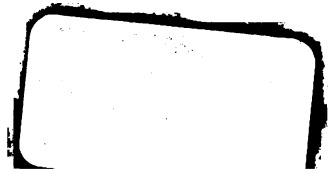

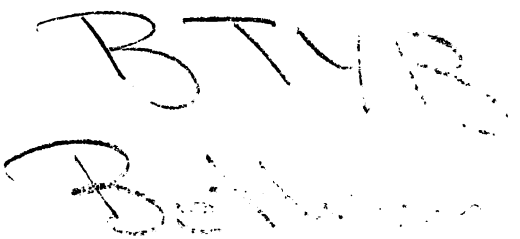

HOLIDAY LETTERS.

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From Athens, Cairo, and Weimar

By M. Betham-Edwards

AUTHOR OF "KITTY," "A WINTER WITH THE SWALLOWS," "DR. JACOB," ETC.

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LETTER I.

AT SEA.

'Thrice happy sails that bear to unknown lands!'

I HAD longed all my life for a sea-voyage, and felt as if I had come into a fortune when I found myself, on the 1st of April, 1871, on board a Peninsular and Oriental steamer bound from Southampton to Alexandria. Egypt, Greece, perhaps Constantinople, Heaven only knows what enchanted places seemed possible of attainment in those first hours of freedom and exhilaration. Could any one help going well-nigh crazy with delight at such a prospect?

Yes, it is good to be at sea. We are passing the Bay of Biscay in the first sweet days of

spring. What a quiet bay it is, a very bear asleep! untroubled grey water, pale, unchangeable sky, were all that we saw for several days. As we get farther and farther south, the sea becomes purple, the sky of a deep blue, the nights wondrously lovely with myriads of stars. There is an astronomer on board, and it is his delight to gather a few of his fellow-passengers around him, and gaze with them on Polaris, the sailor's friend and guide, the blue Spica, the fiery red Arcturus, Aldebaran, the poetic Pleiades, pointing out this constellation and that, and telling us much that is new and captivating. Our captain, too, like all sailors, had studied the heavens, and many a time I paced the deck with him in talking of the stars and the navigators of old whom they so well befriended.

A first experience of sea-life is that we suddenly find sunrise and sunset turned into events. At home we have, perhaps, neither

the time, spirits, nor inclination to observe so common a phenomenon as the rising of the sun; but at sea we dream of it, wake for it, rejoice in it every day. Not a cloud passes over the heavens that we do not notice; and when the long, bright day draws to a close we watch for our favourite stars.

The days are as idle as they are long. The ladies in little groups, knit and embroider, the men alternate between the smoking-room and the upper deck, novels are at a premium, and talk goes on unceasingly. We retire early and sleep, as one only can sleep at sea, till dawn.

Nothing is more amusing than the extraordinary amount of confidence people put in each other when brought into this daily and hourly contact. We talk to amuse ourselves, and what so interesting as personal experience and adventure? The stories of two or three men's and women's lives are revealed to us with a frankness that, under ordinary circum-

stances, would hardly have followed years of acquaintance. Ambition, love-stories, religion, family history, replace the hackneyed topics of literature, art, and politics, and by the time our journey is over, it is difficult to believe that such intimacies are at an end.

It struck me as a painful fact that all those of our fellow-passengers who were bound to India should regard it entirely as a land of exile. All talked of 'coming home' as the acme of their desires—home to this over-crowded little island, which is but too thankful to rid itself of some of its loving children.

An event happens now and then. One day a hoopoo flew on board, and hovered about the ship for hours, as if to delight us with its splendid gold and black plumage; and as we glide into warmer latitudes we are visited by frequent little stragglers from home-returning flocks. Among these were a redstart, a pied fly-catcher, a wheat-ear, a green-roller, a ring-dove, and several swallows and martins. In

pursuit came one day an orange-legged hawk, which was immediately killed by the sailors. The little birds generally die of weariness, soon after they light upon the ship. The cry, 'A bird!' is sure to be the signal of universal commotion, and so are the bottle-nosed whales, and the water-spouts, and the rare sight of a distant sail.

The little fishing-boats off the mouth of the Tagus afforded us great delight. Here are seen the lateen-sailed boat, said to be the same kind of vessel described by Virgil in the Æneid.* Off Malta we saw the Gozo boats, also very pretty, but different from the others. Was Gozo Calypso's isle? So it is said. The boats of the poor Gozo fishermen are as dainty a sight as was ever seen in the days of enchanters. They move coquettishly about the rocky coast, then suddenly dart off in a certain direction at full speed, and are soon lost to view.

* And also by *Lothair*.

On Easter Sunday we passed a lovely little island off the coast of Tunis, called Galita. Bluest of the blue, exquisite in form as in colour, it seemed to have risen out of the sea on purpose to bewitch us. A little farther on we are looking straight towards the plain of Carthage. Almost everybody has seen Malta—that little red-hot cinder of an island without a tree—and having once been there, surely can have no wish to go again. Yet our day at Malta was amusing enough. Burning walls of yellow ochre colour, aloes, a few fields of clover in rich crimson flower, a sky of dazzling blue, lovely white goats browsing between yellow walls and burning turquoise sky, a rascally, good-natured population, half-naked, roguish-looking children selling superb bunches of flowers at every street corner, red-coated English soldiers marching through the town, bands playing, colours flying, idlers running after, policemen crying, 'Move on!' This is my recollection of

Malta. We had a drive—if being jolted up-hill and down-hill between interminable yellow walls for upwards of two hours deserves that name. There was nothing to see at each new turn that we had not seen at the last, yet our driver turned round with a chuckle of congratulation, as much as to say—Where else can you see such a sight? When it was over, there remained only time to see the church of St. John and hasten on board. The delectable process of 'coaling' had not finished, but after being all but suffocated in our cabins for an hour, the port-holes were opened, the dinner-table decorated with bouquets, and the evening turned into a festival.

No more events happened till we reached Alexandria, except one or two disturbances on board. We had some excellent company, as I have said, but there are 'roughs' among the upper classes as well as among the lower, and some of our first-class fellow-passengers came decidedly under that category. 'Drunkenness

and disorderly conduct' were not uncommon offences among these so-called gentlemen; and upon one occasion the captain was half disposed to leave the offenders at Malta, which we were sorry he did not do. This is what they had done. In the middle of the night they invaded the forecastle, got two sheep out of their box, brought them into the saloon, and chased them round the tables, waking up all the passengers by the uproar. Before an officer could come to the rescue these ruffians finished their orgies by breaking the poor animals' legs!

But we had made some agreeable acquaintances on board, and were sorry when the time came to bid them adieu. This friend of a fortnight's standing was bound to the remotest district of British India, that to Sierra Leone, a third to New Zealand, a fourth to Japan. Shall we ever meet again? The chances are against us. Yet we have enlivened each other's sea-life, and very likely waifs and strays of such remembrance will linger when

more important incidents are forgotten. But here we are at Alexandria. What a sun! What a sea! What a sky! We cover our heads and shade our eyes, dazzled by the blaze of the heavens and brilliance of the waves. Very slowly we glide through the glittering emerald bay, making a sudden pause in the harbour. In a few seconds, wild figures in fantastic habiliments swarm the deck, brown-skinned, lithe of limb, gay as masqueraders in their Oriental dresses of rich purple, crimson, orange, green, blue. We look down the vessel's sides and see that the ship is surrounded with boats, and that some of our fellow-travellers are being forced into them helpless and bewildered. The wild figures surround us, jabber, grin, gesticulate, and we see no help for it but to yield, when on a sudden, a stately figure, also dressed in Egyptian costume, interposes himself between us and our persecutors, sending them away with a tone of angry command, and bidding us follow him in excellent English.

Our protector, who was an agent of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, conducted us to a boat, and when the amount of swearing, storming, and gesticulating necessary for the safe delivery of our luggage was gone through, he conversed agreeably with us. He was a tall, imposing Egyptian, dressed in dark blue from head to foot, with the exception of the crimson fez, which well became his dark, glossy skin. That two English ladies should entertain the notion of travelling in Egypt and Greece alone, did not surprise him; but he smiled satirically when he discovered that we could not speak a word of Arabic or modern Greek.

We alight, and follow our guide through several streets in the blazing sun, wondering what was going to befall us next, when, oddly enough, we were summoned to produce our keys, and an examination of our baggage took place in the public streets. Two or three porters, negroes, laid bare the contents of a

portmanteau, a set of idlers gathered round to look on, and in the twinkling of an eye everything was turned topsy-turvy by the ruthless fingers of an Egyptian custom-house officer. The business was soon over, then half-a-dozen pair of jet-black and walnut-juice coloured hands huddled together the mass of tumbled clothes, pressed down the lid, and we continued our way.

LETTER II.

ALEXANDRIA.

THE weather is intensely hot (14th April), and it is only by rising very early that we are enabled to see a little of Alexandria. In the evening it is delicious to drive along the canal, and wander about the Pasha's garden. Here are the pomegranate trees in full red flower, the large lovely datura—empress among flowers!—orange and lemon trees, palms, acacias, roses, thickets of pelargonium, and the gorgeous tritoma. A little negro lad accompanies us wherever we go—guide and interpreter—stealing away when opportunity offers to play with any comrade he may chance to find. We drive one evening

amid lines of palm and tamarisk to the wastes of sand where the old city of Alexandria lies buried in the desert—'Leonum arida nutrix' begins! The setting sun lights up the noble column of red granite, called Pompey's Pillar, making it redder still; and we grow drowsy and dreamy in the unaccustomed atmosphere. This then is the site of Alexandria.

'Here on a spot whose advantages had for we know not how many thousand years been overlooked by the boasted wisdom of Egypt, a glance and a word of the Macedonian called into being the greatest mart and hearth of the commerce and cultivation of the world.'

Who can tell what treasures lie underneath the billows of sand around us? or when they will be disinterred? If the Temple of Ephesus be restored to us, why may not coming generations recover some monuments of the splendid half Greek, half Roman capital of the great conqueror? Even the missing books of Livy and the plays of Menander may

have escaped destruction, not to speak of priceless Oriental manuscripts.

Two or three days are enough at Alexandria just now. The broad open streets are burning hot, and we are thankful to accept an invitation to spend Sunday in the country. What by a euphonism is called the country, turns out to be a pleasant seaside retreat, reached by rail in half an hour. Thither resort the inhabitants for fresh air during the summer, and already many families had taken up their abode there. Ramle is a scattered village lying close to the sea, and our friend's villa had a dazzling view of white sands and blue waves. The breeze was delicious, the air perfumed with desert flowers. We find abundance of a small lilac stock of delicious fragrance and other flowers that had been familiar to us in Algiers. There are very few trees; nothing but sand and sea and a few palms. How different to the spring-like verdure of Algiers, where you have a

prolongation of perfect April or June weather from October to March. We would fain have stayed longer at Ramle, but every one tells us that if we go to Cairo at all we must go at once. Already the sirocco may be blowing, in which case when we get there we shall have to shut ourselves up in our rooms, perhaps for a fortnight—no agreeable prospect at this time of the year. One remark I may make here by the way, and that is, that travellers in the East must follow the example set them in the *Arabian Nights*, wherein it is written that no one sets out on a journey without a bag of sequins. Travelling here is certainly costly. Everything costs you about a third more than you expect, so it is desirable to provide yourself with a third more money than you really think you shall spend. In fact it is impossible to calculate expenses in the East. If the washing of a pocket-handkerchief costs sixpence, what will the eating, drinking, and journeying to and fro of a day come to? That is a little

arithmetical problem the traveller must set himself before going farther.

We found, as most travellers find, that we had not brought nearly baggage enough. Wherever we stopped on this momentous journey, we had to buy some necessary of daily life, and as the price of everything increased as we went on, the proceeding was an expensive one. It is much easier to throw away superfluities than to do without necessaries!

After staying two or three days in Alexandria we travelled luxuriously by express train to Cairo, a distance of one hundred and thirty miles. Every minute seemed to bring us nearer the sun. The ever-recurring features of the landscape of the delta, dazzling green corn-fields, golden-crowned palms, and dark grey mud village, gained an intense glow as we sped on. The sky, that had been pale blue at Alexandria, became paler and paler, and the air hotter and hotter. We drew down the blinds only to lift them up when

we came to a station, which was sure to be announced by half-naked Bedouin children holding oranges to us, crying 'All for sixpence, missus, all for sixpence!' The oranges and the dark brown skin make a contrast delicious to look at, which is well given in some of Gérôme's Eastern studies.

At the end of three hours we stop; the doors fly open, letting in a blaze of light and puffs of heated air as from a furnace, glimpses of mosque and minaret, and stately figures walking about in gorgeous Eastern costumes. We are at Cairo!

I fell ill directly I got to Cairo, and lay for two or three days on the sofa of my room, burning with desire to enter the world of enchantment outside its walls, yet not able to stir. Few northern travellers can securely visit Egypt as late as this, and they would do well to expend their first guinea upon the best advice to be had as to eating, drinking, and other matters concerning health. When we

left England little more than a fortnight ago, the weather was wintry; every one was wrapt to the chin in furs, and fires were blazing on every hearth. We were now wearing the thinnest summer clothing to be had, it was much too hot to stir out after ten o'clock in the morning, and the only way to enjoy life was to lie perfectly still, with Lane's *Modern Egyptians* in your hand, and a bottle of Nile water within reach.

My chief amusement during those hours of imprisonment were the birds and flowers of our garden. From five to nine or ten o'clock in the morning we could have doors and windows open, and the bullfinches were so tame that they would sing on the very threshold. The singing lasted all day long. What with the palm-trees and the rose-bushes and the bulbuls I fancied myself in some garden of Eastern story. The principal work of the house was done by handsome Nubians dressed in bright blue cotton garments reach-

ing from head to foot, who, on hearing the accustomed clapping of the hands, would answer the summons with a good-natured 'Esh-tereed?' 'What do you want?' The garden, and the birds, and the beautiful Nubians, made up a picture which every now and then the shrill voice of the hotel director, a German, would spoil. He was not at all a disagreeable person otherwise, but he had a habit of screaming out to the servants in the harshest tones of a very harsh voice, which was quite out of keeping with the scene. If I lived a hundred years I could not forgive him. Many and many a time when the dusky figure of Hamed Ali moved softly among the gorgeous flowers and birds, or a wandering merchant from Damascus displayed his carpets and silks under the shadow of the palm-trees, and I felt carried back to the days of Haroun Al Raschid, that terrible voice would break in, dispelling the illusion.

At night there were no such disenchant-

ments. Then, piercing the stillness, would ring forth the solemn voice of the muezzin from a neighbouring mosque—shrill, clear, deep-toned, unspeakably thrilling: 'God is great—there is only one God—prayer is better than sleep!' Like a bell, that touching cry has roused me many a time in the midnight silence, reminding me that I was among the followers of the Prophet, in what is still the land of the pilgrim, the prayerful, the austere, the resigned.

LETTER III.

'THE POMP OF EGYPT.'

AT last my term of imprisonment came to an end, and one sultry afternoon I caught a first glimpse of 'the pomp of Egypt,' that I had travelled so far to see. We took a carriage; for, in spite of the attractiveness of the Cairo donkey and its romantic associations, it is much more agreeable to be lifted a little above the jostling, gaily-dressed, picturesque, often dirty crowd of the Mouski and other principal streets. What with the abundance of colour, the variety of noises, the heat, the dust, and the moving masses, one is at first too bewildered to observe anything. It is only after con-

siderable practice that unaccustomed senses can take in all the elements of such a picture.

Driving is slow work in a narrow street without pavements, and as crowded as a London thoroughfare. Every moment our wheels put somebody's toes in jeopardy, and every moment we are in danger of getting our carriage locked; the donkey-boys shriek and brandish their sticks; the street-waterer, with his pig-skin on his back, squirts right and left, stirring not an inch for anybody; the blue-robed Fellaheen woman, with her baby on her shoulder, moves on statelily; the pedestrians, for the most part wearing every conceivable shade of purple, crimson, green, and yellow, go on and take no heed; now some rich man's equipage is heralded by the wild, beautiful figure of his sais, or groom, who runs forward, waving a staff over his head, and crying 'Out of the way! out of the way!' his long white sleeves

fluttering like the wings of a bird, his gold-embroidered vest flashing for a second, and then vanishing; now we are brought to a standstill, blocked by donkeys, carriages, fruit-vendors, water-vendors, heavily-burdened street-porters, an English dog-cart, and a string of camels.

At last we are in the beautiful Shoobra Road, which is at once the Rotten Row and the Hyde Park of the Cairenes. Here are villas and palaces, orange-groves and palms, avenues of acacia and tamarisk, a verdant strip of vegetation on either side. We hardly came prepared to find Cairo a city girt round with magnificent trees, and do not know how to praise enough the cooling breeze of the evening after the stifling heat of the day. At every step we meet something to bewitch or amuse us. Here is a wayside fountain, and our dragoman, and driver, and sais—for even two unpretending travellers like ourselves are not permitted to drive out without

three persons to look after us—stop to drink from an earthen bottle with flowers twisted round its neck. There are no lovers of flowers like Orientals. Now we come upon an encampment of Fellaheen, or a little crowd going home from daily work, the women walking, like Hagar, with their children on the shoulder, wild, sad-looking figures, twice as picturesque as the so-called oriental subjects of modern painters. Or the carriage of some Egyptian lady would pass us, driven by a negro coachman, and full of glaring green or yellow satin and black drapery. We meet every shade of complexion, ebony, walnut-juice colour, olive, browns, pale and dark. The great beauty of the Arabs of the Sahara is I think wanting. The Egyptian face has more character, but more coarseness, and the skin is glossy to greasiness. There is no more imposing figure in the world than an Algerine sheikh in white burnous; although intellectual attainments cannot be attributed to him,

he always looks as if he had a soul above common things.

Meantime, as the evening wears on, the press of vehicles and donkey-riders increase, and the scene becomes magnificent, but not quite what we had expected. Here are European equipages and toilettes that look fresh from Hyde Park or the Bois de Boulogne, Oriental picturesqueness and delicious combinations of colour side by side with chimney-pot hats, crinolines, and other crude inventions of modern millinery. Alas! the chimney-pot hat has reached the land of the Pharaohs, and the high-heeled boot has penetrated into the hareem! By-and-by, where shall we seek for a vestige of those charming inventions of bygone ages which have so embellished and beautified, instead of disfiguring and caricaturing, the human figure? It is hard to say.

I think the loveliest sight to be seen at Cairo, or indeed anywhere in the world, is

the twilight. The vivid colours of sunset die out one by one, and are replaced by opaline hues, so vapoury, lucent, and etherial, that mosque and minaret, palace and fortress, appear part of cloudland. An extra sense of vision seems to be bestowed upon the gazer on those undreamed of and airy transformations. A few moments ago the gorgeous Eastern city flashed resplendent in the light of the setting sun; now it is a structure of pearl floating in an amber-coloured mist. To describe such a vision is impossible.

Next day we went into the bazaars to spend our money. The principal objects of Oriental traffic are still as Gibbon describes them, 'splendid and trifling;' and though it was not our intention to barter for the silk, a pound of which is esteemed in value not less than a pound of gold, precious stones, and a variety of aromatics, they were displayed to our bewildered gaze. Muslins from Damascus; creamy-coloured, diaphanous, lustrous

embroideries from Constantinople, heavy with gold and silver; scarves, gorgeous and light as a butterfly's wing; silk shawls, in which purples, greens, and blues blended together as harmoniously as the plumage of tropic birds; all these were brought forth as if by magic from inner recesses of wonderful little shops shaped like ovens.

The ancient love of ornament and splendour still lingers among the Egyptians. Nothing that is to be seen is thought unworthy of elaboration, from the donkey-trappings of the rich to the mahogany-coloured ear of the ragged street-waterer, which is sure to have a crimson or blue flower stuck behind it. Earthen water-bottles, sold at a penny each, have a delicate pattern traced upon them, and so have the copper trays used by the poorest. The dress of our dragoman is enough to turn an artist crazy with delight, being of a soft, indescribably lovely plum-colour, with a splendid red and gold silk scarf round

his waist. Sometimes he appears in a costume of bewitching greyish blue. What a pity that costume, even in Egypt, should be on the wane, and that even the dancing dervish should appear in frock-coat and trousers!

LETTER IV.

THE HAREEM.

AMONG other introductions, we two Englishwomen had brought a letter to a certain Turkish princess, widow of a pasha, and reputed to be a beautiful, amiable, and agreeable lady. The presentation of this missive required some little formality; but after one or two interviews between our dragoman and her royal highness's chief of the household, all was arranged; and one sultry afternoon we found ourselves at the gate of the palace. Two very smart negroes, dressed in black frock-coat and trousers, received us with stately politeness. We were led through a garden to the front of the

house, where several women-servants received us and the men retired. These women, at a first glance, might have been taken for English maids-of-all-work; but, on closer inspection, their olive features and white crape turbans betrayed an Oriental nationality. They were, in fact, Circassian slaves.

On the terrace sat a very ugly old duenna smoking a long pipe. We bowed to each other, and she rose with some difficulty to accompany us to the reception-room, a long apartment, that made us fancy we were in a fashionable lodging-house at St. Leonard's. Excepting a few knick-knacks, all the furniture had come from Paris and London, and was in very bad taste indeed. The old lady motioned us to sit down, pipes were presented to us, which we refused with all the graciousness attainable; then followed a long pause, during which our companion continued to puff away and stare hard without a word.

Then the Princess entered. She was tall and slender and very handsome, with a pearly skin, delicately cut features, and black hair and eyes. Her dress was simply perfect, ample, flowing, easy, of soft, noiseless, lustrous silk, the precise hue of which it would be impossible to describe: it was something between an asphodel-blossom and the palest pink coral, and yet neither the one nor the other approach it at all nearly. Around her head was wound a little turban of delicate coloured gauze, fastened over the forehead with a jewel.

Now, I am sorry to confess that this graceful and imposing creature was such an inveterate smoker that it seemed the sole business of two or three of her slave-girls to supply her wants. During the two hours that we were honoured with her presence, one of these automaton-like figures would come in about every seven or eight minutes, unsummoned, and hand each of the ladies a

cigarette. Anything more like machinery could not be conceived. There was no salutation on the part of the servant, no acknowledgment on the part of the mistress. The cigarettes came and went, and that was all.

Meantime, our hostess had sent for the French governess of her little adopted daughter Gilparè to act as interpreter; and soon the governess and her young pupil appeared. Coffee was handed to us in little jewelled cups, the French lady made something like sociability possible, and we were asked, if we should like some music and dancing.

Of course the proposal was accepted joyfully. 'You will be much amused,' said the French governess to me; 'The Turkish national airs are so *naïve*, and the Princess has among her young slaves some really fine voices.'

'We do not realise at home,' I said, 'that slavery still exists in the East.'

'Oh! but what kind of slavery? These

girls are happier than our cooks and housemaids at home. The Princess is like a mother to them. Some she marries off and provides with a dowry; to all she is kindness itself. They have no cares—think of that.'

Not being able to argue the point from her ενδοξὰ, I was silent. I could readily believe that our hostess would be good and kind to everybody and everything under her care; but the thought was uppermost in my mind, how differently such goodness and kindness work in our own conditions of society. With us a good mistress is sure to have a smiling household. Here no one smiled. Every look and movement of the dozens of women we saw about us, most of them young girls, was joyless, mechanical, monotonous. They were evidently neither starved, nor beaten, nor overworked; but the prevailing look of apathetic helplessness and hopelessness was very depressing to unaccustomed eyes.

Meantime, the musicians and dancers

entered, ten in number, all Circassians. The latter wore Turkish trousers of white linen, striped with gold, bright silk sashes, and flowers in their hair, which was long and flowing.

The singing had something inexpressibly savage about it, consisting for the most part of wild chants repeated again and again to a monotonous accompaniment. After the songs, came the dancing, which lasted nearly an hour, if a series of gymnastic feats and exercises could indeed be called dancing. The woodcuts in Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, representing women tumbling and performing feats of agility, from the temple of Beni Hassan, would give a better idea of the entertainment than any descriptions in writing. The jumps, prostrations, rhythmic movement of the arms, standing on the head, and other ungraceful laborious performances, displayed for our amusement, must be very like those of the dancing women at the time of the Pharaohs.

On the termination of the dance we rose to take leave. Gilparé, her governess, and half-a-dozen maids—I mean slaves—accompanied us to the garden, where we were presented with roses, then they retired, and we drove away, without the slightest wish ever again to enter the precincts of a hareem. The monotony, the inanition, the dead-alive atmosphere were unendurable.

There are a hundred thousand slaves or thereabouts still in Cairo; and we heard some interesting stories of daring escapes from the hareem. The English Consul is empowered to give civil manumission, but of course has no authority to go farther; and the religious ties can at any time step in between slavery and freedom. For example, a slave girl flies to the British Embassy and protests against the cruelty of her master; but if he demands her, declaring that she is his wife, the end of the matter is that she must go with him. Then there is the difficulty of providing for

manumitted slaves. They are, for the most part, incapable of shifting for themselves. The Circassian women who have been brought up from childhood in the ease of the hareem, are especially difficult to deal with. Vain, ignorant, and self-conceited, they look upon themselves as important personages, and would turn up their noses at the notion of marrying a man who could not provide them with a slave!

Thus affairs are likely to remain much as they are; and slavery promises to outlast Oriental costume, architecture, and other things daily giving way to European civilisation.

Those who wish to see the Cairo of the past should not delay. The beautiful old houses, with their polished and fantastic lattice-work; the narrow streets, having such delicious coolness and play of light and shadow, are fast disappearing. You hear the remorseless chipping and hammering

of the mason all day long; and soon the demolishers will be replaced by the reconstructors, and boulevards will be the promenade of the Cairenes. Of course travellers are compensated for much that is lost. There are the roads, for example, which enable you to drive to the Pyramids in an hour and a half, and to breathe the sweet air of the desert with as little fatigue as if you were driving along the Richmond Road. Then there are the hotels, which, though expensive, are in other respects satisfactory; clean, cool, and comfortable. It is all very well to talk of the romance of travel ending where modernisation begins. A fine landscape is enjoyed none the less because it is seen after a good breakfast; and rapturous impressions do not wear off the sooner because you sleep upon them in a comfortable bed. If people travel for pleasure they should travel at their ease. In scientific explorations, of course, all minor points are left out. You make up your mind

to hardships beforehand, and start off with the smallest possible amount of luggage, to which it is necessary to add the largest possible amount of endurance. But holiday travel, like music, painting, and other intellectual recreations, should be perfect of its kind; and, granted a capacious portmanteau and a good supply of money, where cannot one find it in these days?

The drives around Cairo are delicious. I think I liked the Abbasseah Road best of all, where we met the sweet, fresh, inexpressibly exhilarating air of the desert. After passing avenues of acacia, sycamore, and tamarisk, we came upon a wide, wondrous prospect of waving sands, burnt to a dark brown; purple hills, or what, for want of the proper name, I call purple,—there are so many new colours in Egypt! here and there the white cupola of a mosque; and, over all, that pale, mysterious evening sky, never before seen or imagined, and, once seen, never to be forgotten.

Some of the most beautiful monuments in Cairo are on the borders of the desert, about half-an-hour's drive from the town. These are the so-called Tombs of the Caliphs, but they are in reality tombs of the Memlook kings. The Memlook dynasty lasted from 1250 to 1517 A.D., when El Toman was defeated by the Turks near Heliopolis, and hanged at Cairo. For two hundred years, like the Prætorian bands, they had carried all before them, choosing a ruler from their own ranks, and their military aristocracy lasted till the well-known massacre commanded by Mohammed Ali in 1811. Mercenaries of European blood, bought or stolen on account of a powerful physique, these splendid soldiers never lost prestige till the battle of the Pyramids; but they had made themselves feared and detested by all kinds of vices, and Mohammed Ali's treacherous act was doubtless condoned by the people generally.

The Tombs of the Caliphs are exquisitely

beautiful, with small minarets and cupolas, each slightly differing from the rest in size and design. A more graceful cluster cannot be conceived; all, alas! fast falling to ruin. The minarets are of dark orange colour, and very dainty in shape. The cupolas are of a rich pattern, and are designed in the best Saracenic taste. Inside the wealth and elegance of decoration remind us of the Alhambra. There are flowers of inlaid marble, screens of elaborate carved wood, painted ceilings, tombs, pulpits and walls, as beautiful as anything to be seen either at Granada or Cordova; and they are evidently doomed to the same fate of ruin and neglect. The tombs of the Memlook kings are encumbered with broken walls, filth and rubbish; whilst within nothing is done to hinder impending decay. It is heartrending to see all this. We can ill afford to lose what little remains of Saracenic art, characterised as it is by such bewitching qualities of grace and fancy as we shall vainly

seek elsewhere. The Moors of the Middle Ages were essentially an artistic people, and, like the Greeks, carried their love of art into the life of every day. Dress, dwelling, furniture, were all made choice and beautiful. They breathed an atmosphere of beauty all their lives long, not getting, as we do, sparse 'gales of health blowing from salubrious lands.'

The glorious mosques of Cairo are not easy to see. In the first place, strangers have to obtain formal permission from the police, which involves delay; and in the second, if they are ladies, they are sure to be objects of curiosity and observation. When we tried to see any mosque we were always pooh-poohed by our dragoman, who had evidently a Mussulman's prejudice against admitting unbelievers into the holy places. And when we prevailed upon him to take us, we were invariably surrounded by a crowd whom he could with difficulty keep off. There is a profound feeling of jealousy at the bottom

of all this. Without understanding what was said by the mob at our heels, we could read plainly enough in their faces: 'Why are these women here! What right have they to trouble themselves about our places of worship?' The few mosques that I did see at Cairo, out of hundreds, impressed me greatly, especially the Ezher. This is the college of Cairo. It is not so much remarkable for beauty of architecture as for its vast courts, which swarm all day long with zealous students of the Koran. These crowds form a curious spectacle. The master sits on a stool, or stands in the midst, surrounded by a group of men and boys squatted on the ground, some conning pages of the Koran, others reciting passages in a loud voice, all absorbed and eager. When we entered, the great court was like a field of red and white poppies, with hundreds of turbaned heads bending backwards and forwards, in a kind of studious ecstasy, whilst the mingled voices

made a surging continuous sound deafening at first.

Bewildered, stunned, elbowed by a little crowd of inquisitive idlers, who every moment threatened to cut us off from our dragoman and cawass, we pushed slow way through the dense masses. To stay longer for purposes of enquiry or inspection was next to impossible. Mussulman devotion is outraged at any intrusion upon sacred ground, and though strangers are allowed to enter the mosques, the permission is not given with a good grace. It is impossible not to sympathize with a feeling which has its origin in real religiousness. The Mohammedans, without a doubt, act up to the five articles of their faith, prayer, fasting, ablution, pilgrimage and resignation.

No one who has spent the month of Rhamadan in the East can discredit the sincerity of the great fast, nor can any one who has fallen in, as we did later, with a

crowd of home-returning pilgrims, discredit the annual pilgrimage to Mecca; whilst the most hasty traveller has daily proof of the ablutions, prayers, and resignation which are carried out according to the Prophet's injunctions.

The mosques at Cairo are worthy of a religious people. Simple, grand in design, exquisite in detail, they leave behind them a clear and ineffaceable impression of beauty. Saracenic art has that delicious quality of playfulness, that child-like spontaneity and freshness, ever the characteristics of true art. You cannot add or take away from the outpourings of genius, which does not do its best or its worst, but simply its own bidding.

There is one mosque which all strangers are taken to see, that erected by Mehemet Ali in the citadel; but except from its magnitude and richness of materials it is unworthy of a visit. There is positively nothing here except marble, cedar wood, gold, and ivory, to remind

you of Saracenic architecture, so completely is the art decayed. What a pity that the most precious remains of its golden age should be allowed to perish!

LETTER V.

THE PYRAMIDS.

A PIC-NIC to the Pyramids is now the easiest thing in the world. You drive in a carriage and pair, taking champagne and cold chicken with you, over which Herodotus and Cheops are gaily discussed, and when the heat of the day is abated you return to Cairo with as little fatigue as if you had ruralised at Epping Forest. Of course there are more ways than one of seeing these marvels, and for my part, if I ever go to Egypt again, I shall try to follow the advice of a sea-captain who travelled with us from Cairo to Alexandria: 'The only way to see the Pyramids,' he said, 'is to go there by moon-

light, spend the night on the top, see the sun rise, and get clean away before a single Bedouin is lying in watch for his prey. This is what I did, and I had my reward. A more splendid sight cannot be conceived, and I saw it in peace.'

These Pyramid Bedouins are the pest of travellers. People are often deterred from visiting the Pyramids a second time on account of the bullying and imposition to which they have been once subjected. What can two or three helpless ladies and gentlemen do among a crowd of wild, powerful, screeching, gesticulating creatures who surround them in these interminable solitudes? They have but to yield, which means giving as much bakshish as will moderate their enemies. Now we were saved from all these miseries by the kind forethought of our Consul, who insisted upon sending his cawass or janissary with us, much to the disgust of the dragoman; he, of course, though a good fellow in the main, looked for

his own share of the tolls that the Bedouins should levy upon us. But the Consul was firm, and the dragoman was forced to yield.

By four o'clock we were up and stirring, and a little before seven we started, the Consul's janissary mounted on the box beside the coachman, the dragoman trotting a donkey alongside, and our little party of three cosily settled in the carriage, which was of course closed on account of the heat. The air was deliciously cool and refreshing; the birds were singing; the sky, as yet, of a soft chastened lustre. For a mile or two our way lay through a superb avenue of acacias, then we came to the Nile, the great river-god of the ancient Egyptians, whose figure they represented as crowned with lotus flowers, and bearing flowers, fruit and water-fowl in his arms! No wonder they made a god of this generous, life-giving, majestic stream.

Having once seen all these things, who could ever forget? The clear brown river,

the graceful dahabeahs lying on the banks, the Fellaheen villages of sober grey, with groups of palms pencilled in pale gold against the delicate sky; the glowing patches of vegetation, greenest of the green, yellowest of the yellow; the long files of camels; the flocks of black and brown sheep; the shepherd saying his prayers in the shade; the stately blue-robed peasant-women bearing water-jars on the head; the variety of birds flying about; doves, hoopooes, carrion crows, vultures, and lines of cranes flashing in the sun, then the first matchless sight of the Pyramids, pale purple mountains rising far away out of the burning, blazing sands of the desert!

When we arrived at the Pyramids about nine o'clock the day was already ablaze. All we could do — excepting the bravest of the party—was to be dragged up to the little platform hollowed out of the north side of the great Pyramid, and there stay. In that little prison, helpless as if on the top,

we whiled away the time as best we could. The first diversion was the return of the adventurer before alluded to, in about an hour and a half, heated and tired enough, but delighted with her achievement. And doubtless it behoved me to follow her example; but, for my part, I never ascend a mountain unless I am obliged, and, like the Roman emperor who declined going underground whilst it was optional to remain above, I prefer hearing of subterranean marvels to seeing them. I did not therefore go to the top of the Pyramid of Cheops, nor did I go to the bottom; but my companion assured me that the first performance was comparatively easy, you have only to trust yourself to the Arabs, who all but carry you as if you were a baby; and after once conquering your repugnance to such a mode of conveyance, all goes delightfully. Once on the top, the idea of the Pyramid changes. The apex, which seen at a distance is a point, proves to be an area ten feet square, from

which you have a wonderful view—north, looking down the river upon the Delta, with its patches of green and gold; its brown villages and palms; southward you look up the river; east upon the wonderful city of Cairo, with its domes and minarets innumerable; west upon the African Sahara, indefinable, illimitable, 'terra domibus negata.' This is the prospect of which we idlers below had only a fourth part, that is the north view, interesting enough in itself, but not sufficiently so to be gazed at for seven hours without a feeling of weariness. However, there came the second diversion of luncheon, and it was wonderful how the air of the desert stimulated the appetite. The contents of an enormous basket disappeared in quick time, whilst supplies of the delicious water of the Nile in long brown earthen bottles were called for again and again. All this time there sat crouching on the ground below, and glaring at us with a sort of suppressed tigerishness in their dark eyes, about

a score of Bedouins, who felt themselves despoiled of their lawful prey by the presence of our protector, the janissary (whom may heaven bless!) We were in a curious situation, perched on a niche cut out of the solid sides of the Pyramid, the glowing Egyptian landscape before us, and below the semi-circle of half savage, bronze-complexioned creatures, who looked fain to pounce upon us with the threat 'Bakshish or your life,' only a little afraid, much as a cat who thinks twice before attacking a big rat.

The Pyramids are majestic and wonderful if you look upon them as natural creations, mountains of stone rising out of the silent, lifeless, trackless sands; and indeed, at first, it is difficult to realise them in any other way. But a kind of horror thrills you at the thought of the myriads and myriads of wretched lives sacrificed upon these monuments of bigotry, pride, and assumption; the life-blood of humanity poured out more

lavishly than water, in order that an Egyptian king might have an eternal sepulchre! How they were built—at what cost of life, labour, time and money—history and sculpture tell us. They tell us also something of their pristine splendour, for choked with sand, ravished of the polished marble that encased the under framework, and reduced in number, the Pyramids of to-day give a very inadequate idea of the Pyramids of old, 'the desolate places of kings and counsellors.' How many of these 'desolate places' have perished altogether it is impossible to say, but doubtless few remain of the many pyramids, the sepulchres of kings, which were once clustered together on the edge of the desert. It is supposed, however, by learned authorities, that the Pyramids were built, not only to serve the purpose of tombs, but also for astronomical observation. They stand exactly due north and south, and whilst the direction of the faces east and west might serve to fix the

return of a certain period of the year, the shadow cast by the sun at the time of its coinciding with their slope might be observed for a similar purpose. Herodotus describes the manner of their construction very clearly, and he speaks of the blocks of polished stone brought from Arabian quarries. This was the magnesian limestone from the hills of El Mokuttum, which is still quarried by the modern Egyptians, and which was polished for casing the Pyramids. We must, indeed, divest ourselves of the idea that the Pyramid before us is at all like the marvels seen and described by Herodotus. Stripped of its splendid covering, half its height lost in the accumulated sand of centuries, what must the stupendous structure of Cheops have been in its first glory? Then, as has been calculated by the author of *Nozrani in Egypt and Syria*, it covered an area fifty feet each way larger than that of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and rose to twice the

height of St. Peter's of Rome! Now, owing to the encroachments of sand, its present base is 732 feet, according to Sir J. G. Wilkinson's measurement, and its perpendicular height 480 feet. Every vestige of the marble coating has disappeared. The subterranean chambers were pillaged long ago, and every available inch of surface is covered with names of travellers, evidently craving immortal fame as much as Cheops and Cephren.

Still, nothing can be more impressive than these Titans of the desert, which have indeed a similitude to fallen gods in their stately solitude and sombre majesty. Will they last as long as the world itself, or will some revolutionary age lay its ruthless hand upon them, and they also become traditional as the Tower of Babel? Who shall tell us? Not even the Sphinx, before whose mysterious smile we stand awed and stirred to a feeling of strangest curiosity. We forget for a time that the sun is making our brains throb; we

forget the Pyramids and all else, past and present, in our contemplation of this sublime, unreadable face. The mutilation of the features has done little to impair the weird, petrifying, superhuman expression of the whole physiognomy. Perhaps the calm of perfect repose predominates, yet it is hard to say, since you feel at the same time in the presence of an inscrutable, riddle-reading wisdom, before which your own life, with all its secrets, might be read as a child's story-book. Surely this must have been since the world began, and is no creation of human hands! One cannot help thinking so in the first moments of fascination and bewilderment. We are fain to gaze for hours, were it not for the burning sun of this April afternoon. The outlined figure, in colour greyish, bluish, yellowish, rising out of the sands, has an eerie majesty of its own that holds us with a spell. But the sun drives us away with its scorching, racking beams; we stagger

across the sands, almost blinded by the glare, to the entrance of the mummy-pits, where we descend, finding coolness and shadow, and the companionship of lovely little blue and black beetles flashing in the white sands.

We got back to our carriage, almost fainting with the heat, and just in time to see a wretched party of travellers pounced upon by the enemy. A more striking contrast than our own security with their helplessness cannot be conceived, not—as the Roman poet says—that it is a pleasure that any should be afflicted, but because it is sweet to see from what evils you are yourself exempt. Anything more dejected than the faces of these unhappy victims, as they were driven about by their tormentors I hardly remember to have seen. And I fear that the little excursion which cost us no more than a couple of sovereigns, mulcted them to a serious extent.

We drive home in the reviving freshness

of the evening. All the pictures of the morning possess now a new and no less enchanting harmony; and as we look back at the Pyramids in the mellow effulgence of sunset, they seem hardly realities indeed, but fairy peaks of amethyst far off and mysterious as the golden city, with its twelve gates of pearl, seen by the Apocalyptic visionary.

LETTER VI.

HELIOPOLIS. THE MUSEUM AT BOOLAK.

TO Heliopolis from Cairo is a long drive of two hours on a splendid road, bordered for the most part with gardens. There were pomegranate trees in rich red flower, orange and lemon trees, tamarisk, olive, castor-oil, rose and acacia, with well-known flowers, such as the African marigold and larkspur in great plenty. Farther off were patches of golden dourra, and in their midst little clusters of palm and olive, oases of green amid yellow deserts.

We were driven by a friend in an English dog-cart, drawn by a pair of beautiful little Syrian horses; and very exhilarating it was to speed so easily through the soft, perfumed

air. When we had left Cairo at three o'clock P.M. it was 83° in the shade! We come in sight of a noble obelisk of granite—all that now remains of the once glorious seat of learning and of free thought, whither Plato went four hundred years before Christ to study 'the wisdom of the Egyptians.' We alight and walk across a field amid groups of Bedouins, with their donkeys, old and young, camels, large beautiful oxen, dogs and sheep. Little half-naked children followed us crying 'Bakshish.' The statuelike men and women stared without a word. In this picturesque scene we linger long around the solitary relic of the famous Temple of the Sun. There is something in an obelisk that takes strange hold of the fancy, especially when it stands under the canopy of a burning southern sky, and on the level line of a desert. It is so massive and yet so airy, and so strangely contrasted in form to its surroundings, that the mind is affected

as by certain caprices of nature, and it is here seen to especial advantage. The eye rests upon the chief points of the picture undisturbed by any overcrowding, and the exquisite proportions gain a thousandfold by this isolation. Indeed, to build obelisks in cities and small hilly countries is altogether a mistake. They should stand in vast plains like lighthouses in the sea.

The wasps have made curious encroachments upon the sides of the monument, which are covered with their nests. Some of the hieroglyphics still remain. They bear the name of Osirtasen I., who is supposed to have been the Pharaoh of Joseph. Now the ancient name of Heliopolis was in hieroglyphics the abode of the sun, Ei-re; in Coptic, On; and variously called Aven in Ezekiel and Bethshemish in Jeremiah. 'He shall break also the images of Bethshemish [the house of the Sun] that is in the land of Egypt;' and in Genesis Joseph is said to have married a daughter of the priest

On. Here in Strabo's time was showed the house where Plato lived when the philosopher himself became 'a disciple of the old men of Egypt.' This was in the fourth century before Christ, when Heliopolis was a celebrated seat of philosophy. Owing to its geographical and political situation, as Mr. Sharpe shows in his learned little work on Egyptian mythology, many various opinions—Greek, Persian, Hebrew, Phœnician, and Egyptian—were brought into close contact, the consequence of which was an outburst of free thought, which was not without its influence on the Athenian philosopher. 'Here,' says Mr. Sharpe, 'Plato may have gained better views of a future state of rewards and punishments; but here he may have lost somewhat of the pure morality before taught to him by Socrates. He seems to have been more particularly pleased with Egyptian mysticism.' Other writers seem in doubt as to Plato's visit at all; but there is little doubt of Herodotus's visit

to Heliopolis—that pattern of travellers, who spent months, if not years, in examining the places he describes—a striking contrast to modern tourists! The reputation of Heliopolis faded after the conquest of Egypt by Greece, when the Greek city of Alexandria took its place. The flocks and herds of the Bedouin now wander at will over the site of the once famous seat of learning. A little train of wild, dark-skinned children, with their tame colts and kids, followed at our heels to the entrance of the gardens near, where tea was being prepared.

We sat down in a thicket of orange and pomegranate trees, glossy green leaf, scarlet blossom, and golden fruit within arm's reach. Soon enormous bouquets were brought by the gardener for each of the ladies, smelling of the delicate blossom of the black and lilac acacia. We saw many of these trees on the way, and its fragrance is not easily forgotten, nor its blossom either.

The drive home was through such a blaze of colour, that we might almost have fancied ourselves caught up in the chariot of Phœbus Apollo and whirled through space in the wake of the sun-god. Never have I seen such a pageant as that Egyptian sunset. All the colours of the flowers in which we had just been revelling, orange, violet, crimson, seemed suddenly translated ino myriads of jewels, which, rainbow-tinted, flashed and flamed for a while, finally melting, like Cleopatra's pearl, in a sea of purple. Verily, we beheld 'the pomp of Egypt' on that homeward drive from Heliopolis.

But we were to see something more of it before turning our faces another way; and this was at the choice museum of Boolak, which all travellers will do well to see more than once, and leisurely. Indeed, this rule holds good with everything worth seeing. I am sure it is a great mistake to spend much time and money in going far merely

to get one glance at beautiful places and things.

I suppose there is no more fascinating collection of antiquities in the world than this delightful little museum contains. As you wander about you are carried in spirit to the beautiful Biblical pastorals more than three thousand years old. Here is a handful of seed-corn that was perhaps garnered in the days when Joseph was ruler over all the land of Egypt; there, a fragment of fine spun linen that he might have worn when 'he made ready his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.' Who knows but that this timbrel was held by Miriam the prophetess when she led out the women of Israel to celebrate the tyrant's overthrow? That basketful of silver money may have been the wages of Moses's nurse paid by Pharaoh's daughter. What Egyptian

queen has studied her beauty in that looking-glass of polished metal? Who last used the marble palette before us, old as the Pyramids, but still bright with the painter's colours? The mummies around us, men and women, who, perhaps, knew all these things, are silent. When we gaze upon the painted masks, an expression seems to come over them almost as if they read our thoughts. We see their hands and feet protruding from the costly wrappings with a ghostly feeling of expectancy, that in a moment the figure itself will shake off its bindings and discourse with us. But they do not stir. We move on, apparently followed by the stolid, sphinx-like gaze.

This collection gives a very high idea of the art of the ancient Egyptians. Jewels, furniture, dress, and objects of worship all bear traces of the same artistic and loving elaboration. Nothing seems ever to have been done in a hurry or with any hampering

consideration of cost. Some little domestic statues are lovely; such as a boy drawing olives out of the beautifully-shaped earthen jar common in Egypt to this day; touching figures of priests in the attitude of prayer; a man asleep; two women, evidently mother and daughter, standing side by side, a graceful and pathetic group, and many others.

How well the ancient Egyptians loved elegancies is here evinced. One can fancy what gorgeous receptions were given in the time of Rameses the Great. The guests arrive, one by one, attended by a train of slaves, and are immediately anointed with sweet odours out of an alabaster vase; a lotus flower is presented to hold in the hand, water is brought for the feet, and freshly-wreathed chaplets and necklaces of chrysanthemum, acacia, anemone, convolvulus, and bay-leaves are put about the head and neck, to be exchanged for new ones during the entertainment. Ladies (for the Egyptian

women were not shut up after the Greek fashion) and gentlemen being seated, wine is handed round, and music whiles away the interval between arrival and dinner. They have been, like Joseph's brethren, invited 'to dine at noon;' and they most probably begin the feast with a pottage of lentils, such as Jacob gave Esau. But there are plenty of delicacies: roast goose, ibex, gazelle, salted quails, and ducks; savoury meats, prepared skilfully as the beguiling mess of Rebekah; sweetmeats, confections, dates, and figs; wine of the Maretic grape, sweetest of the sweet, light wines of the Thebaïd, and the choice pale Teniotic, which Athenæus describes as 'possessing so delightful a fragrance as to be perfectly aromatic.' These are served in elegant drinking-cups of gold, silver, porcelain, glass, and alabaster. Grace is said before meat; and when the wine has circulated and conversation flows freely, a wooden image of Osiris in the form of a

human mummy is passed round, to remind the assembly that if we eat, drink, and are merry to-day, 'To-morrow we die.' Even the mummy of a deceased relation is placed at table as one of the guests.

Meantime, the feast draws to an end; a gold bowl full of water, with napkins, is brought round; all wash their hands, and the second musical entertainment begins, accompanied by song, dance, gymnastic feats, juggling, and buffoonery. Perhaps, at side-tables, draughts are played, a favourite game three thousand years ago!

But the lotus flowers are withering in the hands of the guests; the ladies have discussed their jewels and trinkets; one or two of the gentlemen—in spite of the mummy and its warning—have taken too much wine, and are borne out by attendants; the crowd of black and white slaves set to work to scour the tables, collect the faded wreaths, rinse the wine-cups, clear away the empty

dishes — and, let us hope, feast on the remains.

Besides the works of art, furniture, and mummies here collected, there are many other interesting objects, especially those connected with their gods and sacred animals.

Happy were the cats and crocodiles in the days of ancient Egypt. If a cat died, the family of its master shaved their eyebrows, as a sign of mourning, and it was embalmed, like a king. The crocodile of Thebes was waited upon during its lifetime with the utmost care; various meats were expressly dressed for it; its head and feet were ornamented with chains and jewels; like the cat, it shared the honours of mummydom with 'the kings and counsellors of the earth.'

LETTER VII.

WITH THE PILGRIMS.

IN the first days of May we were again at sea; like the Roman poet, overwhelmed with the feeling that at last indeed we found ourselves on the way to Athens.

'Magnum iter ad doctas proficisci cogor Athenas,'

sang Propertius, bound thither in order to cure the smart of a certain love-affair, which caused a severe wound, though it did not break his heart. Was it possible that we should soon climb the Acropolis, and rest on the broken walls of the Parthenon? It seemed too good to be true.

Very pleasant it was, moreover, to feel

that we were fairly out of Egypt, that fiery furnace, from which we had somehow miraculously escaped, like Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego. The weather was delicious, warm, fresh, and glowing, with just enough breeze to speed our sails, and nothing more. Our vessel—an Austrian Lloyd—was packed as closely as a box of figs with pilgrims returning from Mecca, who afforded us, with the rest of the crew, plenty of amusement during the first uneventful day or two, whilst we were yet in the Mediterranean.

To begin with the quarter-deck. We have, first of all, a learned Turkish judge, bound to Constantinople, with his hareem; and what with his wives, slaves, children, and miscellaneous attendants, I was reminded of a riddle that used to puzzle me in my childhood, about a man with seven wives who was going to St. Ives. The judge himself was a very ugly old man, wearing baggy white flannel trousers, a short petticoat or skirt of gay

Persian stuff, and over his shoulders a jacket bordered with fur. His ladies were even more unprepossessing in appearance than himself—ungainly creatures of all ages and sizes, dressed in sack-like garments of dingy white linen over a petticoat of hideous Manchester cotton, stockingless feet thrust in leather boots, unlaced, and down at the heel. Their veiling was a mere sham; sometimes the nose would be covered, or, perhaps, the mouth as well; but, for the most part, they showed their faces like other people. A more unattractive group cannot be conceived. They used to spend the day squatted at the farther end of the deck, giggling, chattering, eating sweetmeats, or, whenever opportunity offered, bargaining for beads and knick-knacks, brought on deck by a pedlar. The children were dirty, untidy little objects, running about all day in the queerest looking nightgowns, or what appeared to be so. There was one baby belonging to the party,

who used to be brought on deck once or twice a day by a negress, a not ill-favoured little thing, of which the old man took a good deal of notice, and the women too. But it was always a slave who carried the child to its father; and during the four or five days that we journeyed together, I never once saw him accost any of his multifarious wives, except when we lay off Smyrna, when he took one of them on shore, with the baby and its nurse. The women seemed in no wise concerned at this treatment, making merry over idiotic little nothings. Then there was a dervish on board, a half-mad, dirty, unpleasant-looking creature, in turban, and long green Egyptian coat, who was a steerage passenger, but persisted in presenting himself on the quarter-deck, from which the head-steward would occasionally drive him; two or three Greek families, one with an English governess, and servants; a couple of sweet-looking German Sisters of St.

Vincent de Paul; a Dutchman, with broad-brimmed hat, from the Manillas, and his wife, going to Smyrna for change of air; and an Illyrian, who was so beautiful and picturesque, that I must pause to describe him. In the first place, he was a splendid creature, tall, strong, and symmetrically proportioned, with regular features, clear, sunburnt skin, and a head superbly set on his shoulders. His costume consisted of a crimson jacket richly embroidered, something like a zouave's in shape, an oriental silk sash round his waist, dark-blue full trousers reaching to the knee, white woollen stockings with crimson garters, on his head a small flat cap, and in his belt a very handsome pistol.

He was worth looking at certainly, and people did look at him.

The forecastle was a strange and animated scene, and, indeed, the lower deck altogether, for the pilgrims were far too numerous to stow away in the former place. They are

of various nationalities: Russians in sheepskin jackets and high sheepskin hats; Negroes, black as jet, in light-coloured clothes; green-turbaned Turks, Egyptians, Arabs, and I know not who else. These poor people have only drinking-water and standing, or rather sleeping, room allowed them. They provide their own bedding, carpets, cooking utensils, and food; and every available part of the deck is made use of. Carpets are hung up to divide different families at night, for, of course, they have no other sleeping-place; and as it is usually fine weather in these seas, they do not often suffer much from cold or wet. The brilliant carpets and draperies, the bright copper cooking-vessels, the gay dresses and dark faces, with the background of blue sea, make up a wonderful picture. There was one little group encamped just below a favourite place of mine on the upper deck that I used to watch with really a hungry interest, wanting either to

paint it, or buy it, or do anything rather than lose it for ever. The central figure was a very handsome, vivacious negress, dressed in a wonderful dark blue cotton robe with an orange-coloured border; about her were two or three other women, all wearing those indescribably gorgeous yet harmonious oriental fabrics so cheap and common in the East, and so impossible, it seems, to manufacture in England; greens, yellows, and blues, what peacock-hues were not mingled in their inimitable costumes! but the effect was marvellous as they reclined upon a carpet of the most delicate pattern, the chief colours being that peerless, ravishing blue you never see except in the land where Mahomet is revered.

All day long there would be animation of a sleepy, oriental kind going on, chatter, cooking, toilette, and so on. But just when the sun was sinking below the sea—a great ruby dropping slowly into a blue cup—all the pilgrims to a man rose with outstretched

arms, uttered a low, solemn cry, and then prostrated themselves in prayer. It was a scene not to be painted by any words.

We are now (May 4th) among the exquisite violet islands of the Ægean; pale blue heavens, blue islands, a shade deeper than the sky, sea of intensest purple, this is what we saw day after day. What enchanted names bear these low-lying rocks! We glide by very gently, and have plenty of time to recall what little we know of ancient song or story. First comes sunny Rhodes, of which Horace sings and Pliny records that the Rhodians never lived a day without seeing the sun; then Cos, where the laughing philosopher was born, also Prodicus the sophist. We must have passed close to Patmos. Then we came to Samos, —'the olive-planted Samos,' wrote Æschylus —Samos, once the brilliant centre of Ionia, the birthplace of Pythagoras, where Polycrates held splendid court, celebrated for arts, com-

merce, mines. This tyrant king of a pirate state was the model Caligula would have fain imitated. All the rarities that money could purchase were bought by Polycrates; pointer-dogs from Epirus, Milesian sheep and Naxian goats for the pastures, gorgeous tropical plants for his gardens, works of art, beautiful slaves to attend his table, where he entertained Anacreon of Teos, Ibycus of Rhegium, and other wits and poets. But lust of wealth was the ruin of Polycrates; and his end was to hang on a cross, in fulfilment of a prophecy, 'bathed by Zeus, anointed by the sun, food of the birds and of the air.' Next came Scio, which may have been the birth-place of Homer as well as any other of the nineteen cities that contend for the honour. Scio is also noteworthy as the first seat of bronze-founding. Here, indeed, the art of soldering in bronze was discovered by Glaucus. It is said that the great abundance of gummy plants growing on the island contributed to

the perfection of the art, being extensively used in the process. Scio was a busy seat of trade before its destruction.

We neared Scio at midnight. I was sleeping profoundly, when my companion rushed into my cabin, crying, 'We are at Scio!' and shaking off my drowsiness for Homer's sake, I dressed hastily and went on deck. It was a brilliant, starlit, moonlit night. We saw a little rocky island, looking black as jet against the heavens, and terraces of white houses built close to the sea, a few ships in the harbour, and lights gleaming here and there. This is all we saw of Scio, but it was worth seeing.

Here we landed a charming Greek family, with their English governess and English-speaking children; then set sail again.

I may remark, by the way, that throughout this journey we were much struck by the strong predilection for the English language shown by the Greeks. Whenever we came

in friendly contact with Greek families we were sure to find that the children were being brought up to speak English; and, flattering as this might be to national vanity, the perpetual recurrence of bad English was very trying to sensitive ears.

LETTER VIII.

SMYRNA.

THE next morning we slowly entered the beautiful land-locked bay of Smyrna. A delicious breeze was blowing from the land, the sky was of tender blue, the distant mountains of delicate violet, whilst bright green hills sloped down to the edge of the calm, purple waves with many

> 'A flowery lea
> Between the barren mountains and the sea.'

From the gardens and orange-groves, and cypress-trees, came breaths of fragrance that seemed almost like a welcome, while little fishing-boats, with dazzling white sails, glided about gracefully as swans.

The aspect of Smyrna from the sea is very enticing; its white houses with green shutters, flower gardens, windmills, and background of sunny hills make up a cheerful and harmonious picture.

We were to stay here two days, and then change boats; so we went on shore, hoping to see Ephesus. This, however, turned out to be an impossibility on account of the railway arrangements. The train goes one day and returns the next, but it starts before the arrival of the Alexandria boat, and it returns too late for the Syra boat, so that for travellers bound direct to Athens, the railway to Ephesus is of no practical use whatever. This is a pity. However, our day at Smyrna was very interesting. First of all we drove to what is called Diana's bath. The road lay for some time along a little river, the banks of which were a tangle of rushes, large yellow irises and mallows in full flower; in the distance rose amethyst mountains thickly

wooded at the base with cypress, mulberry, fig and sycamore. A fresh breeze met us as we went, and what a treat is a land breeze after many weeks or days at sea! The bath is an oblong basin of the most transparent water I ever saw, bordered with rose-bushes and mulberry-trees. Close by is a large corn mill. It was but a glimpse that we got of the scenery of Asia Minor, yet a glimpse brimful of suggestion and interest; peaceful, pastoral, poetic, delicious at the time, and refreshing to look back upon.

On returning to Smyrna, we set out for a stroll through the bazaars, under the guidance of a very stupid and exorbitant interpreter, from whom may heaven defend future travellers! He was good-natured, and spoke English, so that we might have fared worse, perhaps—always a satisfactory thought after having been cheated.

Of the Smyrna bazaars it is not worth while speaking, except to advise people not

to visit them without plenty of money in their pockets. The carpets are temptations agonising as those of Tantalus to the poor tourist. A large price is still asked for a carpet only six foot square, like Prince Houssain's, and if it does not possess the magic quality of transporting you bodily to any longed-for place, at least at the sight of it you are in spirit borne to the gorgeous East whence it has come. Do not go to Smyrna, therefore, unless you happen at the time to be rich enough for such a purchase. Every carpet I saw at Smyrna was enough to drive anybody possessing a particle of artistic feeling well-nigh crazy with delight. There is a new mosque, to which travellers are taken, the floors of which are covered with the richest Persian, Turkish and Syrian rugs, and in the poorest little bazaar there is always a beautiful carpet for the master.

The glimpses we got of the private dwellings gave us a very pleasant idea of

domestic comfort in Smyrna: the houses are large, cool and spacious, with open courts, where we saw family groups enjoying themselves. These courts are often planted with trees and flowers, and to the passer-by wear an inviting aspect. As we toiled painfully after our guide in the close, unpaved streets, we wished heartily that some magical invitation would be sent out to us to eat with Aladdin and his mother. But no such luck happened, and we had to content ourselves with a draught of lemonade prosaically purchased at a shop for twopence.

We were next taken to see the dancing dervishes. I suppose the dervishes enjoy it themselves, or they would not do it; but their performance has little edification for the spectators.

When we entered the gallery, all was still, the lines of spectators around us, the ever-increasing crowd of performers below. By-and-by, the squatted figure of a dervish

having a sweet little child of about five years beside him, sets up a howling which means Allah il Allah; one by one the bystanders take up the cry, which gathers in savageness and intensity till it more nearly approaches the howling of wild animals than anything human. After a time the leader rises, and a circle is formed around him of about a dozen men, with three little children in the midst. They move backwards and forwards, keeping up the same cry, till they are joined by two, three, five, ten, twenty; it is impossible to count them, for the noise and movement makes me giddy. At last the circle of yelling, writhing, glaring men is complete. Backwards, forwards, backwards, forwards, go the turbaned heads, louder and louder grows the reiterated chaunt, La Allah il Allah. It seems as if they would never stop, and with their increasing animation is mixed an element of ecstasy, fanaticism, craziness, I know not by what name to call it, which drives us away half frightened. There

was one horrible-looking creature whose face haunted me for days after, like a nightmare.

Next day we went on board the *Archduchess Carlotta*, a splendid Austrian Lloyd screw steamer, new, clean, and handsomely fitted up, that was to take us as far as Syra. We did not start till nightfall, and very amusing it was to watch the passengers embarking. A gayer scene never surely delighted the eyes of colour-loving travellers. First of all think of the background, sea smooth and green as polished malachite; sky, a vault of turquoise; and then try to imagine dozens of boats coming, one after the other, from the gleaming white city, each manned by sunburnt picturesque figures wearing white shirts and brilliant sashes, and filled with passengers in diverse and rich costumes.

Now a boat approaches bearing half-a-dozen green-turbaned Turks; now it is two brown-robed, bearded, Carmelite monks who climb

the vessel's side. Armenians, Jews, Turks, Egyptians, Russians, Greeks, are to travel with us as far as Syra, and if we could only sketch a little we should bring home costumes enough for a dozen fancy balls. The dresses of the Smyrna Jews are very gay and fantastic. We had on board a lady and her little daughter, dressed in long mantles of salmon-coloured cashmere lined with grey fur, petticoat and trousers of gay-coloured muslin, bright little gauze handkerchiefs round their heads, and properly adorned with ornaments. The men wore the same kind of mantle, lined with fur dyed brown, red, or orange, coloured cambric shirts, with silk scarfs round the waist, rather full trousers and slippers. One or two had on long loose cloaks of dark blue cloth with violet hoods, full black trousers reaching to the knee, and white stockings. There was still another variety of dress, that consisted of a bright blue zouave jacket, full Turkish trousers of

dark olive green, and waistcoats or shirts of gay figured muslin. Amid this dazzling company we felt almost as much at a disadvantage as two dowdy grey guinea fowls that have strayed among a group of peacocks. What must the peacocks have thought of our sober-coloured travelling-dresses, grey waterproof cloth, unrelieved by a single adornment? We beheld their splendour meekly.

In the meantime the Turkish gentleman with the innumerable wives, who had just returned from Smyrna, spreads his carpet and performs his devotions, apparently nowise disturbed by the bustle around him. The Carmelite monks also become absorbed in their little books of devotion. The sun sets with more than usual magnificence, soon the business of embarking ceases, and we weigh anchor, gliding out of the bay of Smyrna amid the blaze of purple-golden heavens. Then follows a long languid twilight, a glory of southern stars, and a long quiet night.

We are of course early on deck for the sake of the sunrise, or if too late for that, the early breeze, and the sight of what blue islands may be seen, of the Cyclades or Circle Islands, that were supposed by the worshippers of Apollo to surround the sacred isle of Delos in a solemn circle. We see Delos, birthplace of Apollo and Artemis, where in this sweetest season of the year, was held the splendid spring festival. Before us is a mere mass of soft grey rock, rising from the bright blue sea. Paros we see from a distance only, one of the most magnificent of these mountain islands. How well they deserve the epithet given them by the Greek poets,—'the island rocks.'

A whole day we have of such enchantment, and on the fifth from leaving Alexandria anchor off the little island of Syra. It is Sunday, and the distant church bells invite us to go ashore; the green hills, cheerful little white town and harbour seem to invite

us too; yet, as it is burning hot, and we feel lazy, we refrain. Here was born Pherecydes, the earliest Greek prose writer, the instructor of Pythagoras, who in a rocky cave used to observe the solstice. Near Syra is the little island of Ceos, birthplace of Simonides, which, at the time of the Persian war, possessed four towers, each a harbour, a legislation, a coinage of its own; and Ceos is only nine miles square!

At Syra we leave the *Archduchess Carlotta*, and embark on the small and somewhat dirty little steamer the *Schild*, which plies between Syra and the Piræus.

It may be worth while, for the convenience of intending travellers, to mention the following facts. We left Alexandria in the afternoon of Tuesday, the 2nd of May, and reached the Piræus on the following Sunday morning, that is, the 7th, making five days' sea-voyage in all, at a cost of sixteen pounds each, which charge included the return journey (first class) as far as Ancona. We afterwards

changed our plans, and went on to Trieste, the difference on our tickets being about three pounds each. On the large Austrian Lloyds, it is hardly necessary to say that the accommodation was good, the food excellent, and the attendance satisfactory. The inconveniences of the smaller steamer plying between Syra and the Piræus are considerable, but only last twelve hours.

At nightfall we set sail for Athens. We do not go to bed, but, wrapped in our rugs, lie on the floor of our cabin, to dream, 'betwixt sleeping and waking,' of Athens. The steamer glides along so gently, that we hardly know we are moving; and at daybreak we cast anchor in the Piræus, and of course go on shore with all possible speed, feeling ready to fall on our knees and kiss the sacred soil we touch for the first time.

LETTER IX.

SIX DAYS IN ATHENS.

'Athens arose; a city such as vision
Builds from the purple crags and silver towers
Of battlemented cloud, as in derision
Of kingliest masonry, the ocean floors
Pave it, the evening sky pavilions it;
Its portals are inhabited
By thunder-zoned winds. . . . ,
A divine work! Athens diviner yet.
Gleamed with its crest of columns, ...
. . . . In marble immortality.'

THE weather is such as we have not seen since leaving England six weeks ago, bright, but cold, with April-like showers and sudden gleams of sunshine. In the Mediterranean we had enjoyed an uninterrupted spell of smooth sea, brilliant blue sky, and gradually increasing temperature from Southampton to Alexandria; during the fortnight

spent in Egypt, we had been overpowered by the tropical heat and unbroken glare of sunshine; and in the lovely Ægean, only the gentlest breezes had ruffled the deep blue waves, only the lightest cloud had swept the sky.

Here, at Athens, we could have fancied ourselves at home. It was not cold enough to want a fire, but cold and showery enough to make us need a cloak and umbrella when ever we went out of doors.

We find carriages and guides at the harbour, and reach Athens in three-quarters of an hour. The road is broad, and bordered with poplars, lentisks, olives, and aloes, the sweet-scented Bohemian olive shedding delicious perfume.

We pass a small watercourse bordered with oleanders—this is the dry bed of the Ilyssus; in the distance, fragments of the old walls of Themistocles are pointed out to us, grey, low-lying masses, around which

goatherds, clad, like the Helots of old, in sheepskins, are keeping their flocks of brown and white goats. To our right is the glorious purple Hymettus; before us, the isolated peak of Lycabettus, the Hill of Light; to the left, the dusky rampart of Mount Parnes and Pentelicus; and in the centre of all rises the Acropolis, crowned with its marble ruins, gleaming golden in the early light. Looking back, we see the pale blue Bay of Salamis, the island of Ægina, and the distant coast of Argolis delicately outlined against the pearly sky, and the rugged Ægaleos, whence Xerxes viewed the great sea-fight from his golden throne. What a matchless scene! Colour, form, and combination alike are exquisite, and every feature in the picture calls up a thousand associations. Greece welcomes the stranger still with a kiss of beauty.

We reach the quiet, cheerful little city of modern Athens about seven o'clock; and as we drive through the open square in which

the principal hotels and the Royal Palace are situated, we are reminded of some small German capital.

We alight at the Hôtel des Voyageurs, and soon an inviting breakfast is set before us: honey from Mount Hymettus, fish, salad, fruit, and wine with well-known classic names; never had any meal such romantic flavour about it as this first one in Athens. Then we procure our letters, and rest ourselves awhile.

My room is delightful. Close underneath the window is a little garden full of familiar flowers, sweet-peas, geraniums, flox, larkspurs, and roses, with one or two cypress and olive-trees. Beyond, is a glorious view of Mount Hymettus, a purple glory always; and Lycabettus, the Hill of Light. In the neighbouring gardens, as in the time of Sophocles, frequent

> 'Mourns the warbling nightingale,
> Nestling mid the thickest screen
> Of the ivy's darksome green.'

Never shall I forget how the nightingales sing during these May days in Athens!

The afternoon is showery, and more than once we have to seek shelter as we wander about, now taking a survey of the modern city, now climbing the marble steps that lead to the Parthenon. We have only six days to stay at Athens; but as there seems no chance of getting beyond the city and suburbs, on account of the brigands, we need not hurry over our sight-seeing. And how delicious is this wandering at one's will here! It is true we have at first to support the twaddle and atrocious English of our guide—Heaven save all future travellers from him!—but the spell of enchantment is too strong to be easily broken. We are for six whole days leading a charmed life. Everything captivates at Athens: the daily hotel life, simple, friendly, unpretentious; the walks in Hermes and Æolus Street; in the former, to search for photographs; in the latter, to

look at and purchase the beautiful pottery of Ægina; the long mornings devoted to the Cerameicus and the collection of antiquities in the Vivakion and the Temple of Theseus; the afternoon drive to Colonus and the Academy, or the Acropolis and the Theatre of Dionysos; the rambles about Mars' Hill. To enjoy all these things was but to realise the dream of one's lifetime. Have we not all longed to see Athens? and the fulfilment is delicious as the expectation.

No place I have ever seen has struck me so vividly, except Granada, which is hardly less beautiful. But Granada had no Æschylus, no Plato, no Socrates. The grandeur of Greek story is wholly wanting to the romantic page of Moorish annals; and lovely as is the Andalusian capital, it does not take the same hold on the imagination. Here, too, the exquisite blue sea is a chief feature in the picture, which, go where you will, remains in the memory, unrivalled and alone.

No traveller wandering about the quiet little city but recalls Milton's celebrated description of it, as seen from Mount Hymettus, with a feeling of regret that the poet never saw what he described except in vision, being called back by the troubles of the civil war.

'Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts.'

Also he will feel some regret that he too cannot climb the fragrant, wood-clothed Hymettus, nor visit the quarries of Pentelicus, nor tread the sacred way to Eleusis, birthplace and nursing-mother of the awful genius Æschylus; nor visit the plain of Marathon, where, till almost our own time, the shepherds heard ghostly cries of flying Persians; nor visit any other of the haunted spots within a day's journey of Athens. Alas! the brigands, with their pot of boiling oil, rule the land of Leonidas and Themistocles; and the modern inhabitants of Athens dare not go unarmed beyond Colonus and the olive-

groves of Academe! It was in vain that we sighed for a sight of Eleusis, Marathon, Pentelicus, and Hymettus.

One day, indeed, our guide, who was always trying to persuade us into undertaking some excursion or other, rushed in, crying excitedly, 'The King and Queen are going to-day to Eleusis; you ladies can go quite safely without any escort;' and we felt a little hope. We immediately made inquiries of friends as to the practicability of such a step, but could get no answer of a reassuring kind. Nobody could say that we should not be running any risk. We found, moreover, that two days before making any excursion, it is incumbent upon travellers to give notice at the police-office—a rule very difficult to observe on a week's tour. From the hotel-keeper no information beyond this could be obtained. So, very reluctantly, we had to give up Eleusis and every other excursion, contenting ourselves with the half-

hour's drive to Colonus, Plato's Garden, and the little journey by sea to the Tomb of Themistocles.

What we heard of the general terror of the brigands seemed incredible. The modern Athenians are kept in a bondage by these ruffians as complete as that of the children of Israel. A young gentleman, whose acquaintance we made through letters of introduction, an Englishman brought up at Athens, and speaking modern Greek, with its dialects, like a native, tells us: 'I go into the mountains constantly, on shooting and botanising excursions; but how do I do it? Dressed as a peasant, speaking the language of a peasant, and receiving the hospitality of peasants. I sleep in shepherds' huts, play with their children, sup off their favourite dish of curdled sheeps' milk and roast lamb, and depart next day, giving them only thanks for their hospitality, and *never showing my face in the same place a second time.* My gun on

my shoulder is the only piece of property I dare carry about with me, and that is of no costly kind. Once the report gets about that the sportsman is an Englishman in disguise, I am no longer safe; but, safe or not safe, I go. I will not remain here a prisoner. You ask me if it is safe for you to go to such and such a place? It is impossible to give a direct answer. Twenty people might go, and return unharmed, and the twenty-first might be carried off to the mountains.' Then he shrugged his shoulders at the state of affairs, and said that he saw no chance of things altering for the better. This is very sad, not only for the tourist, but for the antiquarian, the naturalist, the artist, the sportsman, to each of whom Greece offers a thousand attractions. But it is the Greeks themselves upon whom the effect is most depressing. 'Greeks,' says a modern writer, a resident of some years in Athens, 'seem born with an instinctive dread of brigands, which deepens

with years and experience, just as the dread of earthquake increases with every shock. Setting aside the brigands, Athens is a cheerful little place, very small, very quiet, but smiling, and gracious, and inviting. It is so quiet, that in the chief square you hardly see half-a-dozen people, except when the band plays at sunset. The shops of the principal streets are not equal to those of a second-rate English watering-place. I believe there are only two places where cabs are to be procured; and you may go into twenty shops without finding a soul who understands anything but modern Greek. The country has invaded every corner of the city: the nightingales wake you early in the morning, and in your walks, you come suddenly upon little gardens fragrant with rose and myrtle. This same mixture of town and country Lord Carnarvon mentions as one of the chief charms of Athens thirty years ago; perhaps the only capital in Europe, he wrote in 1839, where

the character of seclusion that pleases in the village, is combined with the mental gratification peculiar to a town.

About the climate we hear different opinions. Most people, however, seemed to find the winter very changeable and trying to the constitution. During these days of early summer, the temperature is variable, with bursts of blazing sunshine, and an occasional touch of sharpness in the air. For my own part, I find the weather of Athens particularly trying, and feel hardly strength enough to get up and down the stairs of the hotel.

Ah! in spite of such drawbacks as these, how sweet are our days at Athens! Indescribable, never to be forgotten, full of enchantment, they stand apart, having little in common with the rest of the calendar; no matter how good and bright they may have been. With what a thrill of enthusiasm we stand for the first time in the Cerameicus, called by Thucydides, *καλλιστον προαστειον του*

ασтεως, 'the fairest subject of the city,' where Pericles delivered the celebrated funeral oration on those who fell in the first year of the Peloponnesian war. With what a crowd of recollections do we behold, from the summit of Mount Lycabettus, the still fair city, called by Homer—

'The noble-soul'd Erectheus' heritage,'

whither came Herodotus in the freshness of youth to stay for a time among Thucydides, Sophocles, Phidias, Euripides, Protagoras, Zeno, and how many others! How sacred seems the barren peak called the Areopagus, where gods and heroes were tried, and where St. Paul preached the Unknown God to the Athenians, and the Pnyx, whence Demosthenes poured forth his burning eloquence to the rapt six thousand listeners below, in sight of the Parthenon, the city, the mountain, and the sea. No wonder the Greek orators became eloquent in such a scene. When we rested on

the Pnyx there were little children playing about, goats feeding, and an Albanian shepherd leading his flock home, the shepherd going first, the sheep following after—a peaceful and lovely sight. The sea was of a pale turquoise, the mountains pale violet, the sky palest of all, the plain green and golden with corn and turf. Close by, a peasant was working hard in a field of large thistles in full purple bloom. This mixture of town and country, of the rural and majestic, has something unique and pathetic about it. Nowhere else do you see such grandeur and such poverty, such magnificence and such stagnation, side by side.

The Greeks keep the old style, and on the 13th of May celebrate May Day with holiday-making, flowers, and garlands. We had noticed carts full of flowers and wreaths coming from the country in great numbers the day before, and just stayed long enough to see the streets presenting a very festive and poetic

appearance. Shops were shut, every one was bent on pleasure, wreaths were hung on the doors, and every man, woman, and child had flowers in their hands or in their hats.

There is very little costume to be seen now except the Albanian dress, and, occasionally, countrywomen wearing handsome crimson caps with golden tassels; so that this sudden burst of colour in the streets was all the more acceptable. The shepherds are, of course, always picturesque in their long coats of goat-skin and dark brown capote, and these you see as numerously among the ruins as when Lord Carnarvon wrote thirty years ago. Leaning on their crooks or leading their flocks, they give a rural look to spots within five minutes' walk of the modern city.

LETTER X.

SIX DAYS IN ATHENS (*continued*).

THE traveller who only stays six days in Athens will surely go away determined to pay a second visit. There is so much that is enchanting besides the glorious ruins of the golden age of art, so much to enjoy a thousand times more for being able to linger over and see under various aspects, so much to be seen leisurely or not seen at all, that costly as is the journey, and long the way, few who have been once will not try to go again.

There are several collections of antiquities to begin with, which to the lover of art offer days and weeks of delight. Perhaps the first to be named of these is the little museum

contained in the Theseum, that least injured of the superb ruins of Athens—the Doric temple built thirty years before the erection of the Parthenon. It has been described as a link between the archaic and the perfect age of Greek art; more perfect than the temple of Ægina, falling short of the Parthenon. It is a splendid spectacle, especially seen in the setting sun, when its marble columns, always gold-coloured, are flushed with yet warmer hues. To say anything of such well-known monuments as these seems a piece of supererogation.

Here are some charming monumental groups, torsos, and bas-reliefs: first and foremost the famous Marathonian hero, Pan, cross-legged, piping to youths and maidens dancing hand in hand; a large, noble monumental group of two men and a woman, the last seated between the two men, who hold each other by the hand, the faces of all inexpressibly sad and beautiful; piping fauns; priestesses; Bac-

chante; heads of Medusa. One figure of a woman resting her hand on the shoulder of her stooping slave, who fastens her sandal, is exquisite. The inscription tells that it is the monument of Ameinocleia.

In the Vivakion, or Grammar School, is a most interesting collection of vases, broken statues, busts, trinkets, metal looking-glasses, alabaster boxes and lamps. The children's toys found in tombs have a pathetic interest. Here are comic little figures of birds and animals in terra-cotta; a mimic market-place, with merchants selling their wares; tiny dishes, vases, drinking-vessels, and other favourite playthings of little, mourned-for boys and girls, who may have died two thousand years ago! Everything is interesting, and the custodian obligingly accompanies us in our rounds, and does his best to atone for the want of a catalogue. Travellers had need be honest here, as heaps of vases, lamps, and urns lie in the corners. Then there are

the monumental groups and fragments collected at the Cerameicus; and last, but most important of all, the beautiful little museums of the Parthenon, one at the entrance, and the other at the Temple of Victory. Some exquisite, but much mutilated, statues here are supposed to be by Phidias and Praxiteles. The first sight of such works as these is not easily forgotten, and one's soul hungers and thirsts to see them again. But the mutilations, often, without doubt, done in sheer wantonness, give the beholder a feeling of dismay not easily got rid of. In one of the collections, I forget which, I remember seeing a row of lovely little feet, children's feet, that had been deliberately chipped off the statues, and at the great theatre there is a row of female figures, not of the best period of art, but still very graceful and pretty, which have been mutilated evidently with design. It is too sad.

The search for photographs of these beau-

tiful works is very disappointing. Few have been photographed at all, and what efforts have been made are not successful; I only found one that was really good, and for photographs of Athens itself and the principal ruins, we had to wait till we got to Venice, where they are to be had in plenty, and of good quality.

It will be seen from this glance at the various collections how much the traveller will find here to study and admire, and how very inadequate for such a purpose is a week's stay. He ought, above all things, to be able to use a pencil. To see so many beautiful things, and carry away nothing but a vague remembrance of them, is very far from being satisfactory. Even a catalogue is not to be had, and books are scarce.

Intoxicated with the sight of so much beauty, he will set off all the more eagerly in search of those spots which are closely connected with Greek art, poetry, and patriotism;

such, for example, as the superb Dionysiac Theatre, excavated in 1862, the Stadium, the Academy, Colonus, and how many more? The first visit to the Theatre is never to be forgotten. Here is to be seen the row of marble chairs for the priests, each chair having engraved on it the name of the occupant, ἱερεως Διονυσου, and so on, the letters still remaining perfect; that of the priest of Dionysus is in the centre, and is ornamented with figures of satyrs holding grapes, wrestlers at play, and having for feet lions' claws. A cast of this chair is in the British Museum. The marble, originally white, is mellowed to a rich orange colour. In each chair is a hole for the water to run through. Mounting to the upper tiers of seats and looking across the orchestra, we see the dark purple mountains reaching to the sea, the amethyst islands of Salamis and Ægina, and beyond, like a faint azure cloud upon the horizon, the Peloponnesian coast. In front of us are torsos of caryatides,

bas-reliefs, and other statuary; above all, the altar of Dionysus, a splendid block of white marble, exquisitely carved with trailing masses of grapes and vine-leaves, smilax, ivy, and fruit. The scene is very quiet and solitary, except for two or three peasant women who are laughing and talking below the theatre. Seated here in the soft summer afternoon, what visions arise before our eyes! Hither, at break of day in the bright springtide, flocked thousands and thousands of spectators to behold a new play of Æschylus or his younger rival Sophocles, marvellously and costlily put on the stage by some wealthy choragus. We can fancy the listening, curious, criticising multitudes; but of the stately dance, the enthralling chorus, the stupendous masks, the drapery, the recitations, how little do we know, how little can we guess? What that strange call of Œdipus was like, or that marvellous farewell speech of Ajax, 'the bravest warrior of all the host

that came from Greece;' or the spectacle of Prometheus comforted by the sea-nymphs, or the chorus of the Furies, we can only guess at, dimly and imperfectly. But the wonderful scenery is still before us, 'glorious Salamis, famous in the sight of all for ever!' as sang the Salaminian sailors, faithful comrades of the unhappy Ajax; and the sea where the great Persian host was overthrown, and the hills that look upon Eleusis.

The Dionysiac Theatre was discovered by Strack, a German architect, in 1862. The orchestra and lower part of the theatre were then covered with soil to the depth of twenty feet, in which was growing a crop of corn, whilst below were some remains of foundations of houses. Strack's efforts were seconded by the King of Prussia and the Athenian Archæological Society, under whose direction the excavations were brought to a close.

A wall three feet high separates the orchestra from the *logeion*, or stage, in the

middle of which is a flight of five steps of white marble leading to the *logeion*. On the topmost step is the following inscription:—'Phædrus, son of Zoïlus, Governor of life-giving Attica, erected for thee, oh! revel-loving Dionysus, this handsome stage (or rostrum) of the theatre.'

This inscription has been ascribed to the reign of Diocletian; the name of Phædrus was already known from a marble dial brought to London by Lord Elgin, of which he appears to have been the maker (see Dyer's *Ancient Athens*). The groups in high relief facing the orchestra are also probably of the Roman time. The restoration of the theatre is supposed by M. Konsopoulos to have been the work of the Emperor Hadrian.

The marble seats intended for the priests and ambassadors were furnished with cushions and carpets, and many of the inscriptions are curious. The seats in the middle and upper part of the κοιλον or audience part of

the theatre are cut out of the solid rock, the women sitting apart from the men. This is evident from a passage in Aristophanes, in which one of the women says—

> 'The men no sooner fill the wooden seats
> Than they stare up and scrutinise us there.'

Foreigners appear to have been placed in one of the side *cunei*. The theatre held more than 20,000 spectators (See Dyer's *Athens*).

We linger among the broken statuary, stopping to look at a stooping Silenus here, a lovely group of female figures, columns, busts, and friezes. Then we turn unwillingly away and drive to the Hill of Mars or Areopagus, which I climb for St. Paul's rather than for Orestes' sake, who was tried here for the murder of Clytemnestra, and, as the old myths say, was acquitted by the casting vote of Athena Areia.

This bare crag, then, is the Areopagus! —the high council of the Athenians, the tribunal of aged citizens, the most dreaded

power in Greece. Here, before the battle of Salamis, the Assembly, armed with extraordinary power, decreed the evacuation of the city, the embarkation and maintenance of the people, the distribution of money to the poorer citizens. It is easy to see how this Palladium of conservative Athens would stand in the way of the reform party, headed by Pericles. In vain Æschylus tried to save it by his splendid play, the Oresteia, which has been well called 'a glorification of these party struggles.' The Areopagus fell, and the democratic life of Athens began; 'that great commonwealth,' as one of our living historians calls it, 'the first fully-developed free constitution that the world had seen, not only gave the political life of each citizen a fuller and wider action than any that has ever been, but also secured life and property and personal freedom better than any other government of its own age or of many ages afterwards. . . . The democracy of Athens

was the first great instance which the world ever saw of the substitution of law for force.'

I am glad that the real meaning of St. Paul's famous phrase in his sermon to the Athenians, δεισιδαιμονεστερον, translated ordinarily by 'too superstitious,' seems to have been of a comparative rather than positive force. Thus, instead of giving his hearers an affront on Mars' Hill, he approached their feelings delicately, and when about to declare a new God and a new worship, said, 'I see, men of Athens, that ye are somewhat more inclined than most men to the worship of the gods;' which rendering gives a wholly different turn to the speech.*

It is a solitary spot, as is also the neighbouring rock, surmounted by the bema, or natural pulpit, whence Pericles and Demosthenes harangued the multitude below.

* Pausanias says, 'I have already observed that the Athenians have more zeal for religion than any other people.'

We ascend the rock-hewn steps, no easy task.

Little children run after us, offering pebbles for sale—bare-legged, ragged, but happy little rogues.

Close by was the temple of the Semnæ, or Furies, to whom those who were acquitted by the court of Areopagus, sacrificed. A chasm in the north-east side is supposed to have led to the subterranean sanctuary of these awe-inspiring deities, as well as to have been the gates of Hades.

It is refreshing to turn from these desolate crags to the coolness and luxuriance of the Academy. We get over the dry bed of the narrow Cephisus with difficulty, the horses backing and kicking at the sight of the stones, and drive for half an hour along olive-groves and plane-trees, resonant with nightingales, till we reach a little wicket about two miles from the city. Here we alight, and enter what seem to be

the precincts of a farm-house; two or three women come out, eyeing us inquisitively, and invite us to enter. We pass through a garden full of flowers, fruit, and vegetables, radishes run to seed, artichokes, leeks, sweet bay and laburnum-trees, asphodel, mallows, and familiar wild flowers, orchids, wood spurges, wild mignonette, poppies, thyme, and mulleins. Growing wild and very lovely we find here that exquisite flower called by us Love in a Mist (Nigella), but having single instead of infinitely double petals, and of intenser blue and beauty. We enter a narrow walk overshadowed by plane-trees, and find a streamlet rippling by, goats wandering here and there, and their goatherd, a little boy, asleep under the trees. Birds are singing, roses and laburnums shed delicious fragrance, sunshine penetrates the thick screen of foliage here and there, and, as we walk on, we obtain glimpses of purple mountain, gleaming white city and sunny plain. Imagination

cannot picture a more enchanting spot. No wonder the Greek philosophers loved it; no wonder that later philosophers imitated it. Cicero at his Tusculan villa had a promenade arranged like the Athenian Academia, and another so arranged as to resemble the Lyceum, where Aristotle lectured; the former was situated on lower ground than the other.

The people belonging to the farm press round us with large bunches of flowers, and our guide gathers a few plane-leaves, which we carry away to lay between the beloved leaves of our Crito or Phædo.

Diogenes Laertius called the Academy a well-wooded suburb. A French writer is of opinion that most of the trees were planted in ancient times. Two which had been cut down showed by their layers that they were 652 and 530 years old respectively. When Sulla invested Athens, he cut down the trees of the Academy for making implements of war, but it was afterwards replanted. Plato's

modest house was close by, and his little garden is mentioned by Cicero as extant in his time. Here the divine philosopher was buried. So solemn was held this haunt of wisdom, that in ancient times—so runs an Attic saying—no laughter was allowed there.

At last we tear ourselves away from the spot; our way home lies by Colonus, birthplace of Sophocles, scene of his most famous play. We are soon standing on the sparry brow described in the celebrated choral ode:—

> 'All the haunts of Attic ground,
> Where the matchless coursers bound,
> Boast not through their realms of bliss
> Other spot as fair as this.'

And indeed it is a landscape of matchless loveliness. The grey limestone crags, the varied foliage of olive, pomegranate, orange, and myrtle, the verdant fields, the city crowned by the Parthenon, the purple hills, the far-off glassy sea, the bright blue sky,

make up a never-to-be-forgotten harmony. We sit down on a knoll of rising ground and recall the story of Œdipus and Antigone. Perhaps it was here the old king sat alone with that true-hearted daughter, and uttered his prayer to the Eumenides:—

> 'Come, ye sweet daughters of the darkness old,
> Come, oh! thou city bearing Pallas' name;
> Oh! Athens, of all cities most renowned!
> Have pity on this wasted spectral form,
> Which once was Œdipus!'

Two learned archæologists, K. O. Müller and Ch. Lenormand, are buried here.

But evening draws on apace, and we are hurried back to Athens by our guide, having had barely time to gather a few blossoms of asphodel. Travellers are not safe even here —and in sight of Athens—after dusk!

We visit again and again the exquisite choragic monument of Lysicrates, still called the Lantern of Demosthenes, sole relic of a street of temples, which was happily preserved by a Franciscan brotherhood, who

have enclosed it in the walls of their convent. Round the frieze is sculptured the story of Dionysus and the Tyrrhenian pirates. This example of Corinthian architecture was built B.C. 335, and is especially to be studied in conjunction with the Tower of the Winds and the Temple of Jupiter Olympus. 'If this is a fair index of the art lavished on smaller objects, the temples hardly give us a just idea of what has perished,' says Mr. Ferguson, whose chapter on Greek architecture here serves the traveller in good stead. He points out how this order of architecture was only introduced in the decline of art, and never rose during the purely Grecian age to the dignity of a temple; and how such ornamentation is borrowed from the Egyptian style: indeed, he calls the Temple of the Winds almost Egyptian in its type, without any Ionic admixture. On the architrave was inscribed, 'Lysicrates of Cicyna, son of Lysitheides, was choragus, the tribe Acamantis

gained the victory with a chorus of boys; Theon played the flute; Lysiades, an Athenian, taught the chorus; Encetus was archon.' This lovely little monument pleased me almost as much as anything in Athens. It is quite perfect of its kind. In earlier times these choragic monuments were quite simple.

The Cerameicus must be a favourite spot with every lover of Greek history. After the hasty rebuilding of Athens, Pericles found that the only way of improving the city was by adorning the suburbs. The ancient Cerameicus, or potter's district, was divided into two parts; the one became a part of the city, the other remained a suburb.* The outer was used as a burial-ground for those citizens who had fallen in war, the vast space being divided into fields corresponding to the different battle-fields at home and abroad; for, as we read in Homer of the ashes of the dead being brought home as an act of piety, so the

* See Curtius's 'History of Greece,' vol. ii., whom I here quote.

Athenians considered it their duty to bury the remains of their fellow-citizens in their native earth. It seems that Cimon, after the battle of Drabescus, was the first to establish this usage as a fixed rule, and that afterwards even the remains of the Athenians were transferred to the Cerameicus from earlier battle-fields, with the exception of Marathon; so that this great cemetery, with its sepulchral columns, represented an entire history of the Attic campaigns.

The inner Cerameicus was one of the most important parts of the city. On the west was the marble hall of Zeus Eleutherius; on the east, the Poikilé, or picture-gallery.

The east end of the city was the most secluded; and here, near the right bank of the Ilissus, was the Lyceum, where Aristotle taught, and where Pericles built a gymnasium. Trees were planted and walks laid out, so that the playground of the young was also the resort of the old. Near the basis of the

citadel (south-east) was the Odeum, the roof of which, shaped like a tent, was made in imitation of the gorgeous tent pitched by Xerxes, the vainest and proudest monarch of antiquity, on Athenian ground. How solitary are all these spots! We drive within a few minutes' walk of modern Athens over the dry bed of the Ilissus to the site of the Odeum, and do not meet a soul; or we cross the Cephisus and linger amid the ruins of the Cerameicus, to find ourselves equally alone. Wherever there are trees there are nightingales, and in the palace gardens they sing so close to us, that we might almost catch them.

Of all the ruins of Athens none are more impressive than the columns of the Olympium, or temple, which stand out majestically from the plain of Zeus Olympus. A shepherd or two, wrapped in sheepskins and leaning on their crooks, keep their flocks around. A group of Albanians in their brilliant costume

are making merry outside the restaurant close by. Children are playing about; but that is all. No noise from the quiet little city of modern Athens reaches us, no sound of wheels breaks the stillness, and we are allowed to wander at will among the ruins.

This was one of the most magnificent temples in the world, and next to that of Diana of Ephesus, the largest on record of the dipteral construction. Fifteen columns are left only; but what gives one a grander idea of the temple even than these is the broken column lying on the ground, overthrown by the earthquake in 1852. It is almost worth while going to Athens to see this broken column. There it lies, as it fell, its huge drums of Pentelic marble disposed accidentally in just the order to fill the mind with awe and wonder. Gazing on these fragments, you see how a column was put together, and realise the strength as well as the symmetry of Greek architecture.

The Theseum is the most perfect of all the monuments of Athens, and we visited it several times, not only for its own sake, but for the museum contained in its walls. The Pentelic marble of which it is built has taken the warm, rich, indescribable colour that only Greek marble takes, and no words can convey any idea of the beauty of the whole structure when bathed in the light of sunset. The sunsets at Athens—whether seen from the plain or the mountain-tops, from Lycabettus or the pastures outside the city—are wondrously lovely.

LETTER XI.

THE ARSAKION.

A FRIEND has driven us this afternoon to see the Arsakion, a public school for girls of all ranks, founded by a rich gentleman of Epirus, and what would be anywhere a noteworthy institution, but is especially so in the modern capital of Hellas.

We were received by the directress, an energetic, intelligent Swiss lady, and before going over the building had a long talk with her in her pretty little parlour. Amongst other interesting pieces of information she told us from what very small beginnings this Arsakion had grown to be what we now found it, a richly-endowed day and boarding-school

of upwards of a thousand girls of all classes. The school was opened soon after the declaration of Independence upon the capital of a few hundred drachmas—(a drachma is equal to about ninepence of our money)—and in 1852 received from M. Arsaki the splendid donation of 500,000 drachmas, which was spent in building and endowments. Other liberal donations have been given, and the endowment now amounts to some millions of drachmas. The staff of teachers consists of twenty professors, some of whom belong to the University of Athens; and the students are regularly examined, and receive diplomas from the Minister of Public Instruction. Seventeen of the 130 boarders are foundation scholars. The curriculum comprises Attic and modern Greek, French, mathematics, history, the elements of physical science, vocal and instrumental music, drawing, gymnastics, dancing and needlework, domestic economy, and the theory and practice of instruction in primary schools and *salles*

d'asile. Religious teaching is given, of course, and during the religious lesson only boarders and day scholars meet, being wholly kept apart at other times. The expense of this very comprehensive system of education ranges from thirty to forty pounds a year for boarders, who receive not only teaching and food, but clothing, medical attendance, books, and everything of which they may stand in need; whilst for day scholars the fees are covered by a few pounds. Not a few of the directress's remarks struck me greatly. In the first place she said that the mixture of classes worked quite well. The daughters of gentlemen and the daughters of shopkeepers, or perhaps of artisans, sit side by side, and only the happiest effects result from this arrangement. The same rule is observed in other parts of Greece. Speaking of a Demotikon, or village school for girls, in Livardia, Sir Thomas Wyse says of the pupils:—'All go to the Demotikon, because, firstly, there are no private schools;

secondly, there are no convents; thirdly, little disposition or talent for private instruction. Hence democracy and equality grow up with the physical and mental development; all start equal.' At the Arsakion the youthful heiress of some rich Greek house is stimulated to exertion by the strides of her humbler fellow-student, perhaps training herself for a school-mistress or private governess; mean little jealousies and vanities are forgotten. As the only precedence observed in the school is the precedence of diligence and aptitude, social distinctions cease to be considered. The young Greek girls are painstaking rather than brilliant, slow to learn, but not ready to forget; and the students of the Arsakion are fired with the love of knowledge. The examinations and diplomas naturally help to keep up this spirit of emulation. When it is considered that the greater part of school-mistresses throughout Greece, Turkey in Europe, Asia Minor, and the Greek colonies

of Western Europe, are pupils of the Arsakion and its affiliated normal schools, the great influence of such a centre becomes apparent. The standard of female education is raised wherever modern Greek is spoken; and not only the standard of education, but the standard of refinement and social morality. It was impossible to spend two hours in the company of the directress without feeling how good and wholesome her influence must be among those hundreds of young girls, many of them rough, wild-looking creatures from some far-off colony, for whom perhaps this school life was the only moral and intellectual ideal they would ever have to help them on their way hereafter. The directress spoke with quite pathetic earnestness of the difficulty she had at first experienced in getting the pupils to eat decently, and she was finally compelled to have them all by turns, six at a time, at her own table; by this means, she said, she was gradually teaching the

proper use of knife, fork, and table-napkin—formerly dim mysteries to these untaught young things. This is a single fact of many, all showing how thoroughly she had the improvement of the girls at heart, and how capable she was of discerning opportunities.

And now she conducts us over the building; first, we enter the class-rooms one at a time. Here we find thirty intelligent-looking girls, about twelve or thirteen, having a Greek lesson from a professor. The text-book is the history of Herodotus, and as I glanced at the little eager faces it pleased me to think that the glorious scene so familiar to them—the blue bay of Salamis, the purple hills of Ægeria and the grey rock of Ægaleos—would help to impress the lesson. Most of them probably had visited the tomb of Themistocles on some half-holiday, and would remember his story all the better throughout life for having sailed to that quiet, ineffably lovely spot, plucked handfuls of the brilliant bugloss

growing on the rock close by and gathered sea-shells and sea-weeds on the very monument itself, over which the tide laps gently.

Some of the girls were very handsome, with dark hair and eyes, and regular features; Most of them were interesting as types, and none what an English schoolmistress would call 'tidy.' We pass on, now glancing at a class of elder girls, whose ages range from fourteen to sixteen, busy with a professor of mathematics; here a French lesson is going on, there a singing-class. The little that we are able to see or hear of the teaching impresses us very favourably, but, of course, it is very little. Then we have to visit the dormitories—lofty, spacious, but somewhat over-crowded apartments to our thinking, which we find are only cleaned once a year! —the chapel, of which the students form the choir, the library, the infirmary, which we find empty, the refectories, the garden; lastly, the *Salle d'Asile.*

This was a charming sight. A young Greek lady, formerly pupil of the Arsakion, and afterwards trained in Paris by the well-known educationalist, Madame Pape Charpentier, was giving about a dozen little creatures a so-called lesson. Anything prettier than this class of mere babies cannot be conceived. The teacher, a young Greek lady, held a picture in her hand, and the lesson consisted in a series of questions and answers on the picture. The children danced and shouted with delight. They all belonged to the upper ranks; but we learned that a *Salle d'Asile* for poor children is in course of establishment, funds only being needed to accelerate matters. Very reluctantly we take leave of the good directress and her little world of girl students. Here, at least, is an active work of regeneration going on irrespective of cliques and politics. Depressing as Athens must be whilst the brigands have their heels upon the neck of the people, there is at least comfort in the

thought that such strides are being made on behalf of female education. This centre of intellectual activity and high educational standard, must exercise an ever-increasing influence in thousands of Greek homes. It is greatly to be hoped that the standard will be raised, and the curriculum extended over a wider period, since, according to the present system, students leave the Arsakion at sixteen, and have no opportunity of carrying on their studies at home.

LETTER XII.

'Sunt quibus unum opus est intactæ Palladis arcem,
Carmina perpetuo celebrare.'—HORACE.

THE ACROPOLIS.

AND all this time to live within sight of the Parthenon! to see it again and again, as we see it this exquisite May evening, rising from an airy eminence of pale amethyst; crowned by marble columns burnished to deepest gold, far off and encompassing it, matchless frame of a matchless picture—perhaps the loveliest panorama of natural scenery that the world can show—pale blue sea and violet mountains, as lovely in form as in colour; and over all, this warm, joy-giving southern sky!

Of what use to try to describe what others have done so often and so well, from Pausanias

down to Michaelis? Moreover, anything like an adequate and satisfying description of the Parthenon is impossible in a short compass, and reads coldly without the embellishment of picture or photograph. Those learned in its history may descant upon the costliness of the materials employed, the choiceness of the site, the rare genius of those who planned and carried out the work, how subtle the devices of mechanism therein displayed, what elaboration of parts, what grandeur of the whole, combined to form the most perfect realisation of intellectual beauty the world has yet seen. What idea do we gather from all this! Hardly more idea than any one ignorant of Shakespeare might gain of his wonderful creation by having an English dictionary placed in his hands and being told, 'These were his building materials; out of such were formed the story of Miranda and Imogen, Hamlet and Othello.' We can tell from books what the Parthenon is, but not

what it is like; and there is only one way,—to come to Athens and see what is left of it, as we see it this summer evening.

We must, first of all, realise what the Acropolis of Athens, 'its earliest throne and latest oracle,' was to the Greek, and how completely Pericles comprehended the spirit of his age in the grand artistic embodiments with which he connected its religion and history. The Acropolis represented Athens to the stranger and the foreigner, and to the thousands of spectators who flocked thither at the great Panathenaic Festival; opening, as a German writer, (Dr. Ernst Curtius) has said, 'its hospitable galleries to all who wished to visit the temples and festivals of the Athenians—rising from the lower city as the crown of the whole, like a great dedicatory offering, with its colossal statues, temples, and halls, and with the marble edifice of the Propylæa shining like a frontlet on its brow.' Whoever wished to see Athens chose the time of the Panathenæa.

Her colonies sent deputations, with offerings of cattle and sheep, to Pallas Athene, that gold and ivory creation of Phidias in which his artistic power was said to culminate. 'She is the goddess of the Athenians' home, therefore the serpent of the citadel, the symbol of the land, is seen winding his coils on her left; she is the warlike goddess, with helmet and shield and spear; and the bringer of victory, with a figure of Victory on her left hand; her attitude is calm and peaceable, not bold or provocative; with bent brow, she casts a calm and collected glance before her; she stands alone, but needing no helper; her features are gentle and frank; and the helmet, under which flow forth her ample locks, is marked by the symbols of sphinx and griffin, signifying power of thought and quickness of intelligence.'

The Panathenaic festival began with recitations, of cither and flute-playing in the Odeum; then followed gymnastic games, which in-

cluded the torch-race held in the outer Cerameicus. On the sacred day, the embroidered peplum, woven by Attic maidens under priestly supervision, was borne up the citadel, fastened sailwise to a ship on wheels. All readers of Euripides will recall an exquisitely musical chorus in the *Hecuba*, in which the captive Trojan women wonder if the embroidering of this peplum will be their task in the land of captivity:—'Shall I, in the city of Pallas Athene, depict on the crocus-hued peplum of the fair-charioted Athene the well-yoked steeds, or cunningly-devised flowers in many-coloured woof, or the son of the Titan, whom Zeus slays with his fiery bolt.' In the tapestry were also woven portraits of those who deserved well of their country, as well as mythical and historical subjects. The judge of the contests sat in the inner hall of the cella, where the victors received their rewards in sight of the goddess, whilst songs of praise filled the air. After the festival, the

Parthenon became simply the treasury. The golden robe of the goddess weighed forty talents of gold, about £12,200; whilst the Proneion, or entrance-hall, contained gold and silver bowls and consecrated vessels.

We ascend the broad marble steps made for the horsemen in the Panathenaic procession, notched so as to prevent the horses from slipping, and find ourselves among the ruins of the Propylæa, one of the last great architectural creations of Pericles. The Propylæa have been well described as the solemn and worthy beginning of the Parthenon. Here were the frescoes of Polygnotus, described by Pausanias, and put together by Riepenhauer, Mr. Watkiss Lloyd, and others. Of this magnificent Doric structure little is left but broken columns and heaps of fragments, though enough to show what it once was.

We next come to the ruins of the exquisite little Ionic Temple of Nike Apteros, the

Wingless Victory, erected by Cimon in commemoration of his victory at the Eurymedon, and discovered in the excavations of forty years ago. There are some sculptures collected inside the temple, all more or less broken, amongst others, the figure of a girl stooping to adjust her sandal, of which we have a cast in the British Museum. Gazing upon these lovely marble things we would fain linger hours. Who knows how much of the work of the divine Phidias is here?

There are two little museums on the Acropolis, but the various works are not arranged in any order, and no catalogues or photographs to be had.

As I approach the Parthenon for the first time, I am involuntarily reminded of the Alhambra; though, beyond absolute perfection of form and colour in both creations, there is no room for the comparison. The Parthenon is the realisation of a grand reli-

gious and national * idea, which the Alhambra is not; but, perhaps, for love of beauty and perception of form, the Moors, in their golden age of art, are the only people to be compared to the fellow-countrymen of Pericles. If the Alhambra bewilders us with a sense of artistic beauty, how much more does the Parthenon? I confess that my first impulse is to steal away from my companion and shed a few tears at the realisation of a life-long dream.

* And political. We are accustomed to think of the Greeks as a mere beauty-loving and creative people; but as that great historian, Mr. Freeman, points out in one of his admirable and delightful essays ('The Athenian Democracy'), the political life of democratic Athens was the very spirit and soul of artistic and creative Athens. 'Other cities ruled over wider domains and more numerous subjects; no other city could marshal so great a number of free and equal citizens. Whether this great noteworthy event was owing to force or to persuasion, to some happy accident or to long-sighted political wisdom—whether we see in it the gradual result of predisposing causes, or attribute it to the single nameless genius of an unrecorded age—in any case it stands forth as one of the foremost events in the history of the world. As the determining cause of the greatness of Athens, it was the determining cause of the distinctive and lasting greatness of Hellas. As such, the union or *ξυνδικισις* of Attica becomes nothing less than the beginning of the political history of mankind.' And elsewhere: 'The democracy of Athens was the first great instance which the world ever saw of the substitution of law for force.'

We are entirely left to ourselves, having brought no guide with us, and I sit down on a heap of broken marble, having about me the lovely asphodel in flower, the rich purple mesambreanthemum, mignionette, mallows, and other wild flowers. On the slope of the rock I see a goatherd with his little flock, but otherwise the place is solitary. Around me are the marble ruins; in the distance, I look around and gaze upon the blue bay of Salamis and the sea-washed isle of Ajax; Ægina—'a certain isle lying off the shores of Salamis, small, a dangerous station for ships, haunted by Pan, who delights in the dance;' farther off, Mount Ægaleos, 'the high hill near the ocean brine, whereon sat the vain and handsome king, a man equal to the gods, of the race that sprang from golden Danae,' and surveyed the great battle. How wonderful it is to be here! Sky, mountain, and sea wear the loveliest hues imaginable.* All is still.

* I think the only way to enjoy the Parthenon is to visit it again and again, as we did, and wander almost alone, without

The perfection of the Parthenon, like that of the Alhambra, consists rather in exquisite proportion and harmony of detail than in size, though the site of the former is of unparalleled grace combined with magnificence. It is itself indeed the gem of Greek art, which has been truly characterised as the purest and most intellectual of all styles of architecture yet invented in any part of the world. The height is 65 feet from lowest stair to apex of pediment; breadth, 100 feet; whilst from east to west it measures 226 feet. The forty colossal statues and four thousand square feet of alto and basso relievo, executed for the adornment of the temple within a few years,

guide or guide-book. As a rule, books on the spot do not help the traveller much. For my own part, if I ever visit Athens again, which I hope to do, I shall only carry in my pocket the *Persæ* of Æschylus, Pausanias, and the smallest abstract of Greek history ever written. We had Wordsworth's 'Greece,' but I (heretically) advise no one so to encumber himself. There is very little information in it of a kind to help a traveller. A respectable knowledge of Greek history and literature and a good memory are very fair substitutes for any books whatever. Dr. Dyer's 'Ancient Athens' is a useful work, though of rather an unwieldy size.

could not naturally all come from the hand of Phidias, though issuing from his school and under the eye of the master. We can form some idea, from what is left here and the Elgin marbles, of the immortal sculptures of that astounding age—the splendid action represented on the pediment, what has been well called the gentlier flow of epic representation of the frieze, and the vivid dramatic movement of the metopes.

We must realise the worship of Pallas Athene to understand the significance of the story told us by the Elgin marbles and the ruins before us — the sleeping Fates waked at the great tidings of the birth of the goddess, the contest between Poseidon and Athene, and the Panathenaic procession. What a ruin is here! What a never-to-be-forgotten glory, and never-to-be-forgotten shame! Nothing can equal the dismay felt by the lover of art as he gazes on such a scene of wilful demolition.

Iconoclasm, earthquakes, accident, and barbarity have here done their worst. The Parthenon was more especially defaced by the Byzantine Christians. When the temple was converted into a church the pronaos became the apsis, and, in order to admit light, the roof of the eastern portico and the centre of the pediment were thrown down.* The Byzantines probably defaced the metopes from religious scruples. The western pediment suffered principally from the various sieges, the most destructive being those of the Venetians in 1687. The ammunition of the Turks, which had been stowed away in the cellar, was exploded by a shell falling upon it, and in this explosion much of the building was destroyed. When Morosoni, the Venetian commander-in-chief, wished to grace his triumphal entry into Venice with the sculptured car of Victory from the western pediment, it was dashed to pieces by the awkwardness of the engineers. The

* See Dyer's *Ancient Athens.*

west façade suffered most in the siege of the Turks (1826-7), who bombarded it from the height of Philopappus. What have been aptly described as 'Lord Elgin's scientific ravages' were hardly less ruinous to the Parthenon and other monuments of the Acropolis. Well might Lord Byron burst into poetic anathemas when in sight of such devastation!

For centuries the Acropolis has been a prey to the spoiler, and not till the Turks evacuated it in 1833, was the work of restoration begun.

The Erectheum is especially interesting, not only because it is a striking example of the variety the Greeks loved in architecture, but because of its richness of adornment. Colour is still seen on some of the mouldings, which in design are as elaborate as any in the Alhambra. The Greeks had no name for blue, so it is said, yet here we have blue before us! This beautiful Ionic temple is, properly speaking, an assemblage of three temples—the Erectheum, Cecropeium (imitated in our

St. Pancras Church), and the temple of Minerva Polias—and Mr. Ferguson notes the great pains taken to prevent the three from being mistaken for one. The porticoes of two are on a different level, whilst the third, or Caryatid portico, is of a different height and level. This playfulness, inherent in the Greek character, goes far to render Greek architecture what it is, not only the sublimest realisation of intellectual beauty, but the most fascinating outpouring of fancy the world has ever seen. The Greek mind borrowed profusely and embellished immeasurably. We see in the Ionic as well as the Corinthian orders how the Assyrian and Egyptian elements were assimilated and idealized, till the old character became absorbed in the new, as was the case with the Hellenic gods and heroes.* The

* 'Every detail of the Ionic order may be traced back to Nineveh and Persepolis, all so purified and imbued with purely Grecian taste and feeling that they have become parts of a far more beautiful order than existed in their native country.'—Ferguson.

Erectheum, like most other monuments in Athens, has undergone strange vicissitudes, having been used as a Christian church, a Turkish seraglio, and a military magazine! Close by was a Christian burial-ground.

The modern figure of the Caryatide, work of a Greek artist, put in place of that in the British Museum, has a depressing effect. The use of the Caryatides, or canephoroi, *i.e.*, representations of the maidens who carried a daïs in the Panathenaic procession, borrowed from the Asiatics, was perhaps an artistic mistake which even Greek taste and skill could hardly overcome; yet it is difficult to find fault with the Erectheum; only the prevailing sense of barbarous mutilation and demolition damps the traveller's enjoyment here—if anything can do that among so much loveliness!

These six canephoroi have only lately been restored. When Stuart wrote, five were in

their places, and the sixth was supposed to have been carried off by the Venetians. One of the five was taken away by Lord Elgin, a second was overthrown by the Turkish bombardment; afterwards, however, this and the missing one were recovered in excavating, and re-erected under the direction of M. Pittakeys.

The solitude is perfect. Not a tourist or a beggar comes in our way as we wander from spot to spot, surveying these matchless ruins and the captivating prospect on every side.

In the glowing hour that follows sunset we return home, descending one or two narrow little streets, where we see women sitting on the doorstep, with spindle and distaff in hand. They have a poverty-stricken, sad, half-savage look, and little barefooted children run after us begging a few *lepta*. When Heine travelled through Italy in 1828, he described the peasant-girls of the Tyrol, spinning after the fashion of antiquity, 'as span the Fates and daughters of

Greek kings.' Thus are spinning these poor Greek women this summer evening, who live in hovels at the foot of the Acropolis; though they have not the charm of the beautiful Tyrolese maiden who captivated Heine as he drove by in the diligence.

LETTER XIII.

FROM ATHENS TO VENICE.

AFTER our too short stay we reluctantly took leave of Athens, the Parthenon, and the nightingales, and drove to the Piræus, where the little steamer that was to convey us to Syra lay anchored. We had the whole day before us, so after visiting the wife of the Consul, and seeing at her house such a collection of birds and butterflies as to make an enthusiastic naturalist set off for the woods and mountains in defiance of brigands, we took a boat, and sailed towards the tomb of Themistocles. There is, of course, little to see at the Piræus, which, in the days of Pericles, was a handsome city,

with large open squares and broad rectangular streets, and a harbour which served later as a model for Rhodes and Alexandria. Let no traveller linger in the hot and glaring streets, but follow our example and take a boat.

The day is superb, cloudless and glowing; the sea like a lake (well indeed may Curtius talk of the mild and humane character of the Ægean), and bluest of the blue; the sands white and glistening, the rocks rising above of a rich burnt sienna colour. Our boatman put up a little sail and, folding his arms, left it to bear us along, which it did swiftly and easily. In half an hour's time we made for the water's edge and alighted. The sun was now overpoweringly hot, and as we walked over the burning white rocks they seemed to scorch our feet. Stepping from block to block of mossy stones lying in the sea, we came to the tomb, a square block of marble covered with sea-weed, moss and shells, all clearly seen through the crystal water. On the

heights close by lay a blue and rosy cloud of wild flowers, masses of bugloss in great luxuriance. A little farther on was a lovely blue bay; before us the sea, with myriads of white sails dancing on the water; behind the Piræus with its shipping, flags of almost every nation waving in its harbours; far off Athens, with its purple citadel and environment of violet mountains. It is a solitary spot, yet how tranquil, how tender, how lovely! Here is no savageness. Nature is all smiles and grace.

We returned to our boat, where we lunched under the shadow of an awning, and then made for the steamer—our old friend, the wretched, crowded, dirty little steamer—that was to bear us to Syra. The two or three days that followed our embarkation at Syra were a mere repetition of those we had spent a fortnight ago when in the Ægean, blue islands, sea, and warm sky, with golden splendours at sunset and dawn; or now and

then an hour of mid-day cloud, when the rocky islets looked suddenly pale and cold, and the sea took a grey hue. It was a torture of Tantalus to pass so many places of which Homer, and how many other poets! have written. Now we are gliding by—

> 'rugged Ægilips,
> And Samos, and Zacynthus, and the coast
> Of the mainland with its opposing isles.
> These, in twelve ships with scarlet-painted bows,
> Ulysses led—in council wise as Jove.'

Unfortunately we had no Homer with us, and no supply of books worth mentioning. Perhaps the bookless traveller has so far the advantage of the traveller with a portable library, that he carries out more fully the prime end and object of holiday travel, namely, idleness. I was amused to see the pertinacity with which some of our fellow passengers devoured the greasy French and Italian novels belonging to the ship's library, as if to pass these exquisite Greek islands was a thing of every-day occurrence. As soon

as we got into the Adriatic a brisk south wind reminded us of Horace's lines, 'Quo non arbiter Hadriæ. Major, tollere seu ponere vult freta.' The weather became wet, cold and cloudy, the sea of a dark aquamarine colour, flecked with silvery crests, and the vessel rocked backwards and forwards. It was, indeed, a change after the smooth seas and genial sun to which we had been accustomed.

One day a curious and noteworthy incident happened. About a dozen first-class passengers were quietly amusing themselves, when a Maronite rushed from the forecastle and walked up and down the quarter-deck like a madman, tearing his hair, wringing his hands, falling on his knees and covering his face, with loud bursts of sobs, throwing himself on the floor, finally retreating and behaving in like manner below. After some time the reason of this extraordinary conduct was enquired into, first by inquisitive travellers, then by one of the stewards, lastly

by a ship's officer, whereupon he stated that he had just been robbed of a large sum of money, £25, which he had to account for to his partner at Corfu, to whom the money belonged; that he was lost, that he was undone, a beggar, a helpless wretch, unless the captain interfered on his behalf. Naturally this story occasioned a good deal of excitement among the steerage passengers, a motley assembly made up of Greeks, Italians, Wallachians, Albanians, Turks, Jews, Smyrniotes, and negroes. But when, after a somewhat lengthy enquiry into the matter, the Captain ordered a general examination of baggage in the forecastle, a scene ensued that beggars description. The women threw up their hands and sobbed aloud; the men swore that the accusation was a lie; the children wailed; and all resisted as far as was possible. To see the bearing of the women and the universal dread of such an investigation, one might have

thought them all guilty. Here an old woman hugged a dirty bundle, sobbing and shrieking as the head steward, to whom the search was confided, exposed its contents one by one. There a poor miserably dressed old negro opened his knapsack with trembling hands and large tears falling down his cheeks. Now a Polish peasant-woman stands upon her chest of clothes defying the emissary of the law, and a battle ensues, which is only decided by the interference of an officer. Now an Italian, with a little child in his arms, both weeping as if their hearts would break, lay bare bundle after bundle of clothes, bits of carpet, and domestic utensils; but no money is found. At last, after some hours, the search is concluded with the same result. None of the third-class passengers have got such a sum of money secreted in their luggage, and the captain is called up to say what shall be done. Wise as Solomon, the captain forthwith orders a personal

examination of the persons accused; but, he says, let the accuser himself first be subjected to the indignity; and lo! the money is found secreted upon the Maronite himself!

If the foregoing scene had been a culmination of sorrow, what followed was a culmination of rage. But for interference on the part of the ship's officers, the wretched man would have been very summarily dealt with; as it was, the women could not be induced to keep their hands off him. Like a company of enraged hens setting upon some unwelcome intruder, they flew at him, hissing, scratching, vociferating. The Polish woman before alluded to was not to be pacified till she had inflicted a few cuffs and blows.

When the universal indignation had a little subsided, there was something inexpressibly comic in the situation. There sat the culprit hanging down his head, the men railing, the women threatening, one or two only held back by fear of the captain;

the Polish woman every now and then springing forward and dealing her enemy a surreptitious box on the ear, which provoked a general burst of laughter. One could not feel sorry for the would-be thief, unpleasant as was his position, after having seen how much suffering he had inflicted upon a number of innocent people; but it would have been more merciful and certainly more expedient to have locked him up. As it was, he went in the letter unpunished, however much he may have undergone in the fact. A mild punishment would have certainly proved a salutary lesson. This sort of thing had happened before, we were told, and the captain all along suspected foul play.

Nothing more occurred of moment till we reached Trieste, on the sixth day from leaving Athens; the sea-journey from Alexandria to Trieste *via* the Piræus had cost not quite twenty pounds.

We made an excursion to Miramar from

Trieste. Seen as you drive from Trieste, the castle looks as if it were built half in the sea and half on the rock; and indeed it is built so close to the sea as to make its hanging gardens, and emerald lawns, and bosky dells, almost appear miraculous. You suddenly lose sight of the blinding white road, and burning blue Adriatic, and enter a cool stately palace, with marble floors and carved ceilings of rich dark wood, or you pass from a sunny flower-garden into alleys and terraces of soft bright turf, or climb an unexpected staircase cut in the rock, to find yourself in a summer-house covered with fragrant creeping flowers, or on a platform looking down upon a wilderness; but a wilderness of man's not nature's making, where fern and myrtle, and all kinds of beautiful trees, orange, pomegranate, and palm, are mingled in glossy luxuriance.

Independent of the interest attached to this beautiful place, it is worth while for all

travellers to see it. Miramar is a triumph of the arts of arboriculture and horticulture. The palace also offers many valuable suggestions to the lover of artistic decoration, and at every step you are reminded of the taste and refinement of the owners of such sad memory.

On Sunday night we crossed the Gulf of Trieste, and at dawn were aroused by the steward crying outside, 'Venedig, Venedig!' I had never seen Venice, and surely, to see it for the first time by sunrise, on a sweet May day, was no small privilege. I rushed on deck, feeling that another dream of my childhood was reaching a bright fulfilment. And bright it was! As we glided nearer and nearer to the city of pearl, rising in clear yet delicate lines against the pale primrose-coloured sky, in which a star or two still lingered, the aspect changed, and when we were fairly in the grand canal, the cupolas were flushed with rosy light, or sudden

effulgence irradiated the scene. I was reminded of Turner's little picture in the National Gallery called, I think, 'Approach to Venice.' It was, indeed, a good piece of fortune to greet Venice for the first time under such circumstances.

One by one we descended to the *barcas* awaiting us, and were conveyed, nay, that is too common a word, rather we were carried by enchantment to our destination, so delicious the movement, so musical the voices of our boatmen. I think no one can thoroughly appreciate the suavity and gentleness of the Italians unless he has travelled to Italy straight from the east, from Alexandria, for instance, where the boatmen shriek and yell like maniacs. In Venice the human voice is music and nothing more nor less. And then how soothing is the soft Italian speech after the mixture of Arabic, Turkish, Albanian, and what else, with which our ears had been tortured of late!

LETTER XIV.

FROM VENICE TO MUNICH.

'SO ist denn auch, Gott sei Danke, Venedig mir kein blosses Wort mehr, kein hohler Name, der mich so oft, mit den Todfeind von Wortschällen geängstiget hat,' wrote Goethe in 1786, and all who have longed patiently or impatiently to see Italy for years, will echo his jubilee. It had formed, however, odd enough as it may seem in any programme of travel taking in Italy at all, no part of our plan to stay long in Venice. Athens had been the goal of our journey, and all other places were taken by the way. Who, however, can spend a few days in Venice and not come away enriched

for the remainder of his lifetime? Goethe, whose letters from Italy are delightful company on such a journey, speaks of Italy being to him a new birth, as indeed it must be to every sympathetic and instructed mind. What a crowd of associations the merest glimpse of Italian landscape calls up, making old things new and new old! Even the *Merchant of Venice*, *Romeo and Juliet*, the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, delight of our childhood, wear a new aspect to us after having seen Venice and Verona. Here, as in Greece, the barest facts of history become clothed with life and feeling. We realise that Art is no mere adjunct to that common existence of which we ofttimes grow weary; but a life complete in itself, higher and better than the other, encompassing it with deeper joy and also with profounder seriousness.

For this very reason I do not wish to stay longer in Italy now. Our minds are full of the East and Athens, and Italian Art

should be approached with more freshness and receptiveness than can be expected of travellers who have gazed on the Sphinx and the Parthenon.

What a delicious and enticing life is the traveller's at Venice! The musical plash of the waters, and the soft voices of the boatmen, the constant nearness of palaces, churches and pictures; the exquisitely graceful and harmonious life of which you suddenly become a part; the entire remoteness from all that is harsh or ugly or common, make up a wonderful sum of enjoyment. Here are no ruins to weep over as at Athens, no gradual decay as at Cordova and Granada, no demolition and modernization as at Cairo; you breathe an atmosphere of quietude and loveliness.

But entirely to realise and imbibe the spirit of art that reigns supreme in Italy, you must go again and again to Venice, as to any other spot you may visit; gaze and gaze on

your favourite pictures till they become a possession you cannot lose. To see the Pyramids once is enough, because if you were to see the Pyramids a thousand times they would tell the same mere tale of marvel. A picture of Titian should be seen not once but a hundred times, and recalled to the mind as often as may be; because Titian, like Beethoven, has always something new to say to the innermost soul of man.

After a few days of pure enjoyment from first to last, we went to Verona. The weather continued bright and warm, and the vineyards and orchards of Lombardy made up a picture of fertility we had not seen since leaving England.

Who does not know Verona? It would be absurd in a hasty sketch of holiday travel to dwell upon places so familiar as this. From Verona to Munich is a journey of three days to all travellers who like to take this enjoyment with economical sobriety; and each halting-place is worth seeing if one only

had time to linger. At Brescia I remembered a story in Boswell's Johnson that I read in childhood with peculiar awe and fascination, of the young son of General Paoli, the Corsican patriot, who, on seeing baskets of sheep's heads in a London market, said, 'We saw baskets of men's heads at Brescia.' That horrible little story, read perhaps when I was ten years old, came into my head as we stopped at the Brescia terminus.

The wild flowers are wonderfully luxuriant here; and Goethe, who noticed everything, dwells with sympathetic minuteness upon the difference characterising mountain flowers from those that grow on the lowlands. When on his way from Innsbruck to Verona he wrote: 'What drew my attention most of all was the effect that mountain elevation has upon plants; not only I found here new plants, but the growth of familiar ones altered. In the valleys the stem and branch were stronger and stouter, the buds

nearer each other and the leaves broader; higher up the mountain, stems and branch were slenderer, buds farther apart, so that a larger space lay between each, and the leaves formed lance-like. I remarked this in a gentian and willow, and convinced myself that it was not a different kind. I also noticed longer and slenderer rushes.' These valleys and mountain sides, green as emerald, are covered with flowers, salvias, crane's bill, blue and white campanula, and many others. In crossing the Brenna a curious experience awaited us. I fell asleep in a lovely valley, the sun was shining, the flowers growing in masses, children playing in cottage gardens, everything betokened summer. Half an hour later I awoke shivering with cold. An icy wind was blowing, snow was falling, the pine branches swayed backwards and forwards, the landscape was covered with snow. Our train had slowly crawled an ascent fearful to contemplate, though at the same time

there was something sublime in the feeling of triumph so called forth.

We descended as slowly, and found an agreeable temperature at Innsbruck. We found also an old friend, namely, a waiter from Cairo. It seems that there is an annual migration of waiters as well as swallows to warm latitudes. They go in time for the influx of winter travellers as soon as our winter begins, returning to Europe when the heat of spring drives all but the last stragglers away. Thus to these happy beings it is granted to live in the fabled regions of perpetual summer, the Happy Isles of classic story.

We fell in with some young American ladies on this journey, one of whom poured out her troubles to us with a naïveté that was highly amusing. She was travelling with her family for a year, had visited the East, various places in Southern Italy, and was about to be dragged through Germany, France and England.

'How I hate it all!' she said, with quite a pathetic weariness. 'I loathe everything, picture-galleries, palaces, ruins, fine scenery, churches; yet I shall have to endure them for months to come!'

Poor young lady! She could perhaps have swallowed a single drop of the essence of enjoyment, but not a dose, and was already sick of the surfeit pressed upon her. And, after all, who can enjoy travel without an educated eye as well as an abundantly furnished mind? For the essence of a traveller's enjoyment is to find, as Goethe found, the world opening before him more and more, and all that he had already known made peculiarly his own.

We had as yet experienced no feeling of surfeit, and our week at Munich was pleasant enough. Within the last few months how much we had learned, seen, enjoyed together! But at Munich I lost my companion of so many happy days, she being bound to

England, I to Weimar, and it was a loss indeed. I can only wish all travellers, whether bound to Athens or Timbuctoo, such a fellow-traveller as I was fortunate enough to possess on this journey in search of health as well as pleasure.

From Munich to Leipzig, where I spent a week of perpetual rain, I started on the coldest, rainiest, and unfriendliest fourteenth of June I ever remember, for Weimar, the *Ilm-Athen* I had all my life longed to see and to know.

[Note.—The art student in Italy, whose knapsack may or may not admit of portlier volumes, would do well to take a new volume on Painting in Italy, published by Mr. Murray. We all know what little use can be made of large books on a journey, always supposing that they contain nothing but what we want, which is seldom. Here is a handy volume, not too heavy to hold in the hand, or put in the pocket, crammed full of criticism, learning and research, admirably condensed and arranged. I allude to Dr. Burckhardt's 'Cicerone,' ably translated by Mrs. A. H. Clough.]

LETTER XV.

AT WEIMAR.

'Wer den Dichter will verstehen,
Muss im Dichter's Lande gehen.'

'And Weimar stood before me,
A dream of half my life-time.
A vision for the rest.'—W. ALLINGHAM.

DEAR, friendly little Weimar! The sun gleamed out for the first time during the three weeks I had been in Germany, as if to welcome me to Weimar, and the rain at last ceased to pour down in a continuous stream, sprinkling us only with April-like showers as, in company with a few other tourists, I walked from the station to the town.

What a quiet town it is! Very few people are walking in the streets, there are no carriages to be seen anywhere, and the country peeps in at every corner. Yet this is not the Weimar that Goethe knew, when he came here a young man nearly a hundred years ago; but a Weimar infinitely larger, more populated, more imposing. As I walk from the station, I note a handsome new building, the Museum. I see new houses in course of construction outside the town, and other evidence of life and progress. The shops, too, have a gay cosmopolitan look, few and small though they are. On the walls of the little theatre, which Goethe loved so well, are playbills giving notice that to-night will be performed Lortzing's opera *Czar and Zimmerman.* Farther on I see a notice that on such and such a day, a vocal and instrumental concert will be given by the *Orchester Verein*; also a notice that certain pictures have just been sent into the Art

Union, and are to be seen by the public. Evidently the Weimaraners are not asleep!

I stop at a little window full of casts and photographs, when an inscription meets my eye, *Schiller's Haus.* I look up and see a modest, low-roofed, two-storied dwelling, with shabby green shutters and painted walls. Here, on a May day in 1805, Goethe and Schiller parted, never to see each other again. What recollections crowd upon my mind at every turn of these quiet streets! There is Goethe's house, still an imposing structure in modest little Weimar; flowers are in the window, and I look with envy at those closed doors, never to be opened by any *sesame* of travellers! Here we are in the market-place, and at my hotel I instal myself comfortably, though by no means luxuriously, in quarters that have almost a classic interest. This homely *Erb Prinz* has lodged who can tell how many Goethe pilgrims, men and women of note of all nations, princes, politicians, artists, authors?

I have a pretty little room at the top of the house, overlooking the market-place, and there, after two months and a half travelling, indulge in the luxury of really unpacking and putting my miscellaneous belongings into order, with a view to a long rest. My first visitor opened his eyes at the notion of spending two months at Weimar during this season of the year. 'What! visit Weimar when all the world is going away! The theatre will be closed in a few days. The Court receptions are over, and the Grand Duke and his family will be leaving very soon. All the principal families in the place are already on the move; and by the end of the month, Weimar will be empty. I certainly can hold out no very lively prospect to you for the next two months. In September things will wear quite another aspect.'

I would not, however, allow myself to be discouraged; and, after a few days, events showed that I was justified in my resolve.

My letters of introduction brought me plenty of pleasant acquaintances, and though the so-called season was over, I had come in time for a little gaiety, a good deal of pleasure, and the amenities of congenial society, English and German.

Weimar is just the place to resort to when in quest of a quiet, cheerful, and not wholly idle holiday. There is a good library for the student of German literature, Berlin, Dresden, and Frankfort are within easy reach by rail, Eisenach and Jena quite near; and the fresh, wild scenery of the Thuringian forest offers drives and pedestrian excursions without number. Then, from September till June, there is a well-conducted little opera-house, a series of entertainments under the auspices of a refined and genial little Court; music, over which the great Liszt presides as the moving spirit, not to speak of the interest attached to Weimar itself, which I found almost inexhaustible.

Those were good days I spent in the little *Athens on the Ilm*, as the Weimaraners call it; not one to be remembered without pleasure. The rambles in the park, the evenings spent in the Goethe house with the Goethe family, the picnics to Tieffurt and Ettersburg; the *matinées musicales* in Liszt's little villa in the park, when the veteran musician would transfix his listeners with divine improvisations; the Sunday services in the Stadtkirche; the quiet hours in the library; the talks with peasant-women at the fair; the culling, daily and hourly, some precious memory of Schiller and Goethe; the drive to Ilmenau, and twenty other happy circumstances—I can hardly call them events—make up an enduring whole as agreeable and profitable as any I can remember.

Events are rare in Weimar, but we have just had two; the first of these was the Friedenfest, or celebration of the peace of 1871; the second, was the entry of the troops.

The Friedenfest took place on Sunday. The town had been decorated with wreaths, garlands, and banners beforehand. Early in the morning, crowds of young girls dressed in white and bearing bunches of flowers, were seen wending their way to the Stadtkirche; and when the service began, the church was full. It was like holding church in a forest, what with the green boughs and young birch-trees that had been transplanted into the aisles. Through this sylvan scenery peeped the lilies and roses and blue flowers of the young girls' hats: very few wore mourning, and the greater part gala dresses. A glorious old hymn was sung, 'Nun Gott sei alle Danke,' composed on the celebration of the Westphalian Peace; but the drums used in the accompaniment made a deafening sound, and spoiled the harmony of the voices. Then came the sermon, which was by no means a good one. The preacher dwelt at great length on the glory of the

German victory and the magnificence of the emperor, generals, and princes, leaving the stupendous moral aspect of this lamentable war wholly out of the question. It was a painful discourse, and evidently created a painful impression. There were present many men and women weeping bitterly. The praise of this bloody campaign could comfort them but little. Had he no glimpse of consolation to hold out to those bruised, weary hearts, that in the future, for their children and children's children, such things would cease to be?

There was a melancholy look upon the faces of the crowd as it issued from the Kirche. For this, then, are we born! seemed to say every one.

The next event was the triumphant entry of the soldiers. But what a triumph! It is true, flags were flying, bands playing, flowers and garlands decking not only every house but every man, woman and child, of the vast crowd that went out to meet them; but when

the heroes of that long and awful campaign appeared, led by the Grand Duke and his staff, and accompanied by the whole population of Weimar, one's heart sank and one's eyes filled at the sight of the woebegone, weary, footsore men. They had been greeted with such a volley of flowers and green leaves at the station, that they were literally covered with them, and appeared like Birnam wood marching to Dunsinane. In spite of these poetic and symbolic lendings, the truth peeped out; the wasted, often scarred faces, the limping feet, the drooping heads, the worn-out uniforms and boots, told their sad story of misery and hardship, from which escape seemed to have come almost too late. As I witnessed the entry in the Schillerstrasse, I recalled that exquisite passage in the Piccolomini describing the soldiers' return after a long campaign—alas! as appropriate now as in the time of the Thirty Years' War.

All day long the little town was full of

excitement. From my window I saw pathetic little groups, of which the returned hero was the central figure; sometimes it was an old peasant couple, who had come from the heart of Thuringia, with the rest of their children, to welcome their eldest born—he, perhaps, a hero indeed, decorated with the iron cross, and a medal or two besides; sometimes a young wife, sunburnt and prematurely old, as these peasant-women are, with a sturdy, white-haired child, at first as much frightened at his father's helmet as the infant boy of Hector. Here and there were open-mouthed little crowds, gathered round some narrator of wonderful adventures; and not a few of the men and their friends might be seen weeping over the fate of the comrades who had not lived to come back. There was merry-making of a quiet kind throughout the day, and *Bier und Wurst* (sausage and beer), with music and dancing, had been provided for the heroes. But the festivities passed off with

the utmost sobriety. I spent the evening in the suburbs, and returning home at dusk, was astonished at the prevailing quietude and moderation. God knows the poor people had undergone enough to sober them.

In a day or two the streets wore their usual aspect, and the men resumed their customary occupations. Some of these discharged soldiers re-entered the service of Dienstmänner, or street-porters, that most useful body of public servants we should do well to have in every town at home. The Dienstmänner of Weimar are handsome fellows, blonde-bearded, blue-eyed, red-cheeked, stalwart, intelligent, and one or two might have sat for the portraits of mediæval knights and *bürgermeisters*.

I have said that events are rare in Weimar; but is it not an event to stand for the first time in the little theatre that Goethe loved so well?—to see the room where Schiller wrote some of his masterpieces, suffered and died?—to pic-nic in Tieffurt, the scene of so many

frolicsome hours, when the intellectual society of Weimar was yet in the heyday of youth?—to wander amid the lovely glades of Ettersburg, and trace the stage of that open-air theatre where Goethe and his friends acted by moonlight? All these, and half a hundred more such recollections of Weimar, are surely to be chronicled as red-letter days in the calendar, and remembered always!

I went to the little theatre on the Grand Duke's birthday, when was given the last performance of the season. It was a wet night—residents tell me that it always rains throughout the month of June in Weimar—but nobody dreamed of taking a carriage. Being a festive occasion, the ladies went well provided with cloaks and umbrellas, in evening dress; and for quiet, unpretending little Weimar, the show of toilettes was considerable. I paid half-a-crown for one of the best seats in the theatre. The piece was over at half-past nine, whereupon the crowd

returned as it had come, on foot, a couple of carriages bearing the ducal party.

All this sounds very primitive and strange to luxury-loving creatures like ourselves; but the lovers of luxury will meet with many such surprises. Indeed, the primitive simplicity of the dear little capital is to strangers one of its chief charms. Snobbery has not found it out; shams have not invaded its precincts. Here, at least, the multitude does not thrust itself under the wheels of the modern Juggernaut, Fashion; and the golden mean, neither poverty nor riches, is the happy lot of all.

LETTER XVI.

TWO MONTHS AT WEIMAR (*continued*).

'WELCHE ein behagliche Stadt is dies kleine Weimar!' writes Adolph Stahr, one of the pleasantest chroniclers of Weimar story; 'einer der spazierlichsten Städte,' he calls it elsewhere; which, freely translated, would be, one of the most walkable places in the world, as it is indeed; for, what with the park and the delicious retreats of Tieffurt, Belvidere, and Ettersburg, all within reach of fair pedestrians, you have a diversity of rambles constantly tempting you out of doors. The town itself, too, entices the stranger to a succession of walks, each with some object in view. There is the cemetery, to begin

with, where so many well-known names meet the eye: Hummel, the composer; Falk, the satirist; Eckermann, 'Goethe's friend;' Charlotte von Stein, and many others. Having strolled hither and thither, we descend to the ducal vault, where Schiller and Goethe lie beside the prince they loved so well. This *Fürstengruft* is a sacred spot to old Weimaraners; and on the anniversary of Goethe's and Schiller's birthdays, dozens of immortelles are laid on their coffins by reverent hands. There is a good deal of doubt as to whether the bones of Schiller really do rest here. When he died, in 1805, Goethe was ill, the Grand Duke was absent, and all Weimar was agitated by the state of public affairs. The great poet died penniless, all the money in the house amounting to but a few thalers. The funeral, in accordance with the law, must take place at once. By some strange chance, no one seemed at hand to see that it was decently performed; so Schil-

ler's remains were put in the cheapest coffin to be had, and buried by night in the Jakobskirche, a solitary mourner following. A few years later, the Grand Duke desired that Schiller should lie in the ducal vault; and accordingly search was made for the coffin, which had been put amongst many others of the same cheap construction; but, unfortunately, in the work of search and removal, confusion arose as to identity. Goethe and other competent judges declared a certain skull to be that of the poet; but who could identify the skeleton? Be that as it may, all possible reparation had been made for the neglect; and now Goethe and Carl August lie near the sarcophagus bearing the name of Schiller.

What a life is that of Schiller's? How pathetic, how nearly touching the sublime. How his last words speak the soaring, irrepressible poet nature. 'Brighter and brighter!' he said, as his lovely spirit encountered death.

To my thinking there is no sadder, sweeter figure in the biography of poets. His words have the purity of childhood and the lightning-flash of oracular inspiration. Who is there so worldly and so absorbed in self that they cannot touch? Surely before such noble thoughts as his, sin and selfishness must flee away or fall down penitent.

Schiller did not understand men so well as Goethe, but he understood God better. His poetry is the quintessence of the aspiring, hoping, trusting, God-intoxicated or truth-intoxicated man. Goethe's profound wisdom, often mere worldly wisdom, and Goethe's stupendous poetic conceptions teach us more, but touch our innermost self of selves less. Goethe is everything — poet, philosopher, scientific investigator, critic, small in nothing. Schiller is a poet to the heart's core, and a child in many things, but great always.

Weimar is full of noteworthy graves. Lucas Cranach died here, and his tomb has been re-

moved from the Jakobskirche to the Stadtkirche. He was Court painter to the Elector, Johann Friedrich, and received one hundred Rhenish gulden a year, and a winter and summer Court suit. When his beloved friend and master, the unfortunate Johann Friedrich, was taken prisoner, Cranach fell on his knees before the Emperor Carl V., and begged to be allowed to accompany him to prison. Good old Cranach was the friend and ally of Luther, and in a very fine altar-piece in this church, a crucifixion, he has given portraits of his friend and himself. Herder, too, is buried in the Stadtkirche, and the inscription, *Light, Love, and Life*, marks his grave. When Herder was ill, and wanted change of air and repose, the Duchess Amalia gave him a pearl necklace, which he was to sell, and thus defray the expense of the journey. He made it, but died soon after his return to Weimar, and the duchess, who adored him, only lived two years longer than her friend. Herder was not one

of the happy spirits. He warred with circumstances, and light and love did not make his life into a rounded and perfect whole. It is a touching and impressive statue that stands before the Stadtkirche of this one of Weimar's not least gifted children. The last representative of Herder's family living in Weimar—and, indeed, I believe the sole one—his granddaughter, died a few months ago. She was a very old lady, and remembered that celebrated interview between the first Napoleon and the Duchess Luise, at which, a mere child, she was present, hanging on the duchess's skirts, her family having fled to the palace for protection. It seems that all the great historic names that have made this little place so famous will become extinct in another generation. The grandsons of Goethe are unmarried. The sole male representative of Schiller is past middle age and childless. Wieland's name is borne by an unmarried grand-daughter only. Yet how near we seem

to be to that wonderful epoch in German literature. The daughter of the Charlotte in *Werther's Leiden* was living the other day—may be living still for aught I know. Walking in the streets of Weimar you may recognise Schiller's daughter by her likeness to the poet. You talk with those who remembered Goethe well as the stately old man, so well known to us in those wonderful conversations with Eckermann.

For the public, the Goethe house and the little retreat in the park, where he spent so many hours absorbed in work, barring himself so completely, that one of his friends said 'nobody could get at Goethe now without hammer and chisel,' and the poet's Art collections, are all sealed books. Even the garden of the little cottage in the park is shut up, though I hear of venturesome travellers scaling its walls in order to see for themselves the stone on which the poet carved those exquisite lines to Charlotte von Stein :—

'Hier im Stillen gedachte der Liebende seine Geliebten.
Heiter sprach er zu mir; werde mir, Zeuge, du Stein.
Doch erhebe dich nicht, du hast noch viele Gesellen.
Jedem Felsen der Flur, die mich, den Glücklichen, nährt,
Jedem Baume des Walds, um den ich wandernd mich schlinge.
Denkmal bleibe des Glücks! ruf ich ihm weihend und froh.
Doch die Stimme verleihe ich mir dir, wie unter der Menge.
Einen der Muse sich wählt, freundlich die Lippe ihm küsst.'

This renunciation is hard to the pilgrim whose dream of years it has been to familiarise himself with Weimar; though, doubtless, there are good reasons for what appears to be a piece of unnecessary exclusiveness on the part of the great poet's family. But there are spots in plenty intimately connected with his life which are free to all. There is the château at Tieffurt—the tiniest, quaintest little place in the world, where the Duchess Amalia used to receive her friends without ceremony. What ceremony, indeed, was possible in such a doll's house? Goethe and Carl August in their frolicsome days here played practical jokes, and one victim was the duchess's friend and attendant, a little, lively, deformed thing named Thuswalda, who found her door walled

up on going to bed after one evening's festivity. This was one trick *inter alia.* The two friends had an exuberance of spirits which must find vent somehow, whether in practical jokes or cracking whips, or improvising open-air performances, or building back-houses at a moment's notice.

I went to Tieffurt several times. After supping in the twilight we looked over the château and descended to the kitchen, where the oddest sight met our view. Here are meats, fish, fowl, cakes, fruits, and vegetables in terra-cotta, spread on tables as if just ready to be served up; a quaint fancy, and about as lively as that of the ancient Egyptians, who used to set the mummy of a deceased friend at their tables. Those free-and-easy little banquets at which Goethe, Herder, Wieland, Amalia, and Carl August assisted, are not to be so recalled. Let the portrait, the bust, the dwelling-place, the pen, the book, the musical instrument, be preserved, and

everything connected with the spiritual life of man, which is indeed himself; but, for Heaven's sake, let all else perish. For my part, I never looked upon Goethe's Court costume in the library — the shabby old blue coat with silver buttons — without a shudder.

Berka is another excursion full of associations. Eckermann gives a charming account of a drive thither with Goethe—one of the old man's last pic-nics; they shared a cold partridge between them, and over the meal Goethe talked delightfully, as indeed he must have done always. Berka is the beginning of the Thuringian forest; and pine-woods and meadows gay with wild flowers alternate the features of the landscape. We passed corn-fields blue with that bluest, sweetest blossom, the *centaurea cyana;* and rested for luncheon on the brow of a superb hill feathered from summit to base with pine-trees. In Germany, the summer-time is made a frolic of to young

and old. Those who cannot travel far, content themselves with expeditions, often on foot, to what woods or country retreats happen to be near, and there live out of doors from morning till night.

Weimar is itself so rural, that at first one is startled to hear of people going into the country. Like modern Athens, you can get quiet and solitude within five minutes' walk of the town; yet a modern writer on Weimar says it is impossible to conceive how small a place was the Weimar to which Goethe first went in his youth. It has now a population of between 14,000 and 15,000 only! Certainly no place of its size can boast of the same amount of attractions, social, historic, and natural. The park afforded me rambles that were countless, and abounding in interest. The little Ilm is no dull, turgid stream, but clear and sparkling, and apt to overflow, as it has done lately, flooding the levels between Weimar and the adjoining village, Ober-

Weimar. One day—I forget the year—the body of a young lady was found drowned in the Ilm close to the weir, with *Werther's Leiden* in her pocket. Goethe was profoundly affected by this incident; and no wonder. It is odd that Goethe, who was as free from morbidness as any genius ever was —Shakspeare is not more free than he—should have written *Werther's Leiden*, which is perhaps the most complete expression of morbidness ever written. I read it here in German and in Germany for the first time since reading it as a ten-year-old child, wretchedly translated into English, and certainly could take it up at any time. Goethe's works are informed with the experiences of a life marvellously rich in experiences, and to know them is to know what he felt, loved, suffered, enjoyed; and it is, moreover, to come to the conclusion, again and again, that of all the wise men and captivating poets that ever lived, none are greater than he, whether

to teach the highest truth or conceive the highest beauty.

No place offers such opportunities of studying Goethe as Weimar, the one spot he loved better than any other in the world. 'Go where I will,' he said or wrote, 'I am always glad to return to Weimar.' For strangers there is a subtle charm about the little town which would surely make them all glad to go again.

LETTER XVII.

MUSIC AND ART IN WEIMAR.

MUSIC, art, and the drama are still cherished here. There is an art-school under the patronage of the Grand Duke; and in the same building are artists' studios and public galleries for the exhibition of pictures. As soon as a work is sent in, notice is given in the *Tagesblatt* (a daily journal), and such exhibitions are always gratuitous. Among the resident artists at Weimar may be mentioned Hummel, son of the great composer; the veteran Preller, whom Goethe pointed out as a boy of promise, and who accompanied his son August to Rome on that journey which ended in his death; Kalkreutz, Hagen,

landscapists not unknown here; Thuman, historic painter; Verlat, the well-known Belgian animal painter, but, I believe, at Weimar for a time only. The traveller provided with introductory letters will find it very pleasant to have the *entrée* of these studios, where there is always some good work to be seen. Preller's studio is in a house which was long the residence of the Duchess Amalia. Here were wont to meet and spend the evening in her company, Goethe, Wieland, Herder, and others. It is a straggling, unpretentious house, standing in an old-fashioned garden, full of roses and laburnums.

The handsome new building in the Italian Renaissance style that strikes upon the traveller as he walks from the station to the town has one gallery named after this artist, the Preller Gallery. The walls are covered with frescoes illustrating the *Odyssey*, which are full of life, colour, and freshness. All

lovers of this Greek story will wander up and down Preller's Gallery, fascinated by his glowing interpretations of it. Next in interest, perhaps we should say first in interest, come the wonderful drawings of Carstens. Never shall I forget my first impressions of these grand sketches. Carstens' fancy has seized upon some of the most striking scenes of Greek story, which he delineates in masterly touches. The art-student will do well to study this collection carefully. Carstens did not understand the word conventionalism. He conceived the incidents, as he has pourtrayed them, in a purely classic and sincere spirit, catering neither to fashion nor taste, so called. His 'Œdipus and Jocaste,' and other illustrations of the Greek dramatists, are fearless, grand, simple. Not a touch could be added or spared. Speaking of Carstens, Adolf Stahr writes:—'I know of no modern artist whose works, confined to the antique, have so filled me with illu-

sions of classic life and colouring as Carstens. We feel, when in the presence of these illustrations of the Homeric hero-world, and the dramas of Æschylus and Sophocles, that the artist was informed with the spirit of antiquity, and that, like Winckelmann, he was born a Greek, for Carstens is only to be compared to Winckelmann among his contemporaries in his love of classic times. And as Winckelmann, by his enthusiastic descriptions of the god-like forms of Greek art, called them again into life, so Carstens was the second creator of the ancient world of gods and heroes. In the midst of a poor epoch, artistically speaking, and a depraved taste, when not the feeblest ray of the light of ideal beauty illumined life in its many expressions and forms, what remained to him but to fly, as did Goethe and Schiller, to the region of shadows, of dreams, of the ideal, of the poetic creations of antiquity?'

In pictures the museum is not rich. The

collection of casts and busts is, however, highly interesting, and do credit to the taste of those who originated it in the first instance, and add to it whenever opportunity offers.

But some of the chief art treasures of Weimar are in the palace. Here are sketches by Rubens, Leonardi da Vinci, and other great masters, formerly the property of the King of Holland, father of the Grand Duchess. The four original cartoons of the 'Last Supper' are of superlative interest and value. These are a possession of which Weimar may be justly proud. Of course, they are seen less leisurely and less at one's ease than if exhibited in an art gallery; still there they are, and the palace can be seen, I believe, at any time. Like the park, the theatre, and the original art-collections of Weimar, the Schloss is chiefly the creation of Goethe. Goethe must have a hand in everything where art was concerned, and

when the new Schloss was built between the years 1790—1803, it was done under his superintendence. It is a very handsome and spacious edifice, and might grace the capital of a much larger state. The last Grand Duchess, out of grateful homage to the four great poets of Weimar,—Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, and Herder,—had a pretty suite of four rooms adorned with frescoes, illustrative of their works, and called after their names. These *Dichter-Zimmer* are a very graceful tribute to the poets. The Wieland Zimmer is illustrated with scenes from the *Oberon* by Preller, which are bright, sunny, and fanciful, as might be expected.

The works of art collected in the ducal library have a historic value, irrespective of what other merit they may possess. The student of Goethe's era may here make himself acquainted with all those celebrated men and women who helped to make its

history. There is no place, to my thinking, in all Weimar so fascinating as this. At every step you come upon some portrait or bust that holds you spell-bound; not to speak of other priceless memorials. Here you may hold in your hand early letters of Goethe, when the poet was in the *Sturm and Drang* period, long, carefully-worded love-letters to Lili, beginning *Mademoiselle*, and the original manuscript of that beautiful poem, the *Marienbad Elegy*, written after his last love-affair, when he was between seventy and eighty. Then there are letters shown of his father and mother, and other MSS., all deeply interesting.

Carl August, the enlightened art patron, the high-spirited sovereign, the friend of Goethe, naturally forms a prominent figure in this portrait gallery. There is, by-the-by, in the Schloss of Ettersburg, a portrait of him as a four-year-old boy that is perfectly bewitching, curly-haired, rosy-cheeked, with

vivacity expressed in every feature. We see him here as a youth, in middle age, and as an old man. The homeliness and shrewdness pourtrayed in these likenesses are in keeping with all that one knows of the man who shared Goethe's youthful follies, and loved in later life to throw aside ceremony and accept whatever enjoyment came in his way. He never understood Goethe—so said the poet in a bitter moment, and doubtless this was true, for in spite of the ardent friendship and many-sided sympathy existing between the two, there could not be such complete exquisite union as existed between Goethe and Schiller, who were both poets, meeting only on the ground of the highest and largest interests. Schiller was as unworldly as it is possible for a human being to be, and Goethe too, in spite of all that is said to the contrary. He set before himself the freest and fullest expression of his own splendid individual intellect, as the supreme

good to be attained in life, and attained it, diverging neither to the right nor to the left. How could he do this without displaying that supremacy over worldly affairs which very easily passes for worldliness itself?

From the portraits and busts of Carl August, we pass to those of his high-spirited, long-suffering wife, the Duchess Luise. It was she of whom Napoleon said admiringly, 'Here is a woman not to be terrified by our two hundred pieces of cannon!' The poor Duchess suffered much neglect at the hands of her husband, which she bore heroically. Her face is plaintive and dignified, but not beautiful.

Schiller's bust by Dannecker needs no comment. That sweet, suffering, saintly face everyone knows. The portrait of his wife, Caroline, is here; and, if I remember rightly, also that of her sister, Charlotte von Wolzogen. When Schiller first made the acquaintance of the two sisters Lengefeld

all three were suffering from the effects of disappointed affection. The one woman whom Schiller loved with all a poet's abandonment and enthusiasm, Minna von Arnim, had proved a heartless coquette. Caroline had been obliged to give up a chosen lover on account of social considerations, and Charlotte lived in unhappy relations with her husband, her best affections being yielded to another. From this triple acquaintance arose many pathetic and strange complications. Which of the two sisters was most to Schiller it were hard to say.

Many busts of Goethe are here. One represents him in his glorious youth, beautiful as Apollo; another, in the fullness of years, the serene, wise, eloquent old man; a third, the work of a Frenchman named David, gives us a Mephistophelian Goethe, the creation of his own fancy. The most remarkable thing in the library is a bust of Glück in bronze. The face beams with animation, the

lips seem moving in impassioned utterance, the eyes are speaking. Glück, like Goethe, was very beautiful; but judging by this bust he must have been marked with small-pox, which scars do not, however, deteriorate from the delightful impression of the whole face. Again and again have I sought this wonderful likeness, and stood before it lost in admiration.

There is a noteworthy assemblage of men and women in this little gallery of portraits and sculpture, and by its aid we can picture to ourselves what the society was like over which Goethe and Carl August presided.

And not only this, but other periods are illustrated. Kant and Lessing, Oefer and Winckelmann, the two Tiecks, Musäus and Bode, are here recalled by portrait and bust. Curiously enough, the library possesses a portrait of Oliver Cromwell, said to have been rescued from destruction by an ardent follower, who carried it with him to the Continent. He took refuge in Weimar, and

died in the hospital, bequeathing all that he had to the institution where he had been housed and tended. The story goes on to say, that this is the portrait condemned to remain on the gallows at the time of the Restoration, and that it was rescued at the peril of life. It is in nowise remarkable.

Amongst other really valuable relics is the document conferring citizenship of the French Republic upon Schiller. The decree is signed by Robespierre, and dated 6th September, 1792. Schiller was honoured in a heterogeneous company; Washington, Franklin, Tom Payne, Anarcharsis Clootz, and others, receiving the same mark of distinction. He is called *Monsieur Gille, publiciste allemand.* The decree is accompanied by a letter of Roland. It was curious to read this when the German troops were returning from the victorious campaign of 1870-71! and when anything like a universal republic seems farther off than ever.

I have said that music and the drama still flourish at Weimar; and perhaps it will be interesting to recall the fact that here Wagner's music—the Music of the Future it can be called no longer—first took root. Nearly twenty years ago, a musical and art critic, whom I have already quoted, writes thus of Wagner, after having given a very careful and interesting description of the first performance of *Lohengrin* under Liszt's direction:—'Wagner's future,' he says, 'is not to be calculated (*unberechenbar*);' and then he goes on to make this comparison:—'We may compare Wagner, with his Puritanism in melody, his rhythmic monotony, his neglect of the virtuosi elements in song, to the zealous austerity of Lutheranism, which, in opposition to the brilliant splendour, the festive brightness, and sensuous many-sidedness of the Catholic religion, often borders upon cold, intellectual sobriety.' Liszt no longer directs the Weimar opera, but it is

well managed; and besides operas and dramas, from September to May, a series of concerts take place, which are really first-rate. Liszt's oratorios are occasionally performed in the Stadtkirche, as well as requiems, anthems, and other of his compositions. I was, unfortunately, too late for the opera-season, but I heard some church-music, composed by the great Hungarian pianist, which impressed me as being singularly solemn, pathetic, and melodious.

There is a passion for Liszt's music at Weimar, and he has quite a school of his own there. He is adored by his pupils; one of whom, and I suppose the most gifted, I saw before his early death. I speak of poor Tausig, who died of typhus fever at Leipzig, during my stay in Weimar. The quiet little table d'hôte dinner at the Erb Prinz was going on as usual, when suddenly Tausig came in, having just arrived from the station. Liszt, who was sitting at table with his friends,

jumped up joyfully, the master and pupil embraced, and then the new-comer sat down, and the meal went on. I heard some wonderful pianoforte-playing that afternoon, and I said to myself that is either Liszt, or Tausig, or a demon! They occupied the room under my own, which almost shook with the thunder of sound occasionally emitted from the piano. Tausig's death affected the maestro deeply; and no wonder.

It will be seen from these little sketches that taste still reigns supreme here. Money-getting is not thought of; how indeed is money to be made? and nothing at Weimar more strikes English and American travellers than the indifference of the shopkeeping class to gain, they being much more absorbed in music and the drama than in prices. Everybody patronises the theatre, and everybody cultivates music, from the Grand Duke to the peasant proprietor. A friend of mine had a piano she wished to get rid of,

and accordingly advertised it in the *Tagesblatt*. An old peasant-farmer applied for it, as he wished, he said, to purchase one for his daughter. To her astonishment the old man forthwith sat down and tried it, playing some classic pieces fairly well. As another instance of the superior tastes that prevail among the middle and lower classes in Germany, I will mention my landlady. Now, I certainly know very little of English landladies of hotels; but from those I do happen to have seen, I should as soon expect criticisms on music and the drama from them, as dissertations upon Darwinism, Comtism, or Protoplasm. But my landlady, who, according to German fashion, used to dine at the table d'hôte with her guests, would discuss such subjects as Wagner's music, the German dramas of the past and of the day, the pictures in the Kunstschule, and other topics of the kind, not only with spirit, but with a considerable display of artistic insight. She was an excellent

housekeeper, and always had her hands full of business, yet never missed an opportunity of going to a concert or play. Love of music and love of nature are the prevailing passions of the German, *pur et simple*, no matter whether he is rich or poor.

The Frau von Goethe died last October; so that it is now permissible to say a few words about one of the most interesting acquaintances I made in Weimar. When first introduced to her, she was occupying some small rooms in the Schillerstrasse, but almost the last evening of my stay was spent in the well-known Goethe house. Even there, however, little reminded strangers of the poet, except a portrait on the wall and some fine bronze casts in the entrance-hall. Not even intimate friends of the Frau von Goethe were invited to see the poet's rooms, and it was a favour none ventured to ask. She lived on the upper storey, and in her small drawing-room gave agreeable *réunions*, to which the Grand

Duke and Grand Duchess would come without ceremony. An old lady, with bright eyes and white hair, dressed, not without coquetry, in soft greys and whites, a lively and pleasant, but by no means brilliant talker, such was Othlie von Goethe. She was fond of talking English, which she spoke fairly, and had a considerable acquaintance with our modern literature. She detested the French literature and language, which was odd, since there was a good deal of the Frenchwoman about her.

'Everything is changed in Weimar since my father's time' (thus she always called the poet), she once said to me. 'Formerly people of understanding used to meet and discuss things worth talking about. Now the talk of society is mere *Schwätzen und Plaudern*' (idle gossip). She had an amusing horror of being written about, either by English travellers or her own country people; but was very kind and hospitable to any one introduced to her by

a friend. One subject I found interested her particularly, namely, the advancement of women's education in England and in Germany. 'If my own daughter had lived,' she said, 'this is what I should have desired for her.'

The golden-haired little grand-daughter whom Thackeray mentions in that charming letter of his, given in Lewes's Life, Irma, died at the age of sixteen. I may as well mention here, that on my way home to England I visited the grave of Goethe's mother at Frankfort; and I think no Goethe pilgrims will grudge the time to do the same. I found it sadly neglected.

LETTER XVIII.

A THREE DAYS' DRIVE IN THE THURINGIAN FOREST.

EARLY in the morning of a glowing July day I set out with three friends for a drive in the Thuringian forest, Ilmenau being the goal of our journey. We had an open carriage, which we had hired for the expedition; and indeed this is the only way to enjoy the forest. There is the Eil-wagen, of course; but the Eil-wagen is at best a slow and tedious conveyance, and never quite falls in with your plans.

Thuringia is still little frequented by English tourists; at least, judging from the experience of three days' travel without en-

countering a single fellow-countryman, I must confess no little astonishment. Here is all a traveller asks for—solitude, a wild and lovely nature, historic and poetic association, past legend and present picturesqueness. But he should give much more time to such a journey than three days; and take a sketch-book with him.

We had started so early, that by nine o'clock we were fairly in the forest. Oh, the wild flowers! Who can describe them? who can imagine them? The valleys were a mosaic of blue, red, and gold; so thickly were the rye and oats interspersed with corn-flowers, corn-cockles, ragged-robin, salvia, borage, crane's bill, wood-spurges, and many others. Melilot grows here in great abundance.

And the hillsides and hedgerows! What a splendour were they in this July verdure and fragrance! The sweet-scented cytisus, willow-herb, white and purple foxglove,

meadow-sweet, with abundance of ferns, clothed the walls of the mountain-roads through which we passed, now ascending a superb height, now dipping into a soft green valley, catching a glimpse of lovely scenery at every turn, pine-forest, alder-trees growing beside noisy little rivers, blue hills, and yellow corn-fields.

At midday we reached Rudolstadt, where we stopped to lunch. The little town has a castle and prince of its own, whose fortress-like Schloss stretches grandly along a bold mountain-ridge. From this point the grandeur of the scenery increases by degrees, till it reaches its culminating point at Schwartzburg. That superb five hours' drive can never be forgotten.

Now we drive along a smiling valley of corn-field and pasture; now we enter the solemn gloom of a mountain-pass; or penetrate into the very heart of a pine-forest, seeing the wild deer scamper away at our approach. Ever

and anon we hear the rippling music of the impetuous little river Saale; or a cry of admiration bursts from our lips as we reach some eminence looking upon vast chains of pine-clad hills, losing themselves in the purple distance. In some places the character of the forest is savage with wild gorges and forest fastnesses, and tumultuous torrents; in others, it is bright, playful, peaceful, with sunny slopes, green as emerald, tall, lovely alders screening one herd from another, the river glancing under their shadows, abundance of field flowers shedding perfume as we go. Such solitude I never witnessed.

The villages are small, and all the population seems to have turned out for the harvest; we see prematurely-old, poorly-clad, hard-featured women, bearing enormous burdens on their shoulders—hay, corn, or straw, little white-haired, bare-footed children trudging at their sides; whilst in the fields they are as hard at work as the men.

Agriculture is in a very primitive state here; I should say, about what it was a hundred years ago. The corn is sowed, reaped, and gathered in after the old laborious way. What would these peasants say to the steam-plough, Ransome's patent corn-thresher, corn-cutter, and seed-distributor, which have penetrated to the remotest regions of the world; but not to the valleys of Thuringia? Life must be very hard and very unpoetic in these lovely regions; yet perhaps not more so than in our own remote villages, though they are now being stirred by unionism and political ferment.

We reach Schwartzburg at nightfall, and find great difficulty in procuring beds. The inns are of a very homely description; and when we sit down to our little supper of roast wild boar and black bread, with the natural adjuncts of salad and beer, we find most of our fellow-travellers to be pedestrians on a walking tour, a schoolmaster with several

pupils, a party of ladies and gentlemen, and so on. Some have even walked from Frankfort. There is a piano in the dining-room, and a travelling student sits down uninvited and gratifies the company with some admirable renderings of Mendelssohn and Haydn. In spite of the enthusiasm for what is called the Music of the Future, the Germans cling as fondly as any nation to the music of the past; and you can hardly find a German, man, woman, or child, who does not play the sonatas of the beloved Haydn.

We have provided ourselves with three books, which are all that the traveller needs in Thuringia,—Bædeker, Springer's *Jena and Ilmenau*, and Adolf Stahr's *Jena and Weimar*. The latter writer has devoted two volumes to his subject, and delightful volumes they are. He takes his readers of course to Gotha, Eisenach, and the Wartburg, and one of the pleasantest chapters is devoted to a Whitsuntide holiday in Thuringia, which

the traveller will find exactly the right sort of reading on this journey. 'It is a cheerful land,' he says, 'this Thuringia, with its green heights, its noisy rivers, its joyous, good-tempered, friendly people;' and then he describes how the *Wanderlust* seemed to be in the air, and enticed, not only himself, but all his friends, to make a Whitsun journey. At Erfurt he found a crowd of students from Halle, Jena, and Leipzig, whose gay spirits and merry voices increased his joy in the spring (*Frühlingsfrende*), and how, in company with other Weimaraners he made a pilgrimage to the Wartburg, passing the scene of Wagner's Tannhäuser—which he describes as a rugged, bare, sharp rock, cold and stiff, and empty as abstract philosophy. Every spot he passes, and every association it calls forth, is dwelt upon with loving minuteness, which we might find wearisome at home in our libraries, but exactly hits our humour here. Part of his description of the Wartburg

I quote, as, though I was prevented myself from including it in my Thuringian journey, other travellers must on no account pass it over; and, in default of personal experience, it will make this sketch more complete:—

'In the evening we ascended the Wartburg. Legend proclaims Ludwig, Landgraf of Thuringia, as its founder, in the middle of the eleventh century. As he beheld the superb height, he cried aloud, "Warte, Berg, du sollst mir eine Burg tragen!" The territory was not his own, but the craft of the old knight devised a means of getting over the difficulty. His followers secretly carried soil from his dominion to the summit of the mountain, and the Landgraf with twelve knights, his sworn associates, standing on it, swore the oath enjoined on them by allegiance to the Kaiser, that he stood on his own ground. Thus the rightful possessor, the Graf von Falkenstein, was put to silence,

and the crafty Landgraf allowed to build his fortress. The story relates further that the thirteen sword-blades on which the knight and his twelve followers swore were driven into the soil of the foundation. The historical truth of this assertion seems to have been recently confirmed by the fact that thirteen rusty sword-blades were discovered on clearing out some fallen buildings. These were showed to us among the curiosities of the place.

'We are indebted to another chance for the confirmation of the reputed splendour of the Wartburg. The Wartburg, as I saw it for the first time five-and-twenty years ago (written in 1851) looked like an irregular mass of buildings, the oldest and loftiest portions more resembling a granary or barn than a princely dwelling. The high massive walls, the dormer windows and low roof awakened little curiosity as to the interior. To the right of this building, yet apart from it, rose a square broken watch-tower,

whilst a modern structure of little taste has been built against the old fortress. In the curious mixture of buildings, small and great, that join the last structure, is shown the room in which Martin Luther remained a voluntary prisoner for a year. Here are seen various relics, as well as portraits of Luther and his parents, by Cranach. When I joined in the celebration of the great Reformation Jubilee, some time ago, I recalled the words of Goethe, who wrote to a friend concerning the Reformation festival; "between ourselves nothing interests me about the whole affair except Luther's character, and that is the only thing that especially imposes on the multitude. Alles Uebrige ist ein verwrener Handel, der er uns täglich zur Last fällt. All the rest is confusion, as we find out daily to our cost." What Goethe meant was the unhappy political division of the German nation which befel Germany

as a whole through the splitting up of the Church, and its consequences. For the rest, Goethe could not only, as is well known, do justice and honour to Luther's character, but could also accredit the Reformation with the benefits that arose from it, namely, the emancipation of the mind from authority.

> "Auch ich soll Gott gebene Kraft,
> Nicht ungenützt verlieren;
> Und will in Kunst und Wissenschaft,
> Wie immer protestiren,"

are the words with which he concluded his poem on the Reformation Jubilee.

'One of the most remarkable collections I have seen in my life, is in one of the old artistically-worked cabinets here, namely, a collection of knives and forks of different ages and nations. Here are Byzantine work in iron, beside wood-carving of Luther's time of simpler pattern, but much more decorated in style than our own. These all show the effort of the Middle Ages to ennoble handicraft through art, and lovingly adorn

the domestic furniture of daily life. On the handles of one pair are carved the figures of a monk and a nun, which most likely were the property of the holy Elizabeth. The most beautiful are those carved with the figures of Gustavus Adolphus and Christina. Here are also knives and forks after the taste of the Sicilian Prince Pellagonia.'

After describing the origin and process of the restoration of the Wartburg, he goes on to deplore that a love of folk-lore is not more universal. 'In mountainous countries the interests of the people are more concentrated, and this concentration has helped to keep up a livelier feeling for legend. Thus in Thuringia, where the ballad has still a home, and the guitar accompanies the song, many a story is told of the holy Elizabeth, and of the spots where she awaited in vain the return of her husband from the Holy Land. The traveller is shown the ponds at

the foot of the Wartburg, which mark the places where her tears fell. We climbed the lovely watch-tower, and lingered till the twilight; it was not easy to tear ourselves away from such a prospect. Below lay friendly, cheerful Eisenach with its towers and castle, surrounded by gardens and country houses. We descended by moonlight. In the courtyard of the fort we saw the sentinel flirting with his sweetheart, but the maiden fled when she caught sight of us. We could not take it amiss of a young fellow—a sentinel who had nothing to guard—for putting aside his bayonet to kiss a girl on the spot where the watchman of old days used to sing—

> Wer liebt nicht Wein, Weib und Gesang,
> Der bleibt ein Narr sein Leben lang.'

LETTER XIX.

ILMENAU.

SCHWARTZBURG is considered the grandest point in the eastern portion of the Thuringian forest. The village, with its gold-green pastures and slopes, lies in a hollow, the River Schwarza—here a broad, bright stream, and no mere babbling brook—winds gracefully through it, whilst around rise bold hills, almost shutting it in, clothed with pine woods from summit to base. Some of the hills—or I may say mountains—are of wild and magnificent shape, others lovely and fantastic.

Next morning, the men of our party were up by five o'clock, and ascended the Tripp-stein, from which is obtained a fine panorama.

We contented ourselves with wandering in the straggling outskirts of the forest near at hand, gathering wild flowers or ferns, and listening to the wood dove or watching the deer. Amid the tall, straight pines came slanting sun-rays, making exquisite play of light and shadow, and the air, pine-scented through and through, was unspeakably delicious and animating.

At three o'clock we started for Ilmenau. The scenery gradually lost its wild grandeur as we got farther and farther from Schwartzburg. The bold mountain ranges disappeared, and in their places were dimpled green eminences; the dusky gorges were exchanged for level roads, leading from one village to another; the deep valleys were replaced by smooth fields and pastures; and the peaceful pastoral aspect culminated in the broad smiling valley of Ilmenau.

Of course we carried a pocket volume of Goethe's poems on this Goethe pilgrimage,

and as we drove slowly along I read those lines which so well describe the poet's *Lieblingsort*:—

'Aumuthig Thal! du immergrüner Hain!
Mein Herz begrüsst euch wieder auf das beste;
Entfaltet mir die schwerbehangnen Aeste.
Nehmt freundlich mich in eure Schatten ein,
Erquickt von euren Höhn, am Tag der Lieb und Lust,
Mit frischem Luft ünd Balsam meine Brust!
Wie kehrt ich mit wechselnder Geschicke
Erhabner Berg! an deine Füss zurücke!
Oh! lass mich Heut an deinen sachten Höhn
Ein jugendlich, ein neues Eden sehen!'

Ilmenau is now a fashionable little *Bad-ort*, whither people resort to drink the waters, and go through the festivities of the bathing season. As we drove along the principal street to the new fashionable inn, *The Kurhaus*, we found groups of young ladies in airy costumes with their friends and partners preparing for an out-of-door dance. In vain we applied at the best hotels for beds. Not one was to be had. At last the landlord of the unpretending little *Sonne* made room for us by some means or other, and we were not badly off.

The only drawback to our comfort was that our host was *ausgefressen*, eaten out, and nothing was to be had till next morning, which fortunately happened to be market-day. Something or other he did at last find—a few scraps of raw ham, one or two eggs, some green stuff, and a huge loaf of black bread, which tasted exceedingly good under the circumstances.

The weather changed on a sudden, and next morning the wind was blowing in gusts, and every now and then would come heavy showers of rain. In spite of these obstacles and another still more difficult to overcome—namely, the want of a carriage—we did at last get to the Kickelhahn. What with the weather and the bad state of the roads, no one cared to drive us so far, and at first we felt disposed to give up the undertaking; but I am very glad that we pocketed our pride and accepted the coachman's own terms after a long process of haggling. His trap and

horses were of the poorest possible description; he was himself ignorant, sulky, and disagreeable; his price was exorbitant, yet if we had sent him away in an ill-humour we should not have seen that solitary spot, immortalised by one of the loveliest little poems ever written; at last we succeeded in making a bargain.

The temperature decreased as we slowly ascended, and we were very glad to wrap ourselves in such cloaks and rugs as we had with us. By the time we were half-way up the winding, pine-clad mountain way it was very cold.

The scene had gradually grown wilder and wilder. The wind blew in angry gusts. A blurring rain poured down at intervals. On every side were pine-trees, not a ray of sunlight to-day penetrating their dusky phalanxes. The dark green foliage looked black under the lowering angry clouds.

Yet this weather had not deterred many an

enthusiastic traveller from making the ascent of the Kickelhahn. As our sorry beasts climbed the steep mountain road we encountered several pedestrians, and on reaching the forester's house at the top, now turned into a restaurant, found a room full of travellers. It was a homely little place enough, and the fare was of the coarsest description. The landlady, a buxom peasant-woman, joked and chatted with her guests familiarly as she served them, praising her rank cheese, her sausage strongly flavoured with garlic, her poor beer and thin coffee. But no one took either her familiarity or her bad comestibles amiss, and if they made fun of the latter it was done in a good-natured spirit which gave no offence. After resting a little we drove to what is one of the highest points in the Thuringian forest, surmounted by a town. This is an eminence of 2,731 feet. Here the storm, which had been lulled for a time, burst forth with fresh fury. We were now in a

scene as grand as can be conceived—on each side rose the quaint, gloomy pine-trees, shutting us in; among their branches the wind soughed fiercely, now making a continuous roar like thunder, now crashing the boughs with a sudden volley of sound. The skies had grown from dark grey to almost pitchy blackness. The rain fell in torrents, sending noisy cataracts down the steep mountain sides.

We hurried, in company with half-a-dozen others, to a little hut close by the tower, and tried to make a fire. But our imprisonment did not last very long. By-and-by, the thunders of the wind died away, the veil of clouds was partially withdrawn, only a gentle rain dropped intermittently, and a gleam of sunshine played for a few seconds on the pine-stems. We walked across a little bit of cleared forest, and came to the ruins of Goethe's hut. It was accidentally burnt down a year or two ago. Pilgrims must content themselves with

gazing on a heap of ashes, for nothing more remains of the boards on which he wrote in pencil that little poem perfect as a flower, a summer cloud, a bird, or any other of Nature's daintiest inspirations :—

'Ueber allen Gipfeln.
Ist Ruh ;
In allen Wipfeln.
Spürest du.
Kaum einen Hauch ;
Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
Warte nur, balde,
Ruhest du auch.'

On that last birthday of the poet, when he visited this favourite spot with his grandsons, he read these lines with filling eyes, repeating aloud the two last lines :—

'Warte nur, balde,
Ruhest du auch.'

We found a primitive table d'hôte and a goodly assemblage of homely guests awaiting us, to whom this cheap little entertainment at the *Sonne* was evidently quite a debauch. Looking upon the rows of shabbily-dressed,

over-worked men and women out for a holiday with their children, it was not difficult to assign to them their respective occupations and standing. They were the class of people who in England would no more dream of making a pedestrian excursion to Stratford-on-Avon with an edition of Shakespeare in their wallet than they would dream of reading Shakespeare to their families at home—small shopkeepers, artisans, schoolmasters, and so on. Among the twenty or thirty assembled guests there was not one who wore a good coat, or that easy, complacent look which comes of worldly prosperity. Even in their enjoyment they were not, as Germans say, *ausgelassen*, but a little anxious and constrained, fearing lest their money should not hold out, or that they might be led in some unguarded moment to commit themselves to an extravagance.

Our way home lay through scenery of a new and strikingly beautiful character. We

had left the wilder portions of the Thuringian forest behind us at Ilmenau, and from thence to Tannroda, and by way of Tannroda to Berka, passed a succession of lawny meadows, alders overshadowing quiet streams, and gentle undulations covered with pine and birch.

It is worth while making this excursion to see the alders alone; in some places they are old and grand, shutting in the little River Ilm with impenetrable gloom, in others, young, slender, graceful, like those captivating trees Albert Dürer and other early painters loved to put in their backgrounds.

As night approached the scene grew weird. The long lines of alders, the dark river, the dim outlines of neighbouring hills, the dusky levels of corn-field and pasture, the wind surging in the trees, recalled the *Erl-könig*. Such a scene and such a night might well have suggested the background of that wonderful ballad.

This is the last recollection I have to note of my Goethe pilgrimage. A few days later I was obliged to bid farewell to dear, friendly little Weimar. So evenly life glides by in such scenes as these, that one forgets how time is hurrying on. I go away, determined to return at no distant day, and live over again such happy holidays as I have lived in the little *Ilm-Athen.* But will that dream ever come true? And should I find again the Weimar I first knew? Does not Goethe say—

'Ach, und in demselben Flusse,
Schwimmst du nicht zum Zweitenmal!'

THE END.

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