LETTERS FROM ABROAD.*

Letter II.—GENOA.

Genoa is truly "Genoa the Superb."[1] Its finest aspect is from the sea, and from the sea I first beheld it. Imagine a glorious amphitheatre of white houses, with mountains on each side and at the back. The base is composed of the city with its churches and shipping; the other houses are country seats, looking out, one above the other, up the hill. To the left are the Alps with their snowy tops: to the right, and for the back, are the Appennines.[2] This is Genoa. It is situate at the very angle of the pointed gulf, which is called after its name, and which presents on either side, as you sail up it, white villages, country seats, and olive groves. I sailed up this gulf in summer-time. The lucid Mediterranean sea washed against our vessel, like amber: a sky, blue indeed, was above our heads: inconveniences and dangers were left behind us; health, hope, and Italy, were before us. With what contented anxiety did we not ask the names of the towns and villages, as we saw them one after the other, seated on the shore like ladies, to prepare for the approach of voyagers to the great Queen![3] How did we not reconnoitre the great Queen herself with our ship's glass, counting the miles as they lessened between us! At length we see her clearly. Her marble pomp opens upon us! We fancy we see the palace of her great son Doria![4] How truly does she realize our expectations, poetical as they were! There

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Serena Baiesi.

she sat between her mountains, having the sea as of old at her feet, and "abating not a tittle[5] of her state," albeit my countrymen had forsaken her.

As Genoa was the first city in Italy which I beheld, and as first impressions are not only liveliest, but liveliest in the order in which they occurred, I will resort to the journal I kept, and notice objects as they struck me day by day. It was at two o'clock on the 15th of June that our vessel entered the harbour. After travelling the great "world of waters wide and deep,"[6] it was every way a pleasant thing to feel one's-self embraced in the Genoese harbour, which is one of the most encircling there are. We were full, at that time, of happy thoughts of a dear friend; and we felt as if the country he was in embraced us for him.

June 15. Our arrival in the harbour did not diminish our idea of Genoa: but our notions of the Italian countenance were formidably startled by the pilot-boat, which came out to offer it's[7] assistance in conducting us by the mole. The mole had been injured greatly by the storms of the preceding winter. The boat contained, I think, as ugly a set of faces as could well be brought together. It was a very neat boat, and the pilots were singularly neat and clean in their persons; but their faces! My wife looked at me as much as to say, "are these our fine Southern heads." The children looked at me: we all looked at one another: and what was very inhospitable, the pilots all looked at us. The sun was in their eyes; and there they sat on their oars, grinning up at us, and bargaining with the Captain. The older ones were like monkies;[8] the younger like half-withered masks—hard, stony, and even pale. One young man however was handsome both in face and person: he had the fine black eyes and brown colour we expected to meet with; and luckily, driving a less hard bargain than the rest (which was to

be expected of him), the Captain agreed with him, and he came on board. His dress and appearance we found might be taken as a specimen, and by no means an uncommon specimen, of the better order of boatmen, upon this and the Tuscan coast: for we soon had the pleasure of being agreeably disappointed with regard to the slovenliness we had looked for. It was that of a smart English apprentice with his coat off. He had a very neat black hat on, in the modern style, good shoes and silk handkerchief, and blue linen pantaloons coming up high, and fastened over his shoulders with braces. Though aware that one style of dress, with little modification, prevails now-a-days all over Europe, one cannot help feeling a kind of disappointment, and even surprise, at seeing Italians dressed like Englishmen. It seems a disgrace to them, not because they are like us, but because they look unlike themselves and their climate, and disappoint us of a becoming variety. We thought how well our pilot would have looked in his cap and cloak. But we were thankful for his face. I asked him where the Doria palace stood. "Behold it!" said he, pointing to the left; and we looked upon the handsome yet comparatively humble mansion, which Andrew Doria built for himself and his descendants, when he was at the height of his power. It is a low long building, with an arcade, and a garden before it, and looks over the harbour which he rendered so eminent. We were in the Genoese harbour for two weeks, and it was no small pleasure to us to have this republican palace always in sight.

We had scarcely got rid of our ugly men, when we were assailed with a much worse sight, a gang of ugly boys. They were a set of young knaves, poking about for what they could lay their hands on; and came loitering and hanging about the vessel under pretence of asking charity. Their

fathers and mothers, or *their* fathers and mothers, or manners and customs *ad infinitum*,[9] had much to answer for in contriving such a set of juvenile vagabonds. They clung about the sides of the vessel, with faces, and hands too, like monkies. They had no foreheads, and moved their hands as if they were paws. Never did we see a more striking look of something removed from humanity; and the worst of it was, they had no sort of comfort in their faces; their laugh was as melancholy yet unfeeling, as their abject and canting whine. They looked like impudent squalid old men of the world, in the shape of boys; and were as pale, and almost as withered. They were like the sordid imps of Massinger or Decker.[10] Sinbad's old man of the sea[11] would have had such children, only stronger. Certainly both men and boys might have made a huntsman himself hypochondriacal.

Boats with awnings were rowing backwards and forwards, many of them, particularly as the afternoon advanced, containing bathers, who dressed and undressed themselves, as they went along, in the most unscrupulous manner. One of the very commonest sights was to see men in their shirts; and not a very uncommon one, ladies in their company. People bathed among the shipping at all times of the day, and ladies would pass them, nothing wondering, in boats. This grossness, which indecency itself would diminish, I witnessed afterwards at Leghorn;[12] and I have seen people bathing in the Arno in the very middle of Pisa. I am not squeamish; and think some of our northern notions as gross as any thing else; but where there is neither innocence nor even a refined sensuality, there is something more than gross in these public expositions of the person; the extreme of formality is better, inasmuch as it approaches nearer to one of the two. But something, in the progress of such customs, is to be allowed for difference of climate.

The first handsome countenance that came near us, after the pilot's, was that of a boy who accompanied a custom-house officer, and who was going to bathe. But he had no modesty in his aspect, and the want of it was not bettered by his ear-rings and the cut of his hair, which made him look like a girl. Numbers of lads had the same look, on the same accounts; even when apparently seventeen or eighteen years old. The short, thick custom-house officer, grave, obsequious, and yet indifferent, was like a man made of dough; and he had the most exaggerated cocked-hat and worsted epaulets which we had ever beheld out of the pale of a pantomime.

The first sight of Italian women disappointed us almost as much as Italian men, because we expected still more of them. Of course, had we seen them first, they would have disappointed us more. But I afterwards found, that as you ascended among the more educated classes, the faces improved; and I have reason to believe, that most of the women whom we saw in boats, deceived us as to their rank in this respect. In Italy, gentlemen do not look so much like gentlemen as in England, but there are greater numbers of women who look like ladies. This is partly owing to their dress. In Genoa particularly, the out-of-door head-dress for women of all ranks is a white veil; and an Englishman, unaccustomed to see this piece of drapery upon common heads, and observing besides the stateliness with which female Italians carry themselves, thinks he is oftener looking at gentlewomen than he is.

We had not been long in harbour before we inquired, with all the eagerness of voyagers, for our fresh provisions. In Italy, we also looked for our heaps of fruit; and we had them —in all the luxury of baskets and vine-leaves, and a cheapness that made us laugh. Grapes were not in season; but

there were figs, apricots, fresh almonds, oranges, pears, and gigantic cherries, as fine as they were large. We also took leave of our biscuit for excellent bread; and had milk brought to us in bottles, which were stopped with vine-leaves. The mutton turned out to be kid, and lean enough; but it was a novelty, and we eat it upon a principle of inquiry. An excellent light wine accompanied our repast, drunk, not in little cautious glasses, like our "hot intoxicating liquor,"[13] but out of tumblers. It was just three-pence English a quart. It had, notwithstanding it's lightness, a real vinous body, and both looked and tasted like a sort of claret; but we were sorry to find it was French, and not Italian. As to the fruit,—to give a specimen in one word,—the apricots, very fine ones, were two-pence a gallon.

16. To-day I went on shore. I shall never forget the sensations with which I first set foot in Italy;—but they will not do to dwell upon now. The quay is a handsome one, profuse of good pavement, gate, &c. and the abundance of stone every where, the whiteness of the houses, and the blueness of the sky, cast, at first sight, an extraordinary look of lightness and cleanliness upon every thing. Nor are you disappointed in Genoa, as people are at Lisbon, between the fairness of the look outside and the dirt within. The large wrinkled features of the old women, with their uncapped grey hair, strike you at first as singularly plain: so do the people in general: but every thing looks clean and neat, and full of the smart bustle of a commercial city. What surprises you is the narrowness of the streets. As soon as you have passed the gate, you think you have entered upon a lane, remarkably good indeed for a lane,—a sort of Bond-street[14] of an alley,—but you have no conception that it is a street, and of the ordinary dimensions. The shops also, though neat, are blind and open,

like English potatoe[15] shops, or at best like some of the little comb shops now rarely to be seen in London. I mean, they have no windows, whether they have counters or not. After entering this street, you soon come upon the public place, or exchange, which is a very fair one. You cross over this into the principal street, or street of Goldsmiths, full of shops in which trinkets are sold, including a world of crosses and other Christian emblems, and huge ear-rings. It is the custom in several parts of Italy for girls to carry their marriage-portion about with them in the shape of gold ear-rings and crosses; and no maid-servant thinks herself properly drest on mass-days without announcing, in this way, that she is equally fit for Heaven and a husband. The gold is very thin, but solidity is made up for by the length and width of the ornaments; and the ear-rings are often heavy enough to tear through the lobes of the ears. Imagine a brown, black-eyed girl, with her thick hair done up in combs, a white veil over it, a coloured, sometimes a white gown, large dangling gold ornaments at her ears and bosom, and perhaps bare feet or tattered shoes, and you have the complete portrait of an Italian maid-servant or peasant-girl, issuing forth to church or a dance. The men of all classes dress more like the same classes in other countries, with an exception however, as before noticed, in favour of the humbler ones. Yet you often see the old Genoese cap, evidently the still older Phrygian;[16] and in Genoa you notice a set of porters from Bergamo, who wear a puckered kilt. They are a good-looking race, and are esteemed for their honesty. The burdens they carry are enormous. The labourer of Italy often shews his propensity to a piece of drapery, by hanging his jacket over his shoulders with the sleeves dangling; a custom naturally prompted by the heat.

But I forget that I am in Genoa for the first time. In England we have delicate names for some of our streets and alleys. There is Love-lane, Maiden-lane, Garden-court, Green Arbour-court, &c. but in Italy they beat us hollow. Pisa has not only Love-street and Lily-street, but Beautiful Ladies'-lane, and the Lane of the Beautiful Towers. In Genoa, after passing through Goldsmith-street, and another that leads up from it, you come out by the post-office upon the Piazza della Fontane Amorose,[17]—the Place of the Amorous Fountains. There is a magnificent mansion in it, containing baths, and another adorned on the outside with paintings of festive women. But here all the houses begin to be magnificent mansions, and you again recognize "Genova la Superba." From the Piazza della Fontane Amorose you turn into the Strada Nuova, which leads round through another sumptuous street into the Strada Balbi, fit, says Madame de Staël,[18] for a congress of kings.[19] This has become a poor compliment. It is fit for a congress of great men. If intellect, and not childishness, settled the destinies of the world, here might such spirits meet as the Dorias, the Miltons, the Sidneys, the Hôpitals, and the Washingtons,[20] and put an end at once to the tiresome farce of kings being taught to no purpose. These three streets are literally a succession of palaces on each side the way; and these palaces are of costly architecture, and are adorned inside with the works of the Italian masters. Marble is lavished every where. It is like a street raised by Aladdin,[21] to astonish his father-in-law the Sultan. Yet there is one lamentable deficiency. Even these streets are narrow. I do not think the Strada Nuova is wider than Bond-street *without* the pavements. "A lane!" you cry. Yes, a lane of Whitehalls,[22] encrusted with the richest architecture. Imagine how much the buildings lose by this confinement, and then wonder how it could

have taken place. The alleged reason is,[23] that in a hot country shade is wanted, and therefore beauty is sacrificed to utility. But the reason is a bad one: for porticos might have been used, as at Bologna,[24] and the street made so wide, as to render the disadvantage to the architecture a comparative nothing. The circumstance probably originated in some reasons connected with the ground, or the value of it, and the pressure of the population within the then city-walls. Some other magnificent streets built subsequently, are wider, though still a good deal too narrow. The Genoese have found out before ourselves, the folly of calling a street, New Street; but have not very wisely corrected it by naming one of their last, *Newest* Street,—Strada Nuovissima. Upon this principle, they must call the next street they build, Newer-than-all street, or Extremely-new Street, or New-of-the-very-newest-description Street. But perhaps they are somewhat hampered at present with regard to names.

I had scarcely set foot in Genoa (which was the first time I had been in the South) when I encountered a religious procession. I found chairs brought out in one of the streets, and well-dressed company seated on each side, as in a music-room. In Genoa some of the streets are paved all over. In the rest, the flat pavement is in the middle, and used both for traffic and walking. This, I suppose, originated in a vile custom which they have in several cities of Italy,—the same which Smollet[25] delights to speak of in Edinburgh. Accidents frequently occur in consequence; but any thing is sooner mended than a habit originating in idleness or moral indifference; and the inhabitants and the mules go on in their old way. To return to the procession. —The reader must imagine a narrow street with the company, as above-mentioned, and an avenue left for the passage of the spectacle. The curiosity expressed in the company'[26]

faces was of a very mild description, the next thing to indifference. The music is heard at a little distance, then a bustling sound of feet, and you see the friars coming up. Nearly at the head of the procession was a little live Virgin about four years old, walking in much state with a silver-looking crown on her head, and a sceptre in her hand. A pleased relation helped her along, occasionally righting the crown and sceptre, which she bore with all that royal gravity which children so soon understand. By her side was another grown person equally pleased, supporting a still smaller St. John, dressed in a lamb-skin, and apparently selected for his office on account of his red little waxen cheeks and curly flaxen hair. He did not seem quite as *au fait*[27] in the matter as the Virgin, but was as grave as need be, and not a little heated. A string of clergy followed in their gowns, carrying large lighted wax candles, and each one assisted by a personage, whose appearance was singularly striking to a foreigner from a Protestant country. These coadjutors were neither more nor less than the very raggedest and dirtiest fellows, old and young, in all Genoa. There was one to every light. His object was to collect the wax that fell from the candles, which he did in a piece of twisted paper; and the candle appeared purposely held low, to oblige him with as much as possible. The wax is sold by him, as consecrated. I dare say this accompaniment of pauperism has a reference to the best doctrines of the Christian religion; but it is a singular mistake, and has a most unedifying appearance. Poverty should not be in this squalid condition, especially by the side of comfortable clergymen. The faces too of the poor fellows had, for the most part, all the signs of bad education. Now and then there was a head like the beggar who sat for Sir Joshua's Ugolino,[28]—a fine head, but still a beggar. Some were of a

portentous raffishness. As to the priests and friars (for there followed a variety) I could not help observing throughout, that with very few exceptions the countenances grew indifferent and worldly as they grew old. A few of the young ones were worthy of the heads in Raphael.[29] One young man had a saint-like manner with him, casting down his eyes and appearing absorbed in meditation; but I thought, when he did cast them up (which he instantly followed by casting them down again) it was in approaching the young ladies. He had certainly a head fit for an Abelard.[30]—I spoke just now of a bustle of feet. You do not know at first to what the loudness of it is owing, but the secret is explained as a large machine approaches, preceded by music. This is a group of wax-work as large as life, carried on the shoulders of ambling friars; for they are obliged to get into that step on account of the weight. It represented, on the present occasion, St. Antonio kneeling before the Virgin, around whom were little angels fluttering like Cupids. It is impossible not to be reminded of Paganism by these spectacles. Indeed, as the Jupiter of the Capitol[31] still sits there under his new name of St. Peter,[32] so there is no doubt that the ancients, under other names, had these identical processions. The Cupids remain unaltered[33] The son of Myrrha[34] himself could not look more lover-like than St. Antonio, nor Venus more polite than the Virgin; and the flowers stuck all about (the favourite emblem of the Cyprian youth)[35] completed the likeness of an ancient festival of Adonis.[36] So also would the priests have looked in their ancient garments; so would have come the music and the torches (paupers excepted); and so would the young priests have looked, in passing by the young ladies. To see the grandeurs of the Catholic religion, you must consult its rarest and most serious festivals, its pictures, and its poet Dante.[37] I

must not forget, that among the musical instruments were violins. One set of friars wore cowls over their faces, having holes only to see through, and looking extremely hideous,—like executioners. Among those that shewed their faces, and did not seem at all ashamed of them, was one good-natured, active personage, who ran back, with much vivacity, to encourage the machine-bearers. He looked as much as to say, "It is hot enough for you, God knows;" and so it was.

Somebody has said, that in the South all the monks look like soldiers, and all the soldiers like monks. I dare say this might have been the case before the late spread of liberal opinions; but it is so no longer. In Spain and Portugal it cannot be so; though the Sardinian troops at present quartered in Genoa[38] are for the most part under-grown and poor-looking men. The officers however are better. They have a propensity, common I am told in the South, to over-grown caps and epaulets; but they have otherwise a manly aspect, and look more like gentlemen than any one else. This indeed is always the case, where there is any difference; military habits begetting an air of self-possession. The Piedmontese soldiery are remarkably well-dressed. They have a bad way of learning their exercise. They accompany every motion,—the whole set of men,—with a loud Ho! just as if a multitude of quick paviours were at work. This, besides encouraging noise, must take away from a ready dependance on the eye.

I went into the churches every day, when I was on shore. I liked their quiet, their coolness, and their richness. Besides, I find my own religion in some part or other of all imaginative religions. In one of the churches are pillars of porphyry, and several are very imposing; but they struck me upon the whole as exhibiting the genius of a commercial

rather than a tasteful country, and as being more weighty and expensive than any thing else. There are some good pictures; but by far the greater number adorn the houses of the nobility. In all Catholic churches, there is an unfortunate mixture of petty ornaments with great, of dusty artificial flowers with fine altar-pieces, and of wretched little votive pictures, and silver hearts and legs, stuck up by the side of the noblest pieces of art. This is another custom handed down from antiquity. I was reminded of Horace's Ode to Pyrrha,[39] by a painting of a shipwreck, in which the wind blew one way, and the sails another. If a man has got rid of a pain in the pericardium, he dedicates a little silver heart to the saint whose assistance he prayed for. If a toe has been the complaining party, he hangs up a toe. The general feeling is good, but not so the detail. It is affecting, however, to think, that many of the hearts hung up (and they are by far the most numerous) have been owing to pangs of the spirit. The most interesting thing I met with in the Genoese churches, next to a picture by Raphael and Giulio Romano in that of St. Stephen,[40] was a sermon by a friar on Weeping. He seemed a popular preacher, and held the attention of his audience for a good hour. His exordium was in a gentle and restrained voice, but he warmed as he went on, and became as loud and authoritative as the tenderness of his subject could well allow. He gave us an account of all sorts of Tears,—of the tears of joy, and the tears of sorrow, of penitent tears, tears of anger, spite, ill-temper, worldly regret, love, patience, &c. and from what I could collect, with an ear unaccustomed to hear Italian spoken, a very true, as well as full and particular account, it was. The style was much more florid than in our northern sermons. He spoke of murmuring rills and warbling nightingales, and admitted all the merits of poetical luxury; but

in denouncing luxury in general, it was curious to hear a stout, jovial-looking friar exhorting his auditors to value above all other enjoyments that of weeping in solitude. The natives are not likely to be too much softened by injunctions of this description.

(I find I have not dated my journal between the 16th and 22nd.)[41] The houses in Genoa are very high as well as large. Many of them are painted on the outside, not only with pictures, but with imitations of architecture; and whatever we may think of such a taste, must have looked magnificent when the paintings were first executed. Some of them look so now, colours in this beautiful climate retaining their vividness for centuries out of doors. But in some instances, the paintings being done upon stucco, the latter has partly crumbled away; and this gives a shabby, dilapidated appearance to houses otherwise excellent. Nobody seems to think of repairing them. It is the same with many of the houses unpainted, and with common garden walls, most of which must have once made a splendid appearance[42] The mere spirit of commerce has long succeeded to its ancient mixture with a better one; or Genoa would not be what it is in many respects. But a Genoese must have grand notions of houses, especially as in this city as well as the rest of Italy, shopkeepers sometimes occupy the ground floors of the finest mansions. You shall see a blacksmith or a carpenter looking out of a window where you should expect a duchess.

How I hailed the first sight of the vines and orange-trees! Neither Genoa nor even the country about it abounds in either. It is a splendid sea-port of stone and marble, and the mountains immediately about it are barren, though they soon begin to be clothed with olive-trees. But among the gigantic houses and stone walls you now and then detect a garden, with its statues and orange-trees; some of the windows have

vines trailed over them, not in the scanty fashion of our creepers, but like great luxuriant green hair hanging over the houses' eyes: and sometimes the very highest stories have a terrace along the whole length of the house embowered with them. Calling one day upon a gentleman who resided in an elevated part of the suburbs, and to get at whose abode I had walked through a hot sun and a city of stone, I was agreeably surprised, when the door opened, with a long yellow vista of an arcade of vines, at once basking in the sun and defending from it. In the suburbs there are some orchards in all the southern luxuriance of leaves and fruit. In one of these I walked among heaps of vines, olives, cherry, orange and almond trees, and had the pleasure of plucking fresh lemons from the bough, a merry old brown gardener, with a great straw-hat and bare legs, admiring all the while my regard for those common-places, and encouraging me with a good-natured paternity to do what I pleased. The cherries were Brobdignagian,[43] and bursting with juice. Next the orchard was a *wine-garden*, answering to our *tea-gardens*, with vine-arbours and seats as with us, where people come to drink wine and play at their games. Returning through the city, I saw a man in one of the bye streets alternately singing and playing on a pipe, exactly as we conceive of the ancient shepherds.

One night I went to the opera, which was indifferent enough, but I understand it is a good deal better sometimes. The favourite composer here, and all over Italy, is Rossini;[44] for which, as well as the utter neglect of Mozart,[45] some national feelings may enter into others less pardonable. But Rossini is undoubtedly good enough to make us glad to see genius of any sort appreciated. My northern faculties were scandalized at seeing men in the pit with *fans!* Effeminacy

is not always incompatible with courage, but it is a very dangerous help towards it; and I wondered what Doria would have said, had he seen a captain of one of his gallies indulging his cheeks in this manner.

23.[46] To-night the city was illuminated, and bonfires and rockets put in motion, in honour of St. John the Baptist.[47] The effect from the harbour was beautiful; fire, like the stars, having a brilliancy in this pure atmosphere, of which we have no conception. The scent of the perfumes employed in the bonfires was very perceptible on board ship.

24. You learn for the first time in this climate, what colours really are. No wonder it produces painters. An English artist of any enthusiasm might shed tears of vexation, to think of the dull medium through which blue and red come to him in his own atmosphere, compared with this. To-day we saw a boat pass us, which instantly reminded us of Titian,[48] and accounted for him: and yet it contained nothing but an old boatman in a red cap, and some women with him in other colours, one of them in a bright yellow petticoat. But a red cap in Italy goes by you, not like a mere cap, much less any thing vulgar or butcher-like, but like what it is, an intense specimen of the colour of red. It is like a scarlet bud in the blue atmosphere. The old boatman, with his brown hue, his white shirt, and his red cap, made a complete picture; and so did the women and the yellow petticoat. I have seen pieces of orange-coloured silk hanging out against a wall at a dyer's, which gave the eye a pleasure truly sensual. Some of these boatmen are very fine men. I was rowed to shore one day by a man the very image of Kemble.[49] He had nothing but his shirt on, and it was really grand to see the mixed power and gracefulness with which all his limbs came into play as he pulled

the oars, occasionally turning his heroic profile to give a glance behind him at other boats. They generally row standing, and pushing from them.

The most interesting sight, after all, in Genoa, was the one we first saw,—the Doria palace. Bonaparte[50] lodged there when he was in Genoa; but this, which would have been one of its greatest praises, had he done all he could have done for liberty, is one of its least. Andrew Doria dwelt there after a long life, which he spent in giving security and glory to his country, and which he crowned by his refusal of sovereign power. "I know the value," said he, "of the liberty I have earned for my country, and shall I finish by taking it from her?" When upwards of eighty, he came forward and took the command of an armament in a rough season. His friends remonstrated, "Excuse me," said he, "I have never yet stopped for any thing when my duty was in the way, and at my time of life one cannot get rid of one's old habits." This is the very perfection of a speech,—a mixture of warrantable self-esteem, modesty, energy, pathos, and pleasantry: for it contains them all. He died upwards of ninety. I asked for Doria's descendants, and was told they were rich. The Pallavicini,[51] with whom the Cromwell[52] family were connected, are extant. I could ascertain nothing more of the other old families, except that they had acquired a considerable dislike of the English; which under all circumstances is in their favour. I found one thing however which they *did*, and I must correct, in favour of this one thing, what I have said about the Doria palace; for the sight of it upon the whole gave me still greater satisfaction; and having since returned to the neighbourhood of Genoa to live there awhile, I have had particular pleasure in going over the ground which it has rendered honourable. This is the overthrow of the Genoese

Inquisition.[53] There was a wish the other day to rebuild it; but this, I am told, the old families opposed; and the last ruins of it are now being cleared away. It is pleasant to see the workmen knocking its old marble jaws about.

You must take this as a mere superficial sketch of Genoa, the result of first impressions. But it is correct as far as it goes. Since my visit in the summer, I have lived in the neighbourhood for some weeks, and found nothing to alter. I have not spoken however of one main thing, the insides of the great houses. I have hitherto seen but two, and those slightly; but writers give us magnificent accounts of them, worthy of the outside. One is described as having terraces on every floor, adorned with orange-trees: and there are paintings in most from the hands of the great masters. Upon the character of the nation I feel myself still less warranted to speak from personal acquaintance; but I may observe generally, that they seem to partake of the usual faults and capabilities of an active people brought up in habits of money-getting. In an historical point of view, it is certain that Genoa has shewn both how much and how little can be done by mere commerce. A great man here and there in former times is an exception; and the princely mansions, the foundations of schools and hospitals, and the erection of costly churches, attest that in similar periods money-getting had not degenerated into miserliness. But the Genoese did not cultivate mind enough to keep up the breed of patriots; and it remained for an indignant spirit to issue out of a neighbouring arbitrary monarchy and read them lectures on their absorption in money-getting. Alfieri,[54] in his Satire on Commerce, ranks them with their mules.[55] It avails nothing to a people to be merely acquiring money, while the rest of the world are acquiring ideas;—a truth which more powerful governments than the late Genoese will find before long, if

they are traitors enough to their own reputation to set their faces against that nobler traffic. But this, at the present time of day, is surely impossible. It turns out, that Genoa and its neighbourhood have no pretensions to Columbus;[56] which is lucky for her. He was born at Cuccaro[57] in the province of Aqui,[58] not far from Asti,—Alfieri's birth-place. Chiabrera,[59] who is sometimes called the Italian Pindar,[60] was born near Genoa, at Savona. I have read little of him; but he must have merit to be counted an Italian Classic: and it says little for the Genoese, that I could not find a copy of his works at their principal bookseller's. Frugoni,[61] their other poet, was born, I believe, in the same place. He is easy and lively, but wrote a great deal too much, probably for bread. There is a pleasant petition of his in verse to the Genoese senate, about some family claims, in which he gives an account of his debts, that must have startled the faculties of that prudent and opulent body. A few more Frugonis however, and a few less rich men, would have been better for Genoa. The best production I ever met with from a Genoese pen, is a noble sonnet by Giambattista Pastorini,[62] a Jesuit; written, I believe, after the bombardment of the city by the troops of Louis XIV.[63] It begins, "Genova mia, se con asciutto ciglio." I am sorry I have it not by me to copy out. The poet glories in the resistance made by Genoa, and kisses the ruins caused by the bombardment with transport. What must have been his mortification, when he saw the Doge[64] and a number of senators set out for France, to go and apologise to Louis XIVth, for having been so erroneous as to defend their country!

There is a proverb which says of Genoa, that it has a sea without fish, land without trees, men without faith, and women without modesty. Ligurian trickery is a charge as old as Virgil.[65] But M. Millin very properly observes *(Voyage en Savoie, &c.)* that accusations of this description are gene-

rally made by jealous neighbours, and that the Genoese have most likely no more want of good faith than other Italians who keep shops.[66] I must confess, at the same time, that the most barefaced trick ever attempted to be practised on myself, was by a Genoese. The sea, it is said, has plenty of fish, only the duty on it is very high, and the people prefer butchers' meat. This is hardly a good reason why fish is not eaten at a sea-port. Perhaps it is naturally scarce at the extreme point of a gulf like that of Genoa. The land is naked enough, certainly, in the immediate vicinity, though it soon begins to be otherwise. As to the women, they have fine eyes and figures, but by no means appear destitute of modesty; and modesty has much to do with appearance. The charge of want of modesty is, at all times and in all places, the one most likely to be made by those who have no modesty themselves.

EDITORIAL NOTES

[1] Epithet used by the Italian poet Francesco Petrarca (1304-74) in one of his epigraphs ("Epigrafe III", l. 21).

[2] Misprint (possible language transfer from the Italian *Appennini*) for *Apennines*.

[3] The city of Genoa.

[4] Reference to Villa del Principe in Genoa, where the Genoese explorer and statesman Andrea Doria (1466-1560) spent many years.

[5] Misspelling of *title*.

[6] John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1688), III.11.

[7] *it's*: nonstandard variant form of *its*, frequent in Hunt's writings.

[8] Misprint for *monkeys*.

[9] *ad infinitum* (Latin): again and again; forever.

[10] *sordid imps … or Decker*: reference to the spirits in Philip Massinger (1583-1640) and Thomas Dekker's (c.1572-1632) play *The Virgin Martyr* (1620).

[11] Reference to *The Thousand and One Nights* (1706, first English translation), where Sinbad the Sailor, one of the protagonists of the saga, encounters the character during one of his voyages.

[12] Leghorn (Livorno in Italian), Italian city in the region of Tuscany.

[13] Reference to William Hazlitt's essay (possibly co-authored with Leigh Hunt) "Brummelliana" (1820), (Hazlitt 2007, 332).

[14] Bond Street, one of the most important streets in the city centre of London, renowned for its shops.

[15] Misspelling of *potato*.

[16] Phrygian cap, typical headdress made of wood or felt with a conical shape originating in the country of Phrygia, Anatolia.

[17] Piazza delle Fontane Amorose (Hunt's misspelling in the text), square in the city centre of Genoa.

[18] Germaine de Staël (1766-1817), French-Swiss writer, political activist, and author of the novel *Corinne, or Italy* (*Corinne, ou l'Italie*) (1807).

[19] *fit … for a congress of kings*: remark commonly attributed to Madame de Staël.

[20] *the Dorias … the Washingtons*: references to the Genoese statesman Andrea Doria (1466-1560), the English poet John Milton (1608-74), the English poet Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86), probably the French mathematician Guillaume de l'Hôpital (1661-1704), and the president of the United States, George Washington (1732-99).

[21] Aladdin, character in one of the most famous stories collected in *The Thousand and One Nights*.

[22] Whitehall, street and area in central London.

[23] Mispunctuation.

[24] Bologna, city in northern Italy, in the Emilia Romagna region, well known for its porticos.

[25] Tobias Smollett (1721-71), Scottish writer, here mentioned by Hunt for his *Travels Through France and Italy* (1766).

[26] Misprint for *company's*.

[27] *au fait* (French): to be well instructed or 'up to the mark' (*OED*).

[28] Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-92), British painter. Hunt refers to his painting "Count Ugolino and his Children in the Dungeon" (1773).

[29] Raphael (1483-1520), Italian painter, one of the finest artists of the Italian Renaissance.

[30] Pierre Abélard (Peter Abelard in English) (1079-1142), French theologian and philosopher, condemned for heresy for his tragic love affair with one of his pupils.

[31] Reference to the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, or Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, sited on the Capitoline Hill in Rome. It was the most important temple serving as a religious centre.

[32] Reference to St. Peter's Cathedral, located in the Vatican City.

[33] Mispunctuation: full stop missing from the copy-text.

[34] In Greek mythology, Adonis, son of Myrrha and Theias, was a youth of remarkable beauty and the lover of the goddesses Aphrodite, also known as Venus.

[35] *the flowers … Cyprian youth*: reference to Adonis, who, according to the legend, spent time with his lover Aphrodite in Cyprus. After his death, Adonis became an anemone flower.

[36] Comparison between the Christian procession and a pagan rite.

[37] Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), Italian poet and prose writer. His best-known work is the epic poem *The Divine Comedy* (*La Divina Commedia*, c. 1307-20).

[38] Genoa became part of the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont after the Congress of Vienna (1815). The kingdom comprised the island of Sardinia, the region of Piedmont (northwestern part of Italy), Savoy (a territory west of the Alps, now southeastern France), and Nice.

[39] *Ad Pyrrham* (23 BCE), ode by Horace (65- 8 BCE), Roman lyric poet.

[40] Reference to the *Stoning of St Stephen* (1521), painting by Giulio Romano (1492-1546), Raphael's assistant, displayed in church di Santo Stefano, Genoa.

[41] The text under brackets was possibly not intended for publication, as it was not included in the relevant section of *The Autobiography of Leigh Hunt* (1850).

[42] Mispunctuation: full stop missing from the copy-text.

[43] Brobdignagian, huge, of large proportion. The adjective was used by Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) in his *Gulliver's Travels* (1726).

[44] Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868), the most internationally successful and influential Italian composer of operas in the early nineteenth century.

[45] Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91), Austrian composer and pianist, one of the most celebrated musicians in the Western world.

[46] This and the following number are references to the dates (23 and 24 June 1822) that Hunt kept in his journal. They were probably not intended for publication, as they are not mentioned in *The Autobiography of Leigh Hunt* (1850).

[47] St. John the Baptist, Patron Saint of the city of Geona, who is celebrated on 24 June.

[48] Tiziano Vecellio (c. 1485-1576), Italian painter of the Renaissance period.

[49] John Philip Kemble (1757-1823), British actor and manager of two theatres in London: the Drury Lane and Covent Garden. He was renowned for his gentleness and grace of his acting.

[50] Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), French general and statesman who played a pivotal role in the French Revolution. Napoleon was in Genoa in 1805.

[51] The Pallavicini family, one of the oldest and most influential noble families in northern Italy, had two main branches, one in Lombardy and one in Genoa.

[52] The Cromwell family, English aristocratic family. Among its most prominent members is Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), statesman who played a key role in the English Civil Wars and who was awarded the title of Lord Protector (1653-58) during the republican Commonwealth (1649-60).

[53] Reference to the Inquisition in Genoa. The inquisition was originally established to combat heresy in the Middle Ages.

[54] Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803), Italian poet and dramatist, particularly renowned for his tragedies, such as *Mirra* (1789) and *Saul* (1782).

[55] Reference to Vittorio Alfieri's "Satira XII. Il Commercio" (1804), l. 148.

[56] Cristoforo Colombo (1451-1506), Italian explorer associated with the discovery of the new world.

[57] Columbus's birthplace is conventionally considered to be Genoa. Hunt refers to the hypothesis that Columbus may have been born in Cuccaro, near Alessandria. This theory is based on the alleged family relation between Columbus and the marquises of Cuccaro Monferrato.

[58] Acqui Terme, city in Piedmont, Italy, near Asti.

[59] Gabriello Chiabrera (1552-1638), Italian poet.

[60] Pindar (c. 518-446 BCE), Greek lyric poet, renowned for his odes.

[61] Carlo Innocenzo Frugoni (1692-1768), Italian poet, satirist and librettist, member of the Arcadian Academy.

[62] Giovanni Battista Pastorini (1650-1732), Italian writer, Jesuit, and professor of theology and philosophy. Hunt refers to Pastorini's sonnet "Genova mia" (1684), written when the city was bombarded by the French in 1684.

[63] Louis XIV (1638-1715, reigned 1643-1715), king of France, and among the highest representatives of the monarchical absolutism.

[64] The Doge was the chief magistrate in the Republic of Genoa between 1339 and 1797.

[65] Virgil (70-19 BCE), Roman poet whose most renowned work is the epic poem the *Aeneid*.

[66] Aubin-Louis Millin (1759-1818), French antiquarian and art historian. Hunt refers to his *Voyages en Savoie, en Piémont, à Nice, et à Gênes* (1866), 2:272.