

The mountain is divided into certain distinct regions: the first or lowermost (the *Piedimontana*), lying around its roots, an Arcadian scene of fertility and loveliness, where the vine, and olive, and fig, and prickly pear form immense bowers of overarching verdure.

Next we pass into the woody region, which extends upwards for a considerable distance, and consists of vast deep forests of ilex, oak, and chestnut—of groves of “murmurous pines”—and of ample grassy glades, diversified by an occasional clump of trees, and enriched with ferns and aromatic herbs. Here the enterprising traveller meets with the celebrated *Castagno di Cento Cavalli*, or “Chestnut-tree of the Hundred Horses”—situated about six miles above Giarre—which is

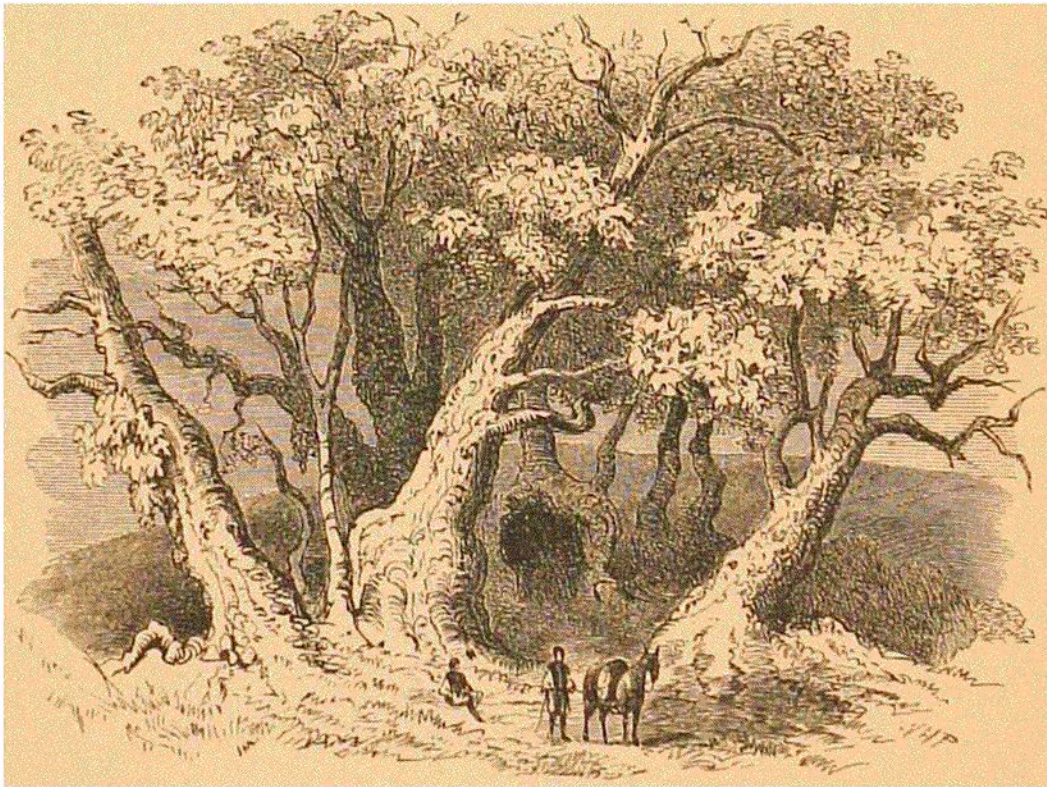


FIG. 137.—CHESTNUT-TREE OF THE HUNDRED HORSES.

not, however, as some have supposed, the mighty offspring of a single root, but consists of several trunks, forming a circle, which, at three feet above the ground, measures about one hundred and ninety feet. Under its umbrageous branches it is certain that a company of cavaliers might easily find shelter.

From the *Bosco* (as it is called) to the summit spreads the third and last region (the *Disarta*, *Netta*, or *Discoperta*); a wild and dreary waste, composed of barren plateaux and deep desolate hollows—