

## Chap. I. The Quarry.

§ 1. Time first the dominion of men was asserted over the Ocean. Three thrones of earth beyond all others, have been set upon its sands: the thrones of Tyre, Venice, and England. Of the first of these great powers only the memory remains; of the second the ruin; the Third which inherits their greatness, if it forget their example, may be led through powder eminence to less fitted destruction.

The Profusion, Exaltation, the Sin, and the Punishment of Tyre have been recorded for us, in perhaps the most touching words ever uttered by the Prophets of Israel against the Cities of the stranger: But we read them as a lovely Song: and draw our ears to the sternness of their warning: for the very depth of the Fall of Tyre has blinded us to its reality, and we forget, as we watch the bleaching of the rocks between the sunshine and the sea, that they were once "as in Eden the Garden of God."

Her Successor, like her in Profusion of beauty, though less in Endurance of dominion, is still left for our beholding in the final period of her decline; a Ghost upon the sands of the sea - so weak - so quiet - so breath of all but her lookings, that we might well doubt, as we watched her faint reflection in the mirage of the lagoon, which was the City and which the Shadow.

I would endeavour to trace the lines of this mirage before it be for ever lost, and to read, as far as I may, the Warning which seems to me to be uttered by every one of the fast gaining waves, that beat like passing bells, against the Stones of Venice.

§ 2. It would be difficult to estimate the value of this before which might be derived from a faithful study of the history of this strange and mighty city, a history which in spite of the labour of countless Chroniclers, remains in vague and disputable outline - buried