Rome to be consecrated; as also for the council, held in 1448, to ratify the abdication of Amadeus VIII. duke of Savoy, then pope, under the name of Felix V. who voluntarily resigned the pontificate for the purpose of terminating a schism in the church of Rome, and afterwards retired to enjoy a peaceable and tranquil life in the monastery of Ripaille in Savoy, a spot contiguous to the lake, leaving the tiara to Nicolas V. who was acknowledged the lawful pope.

Lausanne, as well as most of the capital cities and towns in Switzerland, contains within its walls abundant helps to philosophic and elegant study, which are to be had, as at Geneva, gratis, the professors of their academy being in like manner paid by the state. This public institution, which is now under the jurisdiction of the senate of Berne, was founded in 1537, soon after the Reformation, and consists of several professors in theology, Greek, Hebrew, philosophy, mathematics, belles-lettres, civil-law, and medicine, and has produced many eminent men, both in literature and the sciences. Nor must we omit to mention, that this academical institution provides exhibitions, or annual pensions, for forty-five indigent scholars, to support and enable them to go through their course of study.

The public library, though less considerable than that of Geneva, has many valuable and scarce books, manuscripts, &c. Here are also several literary cabinets, where, for a very moderate subscription, admission is easily gained.

The principal buildings are the hospitals, which are extremely well regulated, and the cathedral, originally dedicated to the Virgin, an edifice well worth attention, both from the magnitude and highly-finished execution of the work, from its being esteemed the most complete of the kind in Switzerland, and from its containing various marble monuments and Gothic inscriptions. The town-hall and arsenal are fine structures; and many of the private houses also are handsome and well finished.

The site of the town is so extremely irregular, that it includes within its walls three hills of no inconsiderable height, which render the streets uneven, and on a continual ascent and descent. The one which stands at the north side of the town is called *la Cité*, that towards the south *le Bourg*, and the third, at the west, *le Quartier de*



*St. Laurent.* These hills are formed of sand-stone, nearly similar to that found in the neighbourhood of Geneva; though, from having more coherency, and being less subject to exfoliation, than the Geneva stone, it is deemed preferable for building. The colour is a greyish blue, and cement calcareous, nevertheless containing several particles of mica and argillaceous earth.

The surrounding country about Lausanne is as beautiful as language can describe; but the scene which will most please the benevolent philosopher, is the genuine appearance of prosperity, content, and cheerfulness, among the inhabitants themselves, arising from their civil codes and institutions being calculated for the benefit of the governed; for, if happiness be considered as the result of a tranquil and easy mind, where should that blessing be found, if not in a country where the comforts of life are easily obtained, and where the laws indiscriminately protect natives and foreigners, the poor as the rich, and the unlettered rustic equally with the man of erudition?

The air of Lausanne being esteemed salubrious, the society delightful, and the articles of the first necessity extremely moderate, though at present much dearer than they were some years back, this city is resorted to by strangers, who not only make it their residence during the summer, but send hither their children, from various parts of Europe, to complete their education. It speaks in favour of this place, that the celebrated Mr. Gibbon chose it as his favourite residence, to complete his valuable work on the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; and what I have advanced above may have induced him to give Lausanne the preference.

Some excellent books have been printed at Lausanne, and there is some business done in jewelery and plate; but, on the whole, its trade is inconsiderable, nor do the principal inhabitants discover any wish to engage in mercantile pursuits.

Before I leave this city, I must recommend the view from the summit of the hill where the signal is placed, which, from its extreme height, commands a vast tract of country; and also explain the origin and utility of the vast number of signals seen all over Switzerland.

The Swiss call *signaux*, or signals (in German *hoch-wachten*), piles of wood and heaps of straw, placed on the top of their highest hills, at certain distances from each other, with a hut, or kind of *corps-de-garde*. The care of attending each of these, in time of war, is frequently entrusted to a piquet of soldiers, who, at the approach of the enemy, or any other danger, set fire to the wood by night, and the

straw by day, for the purpose of alarming the cantons, and giving the inhabitants sufficient time to join their respective corps.

The care with which the Helvetic body guard their frontiers cannot be sufficiently admired, particularly in times of surrounding hostilities, preserving a respect for their neutrality, by keeping continually in readiness, to oppose force by force, a very considerable cordon of troops, should the belligerent powers attempt to violate their territory: and in case the number on duty be found insufficient, by lighting the signals, in a very few hours, upwards of three hundred thousand of some of the best troops in Europe would be on their march (though composed of militia only, the military in Switzerland being formed of no other), and repair to the field of battle, preceded by their banners, and followed by cannon, baggage, &c. As every citizen is a soldier (the clergy excepted), in case of emergency, one hundred thousand more might with ease be raised; their military regulations being such, that each state or district of the Helvetic body may be considered as an army in cantonments, ready to move at a moment's notice.

It is certain, that the character of a militia-man of any particular canton is not only looked on as an honourable distinction by the Swiss in general, but is in fact held in such estimation, and so encouraged by the laws of the country, that an individual dares not appear in a court of justice without his uniform and sword, under pain of being fined for the neglect of this *étiquette*. In several of the cantons, the peasantry cannot gain permission to marry without first applying to the magistrates, dressed as above, with their guns in good order, the pouch well filled, and a bible.

By these judicious regulations of their government, and that degree of confidence which every individual places in his own personal courage, added to an enthusiastic *amor patriæ*, which, by increasing every attachment to what they hold most dear,—the defence of their aged relatives, wives, and children,—the Swiss have been capable of preserving the blessings of peace for the space of three hundred years. Satisfied and contented with their possessions, they quietly enjoy them, without envying their neighbours, and are confident of being enabled to defend their territory against the unjust and arbitrary attacks or encroachments of an inconsiderate enemy. They wisely avoid war, without fearing it; and do not interfere with that cruel system of politics, which has for years been the cause of shedding torrents of blood, to little purpose, in different parts of Europe.

The road from Lausanne, by the gate *la Cité*, has a considerable descent for the space of three miles, along the sides of luxuriant vineyards, which cover the southern



surface of the hill de la Vaud (famous for its wine, a great quantity of which is annually exported), and continues close to the edge of a range of rich pasturage, stretching to the very banks of the lake. This hill, about nine miles in length, is a continuation of the Jorat, of the sand-stone of which it is in great part formed, and nearly similar to that found in the quarries in the vicinity of the town. An extensive forest of firs, interspersed with meadows, covers its entire summit, where the vines are not cultivated.

From Lausanne to Lutry, the next town, I noticed, in several places, large blocks of pudding-stone of the primitive order, with their angles nearly rounded, resting on strata of sand-stone belonging to the above mountain, and even sometimes buried in their crevices or fissures. Now, it is perfectly manifest, that these stones cannot have been carried thither, unless by some great commotion or revolution of the earth, which not only caused them to be detached or loosened from the high Alps, but, by some certain force, transported them to where they now lie. The reason why I am induced to consider these pudding-stones as primitive, is their being entirely formed of pebbles, which do not effervesce with acids any more than their cement, which is of the nature of silex and argil: even the sand found in their interstices appears to be totally composed of vitrifiable parts, such as quartz, and different particles of rock-crystal. The road then proceeds through Cully (another small town, and the last before arriving at Vevay), the environs of which are more curious than agreeable, from the road which leads to it being nearly the whole way wedged in between walls rising above walls, which serve as inclosures to the different vineyards, the property of individuals who reside there; and though I could not by any means feel much partiality to such a road, finding myself dreadfully incommoded by the heat, the sun being intense, and its beams most forcibly reflected by those extensive walls, yet could I not help admiring the indefatigable industry of the inhabitants of that part of the Pays-de-Vaud, who, by hard labour and perseverance, and at a great expense, have erected a number of terraces, one above the other, and, by covering them with earth, have forced a mountain, abrupt and barren, to yield the most delicious wine of Switzerland.

From Cully the road imperceptibly becomes more cheerful, and the structure of a mountain on my left offered a greater variety, both in form and production of soil; besides, I again noticed huge rocks of pudding-stone dispersed, though not of similar species to those before observed between Lausanne and Lutry,—these being composed of thick strata, mostly separated by argillaceous shelves or zones, and sometimes even