

**THE MOUNT: NARRATIVE OF A
VISIT TO THE SITE OF A GAULISH
CITY ON MONT BEUVRAY. WITH
A DESCRIPTION OF THE
NEIGHBOURING CITY OF AUTUN**

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P. G. HAMERTON

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P. C. Hamerton

THE MOUNT

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*NARRATIVE OF A VISIT TO THE SITE OF
A GAULISH CITY ON MONT BEUVRAY*

WITH A DESCRIPTION
OF THE NEIGHBOURING CITY OF
AUTUN

BY
P. G. HAMERTON

Author of "Round my House," Etc.

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1897

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PREFACE.

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"THE MOUNT" is an unpublished portion of "Round my House." My husband's love of mountains drew him repeatedly to the summit of the highest hill in the neighbourhood of his dwelling, and led him to describe the varied charms of Mont Beuvray, and the remains of the ancient city upon it, at greater length than was consistent with the plan of that book. He therefore laid these chapters aside, with the intention of adding to them and publishing them as a separate volume at some future time. This, however, he never found leisure to do.

While arranging his papers after his death, I came upon the original roll of manuscript, and as it seemed to Mr. Seeley and myself to be in his happiest vein, we have thought that many of the readers of "Round my House" might be glad to have it in print. We have added to it four

papers which he contributed to the *Portfolio* in 1882, giving a description of the neighbouring city of Autun, to which he used to go almost daily during thirty years of his life.

The portrait is from a photograph taken at the time when he was writing "Round my House."

E. HAMERTON.

THE MOUNT.

CHAPTER I.

Mount Beuvray—*Déjeuner* with a learned antiquary—His house—His love of the past and dislike of newspapers—We travel together to the Mount—The village of Monthelon—Story of a saint—The *château* where she lived—The church of Monthelon—Romanesque country churches—Anecdotes of a priest—Fish-pond made useless by the invasion of a plant—Tower of Vautheau—An antiquary's fancy—The fountain of the Wivre—A legend.

ON the western side of the valley or basin of Autun rises a massive hill, about 1,800 feet above the level of the plain and 2,700 above the sea-level. It plays a great part in all effects of sunset, being remote enough to take fine blue or purple colour in certain conditions of the atmosphere. The distance from my house is about ten miles as the crow flies, or it is twenty

miles by road, so that the hill may be reached in a drive, and I go there from time to time, yet not so frequently as a certain friend of mine, who has reasons of his own for taking an especial interest in Mount Beuvray.

The best way to initiate the reader into the peculiar charms and characteristics of the Mount is to take him with me, if he will kindly pardon the liberty, and let the place come upon him gradually as it would upon an actual traveller. He shall, however, in addition, possess certain advantages which are only shared by very few and highly favoured pilgrims of the Mount. Before we start I will just whet the reader's appetite with the remark, which he will find fully justified before we have done, that Mount Beuvray is much more than any other hill or mountain that I have either visited or read about, a place of peculiar characteristics. It has not the grandeur of my old friend Ben Cruachan, and as for height, its whole elevation is but the *difference* between Mont Blanc and the Aiguille Verte, yet the impression that Ben Cruachan leaves is essentially what you will receive after climbing several other Highland mountains, and the exploration of glaciers on Mont Blanc has