

in numerous directions, which appeared to have conducted the rainfall into reservoirs. The nearest water was by the caves, occupied by the peasants in the glen, about a quarter of a mile distant. Nothing would have been easier than an investment, which would sooner or later have reduced the garrison to starvation, as the precipices upon the north, west, and east, which rendered the position impregnable from those directions, at the same time prevented an exit, and effectually barred all egress either for sorties or escape. The first court upon entering the gateway comprised several acres, but there was no level ground, and the natural slope of the mountain was inclosed by walls and parapets upon all sides, until at convenient places the earth had been scarped out for the erection of buildings, which had either been barracks or magazines. These were all of stone and hard cement, and were now used as stables for various animals by the few peasants of this wild neighbourhood. Passing through galleries, from which an occasional window showed a deep chasm of many hundred feet beneath, and continuing until we entered a tower which terminated the passage upon a perpendicular peak that enfiladed the outer line of defence, and at the same time from its great height commanded the main approach, we descended a rude flight of steps, and presently entered a grand hall supported upon numerous arches which appeared to connect two peaks of the mountain. Descending from this solid work, we entered upon a plot of grass which sloped towards a precipice of rock that completely closed this side of the fortress. Several cypress-trees grew among the stones, which assisted us in ascending from this steep and dangerous slope, until