

The barometer was in the morning at 27 deg. 7 min. and in the afternoon at 27 and a half. The air was a little clouded and sharp. I was in the evening at Valentin *. I observed, that an hour before sun-set, there was a little above the mountains a great band of clouds, which contracted and lengthened themselves more and more. It began in the south, passed through the west, and extended almost to the north.

I have written to Padua, and Venice, and into Dalmatia and the East, to be informed what may have been observed there. If I shall receive any account, I shall take care to communicate it to you.

CII. *An Account of a continued Succession of Earthquakes at Brigue in Valais. Written by the Rector of the College of Jesuits at Brigue, and addressed to Monsr. Jalabert, Professor of Philosophy and Mathematics at Geneva, and F. R. S. and communicated by Mr. Abraham Trembley, F. R. S. Translated from the Latin.*

Read April 29, 1756. **V**ALAIS, and especially Brigue, have almost every ten years felt Earthquakes, but never any so considerable as in 1755. For in that year, on the 1st of November, which was so

* A palace of the king of Sardinia, without the walls of Turin, where the Botanical Garden is.

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fatal to Portugal, we felt Brigue several times shaken, and particularly on that very day. And, what is wonderful, from that time, especially in the night, the walls were perceived by many persons to tremble; for which reason they justly apprehended still greater shocks of an Earthquake. On the 9th of December, which was a clear day without wind, about two in the afternoon, the earth at first made a great noise, and seemed, as it were, to give a signal for immediately retiring. This was, not long after, followed by repeated, but slight motions. At a quarter after two, the earth was again shaken, and a much louder noise heard: at last, a little before half an hour after two, all Valais seemed upon the point of destruction; for the earth began not only to tremble, but to send forth a horrible noise, and to shake all the buildings with so violent a motion in the space of two *pater nosters*, that the houses inclined on each side alternately, and rocked like a cradle: almost all the chimnies were thrown down; all the churches suffered very great damage; the towers gaped; a considerable number of walls fell down; and stones of all sizes poured down from all the buildings, so that no house at Brigue escaped some injury. It was a singular instance of the goodness of God, that when all the inhabitants fled amidst the dreadful showers of stones falling every where, not one of them was hurt.

The whole neighbourhood suffered the same calamity, especially Glisa and Natria. In the latter, the roof of the parish church fell at the same moment; and at Glisa, the large church, and especially the tower, were greatly damaged. For a great part of the wall of the tower being removed out of its place,

place, fell on the roof of the church, and broke it, and demolished the side altar under it.

At Brigue both the church and college of the Jesuits suffered very considerably. Part of the roof of the former fell down; and all the walls of the college were much cracked.

It was likewise observed by some persons then in the fields, that in some places the earth opened and immediately closed again; and that water rose from the ground like a *jet d'eau* several feet high: which I ascribe to the secret springs in the earth. Some fountains likewise in the neighbourhood, which had run till then, have ceased ever since; and, on the other hand, not a few never seen before have flowed from that time.

At the distance of about an hour's journey from Brigue there is a mountain, where it has been observed from the 9th of December to the 26th of February, that every day within the twenty-four hours the ground sinks in, the space of a thumb's breadth: and every body is persuaded, that there is water lying there; but the event must shew, whether any great quantity, or capable of doing mischief, or only some harmless springs.

With regard to that dreadful 9th of December, almost every half hour the shocks of the earthquake returned, but without damage; the earth seeming to tremble continually under our feet, and as it were to groan. From the 9th of December to the 21st the shocks were repeated every day, but still fewer and less violent. On the 21st, at four in the morning, Brigue was so much shaken, that every body was justly frightened: but no damage was done except the falling down of some stones.

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From the 21st to the 27th we felt the earth moved twice or thrice every day at different times. On the 27th, at half an hour after two in the afternoon, Brigue suffered a shock almost equal to that on the 9th, but of a shorter duration, and attended with scarce any damage. On the 28th, in the morning, about six, there were two slighter motions. The 29th was the first day free from all disturbance. On the 30th, at one in the night, the houses were greatly shaken, so that some chimnies, which had been before damaged, now fell. On the 31st there was no disturbance.

On the 2d of January, 1756, at half an hour after nine at night, there was a slight shock. On the 3d, a little before ten in the morning, there was another gentle one; but none till the 6th, before eight at night, when a pretty considerable shock happened. On the 7th, about five in the evening, were two more, as also on the 8th at half an hour after eight at night. For the three following days all things were quiet. On the 11th, at three in the morning, and again about eight, and on the 12th and 13th, were some few shocks, but slight. On the 14th, at half an hour after two in the morning (which time proved generally fatal) every thing was put into such an agitation, as is inexpressible; but the damage was but small, because the motion lasted scarce three or four seconds. On the 15th, at half an hour after five in the morning, there was a slight shock. It is observable, that on this day, and generally for three or four hours before the earthquake, we observed a gentle trembling to precede, and the winds, which were before violent, to subside of a sudden: and that

the motion seemed always to be propagated from the South to the North. It is fact, that all the books in our library, tho' of a square form, were all thrown down from the south towards the north. I observed the same in the chasms of the ground, which were near parallel with the meridian. I often remarked likewise, that the Rhone grew turbid a little before the earthquakes; and I frequently took notice in the evening after sun-set very long clouds stretched out like a strait line, without any breadth, and extended from the South to the North. The earth, in some places, was broken into fissures, but not large ones.

On the 16th and 17th of January all was quiet. On the 18th, at twelve at night, there was a moderate shock, but of a short continuance. On the 19th, at three quarters after twelve, there was another moderate shock. The 20th was undisturbed. On the 21st, at eleven in the morning, and the 22d, a little before eleven at night, the earth was shaken so violently, that every body confessed, that this shock was very near equal to that of the 9th of December; but the damage done was small. This was soon followed by another, but more gentle. On the 23d, in the morning, were two more shocks, the first stronger than the second. On the 24th some slighter ones: on the 25th more frequent ones, but without much noise: the twenty sixth was as the day preceding, as likewise the 27th, except that some stones fell down here and there. And from that time the motions have grown weaker and less frequent, and even none for one or two days. On the 6th of February, at six in the morning, there was a very great shock; and from that day to the 13th every day a continual tremor

tremor of the earth, but no shock. On the 14th, at night, there was a slight motion. On the 15th the earth was twice greatly shaken at half an hour after two, and half an hour after five. The 16th was quiet; and the 17th perfectly so. On the 18th, at half an hour after one, was a terrible shock with a great noise, which continued for the space of a *pater noster*, and ended with a violent shaking. On the 19th, at half an hour after eleven in the morning, the walls were again so violently shaken, that the stones, and what was upon the walls, fell down. For some days after all was quiet. On the 23^d there was a very gentle motion; and on the 26th two, but both slight.

I shall now subjoin the other particulars, which seem to me to deserve to be mentioned.

1. No person has lost his life, tho' many were in manifest danger of it. 2. The accounts, which have been published in the news-papers of Geneva concerning Brigue, are not at all true; for all the churches are standing: and it is false, that the earth has opened vast chafms, and that a thick and fetid matter flowed from these chafms. 3. The damage, which the neighbourhood has suffered, far exceeds that, which was occasioned a little before by the inundations. Some of the buildings cannot be inhabited without danger. 4. Whatever is not found in this account may be judged to be false. 5. We perceive still some slight tremor of the earth, but it daily decreases. 6. Tho' in the more remote parts of Valais the same motions were felt, and at the same time, yet the neighbourhood of Brigue was much more sensible of them. Brigue is surrounded with very high moun-

tains, and stands on a hill, Glisa and Natria, the former of which is at a quarter of an hour's distance from Brigue, and the latter at half an hour's, are situated almost on a plain. Glisa suffered more than Brigue. Lastly, Brigue never had in any year more violent winds than in 1755; and we are continually infested by the south wind.

These are the facts, which I have hitherto remarked with care: if any thing remarkable shall occur hereafter, I will not fail to write them to you.

Brigue, 27 Feb. 1756.

CIII. *Extract of a Letter of Mons. la Condamine, F. R. S. to Dr. Maty, F. R. S. translated from the French.*

Rome, 11 March, 1756.

Read May 6, 1756. **T**HE Abbé Barthelemi, who is here, has been at Naples. In the manner of going on with the manuscripts there, it will require above a century to open and pass them all. However it is done with great dexterity. But there is only one person employed in it. The Canonico Mazzocchi, who copies them, is very capable of that task. An academy of Antiquaries is just founded at Naples, for explaining all the antiquities dug up at Herculaneum; but according to their method of discussing things in their assemblies, they will not explain two dozen antiquities in a year. They will alter their method, and find, that such kinds of works, and perhaps all others, are not to be done