

An accurate Description of the Lake of Geneva, not long since made by a person that had visited it divers times in the pleasantest season of the year; and communicated to the Publisher by one of his Parisian Correspondents: English'd as followeth:

YOU have reason, Sir, to demand of me an account of the Lake of Geneva, which, in my opinion, about this season of the year (in June) is one of the most pleasant places of the world. This is the third time I have visited it, and I am, if I may say so, more charmed with it than the first.

I shall say nothing of the *Alpes*, nor of mount *Jura*, which do environ it, which by this Lake as by a large Ditch are separated from one another: for that would not give you a sufficiently fair idea of the Country. Be pleas'd therefore to represent unto your self a Croissant, of water, one extremity whereof is eighteen leagues distant from the other, and the banks of which are gently raised to some heights, then to collines, and at length to stupendious mountains; which yet are not so linked to one another but that they leave betwixt them interstices of fifteen or twenty leagues prospects, checkered by meadows, corn-fields, orchards, vines, Forests of Fir-trees, Snow lying on the sides of the Rocks. All these objects, which at a distance are confounded, and seem to make but one, have near hand their several beauties: So well is the Country intersected by Rivolets, which, after they have served to make Iron, Paper, &c; run into the Lake, carrying with them very many fountains.

But leaving these things, I shall now content my self to entertain your Curiosity by giving you a candid relation of what I have there observed in the space of four months.

Although I have told you, that this Lake hath the figure of a Croissant, yet that point, where is Geneva, is somewhat longer and more extended than the other. This Croissant where 'tis largest, which is from *Morges* to *Thonon*, is about five good leagues over. That which hinders from making an exact estimate of its largeness in other places, is, that the Winds by driving the water toward the banks have made certain points, which advance far into the Lake, in such sort that when one happens to be opposite to the other, the Lake seems to be narrow: As may be observed in going from Geneva to *Nion*, where it seems as if the *Pharus* or Watch-tower of *Prangin*, which is in *Suisse*, did almost touch *Savoy*; whereas yet one is a league distant from the other. And, what is remarkable, is, that at the coming out of this Straight, the Lake hath there almost its greatest breadth and depth.

The water of this Lake is very good to drink, and ever so limpid, that even in the rolling of the waves, which sometimes go high enough, the water is not troubled but along the banks. And if one do attentively look down from the Castle of *Chilon* or from any of the neighbouring heights into the bottom of the Lake, he may see high mountains

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under the water. And the water is so deep before *Vevray*, that the founding line at the end of four hundred fathoms seems, because it will not stay, to touch upon something slippery. 'Tis held to be 500 fathoms deep before *Roole*; and 'tis affirmed, that near this great depth there may be seen a kind of *Isle* under water.

The *Rhone* enters at one of the points of the *Croissant* into the Lake, and issueth out at the other; but with this difference, that whereas he comes in dirty and miry, he ever goes out so pure and clear, that under the bridge of *Geneva*, where the water is deep twenty five feet in summer, you may well discern the smallest stones at the bottom. And the same water, which in this place appears of a Saphyrin blew in the shade of the Houses, appears altogether green, nor is so transparent, when the Sun shines on it.

There is a great diversity of opinions as to the *Current* of the *Rhone* in the Lake; some maintaining, that it may be discerned, others denying it. Having heard the sentiments of the Curious of *Lausanne* and *Geneva*, and the opinions of the most knowing Fishermen that are there in great number, and especially at *Compet*, I believe with the latter; That, although the *Rhone* entering into the Lake looseth its violence; yet doth he still keep some sensible motion in some places, and every where observable, and that no Trouts are taken any where in this Lake but in this *Current* of the *Rhone*; which is what these Fishermen call, to go and fish *sur le mont*.

Others there are, that go further and say, that one may every where distinguish the water of the Lake from that of the *Rhone*: But the Fishermen will not allow this, but assert, that there is no other mark than those lately alledged, *viz.* of the Trouts, and the *Current*; and that the latter of these is alone sufficient, in calm weather, to observe the *Current* of the *Rhone* from the place of his entering the Lake unto that of his going out.

The water of this Lake commonly begins to increase about the end of *January*, or the beginning of *February*, and continues to do so unto the twentieth of *July*, and often unto the very month of *August*; and then it insensibly decreaseth, so that the water is less high in winter, than summer by 12 or 15 feet; the frosts draining the Springs, or rather freezing the waters that issue out of them.

About this Increase of the water there are also different opinions. 'Tis true, they all believe in general, that the principal cause of the increase of the water is the melting of the Snow, and of the mountain Ice, that is in the winter formed of the waters of the Springs and Torrents, which the frost fixeth. This is so true, that when there is much snow in winter, the waters are very high the ensuing Summer. But when great Rains chance to fall in *January*, then the Snow, not yet being well hardened, melteth on a sudden altogether. And when this melting is not so violent, all the Snow, that will melt, melts at the end

of *May* or at the beginning of *June*: so that, there remaining but the stock of Ice for entertaining the increase of the water unto the month of *August*, some have thence been induced to say, that this increase, which amounts, as hath been said, to 15. feet water generally all over the Lake, is caused by the herbs, growing, as they pretend, at its bottom in great abundance; and that these herbs, whilst growing, do force the water upwards, and dying in autumn make the water to sink lower. Which is not satisfactory to me, because there are no herbs seen upon the Lake, and very little within it, and the banks being very dry.

Others there are, that will have this water rarified by the heat of the Sun, and thereupon swelled on the borders, hot water not being so high in the middle as cold.

This is certain, that all the rivers and torrents, that fall into this Lake, carry with them store of stones and earth, which may indeed enlarge and raise it: But such an augmentation or rise cannot be sensible but from age to age; not to mention, that in winter, whilst the water is low, the stones of the Lake are carried away for building or fortifying at *Geneva*.

At the issuing out of the barres, that forme *Geneva*, on the side of the Lake, are seen in the water two or three huge Flints, standing out of the water; the chief of which they call *Nison*: And the tradition is, that it formerly was an Altar consecrated to *Neptune*; there being also a place cut out in the middle, which they take to have been the place for the sacrifice. On this Flint seven or eight persons can sit; and sometimes, when the waters are very low, there are found about it knives, and needles as thick as bodkins of tweezes, and much longer; both of brass well enough made, and esteemed to have served for the sacrifices.

This Lake in serene and calm weather appears sometimes, and that even before Sun-rising, as if it were made of divers pieces, differently coloured; part of it being browner than the rest: which seems to be caused by a breath of wind passing thorow the water, coming either from the bottom of the Lake, or from above; though others think this gentle agitation to proceed from some springs that are at the bottom, making the water shiver above. But that part of the water, that is not moved, appears as even and smooth as a looking-glass, or like water traced by a ship. And as for the Colors, they are, in my opinion, an effect of the neighbouring mountains, the different images of which, being confounded in the water, make an appearance of very pale colours.

After that the Rhone is entred into the Lake, he retakes not his impetuous course before a quarter of a mile's distance from its coming forth again, that is, above *Geneva*. And the nearer he comes to that Town, the more his bed becoms narrow, and consequently his course more rapid. Yet this rapidness hath been in our times once surmounted by wind, and once by water. To understand which, you may ima-

gine, that in *Geneva* there is a streak of Land about an hundred fathoms long, which divides the Rhone into two parts, passing under four bridges, then cover'd with houses. From the point of this Isle unto several ranks of stakes on that side of the Town there are about a thousand common paces. This whole space of water, which makes the figure of an V (whereof the Isle is the point, and the Town formes the sides; and the stakes, the empty place of the end,) hath been once laid dry by a violent wind, after this manner. One day in the winter of the Year 1645. there arose in the morning about 9 a clock so furious a wind, that not only it uncovered the houses, but also laid dry the bed of the Rhone above the bridges, so that many, in the view of all the town, crossed quite over it dry-foot, and one of the sons of M. D' *Aubigny* took up some medals, which he found in his way. This passage was free during an hours time; at the end of which the Rivers retook its course. At that season the water being very low, and a west-wind, to arrive at *Geneve*, being pressed by the high mountains, that bring it upon the town as by the nose of a pair of bellows; it came to pass, that that wind did violently bear upon the water near the said bars, keeping suspended the water that was beyond, and those waters, that were beneath, running away downwards by a declivity, and under the shelter of the houses. Whilst I was scrupling at this relation, they brought me *Gallafius* his Commentary upon *Exodus*, printed 1560; where 'tis recorded, that the like accident had fallen out at *Geneva* at the time when that Minister lived there, a South-west-wind having made the Rhone to recoil into the Lake, and many people having thereupon passed over dry for an hours time.

Concerning the other accident; you may remember, that the river *Arve*, which is a kind of Torrent, falls into the Rhone, about a 1000 paces beneath *Geneva*. In the month of *December* in the Year 2652. the said *Arve* did so extraordinarily swell, that not only it over-run its banks with impetuosity, but also interrupted the course of the Rhone, and forced it to re-enter into the Lake for the space of fourteen hours; though some do esteem, that the *Arve* dis-gorged it self for that time into the Lake, by passing over the water of the Rhone, which, in their opinion, continued his course under the water of the *Arve*. However, the water was seen at *Geneva* to re-enter into the Lake.

But to conclude, this Lake doth very much abound in Fish; but that which is observable is, that those Fishes have as 'twere cantonized themselves, and divided the Lake amongst them. The *Trouts* are not to be found there, but, as hath been already mentioned, in the Current of the Rhone: the *Carps* have taken up their quarter towards *Vevray*: the *Pikes* and *Pearches* have also their habitations apart. But some other fish, that are but passengers, not living constantly in the Lake, spread themselves almost every where indifferently.

The great Trouts pass out of the Lake for four months of the Summer, and are taken in autumn when they are returning thither. The Fishing is farmed out at *Geneva*; and there are Conservatories where many of those big Trouts are kept, among which there are some that weigh fifty pounds. Sometimes they catch Pikes there of eighty pounds weight; and a pound weight at *Geneva* you know to be eighteen ounces.

In the months of *July* and *August* they fish there for the Fry of Peaches, at a time when they are no bigger than the smallest taggs. These are a very delicious dish, there called *Mille Cantons*.

I shall add no more than put you in mind of that Duke of *Savooy*, who renounced his Crown and the Pontificat it self to pass deliciously the rest of his dayes at *Ripailles*, where he made so good cheer to all that visited him, that, to express a very merry entertainment, they say still, *faire Ripailles*.

*An Account of some Books.*

1. *LUX Mathematica, Collisionibus Johannis Wallisii S.Th. D. & Thomæ Hobbesii Malmesburienensis, excussa: Multis & fulgentissimis auctoritatibus, Auth. R. R. Adjunctâ Censura Doctrinæ Wallisianaæ de Libris, unâ cum Roseto Hobbesii. Londini, pro Guil. Crook in viso vocato without Temple-bar, 1672. in 4°.*

**T**HE Author of this Book dedicated to the *Royal Society*, having told the Reader in the *Preface*, that he hath deduced the rise and occasion of the Disputes betwixt Dr. *Wallis* and Mr. *Hobbes*, and commended the many and difficult Propositions and Demonstrations, said to be advanced by the latter of them, and compared therewith those of Dr. *Wallis*; having also subjoined in the same the things that by Mr. *Hobbes* are judged manifest: Proceeds in the Body of the book to the Controversies themselves; endeavouring to vindicate Mr. *Hobbes's* Assertions from the Objections of Dr. *Wallis*, particularly those, that were published in N<sup>o</sup>. 73. and 75. of these *Transactions*; which Monthly Papers, (to touch that by the by,) this Author, by a great mistake, calls p. 36. the *Transactions of the R. Society*; whereas they are notoriously composed by a Single Person, who hath not only declared so much in several places of these *Tracts*, and more solemnly in N<sup>o</sup>. 12. p. 213, 214; but also adds his very name to them in the Dedications of every years volume.

The Controversies, by the Author enumerated, are 13.

1. *De Rationum calculo per magnitudines Infinitas*
2. *De significatu vocis Rationis apud Mathematicos.*
3. *De Ratione rectanguli ad Parabolicam, ad Paraboloides solidum, ad Parabolam Cubicalem, & ad alias Figuras ipsi inscriptas.*
4. *Utrum Numeri quadrati ratio eadem sit cum Figuræ quadratæ latere.*
5. *De Puncto, de Longitudine sine Latitudine; & an Angulus semi-circuli sit rectus?*