

lica, erected to celebrate the victory over the French Army in 1706; San Filippo's the majestic façade of Palazzo Madama, the Castle at Stupinigi. All these works, although of great variety of modes of expression are representative of a consistent artistic concept.

But architecture in Turin is not merely the triumph of the Baroque style. Later on, the long straight streets, the beautiful places were lined with superb monuments of a new style, although in the wake of Guarini and Juvarra's style. Neo-classic and Empire styles, though somewhat stiffened, can be found in the houses along Via Cavour and Piazza Maria Teresa.

Turin was the capital town of a small State which withstood the phylis pressure of Napoleonic powers. It was the last Italian town that House of Savoy had their residence and during the Risorgimento the all the most vital political forces converged towards them.

King Carlo Alberto, who granted the first Statute; king Vittorio Emanuele II, who was a strenuous supporter of the Statute; the Prime Minister Camillo Cavour, who was not only the first great spokesman of Piedmont, but of Italian history, were started by Vittorio Amedeo II and Carlo Emanuele III and followed their policies.

Turin had been the first capital of Italy from 1861 until 1864, year in which Florence was proclaimed capital.

The former capital of the small State of the House of Savoy is, at present, a modern and densely populated metropolis. The metallurgical and mechanical industries grew rapidly, and among others the Fiat and Lancia companies lead the way in the automotive industry.

ASTI — In ancient times Asti was first a Ligurian settlement, then a Roman colony. In the Middle Ages it was for a long time a free municipality and its inhabitants for freedom's sake valiantly fought against the neighbouring feudal powers such as the Marquis of Monferrato and Tommaso II of Savoy. Asti was the birth-place of Vittorio Alfieri, the great poet. Alfieri's verses stimulated the Italians to fight for freedom and in a way opened the way to Risorgimento. Still at present, in the splendid 18th century manor-house where Alfieri lived, his plays are staged and despite time Alfieri's poetic message is still vital.

ALESSANDRIA — In 1168 Alessandria was a stronghold of the Lombard League. When Frederick Barbarossa was preparing one of his usual terrific invasions the seigneurs of Rovereto, Fano, Gamondio, Marengo, Solero and Origliò—who revolted against the Emperor and his allied, the Marquis of Monferrato—gathered their vassals in Alessandria, so forming the first nucleus of the future Kingdom of the Marches of the Alps under Alexander III. The inhabitants of Alessandria gallantly fought against the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa whose army was decimated and defeated in 1175. Owing to the thatched roofs of Alessandria's huts Barbarossa nicknamed this valiant town "strawy Alessandria" and remembering Barbarossa's defeat the inhabitants still consider this nickname a great honour for their town.

CASALE — Casale is situated at one of the vertex of the hilly triangle that forms Monferrato. This ancient town was the capital of the Marquisate of Monferrato up to 1713 when the whole region passed under the House of Savoy. Casale is enriched with monuments that date back to the Middle Ages, as for instance the cathedral built in the 13th century, and with beautiful mansions of the XVIII and XVIII centuries among which Palazzo Triville one of Scappia's masterpieces.

Medieval legends that reflect the romantic and chivalrous character of its inhabitants are still alive as for instance the love story of the troubadour Raimondo de Vaqueiras and the daughter of Marquis Bonifacio.

VERCELLI — Vercelli is situated among rice-swamps and rice of course is the main product of this region. In the Museums important works of the Lombard and Piedmontese schools are housed including Gaudenzio Ferrari's paintings. In the centre of the town are Sant'Andrea's with its beautiful portal of the 13th century made by Benedetto Antelami and the Basilica dedicated to Sant'Evasio.

NOVARA — Novara is the Piedmontese town nearest to Lombardy. The cathedral dedicated to San Gaudenzio was built in the 19th century, the dome is by Alessandro Antonelli, the famous Piedmontese architect who also designed the Mausoleum of the Risorgimento in Turin. The province of Novara offers many attractions to tourists; Lake Orta and Lake Maggiore are renowned the world over.

AOSTA — Aosta is the capital town of the Valley of Aosta which is an independent region. It is situated in a pleasant dirt surrounded by mountains. Roman and medieval remains as for instance the Arch of Augustus, the Collegiata di Sant'Orso, the Priore and the Cathedral. Each of these monuments remain as a glorious stage of AOSTA's history.

Towards south-east stand the castles built by the D'Avise, Dara and Challant families and later conquered by the House of Savoy. All these castles were embellished with late gothic mural decorations by famous French, Provençal and Turinese painters (among whom we should like to mention Jaquero who frescoed the castle at Fenis). Beyond the holiday-resort of Sain Vincent the valley opens up into pleasant green pastures celebrated by a romantic Piedmontese poet by the name of Guido Gozzano. But Canavese is not only beautiful panoramas and sweet memories: at Ivrea for instance we have some of the most important industries of Italy. The same can be said for BIELLA, main centre of the textile industry.

CUNEO — Cuneo a very important commercial and agricultural centre, is now the largest province of Piedmont. It was a well defended stronghold during the wars waged in the XVIII and XVIII centuries. Its celebrated valleys are crowded with hunters in autumn and skiers in winter.

GASTRONOMICAL SURVEY. — There is a close connection between the character of the Piedmontese people and their food. Meat is excellent and is prepared in many ways. Boiled meat is eaten with an exquisite sauce called "green sauce" made with parsley, garlic, oil and vinegar. And what about the "fonduta" with truffles, the "bagna cauda" served with edible thistle grown at Chieri and Nizza Monferrato? Venison from the Lake, asparagus from Cambiano and Santena, perches from Lange Maggiore make unforgettable dishes. Wine deserves special attention: a long chapter could not be sufficient to list the outstanding qualities of Piedmontese wines... such as Barbera, Dolcetto, Nebbiolo, Barbaresco, Carema, Gattinara and, above all, the glorious Barolo.

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION. — Ever since ancient times Piedmont has been a frontier province of the utmost strategic importance. Any Roman or Lombard army, the Franks or the pilgrims directed to the Eternal City had to go over its mountain passes. Nowadays, in the era of the European Common Market, Piedmont can boast a perfect road network. Through the pass of Moncenisio and Grand and Little Saint Bernard passes, endless lines of cars from all nations come down to Italy, in direction of the sea and of the most appealing artistic centres.

Mont Blanc is being tunnelled and this gigantic work is planned by Italian-French engineers in close cooperation. One of the construction of the tunnel is now accessible to both countries the year round will be ensured. We should also mention some of the most frequented motor-ways in the North of Italy as for instance those linking Turin to Milan, Turin to Savona, Turin to Ivrea - Pont Saint Martin, Ceva to Savona. In the near future the Ceva - Savona motor-way will reach Turin while the Alessandria - Piacenza is being planned.

PIEMONTE UND DAS AOSTA-TAL

Zu zwei Dritteln von Bergen begrenzt, was ihm den Namen gegeben hat, wird Piemont in der Ebene im Osten gegen die Lombardi freundlicher und erstreckt sich im Süden bis in die mehr oder weniger lieblichen Hügel der Langhe. Weitere Hügel bilden im Zentrum der Region zwischen Turin, Asti und Casale ein Dreieck: das Monferrato, einstruckvoll durch seine Farben und das Bild der Abhänge und Täler.

Piemont vereinigt die verschiedensten geologischen Strukturen: majestätische Giganten aus Fels und Eis wie der Mont Blanc (mit 480 m der höchste Berg Europas), der Cervino, der Monte Rosa, das Gran Paradiso, blicken über weite Rhododendron-Hänge die über zerren Landschaften der Taler wie das Tal des Pellice, das Tal der Varaita, das Tal von Susa, von Lanzo, von Aosta und das des Sesia.

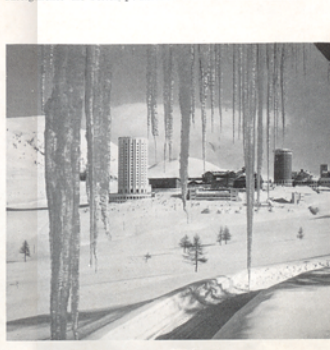
Vom Monviso, der grossartigen Pyramide, die man von Turin aus ins Licht des Abendrotts getaucht beobachten, entspringt der Po, der längste Fluss Italiens, die Arterie, die seit Jahrhunderten den Pulsschlag des Handels in Oberitalien anzeigt, und mit ihren Zülfüssen (den Tälern) den zwei Dora, dem Orco, der Stura, dem Sesia und dem Ticino) die Poebene zum fruchtbarsten Gebiet der Halbinsel macht.

Der Binheit der Natur entspricht eine ereignisreiche und interessante Geschichte. Die Bewohner, seit der Antike an die mühsam erungene Freiheit gewöhnt, nahmen im Lauf der Jahrhunderte einen wilderindischen Volksscharakter an, hart entschlossen, diszipliniert, vielleicht phantasmatisch, aber logisch und diesseitsbewogen. Man warf und wirft noch heute den Piemontesen diese Charaktereigenschaften vor: man sagte früher, dass die militärische Organisation, die Jahrhunderte lang den kleinen Staat auszeichnete, bei ihnen jeden Willen zu künstlerischer und intellektueller Betätigung erstickte back. Das ist nicht wahr, wie es die moderne Kunstkritik beweist. Erinnern wir uns, dass hier in Piemont ein Sponsor, ein Defendente Ferrari, ein Gaudenzio Ferrari, ein Tancredi Varallo lebten und wirkten und dass bis zu Cignaroli und der grossen Schule des 19. Jahrhunderts eine beispielhafte Kontinuität bestand, die der höchsten künstlerischen Tradition Italiens würdig ist.

Nach der Wiedererringerung des Herzogtums durch Emanuele Filiberto (1559) wurde TURIN zur Hauptstadt des kleinen Staates. Die intellektuellen, wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Kräfte des Landes vereinigten sich hier. Als Zentrum des Lebens im neuen Herzogtum wuchs Turin schnell als Folge der zunehmenden Verstädterung. Trotzdem blieb die typische römische Stadtanlage erhalten; gerade Strassen, von grossartigen Palästen gesäumt, führen zum Po, in die Neutralität, zum Stadtor am Hübel.

Turin schaffte und entwickelte so im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert eine neue Architektur, die einen Substanz in der Kunstgeschichte Italiens bildet: das Piemonteser Barock. Guarino Guarini entwirft seine grossen luftigen Baukörper wie den Palazzo Carignano (Sitz des ersten italienischen Parlaments, hier wurde 1861 von König Vittorio Emanuele II die Einheit Italiens verkündet), die Kapelle Santa Sindone, den Palast der Akademie der Wissenschaften (der die Pinacoteca Sabauda, das Griechisch-Römische Museum und das bedeutende Ägyptische Museum beherbergt, die grösste ägyptische Sammlung nach der von Kairo). Er bevorzugte runde Baskinien, um die phantastischen Linien der bewegten Fassaden auszuführen. Filippo Juvara, der mit Vittorio Amedeo II aus seiner Heimat Sizilien kam und zum Wahlprinzen wurde, schenkte Turin den vollendetsten Ausdruck seiner Kunst; die Basilika von Superga, zur Erinnerung an den grossen St. Peter von 1706 erbaut, S. Filippo, die majestätische Fassade des Palazzo Madama und das Schloss von Stupinigi bilden in ihrer erstaunlichen Verschiedenheit den Entwurf eine vollkommene Einheit künstlerischer Konzeption. Aber die Architektur Turins endet nicht im Triumph des Rokoko: in den folgenden Jahrhunderten wurde die geraden, langen Strassen von bevölkerten Palästen gesäumt, die immer noch Anklänge an den Stil des Guarini und des Juvara erkennen lassen. Selbst der alte Klassizismus und das starke Empire lassen zwischen Via Cavour und Piazza Maria Teresa weiche Perspektiven luftiger Baukörper zu.

In der Hauptstadt eines Staates, der dem harten Spiel der grossen abendlichen Mächte zu widerstehen wusste, entstand die Dynamik von Savoyen, um die sich in den prophetischen Tagen des Risorgimento die besenen politischen Kräfte Italiens scharten.



Sterliere (Torino): Un invito agli Sport