

The appellation of *Cirque de Gavarnie** is given to an immense semicircular amphitheatre of rocks, from whose crest a great number of torrents precipitate their boiling floods. Gavarnie itself is a small village of a few hundred inhabitants, but its neighbourhood is justly famous for the savage grandeur and romantic beauty of its landscapes.

The *Cirque* is enclosed by a precipitous wall or rampart not less than 1300 feet in height, surmounted by vast terraces, and crowned by enormous rocky pinnacles—



FIG. 177.— CASCADE OF GAVARNIE, IN THE PYRENEES.

the remains of disrupted and ruined mountain. From its summit ten to twelve torrents roll headlong their "sheeted silver." The principal of these is considered to be the source of the Gave du Pau.

From an interesting volume on the Pyrenees, by M. Adolphe Joanne, we borrow the following description of the Cirque and its cascades.†

The Cirque, he says, is 11,750 feet in circuit; has three stages of perpendi-

* [The Pyrenean mountaineers call these cirques *oule*, a word signifying a *pot* or *caldron*.]

† Joanne, "Itinéraire des Pyrénées."