

RODOLPHE CHRISTEN
THE STORY OF AN ARTIST'S LIFE
BY
HIS WIFE



1859-1906

J. W. Barrow.
15 St. Georges Park Avenue
Nestcliff-on-Sea.

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RODOLPHE CHRISTEN



Rodolphe Christen

RODOLPHE CHRISTEN

THE STORY OF AN
ARTIST'S LIFE

BY

HIS WIFE

Christen, Sydney Mary (Thompson)

*"What is the grave to us? Can it divide
The destiny of two by God made one?
We step across and reach the other side,
To know our blessed life is but begun."*

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO
THE DEAR MEMORY
OF
MY HUSBAND
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

“What cheer hath he? How is it with him?
Where lingers he this weary while?
Over what pleasant fields of heaven
Dawns the sweet sunrise of his smile?”

Why on this spring air comes no whisper
From him to tell us all is well?
Why to our flower-time comes no token
Of lily or of asphodel?

I feel the unutterable longing,
The hunger of the heart is mine;
I reach and grope for hands in darkness,
My ear grows sharp for voice or sign.

Still on the lips of all we question
The finger of God's silence lies;
Will the lost hands in ours be folded?
Will the shut eyelids ever rise?

O friend! no proof beyond this yearning,
This out-reach of our hearts we need;
God will not mock the hope He giveth,
No love He prompts shall vainly plead.

Then let us stretch our hands in darkness,
And call our loved ones o'er and o'er;
Some day their arms shall close about us,
And the old voices speak once more.

No dreary splendours wait our coming
Where rapt ghost sits from ghost apart;
Homeward we go to Heaven's thanksgiving,
The harvest gathering of the heart.”

—WHITTIER.

FOREWORD

“ I KEEP on regretting that it was not possible to save your husband's life. Every day I meet people to whom his death came with a sense of personal loss.”

So wrote one of the kindly medical men who had lavished in vain all the wonderful professional skill of these modern days, during the slow months of heroic suffering before the end came. That sense of a grievous loss to all humanity was the keynote of innumerable kind letters and regretful messages.

For his friends whom I know, for his far more numerous friends whom I do not know, but who, knowing him, also loved him, this book has been written.

SYDNEY MARY CHRISTEN.

ST. IMIER, BRIG O'GAIRN, BALLATER.

Begun 1907. Finished 1910.

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Messrs. W. L. Dunn & Son, Aberdeen . . . Frontispiece

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RODOLPHE CHRISTEN

CHAPTER I

A VALLEY IN THE JURA

1859-1879

TRAVELLERS entering Switzerland from Pontarlier by the beautiful gateway of the Val de Travers are too busily occupied in trying to see the constantly changing beauty on either side of the line, as the train whizzes swiftly down to Neuchâtel, watching for the first peep of the lake and the grand array of snowy peaks above it, to guess that far above them another line winds up to the less familiar Val de St. Imier, called after the smiling little town that nestles in its bosom.

In a small house at St. Imier, on the 26th of April 1859, a little boy was born to parents already blessed with six children, augmented as the years rolled on by half-a-dozen more. Only five of these thirteen children lived to grow up.

The father, Melchior Christen, was a shoemaker, and the manufactory where he and his men worked still stands at St. Imier, with "M. Christen, Fabricant de Chaussures," painted in large letters on its walls, the only remaining evidence of his sojourn in the town.

Let us consider this Calvinistic father, who interlarded merciless whippings with verses from the Bible, assuring his writhing children that duty forced him to punish them, for those whom parents love they must chastise! To peel the potatoes carelessly for the family dinner might entail the

promise of a beating in the evening, giving hours of anticipation in addition to the grim reality. Even his large comely wife did not escape; if she displeased him, the vigorous little autocrat would pick her up and lock her in the cellar till she came to her senses and a proper state of wifely subjection!

In spite of parental austerities, the boy Rodolphe had a warm affection for St. Imier and his family, and many happy histories of his childhood come back to my memory. The long Swiss winter when the snow accumulated over the country until the traffic on its roads was carried on between its protecting walls, and elaborate snow buildings would last for months. Glorious summer excursions in the forests or up the mountains, visits to the Combe Grède—a picturesque ravine in the Jurassic limestone mountains that divide the valley of St. Imier from the parallel lake basins of Neuchâtel and Bienne—sudden clammers in the intervals of school hours to a robber's cave on the northern side of the valley. Such are the visions that remain when the troubles of childhood have passed away, and only its gracious sunny memories survive.

And how intensely he loved his mother, who must indeed have been a fine and vigorous character, managing, in spite of her thirteen children and her household duties, to cultivate her garden and decorate her table with flowers, as well as joining in the expeditions that form such a beautiful and wholesome feature of continental family life, and are unfortunately so much rarer with us. Sometimes it was a trip to collect sticks or fir-cones for the fires—sometimes the fragrant Alpine strawberries, at other seasons mushrooms, especially the favourite *morilles* that always grow in couples. The future artist always attributed his intense love of Nature and early perception of beauty to his mother's influence and example.

Must not all sensitive natures who dwell amongst mountains be largely influenced by their surroundings? Those mighty masses seem so cradling and protective, day and night; small views of life fade away before their great



9 Juillet 85

W. Christen

Monsieur Melchior Christen

calm outlines, and peace, strength, and courage come instead.

How we crave to get back to Nature when troubles come upon us, if we love her. Do not those to whom this silent intercourse is an unknown thing miss one of the most helpful influences in the battle of life?

The boy Rodolphe was not fourteen when he determined to take his fate into his own hands and face a world whose discipline could scarcely be harsher than his father's, so he ran away from home as two elder brothers had already done, and made his way to Neuchâtel, where he apprenticed himself to an engraver of watch-backs. His brother Théophile went into the Swiss Police, and was rising rapidly in the service, when he met with a severe accident when on duty at a fire, and died in hospital; whilst Arnold, travelling in many lands, developed the family gift for languages, and is now the sole survivor of that merry little group.

The indenture apprenticing Rodolphe Christen to Monsieur Charles Boillot, engraver, is dated the 1st of June 1873. It binds him to serve for four years under a penalty of 1200 francs¹ should he not complete the term, the father undertaking to clothe his son, who was to live in M. Boillot's house.

Many letters are extant between the scattered members of the shoemaker's family. A regular correspondence between the youthful engraver and his only sister Elvina records the occasional appearances at home of the other brothers, and her sense of their good fortune in escaping from the tyranny and friction at home, where she and Emile alone remained with the parents. Rarer are the letters from the father, sometimes in French, sometimes in German, inquiring as to his youngest son's progress, or sending him to collect money due for boots or shoes.

Let us picture the boy, with radiant face and eager steps, starting on the five hours' walk from Neuchâtel to St. Imier, passing through the gorge of the Seyon into the sunny spacious Val de Ruz. The meadows gay with flowers, the

¹ £48.

fresh green leaves and play of light and shade penetrate dimly to his consciousness, for the lad is a poet at heart, and Nature is his intimate friend. But to-day her secrets do not hold the first place in his mind. It is the dear ones in the distant valley to whom he is hastening, his heart swelling with emotion at the prospect of seeing them again, and warm with the consciousness of tiny gifts for each, bought with his own first savings.

On he goes up the head of the valley, across the "Marais Pontins," then down through wooded roads till at the first sight of St. Imier far below, all his fatigue is forgotten, and he races down the hill.

Proudly the tiny gifts are displayed, and the little brooch for the dear mother lovingly presented.

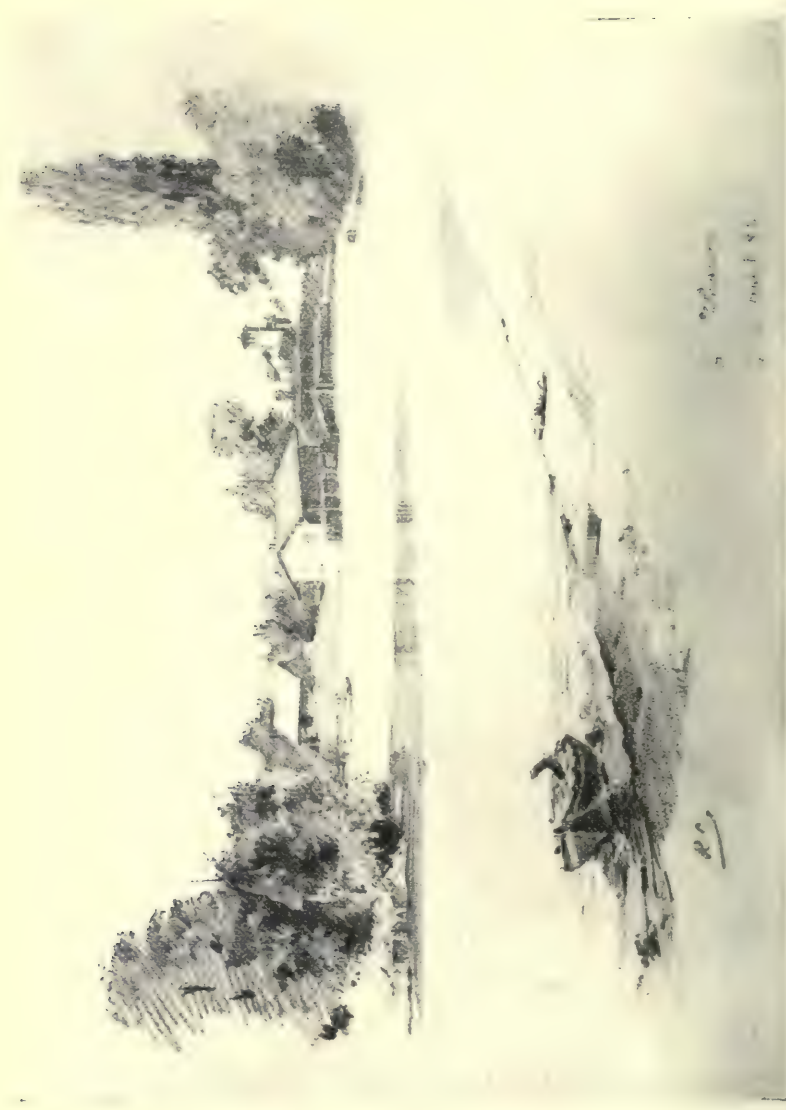
Alas! a sudden chill falls on the generous young heart: "Why didst thou not bring money, instead of buying all that rubbish?"

Never to the end of life was the pain of that moment forgotten.

Some years later a sum of 250 francs¹ was laboriously gathered up and sent home to his father. The grateful parental response was a complete bill of all that the son had cost since the day he was born!

On the lovely summer Sundays the lad often escaped from his companions in Neuchâtel, and wandered over the mountains with a book in his pocket to read in peace, to dream, and see visions, and revel in the beauties of Nature. Many were the hairbreadth escapes from the fierce watchdogs or dangerous bulls on the Alps, but worst of all was an experience when in climbing the face of a precipitous cliff he drew himself up by his hands till he could overlook a ledge of rock, and found himself face to face with a deadly black viper. Roused by his sudden appearance, it prepared to strike. Unable to let go or defend himself in any way, for one grim fascinated moment youth and reptile gazed at one another, then the viper slowly lowered its head and glided silently away.

¹ £10.



Thoune

On a walking tour with George Sim

Before his apprenticeship was completed Swiss watch-making had fallen on evil days, and Boillot, determined to emigrate to America, insisted on his right to take his gifted young apprentice with him, under a clause in the indenture which empowered him to change the locality of his atelier. But the necessary sum was borrowed, and the youth remained in Switzerland.

In a letter recently received from a friend who had known him ever since those early Neuchâtel days, he is described as a gay and handsome young man, always outgrowing his clothes, and laughing as heartily at his own appearance as did every one else.

Amongst his fellow-apprentices at Boillot's was a boy called Emile Allement, whose brother was gardener to a Madame de Pierre, who lived in a handsome old house in Neuchâtel, and was also the fortunate possessor of a charming suburban garden on a cliff overhanging the lake.

Until the Canton of Neuchâtel joined the Swiss Confederation in 1848, it had remained an appanage of the Prussian Crown, and this lady had spent some time at the Court in Berlin as governess to the Grand Duchess of Baden, the sister of the Emperor Frederick. She now lived in honoured retirement amongst the little group of noble Swiss families still existing in Neuchâtel.

Very highly cultivated, sympathetic, and fond of young people, she soon noticed the handsome, merry youth who came to her house with his fellow-apprentice, and interested herself in his career.

Madame de Pierre was now desirous to educate him at her own expense as a pastor in the Swiss Evangelical Church, to which he belonged, but doubts and questionings were then disturbing the simpler faith of earlier years, and he could not accept her offer. She therefore arranged that he should enter the office of a Monsieur Noirga, a notary in Neuchâtel, where he studied law for a twelvemonth.

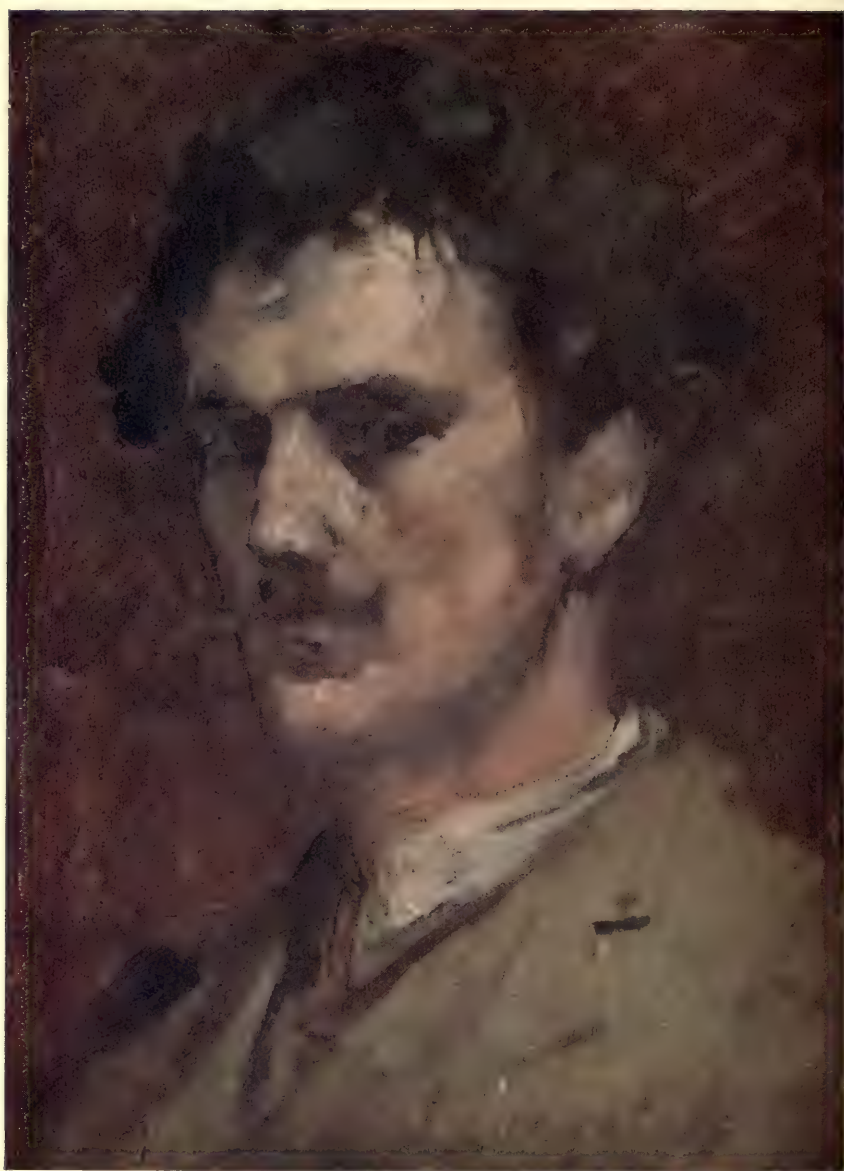
I have been with him to see the miserable windowless loft in a house behind the Château of Neuchâtel, where he lodged after the departure of the Boillots, being obliged

to sleep with his door open to the hillside for lack of ventilation; until his kind friend, finding out his predicament, gave him permission to live in a pavilion in her beautiful garden, where she kept him well supplied with books.

Those were halcyon days, when he lived on the top of the cliff amongst the flowers, and could scramble down to shady ledges that made ideal retreats for study. A risky further climb let him indulge his passion for swimming in the crystal waters of the lake. Madame de Pierre became much attached to her young protégé, and his gratitude and affectionate reverence for her knew no bounds. She influenced his life profoundly.

His legal studies proving utterly uncongenial to his temperament, he was sorely tempted to accept a proposition, made through his brother Arnold, then at Odessa, to accompany a noble Russian family as tutor on a journey to the Caucasus and Black Sea. But the post was of quite uncertain duration, and involved an expensive journey to Russia, so he eventually joined his brother Emile at Nancy, obtaining employment in the office of a Monsieur Perret, who manufactured straw hats.

Here another patient year of uncongenial work was thoroughly well done, and at last, in the June of 1879, the hope of many years was fulfilled, and he left Nancy for Paris.



Rodolphe Christen.
Sketched by Mr. Longstaff at the Academie Délécluse.

CHAPTER II

PARISIAN VIGNETTES

1879

TWENTY years of age, full of life, health, and intellectual vigour, absorbed in his passionate love of art, at last the pilgrim had reached his Mecca.

Swinging along with the elastic step of a mountaineer, carrying his portmanteau on one shoulder and a ham (sent by friends in Nancy to relatives in Paris) in his free hand, with what a thrill he must have trodden those crowded Parisian streets for the first time.

Paris! What does it mean to most English visitors? The gay and brilliant city of cafés, of the opera, the Comédie Française, the Bois? To others, the artistic centre of the world; their Mecca also, to be devoutly longed for from afar, the city of the Louvre and the Luxembourg, of stately bridges and noble buildings—of the Quartier Latin and the studios!

What else did it grow to mean to the eager student, so quaintly equipped for his first entry? It grew very dear to him, like a beautiful but dangerous panther. A city where work was hard to get and a man might easily starve. Where for two long days he had nothing but a cup of bouillon, whilst vainly hunting for work; and when at last he got employment painting buttons for dresses, and confided matters to the man working next him, that good Samaritan lent him five francs, and he went off to have a much-needed meal. Needless to say, that friend in need was never lost sight of.

The strenuous days of the Commune were not long over, and the Swiss lad, with observant receptive mind,

came in contact with men who had suffered and fought ; who had seen their own friends shot down, and endured all the horrors of uncontrolled mob law. Nowhere does a crowd gather so rapidly as in Paris, and nowhere can it become so suddenly dangerous.

Instinctively a student of social problems, this keen young nature *lived* the things that most of us only investigate. Rarely during these early Parisian years could he afford to thoroughly satisfy the hunger of a vigorous and growing body, whilst the intense craving for open air and exercise that had to be controlled, as he sat for twelve mortal hours daily on his engraver's stool, was often absolute torture.

With characteristically practical sense and a hatred of illness as "an inferior thing," he saw that proper food must be the first consideration, and soon discovered that certain restaurants frequented by cabmen gave him the best value for his money, and constant interest in studying varied types of humanity. As years rolled on "Rodolphe" became a popular figure throughout the artists' quarter, well known and trusted in its shops and cafés. He always recalled with pride how the "patron" of a little restaurant in Rue Bréa gave him credit for an entire year, when times were specially hard and money scarce.

Presently painted buttons went out of fashion, and he found work with Monsieur Wolf, an engraver in Rue du Fleurus, subsequently working at heliogravure under a Monsieur Dujardin. He was soon promoted to be "contre-maître" by his employer, who appreciated an unwearied worker who never spared himself on an emergency. This appointment raised him above the heads of older men who served their employer less faithfully, yet grudged the promotion won by a willing industry they neither wished to practise nor to permit.

Nor were his evenings wholly free for relaxation, for already in his first Parisian year we find the Swiss Consul introducing him to the Director of the National School of Decorative Arts, and he subsequently worked in many

studios, was a member of the Swiss Harmonic Society, and kept up his favourite literary studies. A warm admirer of Verlaine's poetry, he liked to recall seeing that erratic genius, when quite advanced in years, dancing at "Bullier" amidst encouraging shouts of "Papa Ver'! Papa Ver'!"

Many life-long friendships dated from those happy student years in that truly cosmopolitan city. Monsieur Louis Guillaume, now a well-known artist in Switzerland, first met him at Julian's Academy in 1887, where he was painting in the forenoons, the afternoons being given to heliogravure at Dujardin's. Ere this he had gone to Great Britain, and had spent two years in Aberdeen teaching drawing and painting in Monsieur Desclayes' Collegiate School, where his brother Arnold was teacher of languages.

The steadfast Scottish nature appealed to him strongly. Many a Sunday in Paris his precious leisure had been wasted waiting for some volatile French friend, who had promised to go out into the country with him, but never turned up; to his surprise and admiration his Scotch acquaintances always kept their appointments. He learned to love the nation as he loved their country, with its low skies and rich strong colouring.

After his first arrival in Paris in 1879 he never lost touch with that well-beloved centre of artistic life, frequently returning there during summer holidays from Aberdeen, accompanied by his artist friend, George Sim, a son of the well-known Aberdeen naturalist,¹ who shared the little apartment in a quaintly picturesque courtyard draped with Virginian creeper in Rue Boissonade, where they were domiciled when Monsieur Guillaume first met them.

The two Swiss students naturally drew to one another, and eventually Monsieur Guillaume occupied Mr. Sim's room, when a neglected cold permanently injured the latter's health and prevented his returning to Paris. During this winter spent by Monsieur Guillaume in Rue Boissonade, one of those mysterious occurrences took place

¹ Author of "The Vertebrate Fauna of Dee," &c.

that baffle explanation and seem to transcend our human limitations.

Monsieur Christen had left Paris to spend a day and night with friends in the country, but towards evening an intense and inexplicable feeling of uneasiness induced him to change his plans and return to their rooms in Paris, where he found Monsieur Guillaume lying senseless on the floor of their apartment. Something had gone wrong with their little Schoubertsky stove, and the fumes had overpowered him. To drag him into the open air was the work of a moment, and his life was saved.

Some letters, kindly lent me by Monsieur Guillaume, give glimpses of those years, with their frequent journeyings to and from the continent.

24th Juin '87.

CHER LOUIS,—Georges revient de Nemours Mardi ; nous partirons je pense 3 Juillet pour Londres. Nous gardons notre atelier et nous payons d'avance pour les trois mois. Ne m'oublie pas en Ecosse, cher Louis ; je pourrai de là-bas t'écrire à tête plus reposée. Toujours à la chaîne pendant onze heures chaque jour, jusqu'à la fin du mois. J'aurai alors assez pour filer vers les cieux plus élémens.

Au revoir ; travaille ! travaille ! c'est là que tu trouveras les jouissances les plus pures et les plus durables.

Il fallait finir par le cachet moraliste qui me distingue du vulgaire !

J'ai visiter le galerie des œuvres de Millet ; voilà le vrai peintre de la nature, qui met autre chose sur toile que de la couleur. Son Labor est plein de sentiment, de poésie, c'est toute l'âme du peintre. L'Angelus, jamais toile ne m'a fait tant rêver, et Les Glaneuses et sa Baigneuse, et toutes ses toiles qu'il faudra citer, c'est me résumer la vraie définition du *beau* que nous avons si longtemps cherché !

In the autumn of the same year, on his return to Paris, he writes again to M. Guillaume about their winter together :—



Portrait of an Artist.

“Je me hâte de te donner le conseil d’apporter quelque petite chose pour rendre notre hiver plus confortable. Je sais que tu es toujours dans les nuages, et en conséquence très peu pratique. Tu connais notre camp-volant, c’est fort joli, mais à cette heure il fait froid, de couvertures en plus ne sera jamais de trop, même un duvet. Georges paye peut-être de sa vie la négligence qu’il a toujours montré à l’égard de son bien-être.”

14th Mai 1888.]

Je compte terminer mon affaire du Luxembourg cette semaine, et, si tout va bien, je passerai à Neuchâtel le 25 ou 26 pour y rester un jour seulement, car j’irai visiter mes parents, et nous pourrons alors nous arranger pour le mois de Juin. La chaleur commence à ne plus être tenable et je m’ennuye tout seul, j’ai arrivé à tomber dans la lassitude. Tu ne peut te faire une idée de mon entourage d’avachissement. Il faut quelque chose de plus que je possède pour y résister.

À Nemours c’est Ernest et Anatole, l’un fatigué de chez Julian, se laissait naviguer au grès de la rivière, ou se reposant sous les saules, l’autre tout simplement inepte d’apathie. Ici c’est Millot cynique et insouciant plus que jamais, chez Ruinet c’est Pilate (écrivain) celui-là la vue seule me soulève ; les Américains, que j’ai si souvent défendu viennent verser par dessus tout cela le seau d’eau froide de la froide et méthodique raison.

Eh ! que tu n’as rien à regretter d’être parti si tôt, pas même pour le Salon. Je reviens chaque fois triste et abattu. Après tout c’est moi qui peut-être aie la vague-à-l’ame, et regarde par le mauvais bout de la lorgnette.

Dans cette orgie de peinture je vois la décadence en plein, et pourtant que de talent et de belles toiles ! Lefèvre possède un beau. Carolus Duran une tête de son ami François, qui est avec un ou deux paysages de Pelouse, etc., la seule chose que je suis fâché de te voir manquer. Une toile qui m’a laissé une impression très forte, c’est “Le Collier de misère” de Geoffroy, après ça pour le reste c’est

prèsque la même critique que l'année dernière. De la technique, de la facture, et de l'exécution, mais pas beaucoup de poésie.

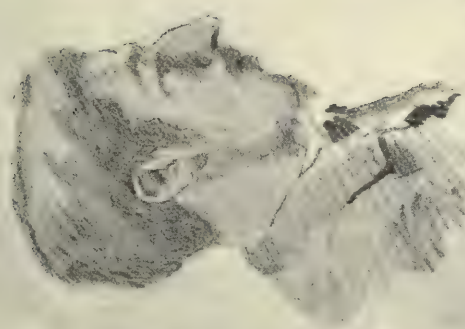
Courage, mon cher Louis, je vais terminer cette lettre comme la dernière : travaille ! travaille ! il n'y a absolument que cela ! et c'est moi qui aurai bien besoin qu'on me le redise.

Je t'embrasse et bien des choses à tes chers et bons parents.—Ton vieux, RODOLPHE.

Other letters tell of the sale of pictures and sketches and painting of portraits, and the ups and downs of mutual acquaintances. I do not know if M. Guillaume assisted at the moonlight flitting of a friend who was suffering from the usual complaint, want of cash, and wanted to escape from a rapacious concierge. His fellow-students assembled in his rooms at night, and silently stole downstairs, each bearing an article of furniture or baggage. The little procession had almost emerged in safety, when an unfortunate stumble aroused the concierge, who started in hot pursuit. Thanks to his athletic habits, M. Christen and the article of furniture he was carrying escaped safely, but some of the others were not equally fortunate.

Monsieur Guillaume Ritter, who subsequently planned and carried through a great engineering feat in lowering the level of Neuchâtel Lake by straightening and deepening the course of the winding marshy Thièle that connects it with the Lake of Biemme, had conceived an even vaster project—to conduct the water of the Lake of Neuchâtel to Paris ! The reception of his scheme is described in the following letter :—

Hier soir j'étais à la Sorbonne. M. Ritter c'est tiré magnifiquement de cette grande épreuve, plusieurs fois la salle entière l'a brillamment applaudi, et c'était certainement un spectacle imposant que de le voir tailler dans la discussion ainsi qu'un taureau fonce sur les banderoles rouges (comment trouves-tu la figure) ; les banderoles rouges c'était les rires et les quelques exclamations sangrenues soulevés dans

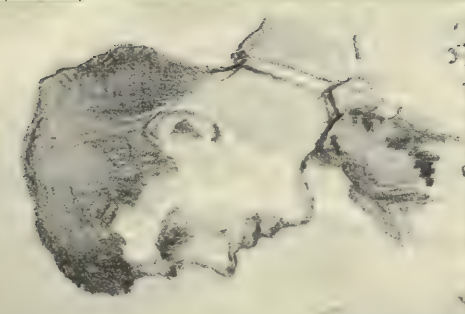


mon ami. L'ami marche
à Romans.



mon ami Charles est un bon
et qui est un bon
et un bon

mon ami. L'ami marche
à Romans.



avec Georges Vain
qui tout le monde
connaît.

la discussion des microbes, et aussi la longueur du discours, et ma foi, le manque de qualités oratoire du conférencier.

Malgré cela, il a eu quelques belles périodes, beaucoup de vigueur, et personne n'a pu méconnaître la force et la sincérité de son discours. La salle a été bondée, et même beaucoup de monde n'a pu trouver de place. La musique du 74^m de Ligne jouait pendant les entre actes, c'est à dire qu'il y eut trois autres orateurs, mais le vrai succès de la soirée a été pour M. Ritter ; même M. F. de Lesseps, qui nous a lu quelques pages qu'on ne pouvait entendre, n'a occupé que quelques instants de la soirée, tandis que M. Ritter nous a, je crois bien tenu pendant une heure et demie.

Quel dommage que cet homme d'action ne soit aussi un parleur et un diplomate, son grand tort, surtout en s'adressant à des Français, c'est de ne pas opérer par la méthode persuasive. Il avait toujours l'air de leur dire. " Je vous ferai boire de mon eau quand même ! "

Another vignette from the hand of a Scottish artist will fitly conclude this series :—

Although I first met Rodolphe Christen when he came to Aberdeen, it was not until I went to Paris, in the spring of 1888, that I made his intimate acquaintance. He was then living in a studio in an impasse off the Boulevard Raspail, and was attending the life classes at the Académie Délécluse in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs.

I lived quite near him, and for the best part of two years we were very closely associated. We made many sketching excursions together all round Paris, to such places as Fontainebleau and Nemours, and I look back on that period, when he was almost my daily companion, as one of the happiest of my life.

Christen's nature was charming. No matter how hard up he was or how black the general outlook—and it was usually *blue* at any rate—he was always gay and light-hearted—and it was his habit to find the humorous element in what was most depressing. Oftentimes in the life class

a fit of silence and absorption would fall on the whole of us for perhaps ten minutes, and it was always Christen who broke it in some humorous way. Sometimes it would be by heaving a deep and prolonged sigh, which set us all laughing, or by some witty remark, or he would start singing a verse or chorus. A favourite one of his was :—

“ La peinture à l’huile
Est bien difficile ;
La peinture à l’eau
C’est bien plus beau.”

Another was—

“ On l’a mis à la terre glacée
Pour un prix exorbitant.
Au cimetière de Père la Chaise
A Menilmontant, à Menilmontant.”

Christen was also an excellent mimic, and had a wonderful gift of finding nicknames. There was hardly a student in the atelier whom he had not “christened” with the name of some member of the animal kingdom, and the verisimilitude was in all cases remarkable. He was a man who made many friends, and never had an enemy. I never heard him speak ill of any one, and he was generous, faithful, and honourable in all his dealings. Although in later years our ways separated, our occasional meetings were always the greatest pleasure to me, and my little world is immeasurably poorer by the loss of his bright and winning personality. GARDEN G. SMITH.]

[Copie d’un acrostiche fait à Paris par M. Gallet, graveur-géographe pendant mon séjour chez M. Paul Dujardin, heliographe, Paris, 1886.]

“ C harmant dans ses discours, pourfois un peu flatteur,
H ardi dans ses fredaines, jamais se rebutant,
R iant de ses amis à l’altière humeur,
I nsouciant de son sort et l’avenir narguant.
S achant avec l’amour faire de petits larcins ;
T enant avec aplomb tête à tous ses voisins,
E t son esprit volage du respect se jouant
N ous l’a par ses sallies rendu très amusant.”



Leaves from a Swiss sketchbook

CHAPTER III

THE THRESHOLD OF SUCCESS

“ No endeavour is in vain ;
Its reward is in the doing,
And the rapture of pursuing
Is the prize the vanquished gain.”

—LONGFELLOW.

“ The wealth of a man is the number of things which he loves and blesses, and by which he is loved and blessed.”—CARLYLE.

THE last decade of the nineteenth century had begun ere Monsieur Christen's growing experience of the conditions of art teaching in Great Britain suggested to him a new plan of action.

As assistant in Monsieur Délécluse's well-known academy in Paris, he taught many English students of both sexes. They impressed him by their earnestness and desire to work, and even more deeply by their very frequent lack of any really useful previous study. He came to the conclusion that this was owing to the type of training then in vogue, especially in most of the Government Schools of Art.

I believe that South Kensington was primarily intended to train designers, and its function was to disseminate a keener appreciation of art in the every-day things of life. It was *meant* to train the whole nation in matters of taste, but in Monsieur Christen's time it had become the national training school for painters, for which purpose he always maintained that its teaching and methods were utterly unsuited.

He was especially moved by the numbers of English girls sent to Paris, for six months or a year, by parents who looked upon a few months in an atelier as the

finishing school from which a full-blown artist should emerge. He watched sympathetically how these Parisian students toiled; how they grew pale and thin and weary, working so desperately hard, because their time in France was so limited that they had no leisure for fresh air or exercise. Full of eagerness and zeal, they had rarely any hope that the privilege of working in Paris would ever be repeated.

In consequence of these observations he suggested the now familiar idea of French artists holding summer sketching classes in England, although at that time he had neither money nor experience to entitle him to attempt such a thing himself.

In later years he regularly organised classes in various towns in Great Britain and Ireland expressly to bring within the reach of students, to whom Paris was an unattainable ideal, the opportunity of learning French methods and working on French lines. He hoped to find in each town an artist able and willing to carry on his teaching, intending himself to revisit such centres from time to time, keeping his pupils in touch with Parisian methods by giving short courses of instruction.

How immensely the study of art would have been facilitated for many gifted English girls could his scheme have been fully carried out! They could then have obtained in Great Britain thorough preliminary training in what are essentials for every artist, enabling them to go—if possible—eventually to Paris properly equipped to follow to the fullest extent a course of study there.

Undoubtedly it is difficult to arrange wisely and satisfactorily for very young girls to go abroad and study. And yet I would fain plead, for such students as are in earnest and sincerely desirous to take up painting as their occupation, that they should get a thorough training. Let them have every chance of making it a real pursuit and pleasure for their whole life; it will give pleasure also to those around them. Surely a girl with a taste for drawing should at least get during her school days as thorough and



Longhurst, Dumfries, Co. Antrim.

continuous training in art as is afforded without hesitation to the girl who has a taste for music ?

In these days such a training is provided for all in one department only—athletics ! Yet hockey is no occupation for a lifetime, nor can golf nor lawn tennis be played for endless years. Yet some of these games are usually regarded as legitimate objects upon which to lavish priceless hours during school life ; and at home arrangements are made and meals altered to facilitate games, that would not be tolerated where the vastly more valuable and enduring tastes for science, art, or literature are concerned.

Happily money is now spent quite as freely on the education of girls as on their brothers, but too often when they leave school they leave all study behind them. Nor can any one exactly be blamed ; it is the result of the whole system. Is there not too much pouring in of instruction, and not enough of drawing out ?

The girls come home full of enthusiasm for their studies, and have excellent intentions of continuing to work, but the home life runs on such different grooves that after a short struggle, study is too often relinquished, and they follow the lines of least resistance. And in many cases this occurs from a genuinely conscientious desire to take a due share in the social duties at home, and to please those whom they love.

Do parents realise what it means to their girls to come home from the full routine of a stimulating modern school, and the intellectual starvation that may be their lot in a luxurious and refined home ?

A few wise parents here and there, looking thoughtfully round the family circle, and recognising the varied aptitudes of those who have to live under one roof, following one routine, resolve courageously to meet their children's needs ; and by this timely and wise sympathy they help to make home happy, and preserve the beautiful and wholesome old ideal of English home life, which is threatening to become gradually extinct.

There are so many houses in which it is quite possible

to fit up an attic or an outhouse at small expense as a studio, a laboratory, a gymnasium, or even as a sanctum for the daughter who loves reading, so that the enthusiasm for a favourite pursuit need not die for lack of opportunity. To recognise thus the individuality of children makes their lives so much fuller and more complete; and eventually the parent will be richly repaid; a life spent chiefly in constant running after games and amusements can never develop the rich calmness of a happy and contented womanhood.

Dropping generalities, let us consider the case of the art student who has some kind of a studio to work in, where she can obtain the uninterrupted leisure essential for progress, where her things can be left and the key turned, so that wet oils may not be covered with dust and ashes from the grate, nor pastels dusted off by a too zealous housemaid!

Sooner or later the student will require to go to Paris or some other recognised centre of art to work in a studio where she can have the help and stimulus of seeing and working amongst students more advanced than herself. In our own schools of art there is still too much *teaching*; the students have no chance of learning to stand on their own feet, as they must do to progress; but there is a medium between that and being entirely thrown upon one's own resources.

Perhaps the ideal way would be to go occasionally to Paris for a few months, and to spend the intervals in working out the consequent thoughts and ideas at home. And the immense value of picture galleries to the serious student is in itself of vital importance. The perception of this induced Monsieur Christen to organise some courses of study, during which he conducted parties of students from London to Paris, visiting the galleries and the two Salons, with intervals of sketching in various country districts, between visits to the galleries of Switzerland, Holland, and Belgium.

One must regret that the rules of the admirable and



*Mr. George Sim, A.L.S.
Author of "The Vertebrate Fauna of Dee," etc.,
in his workshop at Aberdeen.*

representative collection in our own National Gallery are not drawn up on broader lines. The grievance of only being allowed to copy pictures (in a collection belonging to the nation) on two days in each week is a very old one. Permission to lecture to his students whilst taking them round the pictures was freely accorded to him in continental galleries, but refused in London. One is tempted to inquire *why* art education should be thus starved and stunted in the richest city in the world; and to speculate whether there is not something wrong in the whole British way of looking at art, that has ended in driving her artists elsewhere for their training?

Let us return to our representative student, hoping, for her own sake, that she does not belong to the extremely wealthy classes, else she will be in danger of being assured that as she has not to work for her living, there is no need to study art exhaustively! Surely it would be the very irony of fate thus to penalise her for her unfortunately comfortable circumstances, by condemning her to a less thorough training than her penniless fellow-student will enjoy. And yet I have known several cases of the kind. Again I would say, why should this be? Why reverse in *painting* the expenditure that would be a matter of course in *music*?

For the student whose art is to be her means of livelihood no training can be too thorough; and parents must reflect that the possession of some capital to start with is as absolutely necessary for her when that training is completed, until she can be self-supporting, as is a similar outlay when her brothers are launched upon the world.

Nor should parents be discouraged if they *have* sent their daughters to Paris, and considerable time elapses before there are many tangible results. They may comfort themselves by reflecting that a student may be making real and satisfactory progress, yet never have a picture in the Salon or Royal Academy. Unluckily such exhibiting has grown to be looked upon as the hall-mark of success by the "man in the street." It is *never* thus accepted by

artists. They recollect hearing that a picture by the veteran Harpignies, one of the finest landscape painters in France, was rejected a few years ago by our Royal Academy. Comment is needless.

A short interview with Monsieur Christen at an exhibition in Antwerp, of which the notes have come into my possession, may have interest in connection with the subject of this chapter.

He was before one of the pictures in the Antwerp Exposition, seemingly lost to all his surroundings, now stooping and peering closely at it, then walking slowly backward away from it. At last he seated himself before it, and I seized the opportunity of making myself known to him.

"What do you think of it?" I asked, pointing to the picture.

"Well, I am puzzled, because never have I seen a picture that expressed nature *so truly*, and yet lacked all of nature's charm. This sounds contradictory, but the picture itself is that; it was some time before I noticed whether it was a seascape or a landscape, I was so carried away with the clever manipulation of the paint; and I am sure the man who did that felt the same. It took some amount of cleverness to make that sun so dazzling, and to arrange those sun-spots all over the picture. It is truly wonderful."

"What school, on the whole, do you consider the most artistic?"

"Well, the present Dutch School pleases me very much. I believe, however, it is going through the same stage of anarchy as the others; the struggle for skill in composition and colour, startling arrangements of atmosphere, technique of all kinds; still the love of art for itself is also evident."

"And the Flemish School?"

"It does not compare so favourably with some of the others. I have been struck with its technique. The



A corner of Dartmouth

Belgians possess great skill in the research for pleasant tones and the clever handling of paint; they seem to use a lot to say very little. That picture there of Brunin and that of Struys show what I mean. The eye is chained by the detail and finish, and the great skill shown in the delineation of the still life, but they do not rouse much feeling, except the admiration for that skill. Perhaps I am severe, but I feel almost colour-blind from looking so long at that dazzling sun of Jephson's."

"But their portraits?"

"Portrait-painting has also come down to a mere question *de métier!* It makes one a little harsh in judgment to come from the building containing the old pictures to this one of the modern. Have you seen the portrait there of the old man by Rembrandt? Ah! *that's* portrait painting, real and true; you are not distracted with technique there; it is carefully hidden, so that you feel the spirit and sentiment of it; the character of the man is there; it takes hold of you and forces you to feel. If the thought of technique comes in, it is secondary. There is hardly a touch of this to be seen in any school nowadays. You have only to look at the religious pictures of three hundred years ago to see this."

"What was the idea they conveyed to you?"

"After going into the rooms containing the slick well-painted pictures of the present schools, it was as if some one had given me a bunch of gaudy paper flowers after I had been enjoying the fresh fragrance of nature. Whatever may have been the state of ignorant fanaticism in which they lived, they felt strongly the spirit of the religion they rendered. The vivid ideas expressed by those artists can still be felt, and convey to my mind a more satisfactory idea than anything I have seen expressed by any modern artist. They are not perfect, to be sure; their faults are often glaring and grotesque, but perhaps that is why I love them. Perfection nowadays occupies too much of our thoughts, and we never allow ourselves to forget it; but if we could forget technique, and paint as we feel,

it need not matter if we do it with our hands or with our feet, as long as we convey an idea, and as long as we love it."

"Then you keep all your admiration for the old masters, and do not think the modern artists deserve much credit?"

"That is not what I mean at all; but I think, as a critic and a teacher of art, I should do my best to point out where we may still learn something of art.

"Some of our landscape painters deserve great credit for their rendering, and their canvases on our drawing-room walls seem like windows open to nature. Their *genre* pictures are often charming and even witty, telling very prettily their stories, and they seem to satisfy the demand of a great number of people."

Monsieur Christen broke off at this point, as time was running short, and he was about to leave on the following morning for Amsterdam, where he wished to study the Rembrandts.

This interview, which, I believe, dates from either 1893 or 1894, is interesting, as it shows how much he felt even then about the over emphasis laid upon technique and its importance.

I once heard an experienced English teacher when lecturing on art, pass Puvis de Chavannes rather lightly by, on the score that he "had no technique." Another artist, also British, made the same objection to our own Watts! Yet these two painters are placed amongst the immortals, by the united and universal verdict of the entire artistic world!

Again I say, "Comment is needless."



*Belfast Lough
from Carnmoney Hill.*





Rodolphe ^{at} 35.

CHAPTER IV

“MONSIEUR CHRISTEN”

1893

“We do not not know what ripples of healing are set in motion when we simply smile on one another. Christianity wants nothing so much in the world as sunny people. . . .

“I wonder why it is that we are not all kinder than we are? How much the world needs it! How easily it is done! How instantaneously it acts! How infallibly it is remembered! How superabundantly it pays itself back—for there is no debtor in the world so honourable, so superbly honourable, as love.”—HENRY DRUMMOND.

FULLY a hundred years have rolled by since the town of Belfast, pre-eminently known amongst provincial towns for its love of study and its culture, was affectionately nicknamed “The Northern Athens” of Ireland.

Travelling in those days was only for the rich, ere steam had annihilated distance and revolutionised social habits. Residents in any locality interested in literature, art, or music were more dependent upon one another, much real “education” resulting from the call upon individual effort and initiative. One might almost assert that the biological results of island life were paralleled in these human colonies; and regret the marked character and strong individuality of those homekeeping days, which threaten to disappear under modern conditions of easy wandering.

During the nineteenth century the great linen industry of Belfast rose to its present importance, subsequently rivalled by the shipbuilding yard of Messrs. Harland and Wolff, now the greatest of its kind in the whole world. During the second half of the century its well-known artistic firm of Marcus Ward flourished exceedingly throughout the length and breadth of the land.

In due course a Government School of Art was established to teach designing for damask, pocket-handkerchief borders, ornamental linen bands, and the machine drawing for engineers and shipwrights, and general training in art demanded by these local industries.

Fortunately for Belfast, the headmaster, sent from South Kensington, Mr. T. M. Lindsay, was an excellent organiser, and an able and enthusiastic teacher. Many sketching and illustration clubs flourished under his stimulating rule, in addition to the ordinary routine work. The Art Manager at Marcus Ward's, Mr. John Vinycomb, M.R.I.A., had the same power of evoking enthusiasm in those working under him, and a Ramblers' Sketching Club was started among the artists of that firm. Ulster boasts with justifiable pride that Hugh Thomson, A. D. M'Cormick, George Morrow, and other well-known illustrators, began their art career in Belfast, and were members of these local clubs.

The School of Art and Marcus Ward's having been always closely connected, when the Ramblers' Sketching Club decided to throw open its membership and to admit ladies, the opportunity of joining an association consisting chiefly of old fellow-students was eagerly welcomed. Our beloved headmaster had been translated to a wider sphere as Art Master and Curator of the Art Museum at Rugby, but the enthusiasm for art and habits of organisation he had implanted still survived, and gradually transferred themselves to the Ramblers' Sketching Club and its interests.

Many of us who had hitherto worked entirely under the tutelage of South Kensington, first tried our unaided powers in the primitive upper room, which was the "local habitation" of the "Ramblers." There was not even a water-supply nor a sink. We took it in turns to attend to the fire, and brought water in bottles with us. When hopelessly dirty, some adventurous member had to carry down the can and empty it in the gutter of what was the principal shopping street in the city!

Life model classes and sketching excursions were held, exhibitions and lectures on art organised, and an immense

amount of voluntary work done by the Ramblers, who developed afterwards into the Belfast Art Society, which has now an honourable record of twenty-eight years' valuable work, and is still the only provincial Society in Ireland holding a public picture exhibition every year.

It was in the summer of 1893 that Monsieur Christen first visited Belfast. In spite of all our efforts, a certain flatness was stealing over the Society, when rumours began to reach us from Dublin, telling of a wonderfully gifted teacher who was rousing tremendous enthusiasm in that artistic, impressionable city. But many good things go to Dublin that never visit our northern capital, and a twelve-month was to elapse before a friend of mine undertook to organise a course of sketching lessons for him round Belfast. Shortly before his arrival serious illness laid her aside. She sent for me and urged me to co-operate with a mutual friend, who was Hon. Sec. of the Art Society, in getting up the class, pleading that his teaching would be an invaluable help to our beloved Society. We acceded to her request; the classes were rapidly organised, and proved a brilliant success. Monsieur Christen enjoyed describing how he first became aware of my existence by the arrival of a letter five sheets long asking for instructions, explaining the circumstances, and making innumerable suggestions.

I met him for the first time two days before the classes commenced. His greeting was characteristic and unconventional. With a cordial grasp of my hand, he said: "So this is my business Miss Thompson!"

How much character there is in a handshake! what an infallible criterion it is! And his strong sunny personality harmonised with that first impression. Erect, alert, with the springy step of a mountaineer, curly brown hair clustering round the lofty brow of an idealist, a frank and friendly outlook from kindly blue eyes: such is the vision memory pictures of a face illuminated by an intense expression of goodwill to its fellow-men. His was a nature so vivid, so intensely alive, that it radiated quite unconsciously a cheering hopeful influence on all within its reach,

passing like a ray of sunshine across the landscape of their lives.

I was many years older than he was, and a steady friendship sprang up between us, cemented by mutual interest in art, enthusiastic love of nature, and a desire to promote all movements connected with artistic education. Much of his leisure during this first visit and in succeeding years was spent at my old home, Macedon, where he could obtain the rest and solitude so necessary to a teacher who threw himself so tremendously into his work.

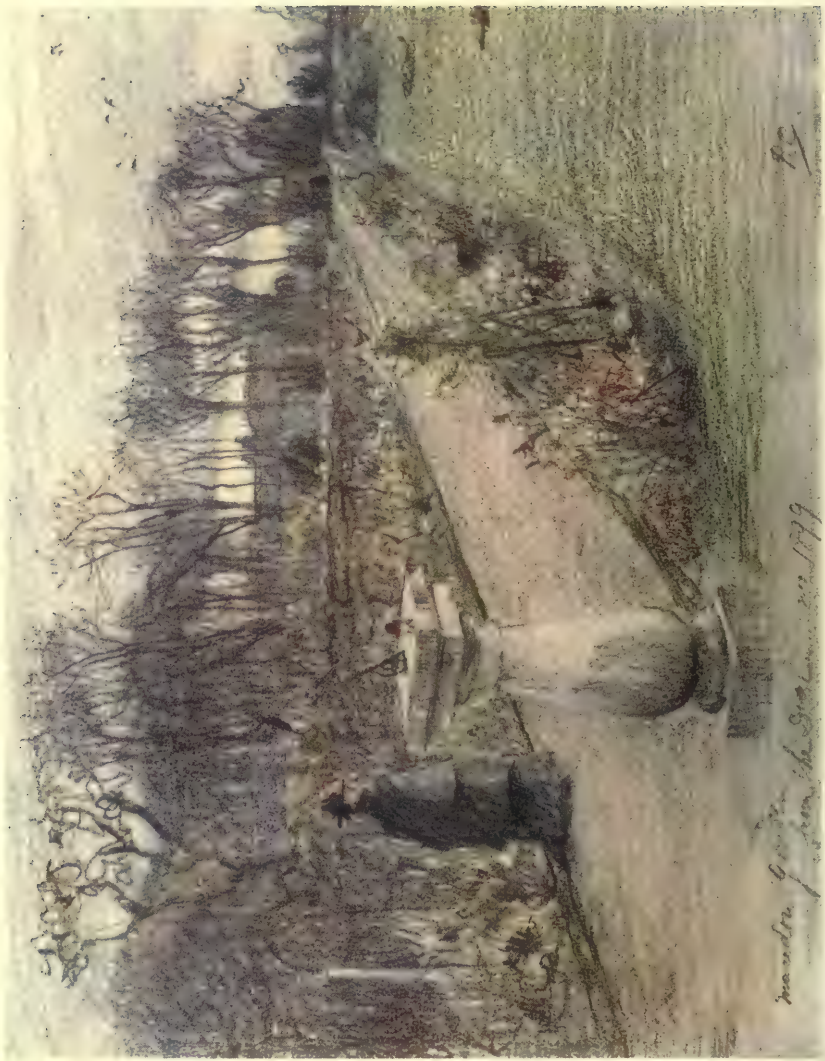
Macedon was a charming old house, built on a plateau some sixty feet above the sea, running down to a mass of basaltic rock that jutted out into Belfast Lough, known as Macedon Point. This bulwark saved the plateau from the encroaching tides, which had eaten away the land on each side, so that, looking from the house, there was a glorious seascape on each side of the lawn. Away at the head of the Lough lay Belfast, poetised by five miles of distance into a vague forest of masts and mill-chimneys, with a range of low hills at either side of the Lough. Looking the reverse way eastward between the lofty trunks of tall beech-trees that grew to the very edge of the water, the coasts of Antrim and Down swept away to the mouth of the Lough, where in fine weather the blue hills of Scotland could be dimly seen.

On Sundays Monsieur Christen usually walked from Belfast in time for morning church, and spent his afternoons in the pleasant old-fashioned garden amongst fruit, flowers, and trees, where my mother fed the birds on an ancient sun-dial, and my sister and I had a studio, always placed at his disposal during his Belfast visits.

Sometimes he and I went for a walk up the hills, as we both delighted in a good country scramble, and were richly repaid by the spacious panorama that lay beneath us, the distant roar of trains being mellowed into harmony with the songs of larks soaring overhead, the tender greys and greens, or flitting lights and shades fading away into the soft Irish distance.



Looking east from Macdon Point



R.C.

Walter Gropius from the Garden, 1899

An old-world Garden.

During these rambles I learned a great deal about his life and adventures—about St. Imier, embosomed in the Jura mountains, where he was born, of his grim shoemaker father, who flogged his children so unmercifully that he had run away from home when only thirteen and a half, and supported himself ever since; of the long hard struggle before he could obtain the art training on which all his heart was set.

He told me of his approaching marriage to a young, rich, and pretty American, whom he loved very much, and the beautiful summer they were to spend in an ideal spot between three lakes in his beloved Switzerland. “And yet,” he added, half laughing, half ruefully, “I have always said an artist should not marry!”

He spoke of his ardent hope ere long to lay aside all teaching, and give his entire mind and energy to his own painting, to be an artist pure and simple, living for art alone, putting on the canvas the noble pictures he dreamt of, to live for ever and rejoice the hearts of men long after the artist himself had passed away.

His pre-eminent characteristic was certainly that merry, sunny temperament that nothing seemed to quench, united with a ready adaptability and fertility of resource that could meet and vanquish all difficulties, and never dreaded hard work. He used to start from Belfast at six in the morning, walking the five miles to Macedon to paint the portrait of an early-rising friend, breakfast with us, and be off to the train at nine to meet his class in town.

I soon found that his rare aptitude for reading character was combined with a keenness of observation and deductive power I have never seen equalled. Most women judge character instinctively and pretty correctly, but we arrive at our conclusions by intuition, and can rarely tell whence we have drawn them, whereas Monsieur Christen could indicate the lines and gestures from which he drew his conclusions.

His philosophy of life was distinct and decided, a deliberate conscious *habit* of being happy and contented.

One learns much from such a nature.

When I remarked, "It would be pleasant to have so-and-so, or do such and such a thing," he would say, "If you are not happy to-day, you will not be happy to-morrow;" or when criticising others, I was gently reminded, "They may not have had a chance of being different." In later days I learned that his favourite chapter was the thirteenth of First Corinthians.

But this "charity" of his was a sturdy thing, standing erect on a wholesome backbone of common sense and clear judgment, not that invertebrate and irritating good nature that can never condemn anything for lack of a definite standard.

His courtesy and thoughtful deference to old people were charming; he was also a lover of children, who invariably took to him, as the little human animal is quite as quick at knowing who really loves it as any kitten or puppy.

Of course, he delighted in pretty girls, and flung himself into the enjoyment of their society with a frank abandon and whole-hearted absorption that were delightful to watch. With friendly fun and camaraderie, and the natural homage of an artist to a pretty face, which he always longed to immortalise, instinctively the sketch-book came out, and another head was added to the gallery of portraits that records his journey through the world.

Though a thorough artist in temperament, Monsieur Christen was very methodical in spite of his Bohemian ways. He had preserved all letters and papers from his earliest years, in spite of his many wanderings, had a vague idea of writing an autobiography some day, and a very definite intention of making a book about our travels, to be profusely illustrated with his own sketches.

This memorial volume inevitably takes a different standpoint. It is founded on my personal impressions and memories, supplemented from his correspondents' letters and extracts from our own notebooks—though his own letters and sketches must always be his best historians.



*Our drawing-room at St. Imier
Photographed by Monsieur Christien in 1903*

Some of his artist friends have kindly responded to my request for fuller information about his student days, thereby assisting in showing him “as others see” him.

Can any one recall him without a tender irresistible smile stealing over them, born of many merry memories—quenched, alas! in an illimitable regret? For such I would fain try to tell of his utter happiness and contentment in our lovely little home on Deeside—of the six beautiful years we spent together before the end came.

From the multitude of very beautiful letters I received after he had entered into rest, I have culled a few sentences that seem to me likely to please and interest those friends who knew him best.

Happy is the man who inspired his wife with such devotion, and left her with such memories! That he deserves it all, few know better than I do. The world somehow does not seem quite the same since that time, and no evening passes without my thinking of him.—J. R.

Yes! of course we should love to have a photo of our old friend; I should like him to look as he did one day as we were driving from your door—bright, cheery, and handsome—chaffing me as we drove off.

Personality, I believe, remains in that other land, tho’ more glorious by far.

Maybe I shall have a greeting of the same kind when my “feet fall on that other shore.” His poor neighbours and men like the “Tramp” will have known him best.—E. M.

When I opened the *Free Press* of Saturday and saw the intimation of Monsieur Christen’s death, I felt that poignant sense of loss which it is so difficult to express, but which remains long after the first pang has passed away. The happiness of you both in each other’s company was so evident as to spread a magnetic influence of the same kind to others.

I have had the pleasure of your dear departed husband's regard for many years, and I shall cherish it as a memory to be carefully guarded; he was devoted to his friends and to his art, and one who never faltered in his allegiance and devotion to all that was highest and best.

Now the mist has come down—but only for a time. The day will break and the shadows flee away.—J. B.

I feel I must thank you for the sketch of Rodolphe's. It was made last year on the 25th November, whilst we were travelling in the train to Edinburgh to see the Watts pictures. Rodolphe had a marvellous faculty for all art work, and would undoubtedly have made a great name had he been spared; and yet as you say, I believe his influence on others will prove his most lasting monument. I find it very hard to realise that our human intimacy is at an end, and that I shall only have recollections.

I know what a terrible blow it must all be to you, and how futile it is to offer mere human sympathy; and yet we must be grateful for even a few years of that perfect fellowship that you and he enjoyed, it is so very, very rare.

The recollections of his high courage and bright cheerful outlook on life will save us from morbidness, and from the extreme depression that accompanies it.—J. S.

All your life long you should feel proud that you were loved by such a man.—C. F.

He had never any dread of death. How vividly I can recall the sudden pang when one Sunday, as we passed the little graveyard below the bridge of Gairn, loitering arm-in-arm, as was our wont, on the way to church, he remarked calmly, "That is where some day you and I will be lying side by side."

I can recall his gentle surprised look when he got no answer, and turning, saw that my eyes were full of sudden tears. How tenderly he explained his feeling that we should



A Pool on the Gairn; afternoon.

have no dread of death, that it was merely rest for us after work ; only an episode in our eternal life.

Longfellow, whose poetry he knew and loved, has embodied the same idea throughout the “ Golden Legend ” :—

“ Slowly, slowly, up the wall
 Steals the sunshine, steals the shade :
 Evening damps begin to fall,
 Evening shadows are displayed.
 Round me, o'er me, everywhere,
 All the sky is grand with clouds,
 And athwart the evening air
 Wheel the swallows home in crowds.
 Shafts of sunshine from the west
 Paint the dusky windows red ;
 Darker shadows, deeper rest,
 Underneath and overhead.
 Darker, darker, and more wan,
 In my breast the shadows fall ;
 Upward steals the life of man,
 As the sunshine from the wall,
 From the wall into the sky
 From the roof along the spire ;
 Ah ! the souls of those that die
 Are but sunbeams lifted higher.

Only a step into the open air
 Out of a tent already luminous
 With light that shines through its transparent walls.”

CHAPTER V

A GREAT TEACHER

MONSIEUR CHRISTEN'S influence over his students was unbounded. I had wondered in Dublin when I heard of ladies sitting sketching out of doors in the cold and damp of our Irish winters, but the wonder vanished when I felt the infectious atmosphere of his enthusiasm for art, his intense personal interest in each individual student, and listened to his stimulating teaching. He had a wonderful amount of that mysterious gift we can only describe as "charm"—men and women felt it equally. His heart was large enough to find a niche for every one he met; he never seemed to forget them or lose sight of their personality (though he frequently forgot their names), and he cherished warmly the memory of friends scattered all over the world.

When I first met him nine hundred British students had already studied under him; he understood and liked the national temperament, and knew how to stimulate his pupils to persevere.

He deprecated too much teaching; his idea was to try and give his pupils certain leading principles to guide their walk, and to induce them to *think for themselves*, wishing that individuality should be preserved and developed. One never saw in his classes the melancholy spectacle of a series of studies by different students so much alike that one could not tell the one from the other, being more or less successful imitations of the teacher's work.

I insert here some admirable notes on his teaching, by the kind permission of the author, a valued friend and pupil of his in Dublin.



A Pool in Glenmistick.

*Notes and Recollections of Monsieur Rod. Christen's
Teaching, 1892*

By Mrs. C. UNIACKE TOWNSHEND

"First reflect. Do not hurry to make a photographic representation of the scene before you. Gaze at your subject until you feel impressed by the meaning and poetry of it; feel it is a picture that conveys something to your mind—sunlight, shade, repose, loneliness, a busy world, a sleepy corner, a home where children play. In whatever way the scene impresses you, try and interpret by your pencil.

"Determine your bounds—arrange your composition—how much of the scene shall be included in your picture?

"Weigh your quantity of light and shade.

"Get your balance.

"Where is the interest? In the sky? No; then do not put in much sky. It may be in the foreground where the figures are—or the animals, the pigs, or the donkey with its cart getting loaded or unloaded. Concentrate your force on the point of interest.

"Then, having determined your bounds, see to the values. Close your eyes. Determine carefully, anxiously, eagerly, undoubtedly, where is the greatest light. Does any spot come up to that in intensity? No; then all other lights must take their places with due modesty of intensity and bow to their superior.

"Where is your greatest dark? That blur of trees on the left—with the eyes closed it looks like a mass of dark. Compare it with other shades, none quite so dark. Now in all your pictures all values must be weighed with regard to the greatest dark and greatest light. Not a spot of colour put in without its tone—its value being considered with regard to everything else. Weigh, look everywhere, up, down, at everything. With sharp, quick decision, set its value right; don't put in a touch without knowing why.

Make your brain work; think hard, decide with reason, act promptly, paint vigorously and courageously; better make a mistake from over-decision than hesitating, uncertain, blunder on, painting without knowing why you put your touches.

“In putting on your colour, think where is your brightest, purest, most brilliant bit of colour. Set it in—bright, clear, pure. If too crude, it is easier to tone it down than to recover brilliancy once lost.

“Don't forget the tone of your atmosphere. Is it blue, red, grey, or yellow? Cold or warm? Let all your tones partake of the prevailing atmosphere. Colour—shall I call it tone, temper, thought, feeling? It must be felt in your heart before your fingers can tell the tale.

“As you put in that bit of green, look round, over, under, everywhere; is its value right compared to each and everything in the picture? Every detail must be weighed with each and every atom and touch of colour in your picture. Close your eyes. Compare your work with the landscape with closed eyes. Open your eyes, look at your picture, then at the landscape, with care. Compare, weigh, criticise.

“In looking at your subject you should get your impression of tone and shadow at some favourable moment. Fix it in your mind—tone, colour, lights, shadows, atmospheric effect. If you like, make a quick sketch in charcoal or colour to fix some effect which you admire but which will not stay; the facts will remain, and you can finish and perfect your sketch at any time. The shades and values will alter else in a few moments, and distract your attention by their varying effects.

“You can often get an impression and fix it in your mind, with notes to help you; then get your sketch correct, and do your work at home in the studio.

“Don't try to make photographic representations of the view. Give your own idea, conveyed in your own way, from your own heart and brain.



From Carnmoney Hill



Cave Hill



Composition Studies near Belfast

“More than ever lay to heart the injunction, ‘Think before you set to work!’ Don’t get carried away with the glory of a bit of colour; it may be beautiful in itself, but it does not make a picture.

“Think of the lines, of the composition. What idea do you want to carry out? And then in working let everything be in harmony with everything else. That green bank in the distance truly is green, but compare it with every other value in the picture before you have it so green. What colour is the grass just there? Full of the blue of the sky. Don’t paint things as you know they are—look at them and paint them as you see them. Strive for honesty. Don’t sacrifice yourself to detail; look at things broadly, largely. Paint the sun, not the specks on it.

“Let the poetry, the calm of Nature penetrate your soul, purify, and bless you, and raise you above the small crosses, the daily cares and trials that drag one down to the earth, instead of letting your spirit soar above, beyond that lower level in gazing at Nature’s loveliness, and drinking in her lessons of harmony; and learning, face to face with her beauty, to be noble, to be pure, unselfish, and untiring in one’s struggle to live a noble life.”

Monsieur Christen’s first course of sketching lessons in Belfast was held in the last fortnight of the month of May and the first days of June 1893. The weather was as changeable as our artistic hopes and fears, but our zeal never flagged. Occasionally he gave a demonstration, painting before us, to illustrate his theoretical teaching, but always insisted that he did not profess to teach us how to *paint*, but how to *see*!

We met in Belfast at ten in the morning, and went together to the spot selected beforehand, and “Monsieur” made several hasty composition studies, leaving us to select whichever attracted us most. He insisted on a rest in the middle of the day for lunch, and I think it was to bribe us to take it, for the good of our work, that he instituted a short discourse during the luncheon hour.

On a hot June day a gifted genius brought a small portable kettle with her, inviting Monsieur Christen and a friend of her own to afternoon tea. Two-and-twenty tealess students glared at this female Columbus with envious and thirsty eyes.

Monsieur Christen, however, disliked anything that broke up a party, and it became a habit to find a cottage for afternoon tea for the whole class. If cups ran short we used mugs, bowls, sketching cups, and once the lid of the kettle. But there was always plenty of fun and laughter, and this wise and tactful insistence on the spirit of camaraderie fused the mixed elements of the class into one harmonious whole, and sent us home full of friendly feelings towards one another.

He was very frank in his criticisms. Once when my turn came he remarked that the subject was well chosen, but there was absolutely no sense of proportion or value, and the drawing was all wrong.

"Well," I remarked, "I did think I could *draw!*"

"What a delusion!" was the instant retort.

But I do not think earnest students ever mind home truths from a teacher whom they trust; they are conscious enough of their own shortcomings, their utter inability to realise their ideal; and his frankness never crushed us, though our own sense of failure often did. Once a member of the class asked him, Was it worth while to go on working? would she ever make anything of it?

"Does it give you pleasure?" was his question. "If it does, go on, by all means. You cannot all be artists, but you can all enjoy trying to interpret Nature."

And how we did enjoy those lessons, and gladly "lived laborious days" until the next summer, trying to carry his precepts into practice.

I have listened to Mr. W. B. Yeats lecturing on the function of poetry, fairy tales, and ancient beliefs. He made his audience realise their value to the Irish peasantry, as he told how they wafted those whose spirits were steeped in imaginative dreams out of the poverty and dull monotony

of their daily life into a golden region of poetical delight.

The hero-worship of a student for a gifted master or mistress has the same magical power, stimulating the mind, and raising the disciple as if on wings of joy. Yet it is often misunderstood and laughed at by those unable to enthuse about anything. Truly *they* are to be pitied, for they lose the very salt of life.

To ardent students the memory of those halcyon days is imperishable. Life goes on, and the lessons are long laid by, but let two of the students meet again, and lo! the years roll back, and a waft of the old artistic joy in life fills the present moment with a flood of remembrance and sympathy, that impels them to try and help on others who are treading the same golden pathway.

With apologies to their unknown authors, I will here insert selections from two amusing effusions from Dublin pupils, which Monsieur Christen keenly enjoyed, and carefully preserved in the old brown album so familiar to all his students.

SAD MEMORIES

"A burnt child dreads the fire." This is an excellent saying, but it did not cross my mind in time to save me from another sad experience, for no sooner was it announced in the studio that Monsieur Christen was coming again than four or five of us were consulting over it. Should we join or not?

"Of course I will," I said to myself, and then aloud, "It would be a pity to let the opportunity pass. Miss Manning says we are greatly improved." Some one suggests, "We go through a lot of fatigue when he is here." Some look doubtful, but, like the influenza, we fall victims to the infection whether we will or no, and make up our minds to go.

That evening I suggest to my people the prospect of more "Christian lessons," as they call them. One says, "Well, one good thing is, he makes you work." Another, "I hope you will be in better spirits this time." I say to

myself, "I will make up my mind not to mind one word he says." A good resolution, but alas! I did not carry it out.

The first sketch I tried I heard the heart-stirring words, "Beaucoup de progrès." Could it be really true? And on the next day, "Not bad at all; you are greatly improved."

I like to think of that delightful time; I felt so happy, I dwell on it, but I am sorry to say it was not repeated. I know he enjoys our misery; but we have our revenge, for when he is very hot and tired we insist that he shall paint for us. With the natural politeness of his nation he complies. We crowd round him (only a few of us can see) and ask questions, and talk all the time, and worry him as much as possible. I give him a dirty palette to paint with; he gave it back to me one day, but I will pay him off another time, I hope.

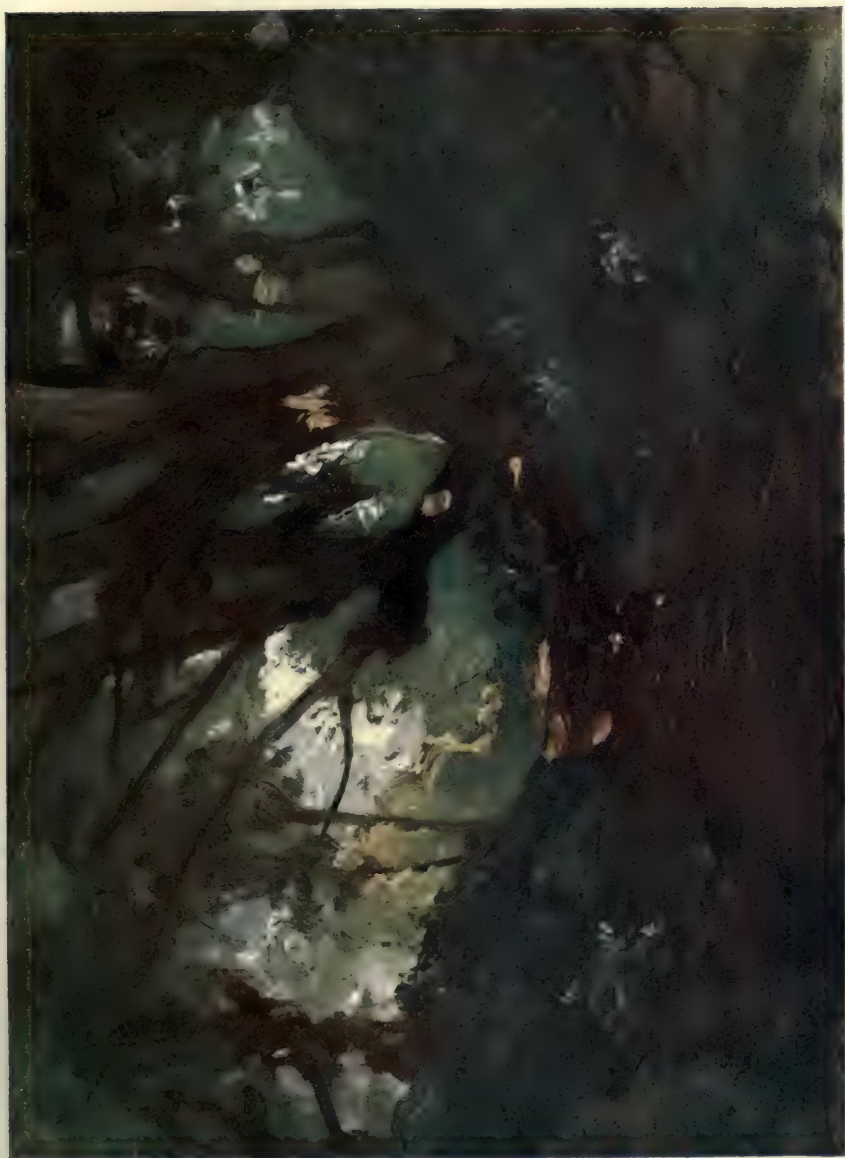
Many and great are the evils which beset our way—yelling children, hunger, dust, fatigue, to say nothing of looking like a set of tramps exposed to the derision of the public; then the home circle, the mocking laugh when I produce my sketch. My brother's ridicule is hard to bear; he says, "Well, I often thought you an idiot, now I believe you a simpleton. You could get two things into the Academy, and then bring home such daubs." Such is life—the more we learn, the less we seem to know. I am not happy—how could I be? But no one else is in the class. The natural good spirits of our country may make us feel better after a while.

Monsieur Christen chooses a sketch, so that if we miss *everything*, we shall have a tower or a haystack to look at. I heard him say so: shows what he thinks of us. He hopes some of us will be yet pointed out as pupils of his. I would advise him not to build castles in the air, and in the meantime I conclude with the words of the poet—

"Art is long, and time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though strong and brave"—

feel very often that looking everywhere at the same time and using all your energy on a very hot day is enough

"To put one in an early grave."



In Nightingale Valley, Clifton.

"ALL I SUFFERED"

Monsieur Christen is coming! No sooner did I hear it than off I went to take my place in the highest spirits, feeling as if I were made of india-rubber or corks, and as light as champagne. The amusing way with these art lessons is that one feels like that at first, then comes a reaction; that feeling of buoyancy soon wears off, then—lower, lower down we go till we reach the depths of dark despair.

A lovely day, according to Monsieur Christen—white frost, keen wind, very cold place of meeting, Baggot Street Bridge. Down by the turf stacks we go, an admiring crowd in our wake; we stand by the canal. "Oh, here he is!" Yes, quite true, here he is, looking as if the notice was in the right place in the paper, under "Public Amusements," and painting was as easy as breathing. We all stand round him, and he begins:—

"Look this way; close your eyes; observe the atmosphere all round. Compare everything," and so on . . . "and now—*do it*. I will be back in half-an-hour."

He vanishes; we look at one another, unpack, and set to work. I begin to wish he would come back, when I see a gleam of relief come over the other anxious watchers. I see a dozen things wrong, and hope he won't come to me first. He does not. Then my attention is diverted by seeing my sketching-stool in the canal, and a boy fishes it out just in time to let Monsieur take a seat. I wait breathlessly. He says: "Your colour is poor; you use too much white. Your values are wrong. Do you not see the darkest spot of the whole thing? Close your eyes. Observe it in a mass." I do so, and it is plain as daylight. I sit down and think I will go home for lunch and sit by the fire! At home I am more plain than polite. I break the fact that my picture is bad; they try to soothe me and say it is lovely. I am ashamed to think I said, "What matters what you think, when you don't know."

Time goes on. I am gaining in knowledge. I am

getting calmer ; sometimes even gleams of cheerfulness steal over me. Monsieur thinks I will get on. I will try to believe him in this as well as in values. He has had to repeat the same advice to each one forty times. Perhaps some day one bright pupil will see the key in a sketch without being told. Although my sufferings many days have been intense, it has done me good, and pain I will, or die for it. And if we have suffered, I can safely add, so has Monsieur Christen !

CHAPTER VI

A TRAGEDY

1893-1896

It is impossible to depict a life truly without including the innumerable human influences that, with delicate touches or shattering blows, mould the character and make or mar the career.

When the tide of Monsieur Christen's success as an artist was in full flow, and his friends prophesied great things about his future, he became engaged to an American lady, who was studying art in Paris, to whom he was married on the 22nd June 1893.

Ah! if only men and women would realise how sacred a human heart is! how easily they may blast the happiness or irretrievably cripple the entire career of a fellow-creature, surely many would pause in the idle task of winning a heart they did not care to keep; surely there would be fewer unhappy marriages and fewer ruined lives.

Three years spent in constant hard work under deepening sorrow and disillusionment, portraits and painting-classes following one another in rapid succession under circumstances which his wounded pride kept totally hidden; forcing himself to appear the gayest of the gay, inevitably destroyed his health, and he became subject to frequent and distressing heart attacks. To his own intensely loyal and faithful nature it had been difficult to realise that to another the only joy was to find new worlds to conquer. In 1896 he applied for a divorce, which was granted, no defence being made. He was now on the verge of a complete breakdown, and resolved to give up teaching as soon as the engagements made for 1897 were carried out.

Perhaps the story in this melancholy chapter may warn some thoughtless reader, and save him from incurring similar crushing misery. He always said those terrible years had taken something out of him that he never could get back. They certainly affected his artistic career, causing a strange pause, a temporary arrest in the artistic self-development he had pursued so bravely and persistently. Slowly, very slowly, the effect of the strain passed away, and the full enjoyment and delight in his creative art had returned, ere the summons came to lay it aside for ever in this world.

We rarely referred to those tragic years. My one desire was to help him to forget them as much as possible.

No sensitive nature can pass through such a spiritual crisis, when love and trust, shattered and betrayed, are hurled from their throne, and the dread feeling of hatred threatens to usurp their place, without the keenest anguish. To one so highly strung, so vividly able to see things from another's standpoint, such a catastrophe was crushing. His ideal of womanhood, drawn from his profound love of his mother and sister, was such a lofty one, and his constant desire was to help women in their heavy struggle with the battle of life.

Yet his own character was not embittered, but deepened and purified, and rendered even more merciful in judging others, for the sake of the one who had so sinned against him, who was fully and entirely forgiven. An idealist himself, he dealt with life on ideal lines, and his standard was that set up in his favourite chapter, the thirteenth of First Corinthians.

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Childhood.

CHAPTER VII

NATURE AND ART IN SOUTHERN ITALY

PENSION MÜLLER, *via* PARTENOPE No. 4,
NAPLES, 4th Janvier 1898.

DEAR MISS THOMPSON,—Happy New Year to you, and very kind wishes for your happiness during this new year.

The pen, the table, paper, my head and all in the room swing and rock gently up and down while I write these few lines. This morning about one o'clock, while I rested myself in a steady bed after having said good-bye to all the friends on the *Cuzco*, this heaving began. Yet you might think that I had been unwell on board; but no, I never for one moment was the least indisposed. In the Bay of Biscay and the Gulf of Lions the trouble of the ship was great; the *Cuzco* is not a steady boat, the rolling of chains, falling of boxes, boots walking round all by themselves, children squalling, tons of water falling on the deck, men and women in trouble, and not silent, swearing still heard above the wind in the masts and the howling of the sea, will you guess from that description I was travelling *steerage*. My voyage from London to Naples, including food and all tips and extras, cost me £5. Quelle déception for you when I read your good letter this morning; no bishops, no titled ladies and aristocrats! Gold diggers for West Australia, labourers for Tasmania, two peasants from Finland, Paddy from Kilkenny and Mike from Cork, a printer from Liverpool, a bookbinder from New York, a telegraphist with family from Manchester, two blackguards from London, a wreckage from all the great cities in the old and new world, a lassie from Aberdeen with a loon from Peterhead, married the evening before they started on this

long trip of five weeks; what a honeymoon of sea-sickness, hash, porridge and treacle, tough American beef and watery potatoes, all brought in big basins almost as for pigs; and pigs we were, some of us, plunging spoons and forks in the same basin to fish up what may. Sixty people in all our cabin contained, twenty-eight all in a row, top of each other, and as close as sardines, the bunks or berths just enough to lie flat. My *voisin* was an Irish boy of twenty-two, going to Melbourne to finish his education as priest, all day praying till far in the night, mumbling over his beads, kneeling anywhere, he was with fortitude and under trying difficulties half cracked already with the petrifying discipline.

In the morning I always found him at the foot of his bed on his knees, blocking up the spare space, and there, half clothed, for half-an-hour he mumbled his devotions. In the night he was coughing my head off; our bodies being only separated by a small plank an inch thick and three inches high. He was a good, *high-minded, moral, fearless fellow, no education, no learning.* Yet when he opened to me his big trunk full of books, all antiquated, bought only because they cost one penny or twopence on the stall, not a single useful author, pamphlets by priests and other useless books, I felt a pang of sorrow at the countenance of his earnest, stubborn face. Those ten days he observed nothing, got nothing from his surroundings, lived always in his own inward self, and could only judge people and things through the little he got from priests.

In that motley gang I went under the name of "The Brigand Chief," or "The Captain." After we left Plymouth I was elected chairman of this "hétéroclite" party, and now that I have introduced you to the surroundings I will tell you to-morrow all our adventures.

The warm sun is streaming all over my room. From my balcony I can see through an orange grove into the lovely Bay of Naples. It's a warm summer day with calm water, and I must go and contemplate the warm orange groves.



At Dartmouth

Never shall I regret to have gone steerage; the time was never slow, and I have learned and done a lot.

Yesterday evening I had a glimpse at the Vesuve, all in a glow of lava, red through the darkness.

From under my windows came this morning such a noise which brought me to my senses at 10 o'clock. One cry was heard above the others, the imitation of an old crow, but nowhere was one to be seen. It's the call made to the mules and asses, and an extraordinary cry it is. Coachmen, cartmen, and muleteers all use it.

I will not try to describe Naples, it has been done by better men, Musset, &c. But this much I will say, so far I have never seen a more picturesque city for colour, for sketching. Immense houses, narrow streets on the top of each other, palaces in ruin and otherwise, orange groves here and there, hanging balconies with powerful cactus plants, patches of innumerable colours of purple, red, and yellow, rich and varied.

But to return to the voyage. Several of the friends on board had left the foggy country for their health, all in great hopes of the future country. One man with wife and children, a typographer, a little man all nerves, witty, kind, and cheerful, possessing a *bad cold*, had sold out and realised just enough money to take him to Sydney, where he was going on speculation. A more perfect and happy couple in their misery I never met. "My wife is a lady," says he, "if it were not for her I would not try to fight life; what does it matter if I suffer or want, I do not care, but only for her." In the evening he would give us recitations, or entertain us with songs or dancing. He tried to be a dancing-master in Bath, ventured also a restaurant in Liverpool, typewriter in Oxford, composer of typography in London; always his health failed him. Then he ventured on the turf as bookmaker, where he lost his last penny—cheerful always!

There was also an American lady of the Salvation Army, who proposed to hold a service on deck, which nobody encouraged, and which consequently came to nothing, always

waiting with the Bible on her knees; I heard her say to a big ruffian just back from Johannesburg, who had been on shore for a couple of hours at Plymouth: "Why do you make a beast of yourself? You know you should not drink thus, it is forbidden in the Bible." She said that in a clear hard voice. At other times she engaged with another bully, a big American blackleg, who knew his Bible at his finger ends, and who was an unbeliever. For me, except rendering small little politenesses or services, I avoided her. Elle avait une figure en lame de couteau, et le corps ditto.

I have some of these types in my sketch-book, and you will see them some day. A young Army Hospital chemist, with whom I chummed at once, going to take charge of his brother's widow and children, and a heritage of £10,000. Also a man, twice married, going back to his farm in the interior of Australia, who brought an immense turkey on board. We had it cooked, eight of us giving a shilling each, and had a feast.

Pat from Kilkenny was a masterpiece. Lever never could have found a better type, and he made himself loved by every one. Six foot three and a lovely brogue. His simplicity was refreshing, and I was indeed in love with the man. You should have seen him before his plate, it would have done your heart good to see him eat. My! what an appetite. He told me of fox-hunting at home, and his life as a crofter. I know Kilkenny as if I had been there; and there I shall go when in Ireland. A more honest, hearty, and simple man I never came across. His name is Patrick Cassine.

Mike from Cork was a different man, and I must keep him for another time.

I have begun my lessons here. I have a mother and her son; the mother gives me half-an-hour of Italian every day; the son, who plays in the orchestra of the theatre, half-an-hour of piano. By Sunday I will have seen Pompeii, to-morrow the Gallery here. I was at the King's Palace to-day.



Rue de
la Forlun
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Pompaii

12th January.

I have seen Naples and miles and miles round!!! Posilippo, Pozzuoli, Portici, Torre del Greco, Pompeii!—all I can do is to put these notes of admiration. I wandered and wandered in Pompeii. Where is that pride for the progress made? Where is this superiority accomplished in the last two thousand years? Where is this so much lauded civilisation? Where is this so much talked of Christianity?

When I contemplate those temples of Venus, Jupiter, and the Basilica, the art, the simplicity in the richness of its sculpture, and loving care in its design; the architecture of the whole immense town is perfect, houses full of grace, comfort, and distinction, public theatres and baths; all tell of a noble race and of a great people. May I venture this bold comparison, having just come from Belfast, Glasgow, London?—here I contemplate a town just left as it was built two thousand years ago. . . .

I will say no more, and I will not draw conclusions. Were I able to put on paper all that passed through my mind when I was in the Triangular Forum, munching my sandwiches, then perhaps you would indeed hear “*La plainte d'un enfant du 20^{me} siècle!*”

I walked back the whole way from Pompeii to Naples, a very long road, through the whole of the new Naples (rebuilt only four or five years ago), where all is ugly in design, immense clumsy square houses with no style, that might be found anywhere on the continent at the present time; all built “on the cheap” as speculation by companies with only one object—to make money. I arrived home at 8.30, with the Vesuve glowing red in dark clear sky, the bay looking beautiful.

Can you imagine that I met here a watchmaker, a schoolfellow when I was thirteen years old, nor the one nor the other had seen each other since 1873, and we did not know of our existence in Naples, yet he came plump on me: “*Tiens, voilà Christen!*” Is not that extraordinary?

SORRENTO, 20th January.

If ever you come this way and walk from Castellamare to Sorrento, you will see the most picturesque and beautiful place in the world. Is it the exuberance of my spirit? Is it the transition from the misty shores of John Bull? or is it really the realisation of my dream of life? I cannot tell! But I feel I have never lived before now. When I recollect the enthusiasm of former days over lovely countries like Scotland, France, or Holland, it seems only to have been preparation for this Eden. I pluck oranges from the trees, the people are friendly, and I get on already wonderfully well with my Italian, which makes the walking tour most pleasant. When I arrived in the little hotel here I found a Roman and two Neapolitans. That is the way to learn something of a country; no fear for me to go to any English hotel. I meet them in town, and on the road, always among their own countrymen, driving, sight-seeing, with bothersome guides. During the two days I stayed at Pompeii I made some amusing observations whilst sketching amongst the ruins; but I will tell them to you when I show you the sketches.

I was on the top of Vesuvius looking down into the crater, and was most fortunate to see it whilst throwing stones and fire (a terrific noise it made); was nearly choked with the sulphur, covered with ashes, and had my boots burned, and was extraordinarily done up and tired. I did it all on foot, while no one ever goes but on horseback, or in the elevator, or *chaise à porteur*. This ascension, which costs from 25 to 30 francs, for many people from £2 to £5, cost me only 11 francs. Vesuvius is just now in great working condition, and is a sight I shall never forget.

I left Naples with regret. I had a capital teacher of the piano, and made good progress. But I hope to return to Naples when I come from Sicily, and will then have another week's lessons. I met there several artists, one an American I knew already in Paris.

Everything is done in the open air. Not an uncommon



*Amalfi in 1898, looking east.
Before the landslip.*

sight is a woman combing another's hair over her table where she offers fish or fruit for sale, or a mother hunting fleas on the head of her daughter! The poverty is great. Yet it is a rich garden of the world. The grapes grow twenty and thirty feet high.

In my next I will tell you of Calabria; look out on the map the mountains of the Apennines, it is there I am wandering with only my shirt and a change of collars and stockings, two books, and my sketching and water-colour materials hanging from a stick. I have been a long time without news, but all my letters are safe in Naples at Partenope, and I am going to have them forwarded to Salerno.

AMALFI, 30th January.

The material for writing to you is enormous since my last, things have been piling up every day with such rapidity that a volume would scarcely be enough; *aventures de voyage*, incidents, *rencontres*, and always new scenes, and never a bad day, never a drop of rain, the light and transparency of the atmosphere is not exprimable. I have tried to picture it in water-colour, and in crayon-colour; in full swing of art, the sacred fire is kindled in earnest at last, about twenty-four finished drawings and paintings. This place is the most picturesque I have seen in my life, people, peasants, children; whole villages pasted against rocks at incredible heights, towns tumbling down precipices to the sea. I will send you two or three drawings which will give you an idea of the extraordinary country it is the happy lot of your friend to live in! Here I arrived last Monday in a "Carosso" with three horses down from the heights of Sorrento at full speed, every moment afraid to be precipitated down below in the blue Mediterranean. That same day I had walked already five hours with my materials on my back, and my big overcoat on my arm, when I met that coachman returning empty; he bargained and haggled to take me in against my will, followed me for more than half-an-hour, and at last his persistence overcame me and

the cheapness of the drive. Two other carriages with natives of Amalfi who had been on a holiday followed our carriage; a young son entered into conversation on the road when all passage was stopped by a fallen horse, offered me a cigarette; exchange of politeness ensued, he came and drove in my machine, at the next stop asked my permission to introduce his father; after a few words, to my great dismay he kissed me on both cheeks, all the party shouting "Viva Svizzera!" I answered with "Viva Italià." The next stop I had to drink a bottle of Lachrima-christi to their health. Since then the family, who are well-known people here, have taken me under their wing. The son, a medical student, comes every morning to show me round, and introduced me to lots of cousins and parents. It is killing fun to see how the people here are friendly.

On the same evening of my arrival here at the hotel four French people arrived from the opposite direction; two were artists, and all from Paris. As we were the only people in the hotel we were at once thrown together, my turn-out marked me at once in their eyes as an Englishman, consequently they did not even look at me. I let them go their way for half-an-hour at the dinner-table, then came out with a display of Parisian French (*argot*) which flabbergasted them not a little. Friends we were in no time, and such friends, such a jolly time we had sketching all day together for a week, taking walks. One was a doctor from Auteuil, a most witty and charming gentleman of seventy-two years, but as young as any of us. They left me yesterday to return to Naples; mais nous avons rendez-vous à Paris!

Ravello, on the top of Amalfi, is a town of the architecture of the Saracens, and an eagle's nest.

When first I left Sorrento I walked and rambled, sketching and studying my book of Italian, all the time in the wrong direction. I ate my lunch in a little olive wood, and at four o'clock arrived at the farthest end of a promontory far into the sea; the heat was intense, and I presumed I must by that time be near Amalfi. In the



In the Castle yard

little villaggio, perched on the cliff, among the vines and lemons, I halted at the door of the first house, which was at the same time the only shop, grocery, and public-house in the place, and asked if I had still a long way to Amalfi, and was told that to walk there I would have another eight hours! There was no hotel in the place, and all those good people were packing round me, every minute one row deeper, till the whole village was there. . . .

At this point another twelve hours elapsed before I took again the pen in hand. The fault this time was the dinner bell, and a woman bicyclist from Kent, England, who arrived just now, having made all the way on her machine from Lausanne; very clever person, speaks several languages, small, ugly, yet sparkling eyes, and a New Woman. I had to sit her out for politeness, and *voilà!* . . .

To return to my adventures. An elderly gentleman had been watching me all this time without speaking, while every one was talking my head off. He motioned me to follow him through the shop into the back-yard, which turned out to be the front, with the most grandiose view over sea, cliffs, and Capri in all its glory bathing itself in the setting sun. I finished there my glass of wine with the old gentleman, to whom I offered also to drink with me, which after much parley he accepted, but not before having ordered every one there to dip their lips in the glass to my health. He turned out to be the mayor of the village. After some time passed in this most idyllic situation at this far end of nowhere (the place is called Termini), the venerable gentleman told me to follow him through a pass among vineyards and fig-trees to his "casa," with large balconies and oriental flat round-edged roof, where the view was still more beautiful. Dickens could not have described this interior, unless to any one already acquainted with the lives of the Neapolitans. In the first court a covered shed full of orange-trees with their brilliant fruits in the green foliage. Here, there, everywhere, 20 to 30 feet long serpents of vines winding themselves amongst the sticks, props, and waterspouts, climbing over walls and roofs, the stairs outside

the house; and in the house the old gentleman told me to follow him to a room full of saintly images and a gilded bust of the Virgin Mary.

He looked me full in the face, and from what I could gather from his talk, which was pure Neapolitan, he was asking if I was no politician, no agent of government, or the like; when I reassured him and told him that I was an artist, he took me by the hand and led me over the house to choose my room; soon after a walk his wife had the dinner set, and from 7 P.M. to 10 P.M. we two, not understanding each other's language, he not a single word of French, and I not three words of Neapolitan, we managed to exchange ideas. He told me he was a Garibaldian, and produced his medal and explained the scars on his forehead. Every time one bottle of his own delicious wine was empty, he laid that bottle flat in front of his wife without a word, and down to the cellar she returned and brought another; the lovely nectar went down like water. When I got up I was glad my bed was in the next room, the inoffensive-looking gold-coloured liquid was stronger than I had supposed.

Next day was Sunday; it was a glorious day! I went to the church to Mass with him. When we entered, he went to talk to the priest, and they put me in the chancel near the altar, we both facing the whole congregation, nearly all women. The sun was streaming in every hole and window of this most gorgeous little church, where every ornament was in marble, and the altar-piece alone would have made the name of any church in Belfast; most gorgeous were the dresses of the peasants, and their faces! After church I was taken by the children to walk round the promontory. When I came back I was covered with flowers, I had them in every pocket. I left next day, and you know how I came here. Ah, *pour bien profiter de ce voyage, il faut y aller en Bohème.*

Naples is still my address. I shall be back there this week, and will write more fully of my steps.

AMALFI, 10th *Fevrier*.

I came back here yesterday after a turn along the coast all round the Bay of Salerno, then went back to Naples, passing through the hills and a bit through Calabria. This place is so far the best I have yet seen. All this morning I have been ordering, sketching, and mounting canvas for two big oil paintings. I brought here all my materials from Naples, and with the sacred fire I spoke of in my last letter still burning within me, I have great hope. There is another French painter here with me—rather a beginner of fifty, but a good man and amiable companion. The winter seems to have set in in earnest since I last wrote to you; all the hills of the Apennines are covered with snow; yet it is fine and sunny, but warm only in the sun. The month of January has been ideal, but they say we must pay for that past happiness. I do trust that we must not always pay for past happiness, as I would be sure to pay dearly for the last month.

21st *February*.

Will you believe that we are getting up in the morning at 6 A.M.? Such is our love of nature and work here. There is another artist arrived, a Pole. The hills have been shedding torrents of tears on Amalfi and its budding art. Since I last wrote to you I have settled here altogether; that is, I have a studio; in fact, a whole house above the sea in an incomparable situation, a garden with purple columns, orchard, orange, lemon, every vegetable on a dozen terraces, cactus immense, overtopping the whole town. Our landlord is the best specimen of Italian, Signor Cavaliere Prota, who treats us as his guests, loads us with kindness and attentions.

But before I describe to you more fully our new temple of art, I must tell you how I investigated the whole town, climbed stair after stair, terrace after terrace, as high as Ravello; had a monk who offered me the tower of the church; a peasant an empty house perched on a rock alone

in an orangery 200 feet, "sur une falaise à pic." We had already come to an agreement about the rent, and almost taken possession, when she changed her price; perhaps my English (?) appearance, knickerbockers, and the turn-out you know so well; perhaps our explosions of delight at such a fine situation made her ask one more franc a day. I struck at once and departed.

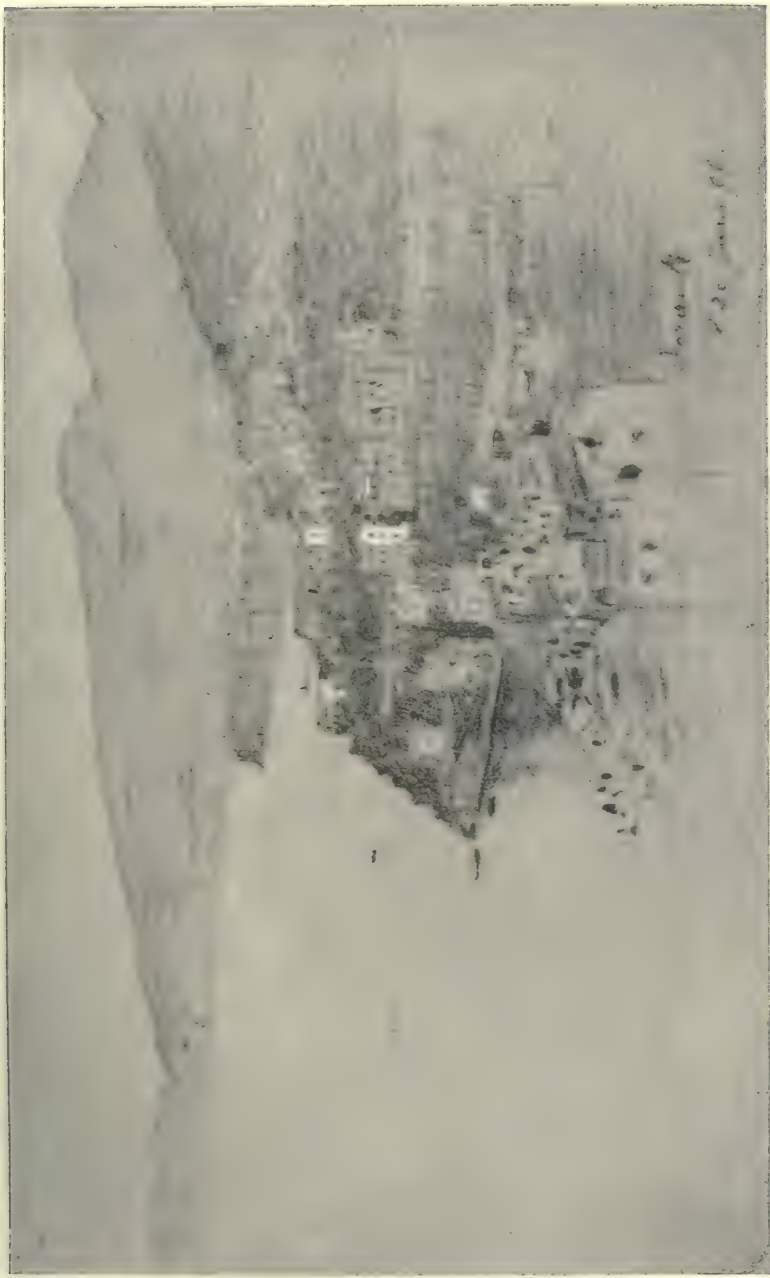
For another house of which I heard, I had to call at a certain house, where I got the servant to bring me to another part of the town, where I explained our desire to a curate. He left the servant there, and took me to a notary, where I had to tell my tale to his wife as well as himself. Then I was taken again in the country to a peasant who kept the key. He after much parley took me to the house, but for no good, as their conditions were ridiculous.

Some time I must tell you in a letter of my observations on the people here. Nothing can give you an idea of the civilisation of Amalfi. In many respects it is just two hundred years behind. Yet to me it has a great charm.

But this evening I must finish my description of Sorrento, and I include a little sketch of the view from the height. The town goes down clean to the sea on rocks cut with deep ravines. Metta and Vico make two brilliant spots on the green of the groves, also on cliffs going into the sea.

Sorrento has all that a rich climate can give. It was the home of Tasso. Boccaccio sang of it long before I arrived on the scene. Here also for the first time I have seen specimens of good modern Italian art—inlaid wood-work.

I visited and sketched in the gardens and terraces of the Villa Correale. To my three days spent in the town I added the fun of a bubbling spirit. At my hotel (which was a small one, called Hotel de la Villa di Sorrento), not one of those where only English and rich Americans go, like the Sirène, Tasso, Cucumello, and Tramontana. No, when I arrived one evening at seven, I found in the big long room two young men of my own age already at their dinner. After



From the heights above Sorrento

an hour we knew each other. After the coffee we were friends; after the second cigarette we sung till bedtime.

They were Neapolitans. Next morning one of them brought me to a big shop, where I bought two collars. The stud at the back of my neck fell down my back, and every effort to bring it up was fruitless, till I stood on my hands in the middle of the shop among the costumes. Then the button came down amid the laughter of every one. Then and there I had some more friends, and we dined together at night, and more singing.

Now to return to this place. Our studio allows us to work in all weathers. I have two big subjects in hand with figures, and also two landscapes. I am going to do all I can to finish them by the end of the month, when I hope to go to Rome.

3rd March.

I have settled to work at the big picture, which I hope to have ready for the Salon. It represents an Eastern girl of an olive colour in a garden overlooking the sea, and the colour of the town and garden is wonderfully rich. As I paint outside all the time I have innumerable difficulties in the shape of short showers, long and strong wind, overwhelming burning sun, then the model does not turn up, then clouds! I have two other landscapes about finished, and two heads, all in oil, and two water-colours. I never dreamt I should be again capable of getting up at 5.30 in the morning, and going to bed at nine at night. I feel ten years younger, and look twenty.

Now look how much I am speaking of myself and boasting, and not a word of your long and nice letter from Bordighera. I wonder where you are now, if you have already left Italy, or if you have returned to Monte Carlo to gamble!

Very likely you will not understand the curious mixture of spring sentiments funnily expressed in my last. I feel sometimes so happy and contented.

A storm is raging again, that is how I am at my pen

in the middle of the day. The sea reaches over walls and houses, and going to my dinner I was drenched by a big wave, which got me on toast when I was looking over the wall, feeling very secure above more than a hundred feet of rocks. You know Amalfi, and all the coast from Sorrento to Salerno is very steep, rocks and high walls of hills eaten by the sea into creeks, little gulfs, caverns, *tout à pic*, very little room for villages and houses pasted against cliffs, at incredible heights, in different bright colours, sparkling light against the brown rocks in the glittering sun. It is so picturesque, and no wonder I do not wish to move from here. Here is a small sketch from a hotel called "The Moon," which will give you an idea of the views of Amalfi, but the colour you must imagine. The hills go to tremendous heights, and when you walk up for hours you find unexpected villages in little recesses. Here is another sketch of another part of Amalfi—these pictures I have made in oil. But you will see all my sketches, about seventy in number, already. I wonder what are the dimensions of my frames you have at Macedon? Some time when you have leisure will you give me the measures? I intend to paint several portraits this autumn, and make pounds to come to Italy again.

2nd April.

I shall be in Rome on the 6th or 7th. I shall pack up with great regret, and take the boat to Capri and back to Naples. Something more about Amalfi. Two months have been enough to get fluency with my Italian, so I have made the acquaintance of every one. One day in a little village near Amalfi, sketching on a wall in a narrow lane, as usual all the loafers and children were packed round me. I felt happy, and I sang a French song with an easy accord. The children joined in, and you would have been delighted with the harmony; soon the whole village was there, over balconies, on the top of the houses, behind, in front, everywhere people singing; they are so melodious, many fine voices. From that day that French

song is sung all over the country. Wherever I go people ask me to sing, and I sing, and they sing my refrain; if I pass anywhere the people cry out, "He! Christopano!" It is my name; my intimate friends call me Rodolfo!

Poor people. I say poor, because there is an incredible poverty here! Much greater than in Ireland—much! All people in rags, no stockings, no boots, all beggars, and very dissatisfied with their government, which taxes all kinds of produce. The great power is the Catholic Church here, which seems to be the master of every soul and body, keeping the women folk in complete subjection. It is a sickening contrast to meet those fat, vulgar, overfed priests and those thin beggars walking together in the street.

A funeral is a pagan sight, half the folk in white "cagools," where only two little holes let you see their eyes; the other half in blue, all carrying big candles. And the sermons are also typical. One day I beheld a monk take in his arms a big clumsy plaster of the Santa Madonna as big as himself and take it to the arms of a Christ, also in plaster, telling her to ask Christ to forgive all the sins of all the people in the church; the people during this performance crying and howling with great clamour, all kneeling and knocking their heads against their chairs. Another time it is the Christ which is thrust into the lap of the Virgin. The same people, after having paid ten centimes for their chair, come and beg from you a sou.

The women work like oxen, carrying immense parcels of wood bigger than themselves, baskets that I could scarcely lift, climbing all day long hills which bring the perspiration to my brow when I walk them without anything. Consequently they are absolutely used up when they marry; they are old at twenty-four! But I could write long pages of other characteristics of those people, which I will tell you some other time.

CHAPTER VIII

ITALIAN WANDERINGS

[WHEN I first met Monsieur Christen I quoted the first line of this fragment of Longfellow's. To my intense surprise he quoted the remainder. His familiarity with English and American poetry was very remarkable.]

“If thou art worn and hard beset
With sorrow that thou wouldst forget,
If thou wouldst read a lesson that will keep
Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep,
Go to the woods and hills!—No tears
Dim the sweet look that Nature wears.”

—From “Sunrise on the Hills.”

PENSION LUCARINI, VIA GREGORIANA,
ROMA, 12th April 1898.

DEAR MISS THOMPSON,—I am behind time, things are piling up, every day new wonders, impressions so strong that it is impossible to shape them at once.

Rome is no disappointment. I feel proud to belong to this human race, to think that I am of the same clay as those artists who produced such marvels; and although I am about the same height, nearly six feet, I feel so much smaller and degenerated when I consider our time and theirs.

Yesterday I spent my day behind a column in the Forum, facing the Coliseum, my back to the Capitol. The caravans of Germans, with their guide explaining all; then the English, Americans, all day long, all nations, all dressed in black, ugly, and all alike. Oh me! If I still had tears in my eyes I would have floated the Temple of Mars.

But I must leave Rome for a moment to return to



From the Capuccini Pergola, Amalfi

Amalfi, and, before all, to your two nice letters. You are so good and thoughtful in all you say. I agree with all you write, and your friendship is an immense help to me during my wanderings, to know you are there watching so kindly my meandering life.

I would it had been possible for you to see our parting from Amalfi. A long time shall I remember this farewell, and the tears at the Casa Prota. At eleven in the morning I returned from the village, where I had already parted with many friends. I found my rooms all turned out by the servants, who were dusting, washing, and cleaning, under the guidance of the old Mrs. Prota and her daughters, one a girl of sixteen, and the other ten. Two boys, one fourteen, and the other eight, *all* in tears; to me it was a shock. Such a display of grief never had I in my born days seen. But it is the land of surprises. "Uccell," the faithful monkey servant, who for two months had been such a curious and slavish attendant, was also *in tears!* You can imagine the spectacle he made if you turn to the charcoal sketch which you will find under the oranges and lemons in the box; he is the one grinning all over like a monkey.

Speaking of the box of oranges and lemons, I sent them and packed them all on the morning of my departure, and plucked all those beautiful fruits with my own hands from our own garden. Oh! I do regret that spot. I spoke to Signor Prota, and he prepared the whole affair, and generously gave his fruits. He is a dear old man. If you write him a card in English about the fruits he will be as proud as a king, and show it all round to have it translated.

Now to return to that eventful parting. A soup and a parting bottle of Calabrian wine, and by that time I had all I could stand to keep the emotion in check. Adieu, good people! In the village our carriage was surrounded by a crowd, all my models and friends, and we had to shake hands for a long time. Once more we clattered in the most beautiful sun along the picturesque winding

road in the direction of Sorrento. Our two horses flew like the wind. Capri soon loomed through the brilliant haze, bathed in the beautiful azure of a calm sea. The night before, on our terrace, we had an orchestra of two guitars and two mandolines, and several singers, a parting soirée of our gentlemen friends. The moon was high, and the music was perfect; but enough of this, the souvenir brings regrets. I will stop this letter now; when one is so happy it is painful to leave the spot where one has felt so peaceful and satisfied.

I could write a great many more moments about those two months in Amalfi. But I believe I will be able to tell them to you any day, because the impression has been strong and lasting.

26th April 1898.

DEAR FRIEND,—To-day began with a most unusual amount of good resolutions; always on this date I make a review of my life; I make an examination, and take strong resolutions, which I keep so-so, as for a time. Yet I find it good in the end, an effort is always an effort; surely if the stone is a mountain, it does not succeed in moving it, nor would the efforts of every day move it, but will strengthen *your arms and muscles*.

There are already thirty-nine days such as this. I remember a good many of them; it is a great day to spend dreaming in this Eternal City. I see from the height where I write this (my lodging is on the top of the house), I see the Quirinal on one side and the Vatican on the other. How well do I understand now what is going on in those two palaces better than any book. A month's wanderings in this city of Kings and Popes will give you the key of so many problems, each of which is a monument of human stupidity. I have seen the King and Queen, but so far I have not been able to have a look at Leo XIII.; but I comprehend now what this powerful clergy are fighting for. I have seen crowds of Bishops and Cardinals and priests—the place is a perfect rookery.

Ah! it is such rest to see the masterpieces of Praxiteles,

the colossal statue of Juno praised by Michelangelo as "the most beautiful thing in Rome," the "Wounded Gaul" or "Dying Gladiator," of which you have a copy in your library at Macedon, also at the Capitol is the *Venus*, a sculpture of the third century before Christ; it ranks with the greatest works of art the world has ever or can ever see. At the Vatican I have seen what is a hundred times greater than any Pope, past, present, or future. I have seen the Apollo Belvedere, the celebrated Laocoon, Minerva, the two Boxers, and so many more works which are lasting monuments of human grandeur and beauty.

It makes me sick to look at Old and New Rome; how nineteen centuries of Popish religion has degraded this lovely race, and spoiled a grand country. All the potentates of the church have spoiled the monuments of old, and mutilated so many works of art that it is a wonder something is left. I have wandered in that Vatican from the Sistine Chapel with the finest frescoes of Michelangelo; I have gazed with wonder and awe, till I had a crick in the neck, at the Fall, the Deluge, the punishment of Haman. That man locked himself up for three years in that chapel, and here I behold what he produced.

Do not speak to me of painting after that for several days! From the Sistine to the Sala Regia, Sala Ducale, Stanze of Raffaello; every place is covered with his masterpieces. . . . At this part of my eulogy I received your so welcome letter. How can you remember all things in such a way, and dates? and your letter came so spick and span in the nick of time, and your 26th of March I had not kept in memory. Is it because I am a man, and consequently an egoist?

The cards from Newman arrived; I had to run the whole city to get them after long parley, and the sum of nineteen francs and ten centimes for port-douane, duty paper, taxes, &c. It's a crying shame, the sending cost more than the actual value of the beautiful boards, which were just what I wanted in size, quality, and shape. Again I had to go to a special packet post-office in another

part of the city to receive a new suit of summer clothes, and pay twenty francs more for transit and taxes. But that was not all for this day; at the Pension the friends knew of my birthday, and we finished the evening at the opera, where they gave us "Lucia di Lammermoor," and I cried!

Months would not suffice to perfect my education here; I read and studied again the whole of the history. It is such a difference to study a history with the objects and marks all round. If you go to Tivoli, not having your mind full of the deeds of Adrian or Antony, you will lose a great deal of the charm of this lovely spot and ruins. What stupendous palaces, from which all countries have stolen to fill their museums, in Germany, France, and England.

It was a melting day when I made my pilgrimage to the Appian Way, with its mausoleums and temples. To refresh myself I went into the Catacombs of St. Lawrence.

What treasures of art there are at the Palais Corsini. The gallery of pictures is very rare; I had a lovely hour before a *paysage* of Poussin, and three Canalettos that are wonders.

Can I tell you more than when I say I feel I also could go and bury myself for a century in a far-off land where life costs nothing, and where I could try to paint a lasting painting to my heart's content.

I am sending my luggage *petite vitesse* to Florence, and only with my water-colour paper and knapsack start on my walking tour through Tuscany. I start this time alone, and may be a month before I arrive in Florence, as I hear the country is simply a Paradise. Travelling in this way is much cheaper, as I can go and do what I like, no baggage to be imposed upon, only my camp-stool! During my tour I shall only paint in water-colour, and draw. My friend Michel is going to return to Paris to-morrow.

Remember me kindly to all the friends in Belfast, and especially to all the dear pupils who have been so good as to believe a little in my teaching.



I have forgotten my past so well, and till now nothing has brought it to my mind.

NARNI, 9th May '98.

I climbed up here yesterday evening in the dark, flying from the malaria of the Campagna. The air was full of those little flies that carry on their back those electric lanterns that make the whole country look like a network of electric wire—extremely curious effect. But I hurried on, my knapsack on my back; I smelt fever in the air. This morning I awoke in a room overlooking two hundred feet of straight pitched rock. This city has certainly seen all the hordes of the barbarians, and although nobody here could tell me of the passage of Annibal, I have, I am certain, seen his work down in the river. The old bridge is lying down like a huge Coliseum, and for centuries the rushing water has gone over it without being able to efface or even move an inch this tremendous stamp of the *Césars*. There in the middle of the stream, covered with trees and grass, are the remains of the biggest bridge I ever saw.

From my window I see over the whole Campagna; so picturesque. All the towns and villages are perched up on the hills, this Narni is the biggest and the oldest. The shoemaker has his shop in an old tumble-down palace, as beautiful and better I am sure in architecture than any palace of any Duke of Devonshire or Lord Salisbury. Whole streets of grand old houses unkempt and scarcely tenanted, yet fit to hold cardinals or princes (*je parle au point de vue de l'architecture, les lignes magistrales des postes et les entablements des fenêtres, la forme élégante des cours et des piliers*), but all this, although strong and erect, and defying time, storm, and revolution, is full of dirt and neglect. But enough of this place, which I shall leave soon on my way to Terni, which I perceive far away in the blue distance.

But I must take leave of the Eternal City, where I wandered a whole month amongst its treasures. Did I tell

you of my visit to the "Moses" (of Michelange)? He looks grand and terrible, as if he were going to rise, and with a tremendous voice put fear and awe in every soul. He is imposing, noble, and mighty; if to-day such a man were to be, I would like him to have a smoother brow and a softer eye, then such a man would to-day put things straight in this world of ours. Michelange was the mightiest of the mighty; in his "Moses" he has given a great deal of his own face and nature. A portrait of himself by himself at the Capitol shows great strength of character, and also a man who suffered much.

The portrait in oil of the Pope Innocent the X is a thing to see! Velasquez made there a masterpiece! It does one good to gaze at such work.

Ce maître me dit en termes nets et précis: qu'il faut peindre absolument tel que vous voyez, sans préoccupation de méthode d'Ecole, ou de manière, le tout est de savoir voir, et ensuite d'avoir la *force* de le *faire*.

Leaving Rome I went to pay a farewell visit to St. Paul's outside the city walls; I copy here the remarks in my book: "Oh! que j'aimerais savoir ce temple magnifique bâti pour la plus grande gloire de Dieu et des hommes! Quel rendez-vous pour le peuple! Quel sanctuaire pour venir y pensez et entendre de belles choses. Mais au lieu de ce rêve . . . j'entends dans le fond d'une chapelle des litanies monotones chantée sans convictions, sans vie, sans foi, et je vois une trentaine de moines et d'officiants gras, à figure bestiale et bête, le reste de cette immense 'théâtre' de marbre est vide; deux ou trois touristes, le guide en main, où il devrait y avoir des milliers de fidèles, car c'est Dimanche, et il fait beau."

But it is all so, and all through, empty of *spirit and life*; of Christian life—the cooking-up, or industry, or business of the church is all alive, but the spirit is gone, gone! And to think that there are so many here who speak of a revival of the Catholic Church! Yes, perhaps a revival as a power of material influence, but the spiritual is dead. I have been in and out of the Vatican, sat at table with



Analfitana



Siena.

cardinals, and seen all sorts of ceremonies, scrutinised many faces of high officials of this mighty institution, but I was never impressed by its goodness or its grandeur.

I have had the good fortune to make a coloured crayon portrait of a secretary of Cardinal ——, and so have had *mes entrées libres* everywhere; it was of great utility to me in Rome. I went to his private rooms three or four times, and stayed with him long hours during work, when talk went freely. He introduced me to several other dignitaries of the Vatican; amongst others to an almoner's secretary, who showed me his collection of paintings and sculptures worth five million francs. Think of that.

Now good-bye, Rome; I know I shall see thee again. Do write me a word to Poste Restante, Sienna; very likely I shall stay there some time. You amuse me immensely over your stony excursions in the rainy country.

SPOLETO, 21st May.

This time last year I believe we were at Frutigen.¹ The contrast with my present condition! I walk alone at my leisure, and nobody to look after. I walk with only my change of shirt and my sketching material, and that all in this Eden of country. Imagine an early morning, full of light and spring, birds singing, a mighty blue warm sky, everything bathed in a liquid atmosphere of topaz, red, and blue, imagine a knickerbockered figure striking along the winding road among olive-trees and orchards, imagine all that can elevate and charm an artist's soul, and you have ME! I do not depend on hotel or town, my knapsack has always something for my hunger and thirst, farms provide me with fresh eggs at five centimes the piece. Oh! this Arcadian life, shall I be obliged to part with it?

When tired I sit near a brook of shaded water, and have many a time fallen asleep on the side of the road, because the heat is getting intense, and it is only possible to walk in the morning or at night. I arrived at Spoleto

¹ On the second continental tour with his pupils.

in a blazing sun, and since I am here I sleep night and day, feel lazy and dry, not a particle of fat on me; when I arrive at the end of my journey I shall have vanished, only a pack of bones, with a tuft of hair and a beard.

All the country is hilly and wooded; the people are delightful, and not spoiled by strangers. I know all the teachers and professors in this place. I made a friend here the first day I arrived. He had a face of a poet and we were gazing over the same view; I studied his face and was attracted towards him; well inspired I was, he turned out to be a teacher, an artist by nature, and a writer; he has introduced me to the whole town, and now I belong to all the societies. One morning the Gymnastic Society came at 3.30 in the morning to take me to make an excursion over the hills. "Mais il ne faut pas que je m'endorme dans les délices de Capoue," and I very probably shall move on to-morrow morning towards Assisi. I tell you all this as a feeble description of my happy condition. I sketch just now in water-colours an abandoned church full of hay, pigeons, ducks, and cats; and I made also a water-colour of Spoleto. This is a fortress, and you would delight in it, although it is used now as a prison. It is more antique than Rome, and I have seen the marks of the cyclopean age.

If Assisi, Orvieto, and Sienna are getting more and more picturesque, I shall never be able to complete my tour d'Italie.

HOTEL SOUBASSIO, ASSISI, 1st June 1898.

Many a time, when taking a rest yesterday morning, have I wished for a companion to whom to expound and cry my love and admiration over this seraphic country of Umbria. I should have written there and then, but even then my lyre is too poor to sing such a cantique of love and peace which came over me from below the valley and hills, Montefalcon perched on one side, and Trevi on the other, like two huge sentinels guarding this garden of Italy. I could see the hordes of Goths and Visigoths and savages



A Deserted Church in Italy.

Original in the possession of Miss S. Blackwood.

pushing through this wooded scenery; I could well imagine how the great Annibal lingered here, and understood why so many other nations have in all time tried to conquer this rich and beautiful country.

It was morning, and from three till eight I had walked among hills and vales, with the accompaniment of the singing of all the birds, and as the morning grew the peasants came to their labours.

Les charrues, tirés par ces beaux bœufs blancs aux cornes immenses, faisaient par les champs des taches claires. Assis derrière une haie je regardais cet vie champêtre, quand je vis tout à coup un grand gaillard qui, caché derrière un mur, le fusil à la main, guettait un vol d'alouettes. Salvator Rosa could have described that beautiful hunter. He was tall, and as dry (lean) as a stick, with a beautiful face. Soon we were great friends, and we walked together to the next village; his words and voice were in harmony with nature, and I felt happy and small when he patted me on the shoulder in a kindly way, just enough to floor me from his seven feet of height. They are all kind here, the peasants have a sweet voice, and are polite and obliging. After two days' walking I arrived at Assisi. . . . Since I wrote this above, I have not moved from this celebrated spot, which reminds you of the Middle Ages. I read the life of St. Francis, and walked to all his favourite spots. I met Scotchmen, Englishmen, Dutch, Americans, Danes, French, Germans, Spaniards, and Russians here, and sketched busily, but I cannot move on. It will be impossible for me ever to leave this country. I sold two water-colours I made in Rome, and got rather a good price for them. I include here the two sketches which I tear out of my sketch-book, they will give you an idea of the composition.

SIENNA, 11th June.

Here I am at last in this city, after having circused round from Assisi, Perugia, and Orvieto. The heat is getting intense, only the early mornings and evenings are

splendid. We had several strong storms, and I was drenched and refreshed, but had no change to put on, yet I am in good health and happy condition. This is Tuscany, and the people are softer and better educated, and speak better Italian.

Just now I travel in company with an architect from Bridge of Allan in Scotland. We left Assisi together, and have clung to each other ever since. If I do not close this letter before to-morrow I shall send a photo of my new *friend*; he got the great prize of a travelling scholarship in Edinburgh, is a hard worker, and will certainly make a big name for himself; we fit splendidly together and complete each other; I learn a lot from him about architecture.

By the slow progress I make to reach Florence, where all my goods and chattels are, you will wonder if it will be possible to reach Ireland this year. Ah, dear me, so do I! Let me know if Mrs. — is going to be painted now, it would perhaps change my programme of return.

Send, please, some papers about the disturbances in Belfast. I got a letter from Miss —, but I shall teach no more. I will answer it to-night; send letters to Florence.

13th June.

Now I must tell you of my big adventure in connection with the present trouble in Italy. I have been arrested when I left Spoleto, and a more amusing affair I could not describe. I had happily all my papers in my pocket, and also a letter from the Consul in Rome, as well as numerous letters of introduction, otherwise I do believe they might have kept me more than an afternoon. As it was, it turned out a very laughable farce, and I had only to get for a couple of hours the company of the gendarmes, who smelt of garlic and tobacco, and had to stand the stupid remarks of the sous-préfet; but my examination was not sufficient, and I had to give all the different addresses where I lived when travelling in Italy, and they went so far as to telegraph to Rome and ask about my doings there.

[This Spoleto incident throws a flood of light on the close watching of foreigners, and the misconstruction likely to be put upon the most innocent speeches. Black plots against the monarchy were credited to him, founded on a playfully expressed desire to blow up all the statues of Victor Emmanuel he had seen. Needless to say it was the *artistic* shortcomings of the statues that aroused his indignation. Nor was the sous-préfet's doubt of his assertion that he was an artist removed by an offer to make a caricature of him to prove the truth of his statement.]

You know during these troubles here several journalists had been expelled from Italy, thousands of people had been put in gaol, and in every town numerous clubs and societies had been closed. Well, it happened that in Rome I knew intimately the correspondent of two continental papers, one of Paris and one of London; we used to meet in the evenings at a certain café. That was already a bad mark, and from that day my movements were watched without my knowing anything about it. But the strongest suspicion about me was that I travelled on foot, and never went near railroads, where the military are in charge. Instead of going to hotels, where strangers usually descend, I went to lodgings; I talked to everybody, especially the poor, the peasants, and went along gaily making friends with every one.

All these remarks were told me by the sous-préfet, who knew all my actions, and several of my sayings had been reported to him. You must have noticed that in my letters I have so far never made a single remark about the political condition of this country. Well, in my conversations here I have happily been the same; but I have never been blind to the bad state of political economy in this lovely country. I have seen the terrible state of poverty, and heard sad tales of mismanagement. I have watched with curiosity and fear the bad influence the Church has still over the mass of the poor people. Indeed, these six months in Italy have proved to me beyond doubt

that the great power of Rome is a very bad institution, a dangerous one, and has not a little contributed at all times to the troubles of Ireland. After having spoken with all ranks of the Church, no one can deny the tremendous, underhand, slow, patient influence those people have over the masses. The revolution just now here is *their work* to a great extent. No, they do not tell you that the government of the King is bad, that you must make a stand against it; no, not point blank; but when you leave them, you have all that feeling, without their having spoken a word for which they could be pulled up.

At Spoleto I had been recommended to a professor at the university, who turned out to be a very learned man, who spoke English and French; he introduced me to all his colleagues, and also to the editor of the *Young Umbria*, a very advanced paper. I went to their club. That crowned the suspicions, and I was marked as an agent of revolution.

I have indeed all the appearances of a revolutionary; thin, long beard, long hair, and a wild look in my blue eyes. But I proved with some difficulty to the sous-préfet that I was really a dilettante let loose in happy Italy.

I have walked to Perugia and Spoleto, and, dear me, how I have neglected Art in this letter, after all the treasures of frescoes and architecture I have seen. In Sienna there are great things of Sodoma and Mateo di Sienna. In Perugia, Fra Angelico, which I studied very carefully—and Perugino; an old keeper from the Musée told me that Frederick Leighton used to come to this room here every year, and stayed long hours in ecstasy and wonder before those grand masterpieces. I can well believe it!

In Orvieto I spent my time in front of the Basilica. The façade is the richest I ever saw; some of the bas-reliefs of the Creation are unique. The "Creation of Eve" is the finest. I studied the architecture of palaces, and made very few sketches this last fortnight. The heat is simply



The Cathedral Font.

appalling during the day. My eyes are well, but still give me trouble at times. We could not find a photograph, so I made a sketch of my friend (a memory sketch). Good-bye; write, please, to Florence; I like so much your good cheery letters.

SAN GEMIGNANO, 21st June 1898.

It stands overlooking a vast plain, blazing with the heat of June. I took refuge this morning in the old ruined garden at the top of the Castle, where I get a little freshness and shade. Can you picture me having to rouse the guard in the middle of the night to open the *city gates*? It sounds mediæval. Well, I had that sensation when traversing the city of Sienna at two in the morning. It's amusing to behold the astonishment of the people hereabouts when I tell them of my doings. Nowadays nobody walks. Ah me, what a loss to everybody!

In the stillness of the dark *bright* night of this eastern atmosphere all things are unearthly and grand, but when later the almighty one starts his grandiose eruption of fire, when he begins to peep over the far distant hills, to go on his majestic course, and blaze over vales and woods, then indeed the small humanity is nowhere. An atom of this humanity felt yesterday morning that no worldly goods or riches can compare with what nature can give *for nothing and for ever* to any one who will go and listen to it. The world seemed to have been transported into a vast aviary, birds of all kinds and varieties of songs sang a concert which I never before had heard; my winding road passed through the loveliest wood, and from four till six I walked slowly, drenched with the morning dew, and in the love of the One who could give you such perfect beauty.

The picturesqueness of this morning walk, when you listen to the awakening of Mother Earth, as the sun rises slowly, the aspect changes, the colours vary; and all this animation of life must have inspired Petrarch, Dante,

Boccaccio, and all the great poets of this land. Can you picture me falling asleep over a bench in a little café where I rested to have a glass of milk in a little village where I arrived at seven? What a change from the days when I had only sleepless nights! here I literally slept standing. But by ten the almighty father sun was doing it too grandly, and he overcame me with his loving heat.

I have been without my correspondence for more than fifty days, and also without luggage; I shall probably be in Florence to-morrow.



In Orvieto.



Olive Trees at Bormes.

CHAPTER IX

NORTHERN ITALY

FLORENCE, 27th June.

I HAVE just arrived at Florence where I found the letters and papers; I can scarcely believe it possible that this sun of ours leaves a spot of this earth unheated. I wish it were possible to send you a barrelful of the over-dose we have here. But I shall tell you something of this beautiful Florence, this fairest of cities, surrounded with charming hills, valleys, and plains, and everything that nature can lavish and art devise. I walked into it in a blazing sun, and crossed it, my parcel on my back, the *point de mire* of all beholders. Long before arriving I could discover the fine Campanile and Duomo emerging from the trees. The Campanile is by Giotto, and is a beautiful specimen of Italian Gothic, a gem. (Please read the description Ruskin gives of it in his "Seven Lamps of Architecture.") This is the home of Giotto, Dante, of Michelangelo!

Listen to Mrs. Browning's description and cantique:—

“That valley of Arno (holding as a hand
The outspread city) straight towards Fiesole,
And Mount Morello and the setting sun—
The Vallombrosa mountains opposite
Which sunrise fills as full as crystal cups,
Turned red to the brim, because their wine is red;
No sun could die, nor yet be born, unseen
By dwellers at my villa. Morn and eve
Were magnified before us in the pure
Illimitable space and pause of sky,
Intense as angels' garments blanched with gold
Less blue than radiant. From the outer wall
Of the garden drops the mystic floating grey

Of olive trees (with interruptions green
 From maize and vine) until 'tis caught and torn
 Upon the abrupt black line of cypresses
 Which signs the way to Florence. Beautiful
 The City lies along the ample vale :
 Cathedral, tower and palace, piazza and street,
 The river trailing like a silver cord
 Through all, and curling loosely, both before
 And after, over the whole stretch of land
 Sown whitely up and down its opposite slopes
 With farms and villas."

I have been (since I wrote the above) to see the two great galleries of the Pitti and the Uffizi, the unparalleled artists' portrait gallery, where to my great wonder and joy I found perhaps the best of all portraits painted by a *woman*. You know they are the portraits of the artists by themselves, and Madelaine Lebrun made a beauty! The one of Frederick Leighton is superb. But, dear me, what thought, what a rush of warm blood of envy when I beheld the own portrait of Albert Dürer. Charming, beautiful young man, full of life. There they are all, those masters of the pencil and the brush: Leonardo da Vinci, a head powerful of will, one of a race extinct! Andrea del Sarto, more soft, more pensive; Salvator Rosa, a bright healthy Bohemian; Tiziano, who resembles Watts. And again Michelangelo, with his tormented strong face, there they are all, also the modern of other countries, Alma Tadema, Ingres, &c. &c.

I am here still, with my friend Stewart, the Scotsman. He came by train, and we are in good lodgings together, No. 12, Via Nazionale. My friend is just now working all day at a fount of Della Robbia, while I soak myself in the Botticelli, Raffael, and Fra Angelico.

I found here all my neglected correspondence, and the explanation of the disappearance of the painting sent to Dublin. It appears I had not made the proper declaration for the Douane, and it had been returned to Amalfi, and from there I have received it back here. I found also French newspapers with a description of my arrest. I feel very well now, and my eyes do not trouble me. I am writing



From an Italian sketchbook

this week to one or two of my clients about portraits. If Mrs.—— decide to have her portrait painted this year, I shall go straight by sea from Venice or Genoa. I have other orders in hand to work on till New Year. If she decide not now, I shall stay in Italy and do all this projected work in six or eight months' time. If you knew how much more I have to learn, if you knew how little I feel, how small after all I have seen, to arrive at the ideal you so kindly have written in your letter, to make a name and take my place as an *artist*, and not only as a teacher, you do not know how much I have to learn.

Not, dear friend, that I discard the principle of my teaching. Indeed I am more and more convinced of the great truth of my principle in art. I say still this, that the teaching of art should not begin with theories, rules of perspective, and hard dry school work; I still say that teaching should start only by the training of power to observe, to see, to compare, to appreciate; the teaching of love! But I know now that after that you must add knowledge of form, and proportion, and structure, which is then the true shaping of art. I shall still stand up and say that the teacher of art must not kill originality in the bud, individuality and imagination, by regular hard-cut humdrum school training, as we can see it done just now all over the world, here in Italy worse still than any country. (Do you see how the old teacher is warming up?) Well, as I said, I have a great deal to learn, and I am no more a very young man, and I do not remember things so easily; but I have still hope, because I have still time before me, and I have no tie, and I need little to live. So if I do not go back this month, I will work and study. I can well see that I can sell a great many of my water-colours. I have a man in Scotland who wants me to send him some.

I intend to go to Venice by the end of this week. I can now live in Italy for four francs a day, in the country even for 3·50 all paid. Is it not an ideal place for an artist? I will not tell you now all that I saw, all that I did in this

city. I only transcribe from my notes my impression when I beheld the "David" of Michelangelo:—

"Je croyais que le Moïse était l'apogée de la perfection, et je trouve David encore plus beau; il respire, il est noble, il est de grandeur héroïque.

"Jamais sculpture ne m'a produit cet effet! J'ai peur de pleurer, tellement l'émotion m'empoigne; pleurer de n'être pas aussi beau et si bien fait, pleurer de ne pouvoir faire aussi beau et aussi bien que lui!"

For the rest of the art of Florence, it is impossible to describe it, even in a volume. I intend to make a copy of the portrait by Dürer. Your last kind letter with all the particulars about the installation was most vivid, and I can so well laugh over it. So you will be in Kenmare just now. I do hope you will have a good time and fine weather. I can picture your tour with all the familiar faces. How is "The King" looking? Did I tell you that I came across Mr. Bigger when in Rome?

At present I am making a copy of Sir Frederick Leighton's portrait (by himself) at the Uffizi Gallery. I have such a great admiration for that man, and his portrait is splendid. I made also several drawings in the print departments; but the heat! the heat is getting appalling; as soon as I can I shall go straight to Venice for a day or two, and up to the Lake of Como, and make a series of water-colours.

LUCA, 31st July 1898.

I ran away from Florence and its boiling temperature on Saturday. On Friday I got your long letter of friendship. I read it in the Gallery. I had just given the final touch to the Frederick Leighton portrait, when I read your words of encouragement and belief in your artist friend; it made me believe in myself, it gave me strength and hope; I was no more hot, the temperature had disappeared for me.

I walked once more through those galleries to say farewell!—but I shall send you when I arrive in Venice a letter I began on Friday afternoon. I write here on a

table looking across the rampart of Luca. I have all this time been still with Stewart and two other architects from Scotland. Stewart is still with me here, but I shall leave him to-night and go to sleep at Bologna.

During my stay in Florence I made a new friend, a Persian, who was studying painting under the patronage of the Shah of Persia. He is himself a nobleman, a tall man more than six feet four inches, and forty-nine years old, yet a child of innocence and simplicity, but an artist at heart. He is there the pupil of the greatest portrait painter, whom I also knew. He told me the life he had led at the Court of Persia, and some extraordinary episodes of his existence. I wish I could give you a snapshot of us two, as we were when walking through the streets and galleries of Florence, hand in hand! He would make a character for a novel; dark eastern face, his thin high-pitched voice, and his innocent remarks. I said good-bye to him on Friday when we were in the middle of the Piazza del Duomo, and he asked me the permission to kiss me, and he did it there and then. I was flabbergasted!

I have been yesterday at Pisa, where the heat was even greater. Here it is also about 80° in the shade. I am sorry to say good-bye to Stewart now, he proved one of the finest men it has been my lot to come across. I wish there were a few more like him in this world, but perhaps it would be then too like a Paradise of goodness, truth, and strength.

Good-bye, may you always have a cool bed to rest on, and never the mosquitoes to trouble you from eleven to five in the morning; I cannot wish you at this moment any greater comfort and happiness.

VENICE, 4th August.

After all the descriptions one has read all these years about *Venise la belle*, it's a rare thing to find this Queen of the Sea far finer and richer than all that has been written. I glided through it yesterday night when I arrived at 11 P.M., coming up the Grand Canal with a full moon shining, and the sound of music coming over the stillness of the lagoons.

This first impression will carry me through life, I have never seen anything more beautiful; and when I arrived at the Piazza San Marco at midnight in this sultry summer heat, I had exhausted all my power of emotion, my sensations had no more definite form or outline than those palaces; it was sparkles of gold, light and shade, rich tints all over. This morning the first move was for a swim in the Adriatic; the water was 90° F. You will then well imagine the atmosphere in the canals of Venice. I try to write this letter under a bit of shade on the Piazza San Marco, but all the energy is sapped away, the little I had left after visiting Bologna has evaporated in the blue firmament.

How beautifully all this glorious sun decorates this city, already decorated by all that time, art, and riches has done. I am going to try and stand this heat at least for a week, because I am sure there is nothing more beautiful of colour just now in this grand world.

VENICE, *Sunday, 14th August.*

You will be surprised to see me still in this hot furnace. But if you could realise how beautiful it is. No painting I have ever seen can approach this wonderful city at this time. And a storm came, which for three days made the canals a perfect dream of beauty and comfort. I had not finished the water-colours I wanted, so I stayed on and on, and I only work in the early morning and in the evening.

There are no artists just now here, it is just the time when it is the beautiful city of its fame. But yesterday and to-day the great heat came again, and it is really unendurable.

15th August.

Your letter just to hand with group of the artists of Belfast. How you do all look so different from all faces here, so stern, so staid, and solid; except you, all have serious faces, but you have your good smile. Dear me, how I would like to come near and just shake their hands! It's very good to hear what the friends say of my small



Bellagio, on Lake Como



Lamplight Study

sketches, and it is a help and sometimes a guide, but wait when I bring forth my latest efforts, wait then. It is true that to study modern art Italy is the worst place, but I know what I want, I know what is good for me—it's the sun, the change. The art of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is also a guide and a help. And the training of my mind, and the rest, the big rest from that everlasting showing-off! And all that I have.

But, oh me! it is indescribable, this glorious sun, those glittering canals, and the whole life of the lagoons. Some day when it has well settled into my mind, I will tell it to you all in colour.

This is the town to study Tintoretto, and some lovely Titians.

I am not cooked yet, but well bronzed and in perfect health. I must have a snapshot to send you of me. Already several times chance acquaintances have taken me, but they were gone, and the photos were not developed, yet they said they would send me some. At Naples I was taken by an English lady, a Mrs. Stocks, in the position of a *blind man*, led by my friend the Frenchman, with an inscription on my chest (it was at the time I suffered so much with my eyes). The promised copy never came. At Florence a Sicilian friend made me pose twice on a balcony specially for a photo to give me. It has not come yet. Yesterday two Scotchmen took me under San Marco while I was sketching; but they are gone, and I am going to follow them.

Au revoir, mon amie, un salut du pays du soleil.

Como, 24th August.

It is possible to breathe at last. I did not leave Venice. I was chased away from it by the heat and the mosquitoes, and I have not yet left a city with such regret, although I suffered greatly. The last week Stewart had joined me he suffered more than I did at Pistoja, where I left him, and he was very much thinner. I managed these beasties

somehow, with a kind of powder I burnt at night in my room which sent them to sleep till four in the morning, when I had to renew the performance. But, oh me! what was all that to the amazing delight of the blaze in the canals!

I can—now that I am cool here, facing the Alps, and even spying there a little patch of snow—I can now write about it with better comfort, and also pity the poor fellows left in that furnace, when I can come here amongst the coolness of the hills. I can remember mornings when both gondolier and artist had fallen asleep, the one over his oars, and the other over his water-colours. I can now bring back when the only fresh spot I had to dive for six or seven feet under the Adriatic. I see in my memory sleeping figures behind every stone that could give a patch of shade; sleeping forms on the Piazza, where they had come to listen to the music of the military band; tradesmen asleep behind their counters; beggars stupefied, to the greatest comfort of the passers-by, who could for the first time pass them unnoticed. All that I can now remember with pleasure.

I have just crossed the plains of Lombardy, and went to see the Cathedral of Milan, with its forest of spires and statues; but they had lost all charm. I saw them burning in the firmament; it was at that time 94° Fahrenheit!

I did not like Como, which was too dear, and I have landed here in a small village much higher up the lake, Menaggio, where I have arranged to stay for some time, and where I am going to put together and revise my work of Venice. I will then know what I will send to the Belfast Art Society.

CASA GALLI, *Sunday, 28th August.*

Here I am in a Lombardy family, because you know this place is in Lombardy—a most interesting couple of old people. She is already just like a mother to me. She is fifty-two and he sixty-two. She has already been married



Charles L. 27 Mar 1901

RS

The Arena at Fiesole, Florence.

three times, and I do not wonder at her being so much sought after.

The village of Menaggio, which I discovered just by chance, when I was looking out for a fresh spot when coming from Milan, is situated on the shore of the Lake of Como, just between the two lakes of Lugano and Como, with hills all round; and now here I can work again and breathe comfortably. I take baths in the lake of fresh water, after the warm salt of the Adriatic! . . .

At this part of my letter I was called to take part in a contest, which was to swim across the whole Lake of Como. I had yesterday in a moment of boastfulness challenged the young sparks of the village. A boat was to follow us closely, and pick up those who were exhausted. *Will* you be pleased to hear I came out of this with flying colours? I remained two hours in the water without resting and without help of any kind. We were nine fellows. All the rest were from twenty-one to thirty-one years of age except me. One after the other were picked up by the boat, and only one, called Castelli, and your humble servant kept swimming till we reached the other shore. I arrived second, about one second and a half minute behind the other, and we swam in all without stop one hour and forty-five minutes.

1st September.

I find it a little difficult to settle to regular life again, and to regular work after this long wandering, but here I shall stay certainly a month. Here I am going to shape properly this life of mine, as far as it is possible to shape a future that is so much in the hands of faith. Yes, I have hesitated long and deep about returning. I am sure if I follow on my road just now, I shall have a second youth, if I keep in health; and I am thankful to say I am grand, although thin. I see before me the future I have dreamed. At present my great aim is to get my eyes in such a condition that I shall some day be able to carry a picture through and through, with only a single memory glance, even if the

picture should technically want a month's hard work on it. I observe very rapidly, and work a little more slowly and more composedly. The strain on my nervous power was too great. For the present I think I shall only send sketches to the Art Society. You see I have my *Aim*, and, right or wrong, I think I must follow it to the end. Almost all my work is half memory, and it wants practice to get it perfect, especially to the eye of the critic. Sometimes I am pleased, others I am not.

11th September.

Letters like the one you just wrote are the making of me! You would have been gladdened to see me that day when I climbed the high peak here, overlooking the lakes of Como and Lugano, the Valtellino, the Monte Rosa, and the whole immense range of hills; it was a glorious view in that fresh rarefied atmosphere, which seems to give wings. They transported me over other hills, rooted out hundreds of souvenirs, of walks in the heather, in the rain. Your faith in me gives me faith also, and I come to my work with renewed vigour and youth.

I read again your letter so full of encouragement. Dear me, how sanguine you are about my taking the world by storm with an exhibition. I know that for making a name and an artist, as I now understand art, will take me a longer time to arrive at. Sometimes I think that I have passed already the marked age, but console myself then by thinking that I will be able to push and direct some one younger and stronger into the right road. Other times I believe I shall after all fill up all the wants of my artistic education before the spark of youth has altogether left me. In my wanderings in this country I have met people who from the first have believed in me and my future art, and they did me a great deal of good. Stewart says always that I shall make my mark, and he does me good, and I like him for this. Yet I am not so sure, and I am never pleased with my results. That is why I do sell my work. If I were sure it is really good I would keep it for the projected exhibition in London.



From an Italian sketchbook

20th September.

I was glad indeed to get the telegram and to know the sketches arrived safely. I am not going to send any more anywhere from Italy; it is absolutely impossible to trust the railway or even the post-office; my misfortunes on that score are numerous. The picture of the Amalfi girl arrived in Paris in spring with a hole in it. The twelve water-colours I sent to Scotland have not been heard of, so I am not going to trust any more to railways. When I cross the frontier I shall take everything with me. I gave a small head of a little girl painted in oil to the Municipal Society of Menaggio. This Society is gathering gifts for a lottery in order to buy musical instruments; several persons offered to buy it from the Society, in order not to run the risk of losing it in the lottery. Art in Italy is not paid at all, but is much appreciated otherwise.

Tell me more about your stay in Dublin; yes, I do know Mr. Gill very well, and also his wife, they are great friends of Miss Purser's, and we have been often together in Dublin. I like him very much. If you see Miss Purser ask her why she never answered my letter of this spring from Amalfi. Your good letter of this morning cheered my drooping heart; it comes on me sometimes very strong that I am so lonely in the great crowd; write, write always, and all that you think. I can picture you well in the Belfast Art Gallery with a busy pen and smiling face, looking after all the wants of those many exacting artists. Do not forget to send me papers with the criticisms of the Exhibition, and tell any one that some day I shall turn up in Belfast to see all the sympathetic friends there.

MILAN, *3rd October 1898.*

I crossed once more and for the last time that beautiful Lake of Como. The rain has come at last, the winter is arriving from over the Alps, and I fly to Turin. Just before I left Menaggio your most chatty and so youthful letter of

the 27th arrived. Do you know you are getting on wonderfully well, progressing in fact, it is you who are getting younger and I older. Soon we shall be vice versa. I the positive, reasonable, calm, well-balanced and steady citizen of the world and pillar of society—and *you* the young, imaginative, enterprising, go-ahead Bohemian!

You guess right when you say, "It is always give, give, and never receive!" The experience of daily life in Italy amongst the people is interesting for the study of life, for its variety, its curious unexpectedness, but not satisfactory for a tender heart. On peut dans ce pays ici perdre quelquefois la tête, être ébloui par la couleur de la beauté, mais pas par le cœur. I have made an immense lot of so-called friends, my list through Italy is tremendous; I am always stretching out my arm towards them. I pine for sympathy, and alas! I only find interest in the end. If I keep in the vein to write just now, I will make a picture of the Casa Galli and my month's sojourn there.

I shall be off to Turin to-morrow. I came here to visit a collection of paintings by a modern man called Cremono, just dead a few years ago. He was an artist to my liking. There are also here some masterly frescoes by Luini, and some fine Mantegnas, and one beautiful Moroni.

Since I wrote the above I have been to the Chartreuse of Pavia; I had a letter to the Director, only that day alone would fill eight pages, and it is to be postponed with my relations of the Casa Galli, to be gone through on a rainy day when I shall feel in the humour of writing a good chatty letter.

I met a pensionnaire here from the Medici French Academy at Rome, and we did several galleries together. I had a visit at Menaggio from my friend Stewart, who came to say good-bye on his way to Scotland.

OSOGNA, CANTON TESSIN, 12th October.

I write in this little village, surrounded with snow, and water pouring down in cascades from the hills, and in

bucketfuls from the clouds. I arrived at this inn last night in the dark, having walked from Novara and through Bellinzona.

Addio, beautiful Italy! Addio!

I felt sad to leave this restful and cheery land, and in the tenderness of my feeling of love and regret I kissed a curly little maid of ten years whom I had made friends with on the road. The whole family bid me farewell, and it was the tenderest kiss I have had for a long, long time. Her little arms grasped me strongly round the neck, and for a long time on the road did I feel that warm grasp. I had made the acquaintance of this family in Turin; the father was the Captain of an association of twenty people from a little village in the province of Novara; they had clubbed together to visit the exhibition in Turin, and thus secured half-price for everything. They were full of the cheapness of the whole trip and all that they had seen, and it was refreshing to hear those simple-minded peasants, who never had been *in the world at large*.

At Turin I had a last experience with the Douane and railway, which will last me for the rest of my days. I registered all my luggage *petite vitesse* to Switzerland, and after a great deal of declarations, signing papers, and tipping porters, I thought I had finished, when an official of the Douane strutted along to give his last signature. He unluckily asked me what a certain bag contained, and I trustfully answered that they were my materials for work, colours, pencils, &c. He insisted that I should pay duty on them; then it was the turn of some canvases for which I had no signed certificate from the Commissariat of Art. Well, I spent two hours going from one office to the other, and really, my dear friend, you would have discarded me if you had seen me there; I really did swear! All the gall I had amassed with those beastly officials I gave them with a piece of my mind, and very nearly ended by being arrested once more.

Now I hope I am rid of all this trouble, and I am ready for some new misfortune, which is always in store for a Bohemian of my stamp.

I received your two good letters readdressed to Turin, and the newspaper with the first account of the Exhibition. How well you have guessed my few moments of despair! Yes, I had those (What's the use to struggle and make a new life!), but they last little, and work soon blows them away.

If you look on the map you will see I am on my way to cross the Alps on foot. I think I shall pass (if weather permit) through the Grimsel Pass. But it is not sure, because the snow is covering the hills. If when I arrive at Airolo I find it too dangerous, I shall go through the tunnel of the St. Gothard. My next address will be Neuchâtel, where I hope to arrive in ten days.

The exhibition at Turin was just what all exhibitions are. You know already that the modern art of the Italians is *nil*, absolutely *nil*. There is a special exhibition of religious art, which for the moderns is a death-blow to their religion. Just after having admired all their beautiful masterpieces of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it is a painful sight to see the work of to-day. Some day I will write an article on the subject. I am preparing it while I walk; it is such a good way to have clear thoughts, walking in the clear air of these heights.

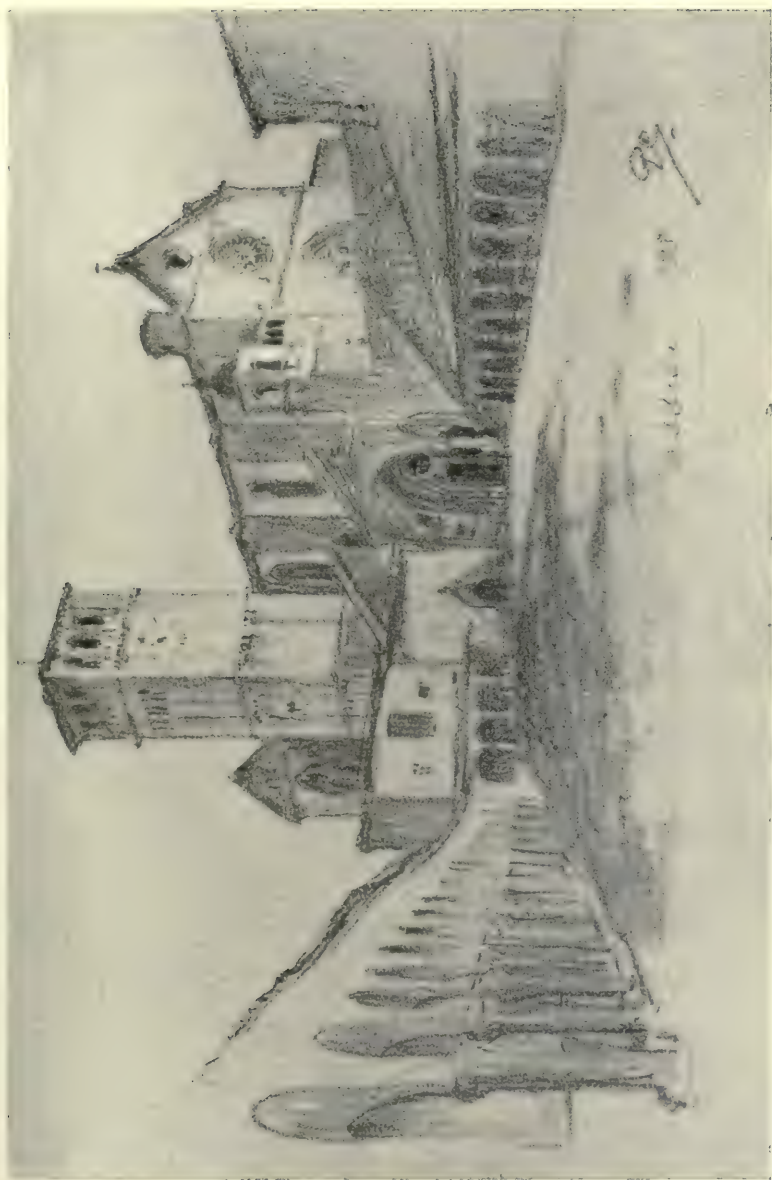
[NOTES FROM A FRIEND.]

BRIDGE OF ALLAN, 29th May 1910.

DEAR MADAME CHRISTEN, — I have completed my Italian notes and was re-writing them to-day. I shall send them to you in the beginning of the week.

Our meeting in Italy was so strange, and Assisi seems a fitting background for the appearance of one so remarkable in many ways. I remember so clearly the profound impression he created there. . . .

To the traveller, who leaving Rome and passing northward through a varied and picturesque country, at last reaches the valley of the Dopino, a charming prospect unfolds itself. On the slopes of Mount Subasio, high above



The Church of St. Francis, Assisi

the fertile valley, and buttressed by the heavy walls of the monastery of St. Francis, cluster the steep streets and quaintly grouped buildings that form the picturesque town of Assisi. The old town walls and gates still exist, although now in a somewhat ruined condition, and on one of the lower walls the Hotel Subasio is situated. From the balcony of the hotel a commanding view of the surrounding country is had, away over olive, fig, and cypress groves, far beneath to the cultivated plain, dotted over with tiny villages and white houses hidden amongst trees, to the distant purple hills. Seen at night, under the soft rays of the moon, the prospect is even more enchanting; fireflies flash between the trees, and the noises from the valley and croaking of the frogs float softened upwards.

Adjoining the hotel, but separated from it by a cloistered courtyard, stands the renowned monastery of St. Francis, famed both for its association with the Saint, for its unrivalled frescoes painted by the great artist Giotto and his school, and for its unique and unrivalled situation.

It was in the midst of such appropriate surroundings that I first met Monsieur Christen in the early summer of 1898. He arrived one day while we were at lunch, and was assigned a seat at our table. By the charm of his manner, by his striking appearance, and the easy fluency of his English, he at once secured the undivided attention of the party. With characteristic frankness he informed us that he had just arrived from Spello on foot, that he was making a walking tour through Italy, and that he was an artist, and deeply interested in Art in all its phases.

In the evenings we generally gathered in the music-room, and there Monsieur Christen, having a tuneful voice and a good ear, rapidly became a favourite.

One evening it was discovered that seven different nationalities were represented, and some one suggested that each should sing a characteristic song of their native land. Scotland, notwithstanding her wealth of songs and ballads, would have been poorly represented had she depended on the vocal talents of her own sons.

When no one could be found in the company to volunteer their services, "Monsieur," with ready tact, sprang up and cried, "I'll sing a Scotch song."

And then, with dramatic gesture and faultless accent, he gave a spirited rendering of the Scottish national anthem, "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled." We sat spell-bound as we listened to the well-known words heard so unexpectedly in a foreign land, and when he concluded amidst enthusiastic applause, we were well contented that Scotland had scored the success of the evening.

All were anxious to thank him for his opportune services, but he modestly remarked, "Hoots, awa, I'm a Scotsman myself, and come from Aberdeen," and his accent was so perfect that a Glasgow professor present believed it for some time after, though he said that he considered his appearance was somewhat foreign.

From this time Monsieur Christen became attached to our party, and from padrone to waiters we were ever ready to listen to his stories of experiences on the road.

He spent many happy hours at Assisi, sketching in the quaint steep streets of the town, and often returning to the study of the frescoes in the monastery; sometimes planning little excursions to the surrounding country, or suggesting concerts or serenades in the evening after the day's work was done.

One outing which he enjoyed greatly was to the "Hermitage della Carceri," to which St. Francis retired for devotional exercises and solitude at various periods of his life. The Hermitage is situated on the edge of a deep ravine of Monte Subasio, forming a courtyard with an old well in the centre. It is entered by a stone archway, and has a parapet wall overlooking the cliffs on the other. We found a small party of Italians just beginning lunch, and with much kindness they invited us to join them. Monsieur Christen seated himself on the parapet wall with his plate beside him, but unfortunately it fell over with its contents, and was smashed in pieces far





A Sunny Corner
in Spain.

below. He affected to be overcome with grief for the loss of his lunch, and created great amusement, with the result that every one was anxious to supply his loss by an extraordinary collection of things, many of little value to a hungry man.

It was with great reluctance that at last we decided to leave Assisi for Perugia. Monsieur Christen suggested that we should all send our luggage by rail and join him in walking, as the distance was only fifteen miles. We were charmed with the idea.

Before sunrise one June morning we set out, a party of three Glasgow architects, and Monsieur Christen as leader. He made a striking and picturesque figure, clad in a knickerbocker suit, with a stout staff over his shoulder supporting his sketching materials on his back, and a small handbag in front. We had a simple breakfast at a rude wayside inn, where they were quite unaccustomed to receive travellers. The heat becoming excessive, we stopped to bathe in the river Tiber, at the foot of the hill rising towards Perugia. M. Christen ventured too near the rapids, and was carried over some rocks and badly scraped on the sharp edges, but fortunately without receiving serious hurt. We found the steep ascent trying work, and were all thankful when we reached Perugia about 9 A.M. We spent three days there, but M. Christen thought it lacking in charm compared with the old-world streets of Assisi, and was anxious to resume his journey. He and I therefore left the two other architects, who had settled down to study, and took the train to Orvieto.

It is very strikingly situated on the top of some high cliffs, commanding fine views of the surrounding country, though not as extensive as Assisi. We spent the day exploring, and saw the frescoes by Fra Angelico and Luca Signorelli in the cathedral. M. Christen thought our bill at the hotel exorbitant, and asked to see the padrona. When she discovered that he was perfectly familiar with Italian prices and customs, she was full of apologies, and

quaintly explained that the stupid waiter had made up the bill from the menu kept for the English visitors, instead of treating us as Italians.

We saw some horse races the following day, which took place in the principal street. This street was very narrow, and scattered all over with sand, to keep the horses from slipping. They ran without riders, and were started off with explosive fireworks, rushing at full speed throughout the streets, spectators keeping close to the walls and crowding into doorways for safety; they were finally stopped at the other end by men holding canvas screens. Siena was much more to his liking than Perugia.

On leaving Siena we parted for two days, as I travelled by train and M. Christen resumed his walking tour, staying one night at San Gemignano. While crossing the Piazza at Florence I saw him seated at a café. He was greatly pleased to see me, as he had been waiting for a long time, knowing that some time in the course of the evening I would pass. He said he had no money with him to pay for his refreshments, so always kept ordering something else when the waiter came to be paid. He was just beginning to despair when I appeared; he felt much exhausted, and was soaked with perspiration after his long walk in the broiling sun, and had resolved to travel by train for the rest of the way. He had been fifty days on the road without receiving any letters!

As the weather was so very hot in Florence we were glad to take advantage of the bathing-stations on the river; the water was muddy in colour, and not very inviting, but we were glad to feel its cooling effects. Owing to the strong rays of the sun it was necessary to have some protection for the head, and M. Christen created great amusement by swimming up and down the river and under the Ponte Vecchio, holding his large umbrella over his head.

Towards the end of July the heat became unbearable, and we both decided to leave Florence. We spent a night at Pisa at a hotel with a beautiful vine-covered courtyard.



Types

During the whole night we were badly bitten by mosquitoes, which we suspected lived amongst the vine leaves. We hurriedly left Pisa, after seeing the Baptistery and Leaning Tower, for Livarno, and had an enjoyable and refreshing day by the seaside. Feeling happier after this short respite we passed on to Pistoia, staying a few hours at Lucca on the way. M. Christen remained with me for a day or two, and then left for Venice. I rejoined him there a fortnight later, meeting him accidentally in a street on the first day of my arrival. He had made up his mind to leave, as it was impossible to work in the heat, but kindly deferred his departure a few days. We spent a happy time in the shady canals, studying the wonderful colour effects, and gorgeous marble palaces towering above the narrow streets. In the evenings we had a refreshing bathe in the blue waters of the Adriatic, returning from the Lido to watch the sun slowly sinking behind the domes and towers of Venice, transforming it into an enchanted island floating on a golden sea.

A month after he left Venice I again met Monsieur Christen at Menaggio on Lake Como; the two last days of my stay in Italy I spent with him on the shores of the beautiful lake. My last Italian night was spent recalling with him the many incidents of the time we had so happily spent together—the charm of Assisi, the heat of Florence, the wonder of Venice—the few remaining hours passed only too quickly. Soon I was in the train for Porlezza, bidding farewell with a sad heart to Monsieur Christen and Italy, but with a strong hope that I would some day see both again.

JOHN STEWART.

CHAPTER X

AMONGST THE ALPS

ALTDORF, 15th October.

I DID it, and am well and happy, but oh! I am tired out. I walked in the snow for more than four hours. Before I reached the hospice of the St. Gothard I met a German professor from Berlin. He and his guide advised me strongly to return to Airolo with them; they had tried to pass through the snow and had been obliged to turn back. I did not listen, although I had no guide, and for the whole day those two creatures were the only beings I met. The panorama was most sublime, and the stillness exalting; the white sparkling snow everywhere round.

I arrived soon at the spot where they two had turned back. It was a spot where the snow had amassed. I walked and pegged away for more than half-an-hour, the snow to my waist, and got all right through, and now I feel so well and glad I did it.

SUMISWALD, CANTON BERNE, 27th October.

From the above you will see that I have not yet reached Neuchâtel. Here I stuck fast since last Saturday, and this land you must some time visit. I shall not leave this world of ours before I have managed some way or other to travel with you in this Emmenthal! It is the birthplace of my father, and all the snowy Alps are standing high crowning the "Tannen-baumen Wald"; it's a beautiful season of the year, all the peasants preparing for the coming winter; it is the most delicious weather, and I am sketching all day long out of doors. I made a special big book in which I do

a great many coloured sketches of Swiss types, and speak the Bernese dialect all day, and drink hot milk.

The Emmenthal is the district where all the Gruyère cheese is made.

I am sure you must notice that with all those dialects, from the Italian to the Swiss, I lose the little English I used to write.

This is one of the richest countries in the world, and I am amazed how many rich people there are in these small villages here; lots of millionaires, who are simple peasants—the money has been piled up for several generations in the same farm.

I spent three days in Lucerne, where I had the good fortune to find an old pupil of mine from Délécluse's Academy, a daughter of a banker, who has a magnificent studio. She used to be a great favourite when in Paris, her mother had specially recommended her to me, and I had promised six years back to pay them some time a visit in Lucerne. Well, they received me to my heart's content, and I found their hospitable home a very cheery spot for a couple of days.

I found here in the register of the village that all my father's sisters and brothers had died, and all had died poor, some even in the poorhouse; most of them were shoemakers and weavers. I found in this village an old man of seventy-eight, who is very like my father in looks as well as in character. The association of ideas and the remembrance of my youth come back vividly here, and people are exceedingly kind and good to me.

MARIN, PRÈS NEUCHÂTEL, 6th November.

"Vous y voilà enfin!" is what they have all said when I turned up at last on the lovely shores of the Lake of Neuchâtel; they had despaired of ever getting me here. You may ask what could so long detain me in the Emmenthal? Come, come some day to see those hardy peasants of the hills in their homes, and you will see the charm they

can give to an artist's soul and eye. Every one is surprised and charmed at my appearance of health and strength, although my beard changes my face. Do not be surprised at my bad penmanship; the instrument is just like a toothpick!

I intended to have written a long letter full of this autumnal calm poetry in which I live just now, yet here only at last am I at the writing-table. It is perhaps that when one lives much one has not the impulse and force to live over again on the paper.

The colours round this lake are absolutely charming at this moment. On the golden slopes the vines repose after the exuberance of summer, a transparent mist full of light, a calm atmosphere, crisp and breathing, no snow on the ground.

I had it in my mind to tell you the avalanche of questions my little nieces and nephews were rushing at me, of the delight of my brother Emile and friends, who were drinking far into the night the descriptions and adventures of Italy. It is intoxicating to watch the joy of people who all the year round dwell in the same spot, and listen to one who has wandered.

At the end of this week I shall return to Sumiswald to paint two pictures which I intend to send to the Universal Exhibition of Paris in 1900. The types of peasant are exceedingly fine. I have made arrangements for a good large room at a farm, of the same type as the one at Anet, near Marin, where we visited the artist Anker. The subject of one of my pictures is a national game in the open air called "Hornouser," of which I will send you a sketch. All the people are willing to pose for me. What decided me was that after all I am a Swiss, although I have always made my art study in France, and for the Universal Exhibition I will have to show in that section; and also I have yet the ambition to be known in my own country, and some day have a picture in their galleries at Berne and Neuchâtel. You will smile perhaps, and think that I am going *à grand pas* dans mes rêves d'ambition. There are still other reasons that have made me decide on Sumiswald



A Life Study

as a place to go to paint. It's the birthplace of my ancestors; it is true they were all poor (I even learnt that an uncle died in the poorhouse in 1884). They are all dead, and as far as I can gather, every one remembered them as brave, true, honest people. When I came there, looking like a prosperous Englishman, telling them that I was one of them, I felt that every one was gratified to receive and greet me. I shall visit Berne on the way to see my friends and relations. In this rich Emmenthal all the farmers—I mean the old families—are millionaires (I mean in francs). The money has been amassed and kept from son to son in the same house for three or four generations. I have board and pension for 3 francs 50 per day.

I got the *Times* you sent me; do please send newspapers from time to time, as I shall be away from the world for those long winter evenings. After my pictures are finished in Sumiswald I will then decide to go and work in Paris till spring. No fear! the past for me is closed and healed well.

SUMISWALD, 24th November 1898.

Oh! if only you could imagine my wanderings here in this calm restful Emmenthal. I have two rooms, one little next the one I arranged as a studio, with one of those little German stoves with bricks that has two stories. The perfect tranquillity and calmness of this village is a good finish for my wanderings before I go again into the towns and the fight. What cheer to read the English news in the corner by my stove, and from time to time go to my window and look at the winding road losing itself in the far distant fir-trees. It is rain, rain all day since Monday, but I feel the snow coming, very likely we shall see it this week. I got also the *Review of Reviews* and *Black and White*; how welcome all those papers are here. I have begun to read and write a great deal; I started to put "au net" my travels, and hope to make something with it.

My tour in the Jura was delightful; at Berne Dr. Guillaume was so hospitable, and he introduced me to most

of the eminent people of the capital. I took the whole of the family of my late brother Théophile for a stroll, and we fed the bears with carrots, and had altogether a good time and numerous glasses of beer. They remembered you very well, and were so delighted to get the stamps. At Neuchâtel I also had pleasures which reminded me of my happy days of yore. Emile is a little better, but is overworked with his big enterprise of commerce. I walked from Chaux-de-Fonds to St. Imier over "Berg und Tafel" in a glorious sun. Though it was now twenty years since I did the same walk, I remembered every spot, side-walk, tree, and stone, where I sat to rest and dream. I went to the spot on the height where one day I cried in the stillness of nature, although I was perfectly happy; I cried only at the beauty of the world and at the powerful feeling of poetry and peace which exhaled from it at that tranquil hour.

At Chaux-de-Fonds I found out an engraver who had been in apprenticeship in 1873 with me at Neuchâtel; he was married now, with grown-up children and a good wife, and he was so pleased at my visit that he never left me a step all the time I was there. I stood a drink to his *ouvriers*, and remembered the time when I also was all day long the elbow on the engraver's table. Ah me, what a change! Now all the watchmakers make very little money out of their watches. I was told that the little black watches, so nice and neat, only brought fifty centimes of profit to the maker!

At St. Imier I went to see old schoolfellows who had married and had children, and were big and fat. And do you know that after all my troubles and changes I looked long years younger and more cheerful than any of them. Dear me, do you know that I learned that my father died of the cholera! When he died he had not a grey hair, and was a strong man. Imagine that the year of his death he had tried several times to marry again. One lady, a very old friend of our family, told me a story really screamingly amusing of his demands in marriage. I wonder if I shall



Portrait de mon frère Emile

be so hale and hearty at his time of life? But he never smoked till his later days, and even then only on holidays or Sundays, and he never went to the public-house. Speaking about smoking, I have left off smoking for a long time and follow the example of my father, and now only smoke on Sunday a good cigar.

Certainly if it is worth while the girls might send their sketches here. I feel ready for work now, because the last three months I have not done a great deal, I assure you. I see that it is not the same with you, you seem to be on every possible committee just now! But you must not overwork yourself; I will hope not to see next time we meet a thin Botticelli Miss Thompson.

6th December.

The woods near the village are still, a restfulness full of mystery and peace, those columns high to the sky, with a roof of white snow, bring back to me the forest of colonnades of St. Paul, near Rome, which I described to you, and the mysterious darkness of Notre Dame de Paris.

But here it is all the work of the Almighty, not a trace of the work of men. The twittering of birds is the music of this temple. These piles erect have taken two centuries to reach such a height; all is clear and neat, the ground is a carpet of brown and dark, and dreamingly I breathe peace and rest; I dream that in this same wood my father has come and dreamt his happy days of youth, as a boy from school has crossed these same woods of fir-trees. And also my grandfather and his father. . . . It is indeed my fatherland!

(I have met here old people who had known my father as a boy. I have been in the old farm where he was born; my grandfather was a woodcutter.) The atmosphere of this place, where few strangers ever come, where generation after generation have been born on the same land, in the same house, awaken feelings which I did not know.

I have dipped my burning body in the cool blue water of the Adriatic; I have been lulled to sleep in the warm

sun, gliding in a gondola down the Grand Canal; I have listened to the gay music in the streets of Naples; looked down into the fiery Vesuvius; I have wandered in Pompeii, pining, lamenting over stupid civilisation. In the blazing sun of Amalfi la bella I have known the joy of eastern life, but it was not my fatherland's peace! . . .

In the plains of Tuscany, when in the early dawn the world seemed a Paradise, I walked gaily through hills and vales, I have then known pure delight.

When in Rome I was "medused" in front of the "Wounded Gaul," and the Venus of the Capitol, or frightened at the "Moses" of Michelangelo; I have felt I had the soul of an artist. But when I awoke near a murmuring brook, the sun was at the zenith, and it was in a wood of fairy Umbria; all around me were the remains of a repast; I knew that day, what I had long guessed, that I was a Bohemian of life!

But here to-day, all this week, when the snow was falling white and thick, when through the firs I could catch a glimpse of the mighty Alps, when in the distance I heard the youthful noise of the children running from school, I felt to describe all the sensations, all the details of life and nature that filled my heart with joy and peace, I felt if only I knew how, that the pen alone, and the pen of a poet, could render it in order that another could feel just as I felt!

I began this letter, and then crowds of things came, and so time passed, but it must go, as I wish it to come to you for Sunday, for the good old quiet Sunday of Macedon. It would be nice to come and sit in the afternoon on that same seat in the garden.

I shall on that day in the afternoon be near my good stove, reading the news from England. I have a lot of periodicals. I got the Christmas number of the *Graphic*, which is very fine. I do follow all that is going on in Ireland with great interest, and I believe good will come out of it. Yet I do deplore (as an artist and a philosopher) that Ireland cannot be allowed to rule itself. I deplore as a lover of originality and national individuality that John



Our artist friend



On the Rhine

Bull has been obliged to make all the laws, to put his stamp on all the institutions of Ireland. I should have liked that the Irish, who is so different from the English, was allowed his own little government, was not obliged to fight in London over his home affairs, not obliged to have Englishmen, who come over to destroy and adulterate his character and originality.

I say all this as an artist. As a politician and a man of the world I know perfectly that England, who is playing such a big rôle in the world *just now*, England who is *going* to have such a *great influence* over civilisation, has to be united to be strong.

SUMISWALD, 14th December.

Two black-headed warblers followed me, chirping and prattling (probably in their language they were begging for a few small crumbs, and I had none; another time I shall bring something for them), the firs were dripping, splashes of snow fell all around, the least touch brought down avalanches, the wood was busy and alive with noises. Woodcutters below at work, felling some big giants. My cathedral had not the silence of last week, its dark brown carpet was tender, but it was beautiful, the strong scent of the fir pervading all the air.

Below on the vale hundreds of sluices, small and large, diverted hundreds of streamlets in all directions through the fertile green pastures whose fame is so world-wide. I could hear the splashing, the gurgling of water, all the land was drinking in joyful thirst, the grass looking greener and happier in the water made me wish to be a duck!

Here only a small plank slantingly put diverted a stream which made the meadow a green lake; there another field was crossed with fine streamlets, all made only of two or three little barricades of earth. The peasants here know how to make use of Mother Nature.

You must not believe that this place, though a small village of only a thousand inhabitants, is wanting in social life. The country is studded with farms and hamlets, with

their big roofs resembling large dark mushrooms; the whole district has about seven thousand people. We have the singing class of men and women, who meet on Tuesday evening in the school-house; I am, as you may guess, one of the choristers. The girls all in a row on the one side of the room, the boys on the other, and we practise for an hour and a half. The age is from nineteen to thirty or thirty-five; some very fine voices; it's very cheery. Yesterday was our night, to-morrow it is the "Menner Choir" with another director, who is the postmaster; in this choir are the leading burghers of the village. I am also one of them, and sing away three times a week in those choirs; because there is a third, made of the peasants, the dairymen, and ploughboys. I am also one of them. You know by this that it is the country of song.

There is also a society for golf, or "Hornouser," which meets only on Sunday afternoons. This sketch will give you an idea of what it is. Rather a dangerous game, as the ball is made of very strong wood, and is this size, and it comes with enormous force, travelling a distance of 300 steps (paces?). Needless to say that I play also that game every day.

Last Saturday I went to the Communal Assembly held in the schoolroom. There I found 151 burghers all sitting like little boys in the class-room, and talking of local elections and home administration; some very fine faces and good strong men.

On Monday I went to the tribunal of the district, which is at the Castle of Trachselwald, an old pile of about eight hundred years, very picturesque, full of historical interest. The Prefect made me visit it from top to bottom. I found the cell of the patriot Leueberger (whose history I shall some time relate to you), a cell without windows, where the feet of the prisoner were closed in a wooden mangle fastened on the bed, so that the man can only remain seated, and there are the chains still fastened to the wall where his hands were chained.

The Prefect made me visit some extraordinary hiding-

places and cupboards, where the chatelaines of olden times used to hide their silver and gold. At the tribunal I heard the usual number of petty larceny and ordinary misdeeds. One man got a year and a half for having sold properties which were under the seal of the law. I thought it was rather hard on him, and said so to the judge the same evening, who is a friend of mine—I mean the judge, not the delinquent.

Saturday night the "Menner Choir" had a banquet of a hundred people, wives and all, to which I had been invited; lots of fun and singing till far into the night; you see we have here a full life. I wanted to let you know what we do in this wooden village. When I cannot paint I read, and exchange just now English lessons for German lessons with the schoolmaster here. The lovely newspapers you send me make my lonely hours so cheerful, and what was more welcome still, a lovely letter just now. Ah, vous allez bien, vous aussi flatteuse, faites de la poésie en prose. How delighted I am that my letter was so welcome that grey Sunday by Belfast Lough.

SUMISWALD, 22nd December 1898.

Je vous souhaite un heureux Noël! du fin fond de l'Emmenthal je penserai à vous ce jour. Probablement que nous profiterons de ce jour-là pour aller faire une partie de traîneau; ce sera charmant de filer sur la route blanche au tin-tin des clochettes. Car la neige est revenue, et il fait maintenant un froid de loup. Ce matin l'eau dans ma cuvette était couverte de glace. Il faut me voir patanger dans la neige avec mes grandes bottes. Je fais tous les jours une promenade plus ou moins longue, qu'il pleuve, neige, vente ou tonne, aussi je me sens fort et jeune. Non, je n'ai plus du tout mal aux yeux, ni aucun autre mal, et je dors comme un charme.

Well, enough French. I felt just now in the mood to write in that language, and I hope you will be able to make me out. It's pleasing to me also to know that my literature has brought to you what in the fulness of my happiness

here I wished to convey to you. I could again this moment depict the clear atmosphere, but the poetry of it benumbs my fingers ; it is below freezing point, the snow is as hard as stone, and sparkles in the sun, a sun which does not give warmth at all. I run my pen as quick as I can to keep alive. I went this morning to look if I could find a little flower as a reminiscence of my lovely wood, but no, I could find none. Do remember me to all at your home, and if you see any of the young ladies of the "wandering artist's" classes, do please tell them that in the new year I shall certainly come and see them. A happy Christmas to you.

26th December.

Your Christmas letter arrived just when I had returned from church. The mixed choir had been summoned to go and practise once more before performing in the church. At 8.30 yesterday morning we were all in the schoolhouse, and at nine we entered in a body into the church, placing ourselves round the altar in a packed audience. We sang two hymns and they were perfectly beautifully rendered, as all people told us.

Just splendid it was to see all those peasants in their Sunday attire on that frosty early morning of Christmas in this old church, weather-beaten monument of about five centuries. Men, women, and children for the most part had walked from far away up the hills, and had had to get up very early. I also got up very early by mistake ; as I am just opposite the church I heard the bells ringing, and thought it was already eight o'clock, when it was only seven. A most beautiful day, cold as cold could be, but with a brilliant sun, which, however, gave no heat. After church we walked with some friends a little way up the valley, the hard snow cracking under our feet, and the country looking crystallised and still. But before I tell you all I did this day, I must tell you that I received the charming pocket diary, which I shall value very much. I also got the letter you readdressed ; it was from Glasgow, from the dear



The Castle of Trachselwald

friend, John Stewart, my chum of Italy, you know, a very nice greeting it was; I also got a nice card from Miss Knowles. But the dear bit on the Lagan is before my eyes, and brings back cheerful recollections.

Now to my day here. On the Christmas Eve I went very late to bed, having been at a Christmas tree and dinner at the house of an Avocat here, a very clever man with two little children; we had a gay and copious evening.

Then to return to the Sunday. After dinner, all the pension (because, you know, I take my meals at a pension at the village hotel where we are about ten or eleven taking our meals regularly at 11.30 and at 6.0. There is the "Maire," who is still a bachelor, but going to be married shortly, there are two of the school teachers, two accountants, two architects, a chemist, and myself)—well, all the pension started for a long walk to a village over vales and hills, above high in the snow, called Affoltere. In no time my breath was transformed into hoar-frost round my head, beard, moustaches and hairs were all white with stalactites hanging on; but it was a beautiful walk, and we returned through an immense wood in time for a big dinner where I was asked, at the house of the President and "Juge de Tribunal." We remained at that dinner till late into the night.

Now to-day I feel very lazy indeed. I took a walk down the valley with my two big dogs; yes, I have two big friends, the dog of the doctor, and the dog of the restaurant, a big St. Bernard, which follows me everywhere. It was beautiful to see them playing in the snow, and running forward up and down with me.

Now, my dear Miss Thompson, I shall go to Berne to-morrow for the day for some materials. I have also an invitation to Dr Guillaume's. I will write again for New Year. I do hope this letter will find you cheery, well, and happy, just as your old friend feels just now. I enclose some small coins which I found when travelling in Italy, and collected for you. If I remember well you

do collect coins. One of those is a rare one, which I discovered in the tower of Robert D'Isca at Amalfi.

SUMISWALD, 3rd January 1899.

The festivities are over, and I had a good share in them, so much so that I could not find a moment of restfulness to write to you when entering on the New Year. The noise, the trade, the going on here all those days has been tremendous. There was a big market day on Saturday, sledges arriving from all parts, such a conglomeration of types; peasants big and strong, like oxen, with heavy features, and a little the passive look of those animals. Others had that worn-out look that is typical of the worker in the open air, something of the type in "Labour" of Millet, or his "Angelus."

Whole families whose only *fêtes* are those market days, of which there are four or five in the year. The girls in their national costumes come for the dancing part; in all the Wirthhaus' there was dancing and drinking all night. For a whole hour the church bells rang, and in the morning of New Year, at seven, another hour of hard ringing. Then at ten the fanfare mounted on the steeple of the church, and played all the national airs; it was very picturesque, and is a very old custom. Then in the evening more dancing; then came a terrible storm, with lightning and rain, but this part was not in the programme, and only an impromptu. In a few hours all the snow had melted, the water was dripping and running everywhere, and the sledges could no more be used. Well, imagine that in the morning there was intense cold again, and a foot of snow on the ground, and what is worse, your humble serviteur felt a shivering all over, as if he had caught a severe cold. I struggled at once to prevent it coming, but in vain; but in two days careful treatment I am already well. That is a sure sign how strong and healthy I am, for I had been singing and dancing all evening, and, coming home, instead of going straight to my bed, sat in my cold room

to read some letters, and fell asleep, and thought I was in for a bronchite or what not. Monday and Tuesday I kept my room, and read your two novels, and now I am as well as a trivet. Mind you, there are others here that caught cold those days, and I heard to-day that one fellow is very bad and not likely to recover for a whole month. Have I not a great deal to be thankful for? But now it is finished; no more festivities for me, and I began the New Year with heart and earnestness.

On New Year's Day I swelled round with a big lilac chrysanthemum in my buttonhole. The flowers arrived most wonderfully fresh, and I put them in tepid water. As I write they are still on my table, looking lovely; nothing could give me more pleasure than those flowers, and to every one I told that they came from far, far away in Ireland, and people looked amazed.

My dear friend, I began the year as I said in the calmness of my room, looking over all your good letters, over all the reminiscences of this never-to-be-forgotten year of peace; for hours on hours did I dream over the wonderful Naples. I walked again from Pompeii to Castellamare and to Termini Massalubreuse; the beautiful sea was again brilliant before my eyes. I heard the song of the matrose, and smelt the exhilarating atmosphere of orange groves; and I felt it almost impossible to resist the strong impulse to return there now with the first train direct to Naples to begin again that life of joy and peace. It's just a year day for day when I began to be intoxicated with the love of life; now even when I write I feel that nothing can equal it, nothing, nothing, my dear friend. There is a rock just above Sorrento, looking toward the Bay of Salerno, which Virgil mentions, on which the Syrens lured their victims to destruction. I remember I sat on that same spot last year, and now it seems as if the Syren of the south is singing to me to come back! Dear me, if it is to go to destruction to learn to live every day as if there was no to-morrow, if it is destruction to listen all day to the music of the waves caressing the rugged shore, to worship

and admire this beautiful world, then let me go to destruction!

Those were some of my thoughts during those two days of calm. Then I read all your words during this year past. I saw how you encouraged me, watched my movements as a mother her child, a sister her brother. I read again those thoughtful and kind letters—that's how I silenced the "Siren of Sorrento"—to listen to another voice which told me of a year of work and duty. Yes, this year shall be a year of work, intelligent and regular work every day, and with a purpose. 1898 will have been a year never to be forgotten, which has made a new man of me. But, dear me, how I did the dilettante—worked only when the spirit moved me—and listening only to a voice, the voice of the artist and the Bohemian! Now there are other things to be done, and I am this year going to try to fructify what I have learned. It shall be a mind with one purpose only, Art, and Art alone.

SUMISWALD, *16th January* 1899.

I have been three days in Berne about framing and about a portrait, then I go to Neuchâtel, where I will stay two days with my brother before starting to Paris. As usual with me at the last moment, I have on my arms an immense amount of labour left to do here. The other day I went to the Great Hospital (which is in another old castle), the annual day when the poor of the whole country flocked down from the hills to be sold out, hired, and paid by the Commune. It is a most extraordinary and interesting performance. There I picked out several curious types which I want to sketch, as well as a little farewell portrait to my hôtelier.



A very little Model
Lamp light Study

CHAPTER XI

IN A FRENCH FOREST

84 RUE NOTRE DAME DES CHAMPS,
PARIS, 29th January 1899.

DEAR MISS THOMPSON,—I arrived here yesterday, but oh me! what a difference, and how dismal the place looks after bonny Emmenthal. In a day I shall write of my *parting!* from the friends, my last visit to Neuchâtel and Marin. To-day I am scarcely settled, and it is very cold. To-morrow I begin straight off at the Academy. Good old Délécluse warmed my heart with his good friendship. I passed through St. Imier and Besançon on my way here. My first impression of France and Paris is that it is a *lost* country. What a pity; and there are in it such a lot of good and noble people.

2nd February.

Since Monday I am working in the Academy the same way as of old, yet there is a difference. I am rested, calm, and in good health. Although most of the faces are new, I am surrounded with recollections. It is nice to study again, and I feel that I shall do very well. Every one thinks I look ten years younger. I met Miss J. — this afternoon; she looked to me so tired out. I do think that *all those girls* do work too long hours in the studio. Although for the present I work most of the morning and afternoon, I do not intend to do so every day, as I wish to do some other work in the Louvre and at the Luxembourg.

Now about my departure from Sumiswald, the dear old place. The people there gave me a parting dinner, and arranged an afternoon drive over the hills and to different

villages, which was a most delightful outing, full of singing and fun. It was hard to part from them the next day, and when the big post carried me away through the long street in the village, all the friendly faces were at their windows, or waving handkerchiefs from the doors. It is a long time, dear friend, since I left a spot with so much regret; I have arrived and gone in the last year from many villages, from many new faces and new friends, after having given a great deal of my best right and left, and received also kindness and friendship from many. Ah me! with a heart so full of humanity, why am I not intended to dwell in a large family, where I could cultivate a long time the same ground, help others round me; and give them something of what I learn in life. Where I had a chance to take my place for good and all among my fellow-men, and leave my footprints! Perhaps all that is to come some day. If only it comes while I have still power in me!

Needless to say that I promised to come back some day and see them. I arrived in Berne, where Dr. Guillaume had also prepared an evening for me, and we danced till late into the night. I made a sketch of a portrait there which will be for my next visit; then I returned to see my brother and his nice little family at Neuchâtel; from there through the Valley of St. Imier, and had time to see my old home between two trains, and to sleep at Besançon. I left some pictures in Berne and some small things in Neuchâtel to make myself known, as I do hope some day to have a picture in the beautiful gallery of that town.

I received your newspaper. You are right, it is my friend, John Stewart, who was with me for two months in Italy. He got a prize of £100. I am so glad, because he deserves it so well. I go this day to stay at a pension de famille, because the life of restaurants has lost its charm for me.

Dimanche, le 12 Février 1899.

The church bells were ringing near by at St. Sulpice when I got up this morning; the sun was already shining

high just like a spring day. But still I turned round again and closed my eyes, to review over once more the first fortnight in Paris (called once *la ville lumière*). The mind is clear and fresh, the eyes limpid, when you come straight from the pure atmosphere of the Alps, and the transition vigorous enough to leave a strong impression. This impression, which passed in a succession of images, the experience of this first fortnight, I will sum up in one sentence, "France is lost;" it must I know sound very curious for me, an artist, to come and pass such a judgment; and what have I to give me the right to occupy my time with political economy, when art alone should be my only aim and thought. It is curious indeed, yet I cannot help seeing big in all things, and as I see a great many things, my mind has a tendency to deduct and compare. You remember well how I have always in the past stood up for France and French people; and now the people to me are dear, and there are many ways of them I love, but the race is lost! is lost beyond recall; it is a strong but very definite sensation I have. I must add that I have been all those days in every part of the great city. I have dined with many old friends, some artists, engravers, some in business, some in the Government. Having been at different times of my life in Paris, I have in it many friends, and travelling abroad I have made some more, and I called on every one after the work of the Academy was over.

With the stock of energy I have amassed last year, I have hunted up every creature I knew once in Paris. If I were Balzac I could write a book on my discoveries. But I will some day tell you *viva voce* all about my curious pilgrimages.

There is no doubt that I see everywhere a decadence very marked. A disorganisation of all the principles that keep society together, and far more advanced than it was ten years ago. The desire I have uppermost is to run away from the decline of this once great nation. It would shock your ears to learn all that I have seen here.

But why dwell any longer on such a serious and sad

theme, when there are such a lot of things that speak of beauty and greatness. I could tell you of the beautiful pictures I went to see in the Louvre, pictures which I understand so much better now; of the new additions to the Luxembourg; of the splendid new galleries in the Palace of Versailles, where I went to admire the masterpieces of the Empire; of my sunny walks in those princely gardens of Trianon and St. Cloud; of the wonderful royal display that strikes the artist from the Pont Royal facing the Louvre, Tuileries up and down the Seine. You see, my friend, I take to the style of the *Epopée* in my writing, but patience, I shall come down from those heights and tell you of my humble life in my fourth story of Rue Madame, where I take only my breakfast and supper; there is a Swede, a Russian, an Armenian, an American, a French lady, a Russian lady, and your most humble servant. A very respectable and religious society I have fallen in with. After supper we have a little musical entertainment and early to bed. Most of my time I pass at the Academy, where I feel that I shall do probably the *most useful work of my whole tour*. The professors here approve greatly of my working again from the nude; I have a rendez-vous with M. Delance to submit a portrait to him before sending it off. Délécluse is now a splendid teacher. I feel only happy at my work and go at it as if I were a beginner; but wait a bit, my friend. The picture of the Amalfi girl was damaged beyond repair, but I have a first sketch of it in oil.

One of my old chums from the time when I was an engraver is dead, leaving a wife and child. He was a Parisian and a good fellow, but there are a great many more and sadder changes among my acquaintances, alas! Yesterday I found myself face to face with a man with grey hair and terribly wasted face, which I could hardly tell was the once happy, gay, healthy youth of twenty years ago. He looked certainly fifteen years older than me, and yet he was two years younger. Ah me, I have still a great many things to be thankful for, among which is to be your friend.



A Little Niece
(Drawing by Sims.)

28 RUE MADAME, 17th February 1899.

In haste I write this short note. You know already about the sudden death of President Faure. I will tell you more on Sunday. I went this afternoon over to the Grand Boulevards, and nobody could guess that the head of the State had died. All is calm and *orderly as before*. To-morrow trouble may begin, when the new President will be chosen, but I do not think any disturbance is to be feared. I believe it will be Monsieur Dupuis who will be the next President.

28th February.

Another week passed, and the regular work does me a great deal of good, though the transition from the pure air of the Alps to the atmosphere of the studio is very great. This last week I took a complete day off for the funeral ceremony of President Faure. I went to see in Paris what was going on. If you read the papers you will get all the political news and ceremonies and incidents since my last note, and the bad guess I made about the new President of the Republic. But you will not get in the description in the papers the expression of versatility and "I don't care-ness" of the great mass of the Parisians and French people. That expression was made very clear to me in various small ways. I wandered all over Paris the whole day; I went everywhere; and as all business and traffic was at a standstill in the big Babylon, it was a fine opportunity to feel the pulse of the people. You know how I can walk, and how tirelessly I can go about; I was at one time near the Père Lachaise, clustered, jammed in a crowd of hundreds and hundreds of the real working, hard-working Parisians, and talked with them on every possible topic. At another time I was in another part of the city sitting on a garden bench with half-a-dozen young men, all business men, artisans, free of speech, and jolly fellows; but no one had an aim, an ideal, a belief of any sort. Only their little squabbles about their pay, work, and small intrigues of love affairs, nothing

above that. Republic, Monarchy, Progress, or better hope of happiness, Religion or no Religion, that was blank to them; slaves they were all. Some do work now twelve hours and fifteen hours for five and seven francs a day; the ordinary day's work is four to five francs for a good worker. A cutter in a big manufactory of boots told me that there were twenty together in the same room with an overseer; they were not allowed to sing, or speak, or smoke, they worked the ten hours a day standing, for five francs a day in that condition, and in a badly ventilated room. I got all this out of it, not that he complained, no, not he! He had only once a word of bitterness when he spoke of another fellow who was only two years older, and got one franc more a day because he looked more of a man than he, "et pourtant," me dit-il, "il faut voir son travail, ses tiges sont mal découpées et vous laissez des ondulations de bordure." He spoke to me just as if I was perfectly acquainted with his business. That's how I spent my day looking round; thousands and thousands had not even a glimpse of the whole funeral, yet they were patiently standing against each other, looking into the backs of the people before them. Once I heard, with my own ears, I heard the voice of joy and unmitigated happiness of a young girl saying to her mamma, "Oh! I have seen a wreath of violets with a white ribbon—yes, I have seen one!" She was perfectly happy, and it was the only single sign of the big funeral procession she had seen the whole day, and do you know she saw that same lilac crown from the same distance as if you were standing in front of your door at Macedon, and perceived a small boat in the sea at the end of the lawn. That is all. Another time I took a poor young lady into my arms for a minute to let her see the big catafalque when it passed; till that moment she had only seen the back of the overcoat of the gentleman in front of her; and the row of people in front of me was already about six or eight deep. I could not keep the lady in my arms longer, because she was very heavy, although she was small.

That is how I saw the funeral of President Faure.



Chartres Cathedral

Since I wrote the above I was called away with a letter from my friend John Stewart, the Scotch architect, who addressed to me one of his chums who was going on a tour round the world, with whom I spent the whole day, and to whom I gave all my addresses in Italy.

Did I tell you that I found here the companion of Amalfi, Julien Michel, who was with me for two months? We went together to the Comédie Française and dined together, and talked of Amalfi la bella! Did I tell you also of another acquaintance I made at the same time in Amalfi, a distinguished doctor from Paris called Guède? I wonder if I mentioned him in my letters from Amalfi; we were together about a week, and I learn now that this doctor has written a novel where I was the hero! all made of reminiscences of Italy. In this novel he has me killed, and I have the manuscript just now, and I think I am going to send it to you to read; it is in French, but you can keep it for a fortnight and read it at your leisure, and then return it to me. The doctor's letters I also enclose, so that you can understand a little what it is. He called me "Boros" in the book, and it is the description of our meeting in Amalfi, all idealised and cooked up. It is sometimes very poetical and sometimes very interesting.

I am going to-morrow night to dine at Madame Lebegue's.

My days are so very short, I feel as if I would like to have two lives to live!

PARIS, 12th March 1899.

I follow with great interest and with much pleasure the movement of art just now in Belfast. Keep it up! Keep it up! Something will come out of it. I received the altered rules of the Belfast Art Society, which I think very clear and correct. I read the papers with attention, and my verdict is that you must keep art matters before the eyes of the public in Belfast, and I see the day when your Society will gain fame.

Dear me, my friend! How you go, how delightful you

are! Quelle imagination! but what splendid and friendly words they made you write, words which are not lost, words which I will keep in heart. I see well in what way you want me to work, and you can *trust* and *count* on me for an example in the matter you so eloquently pleaded. I do understand you!

Now about "Boros." It's natural you should get lost between the fiction and the real in that novel, because they intermingle so well into each other. In the "Boros" I am killed—yet here I am sound and safe; in "Boros" I made love to an Italian girl called Assunta—in real life I did not do that, I made a sketch of her, and was kind to her, because it is my nature to be so to the poor people; she consequently, whenever I met her in Amalfi, ran to greet me with every mark of friendship, and I had always a sou or two ready for her. When people in the village began to know me and found out that I was kind to a poor working girl, I found many houses open to me, and models placed in my way. The doctor was amazed at the boldness and free manner in that foreign land, and predicted to me before I left him at Positano that if I did not take care I would fall into mischief. Yet so is a clear conscience. I never feared, and nothing happened to me! I got only kindness in return.

That dear doctor shall pay for the *coup de couteau* to-morrow night, for I am going to dine with him; just a year and a month since I left him at Positano—from that day I have never set eyes on him; I look forward to it with great expectation.

Is it not a pity he killed me in his novel? but I will make it hot for him. When you have finished with "Boros" send it back here. Michel is *en province* just now, but I expect he will be back soon.

Every day I see great progress in my work, and I see daylight in the future. Yes, I have piano lessons, and I practise singing here twice a week. I am training my voice.



"Such a dear chap"



The Eiffel Tower

21st Mars 1890.

How the time is fleeting rapidly ; we are to-day entering into spring, and just now the snow begins to fall after two months of almost regular sunshine ; it is the seasons topsyturvy, as it is as cold as a New Year's day.

Last Monday I was warmed up and cheered by meeting the dear old Doctor Guède. You guessed aright, we stayed, elbows on the table, talking till far into the night ; I found him, with his wife and friends, in a charming house with every comfort, a museum with numberless pictures of the best modern painters, and souvenirs of long travels. I found out that he had married the widow of the great artist Diaz, a most beautiful woman, who still possesses a splendid head of black hair. We travelled again together in Italy, and he told me of his early journeys in Tuscany in 1858, before I was born. He is seventy-two, yet his eyes are brilliant, like a young man ! To his ear he still tells me that I have a slight English accent when I speak French. Is it not curious that it should be so ? He came to the Academy yesterday, and I introduced him to Délécluse. I see Monsieur Lasar very often ; he is working at painting, and has very good work indeed.

28 RUE MADAME, 17th April.

Dear me ! I was under the impression that I had finished this letter and sent it on to you, and now I find it here among my papers unfinished. I must surely have been dreaming, but I thought I had written about all my doings here. I am very glad to be posted about the movements of art in Ireland. That exhibition in Dublin is a very good sign, and also the number of articles written on it. Also about the movement in Belfast, and the news that subscriptions are running in.

I read the letter of poor ——, which passes my understanding in some ways about the spirit of it ; it is something of the same school of thought which inspired the letter to

the Town Council of Dublin, asking to elect on their board only men who would engage to have their portrait painted by local Dublin artists! All that kind of thing is very degrading to art, and very narrow, and must not be encouraged. Yet I feel for the poor fellow's disappointment.

Now I have to confess that in my everlasting selfishness and forgetfulness it passed my mind to-day that I had let the 26th of March go on unnoticed and unobserved, yet it is gone and passed, and I will hope that every new 26th of March will add one and add one long into the next century, without leaving traces of their passage and their number on your dear face, and on our friendship. May you have peace and joy in those you have taken to heart. Though one month late I send all good and sincere wishes for all the year.

I enclose in this letter two photographs which I have just received from Switzerland. It's our family in 1871, after the loss of some other small brothers and sisters, the other taken at the age of twenty-five. If I have a chance here I will have a photo taken on the day I reach forty years (which is very soon), as you very well guessed thus by deduction, thinking of *my own self*, that I discovered your birthday. Alas, such are we men. You must think me very vain to have so many photographs, but this is going to be the last photo taken of me. Forty is the starting moment of my second life.

You will hear with pleasure that Lasar is working with me at Délécluse's. I have been able to induce him to come to work and study again, and now we are since a fortnight, stool to stool, in the full joy of early childhood. He is such a dear chap; you know that, like myself, he will teach no more. However, we are working cheerfully and manfully like two little boys, and I am very happy.

You must not be concerned if I have not spoken about the Salon of this year. I have not sent a single thing, though every one told me to do so. There is no hurry. I do know where I am and what I am aiming at. I have already hurried much too much in life.

Experience teaches me.

I received a letter from Switzerland which gave me news of Emile's health. I am still very concerned about him. As for my own health, it is very good, and I am cheerful all day. Perhaps a little lazy with the spring influence. I will conclude by wishing you a joyous spring-time full of gladness.

29th April 1899.

This is the first letter I write in my new year. I have been burying my first half life! And after closing this eventful first part of my existence, I took a long wistful glance in front of me, and I felt full of hope and courage.

I walked into the new existence surrounded with flowers, with friends, and with the goodwill of all around me. When I arrived in my pension at seven o'clock on the 26th I found every one standing round the table greeting my entrance; the table was illuminated with forty candles, representing each a year of my life. Every one took part in the *fête*, and we had there six different nationalities. At the Academy I found also every one ready to shake a friendly hand. I shall go on working as long as my money lasts here. I shall work with better fire when I know I have not a penny left behind. Lasar and I are working regularly every afternoon at Délecluse's. I am taking private lessons in the mornings just now from a very good artist in his private studio; he is the man I want for some practical technical advice.

POIGNY, PRÈS RAMBOUILLET, FRANCE, May.

I begin this letter away again from the madding crowd, away from the noises, the trams, the railways, away from the salons, away from the thousand struggling artists, and away from anarchy. I have taken refuge in the wood, peopled with singing birds. Since yesterday afternoon I walk amongst the brambles where I find the discreet violet and the lily of the valley; the peace is immense, all nature is at work, growing in silence under a loving sun. In the pine woods I find the mystery of dreams in life; in the

open meadow where larks fly high I find the joy of life ; when I meander with the streamlet and its sweet murmur I hear the voice of the poets ; I hear them all, from that strong mighty Homer to the rich ring of the writer of Locksley Hall. In the studio you can find the secret of your trade, but here the artist is made.

This hamlet is hidden in a small vale in the famous wood of Rambouillet (*chasse royale*) ; here is Ertz, my friend, one of the best water-colour artists of the day, and from him I take now a series of ten lessons before starting for the "Islands!" I have had three months of Délécluse studio, and I began to have a need of fresh air and tender green for my eyes. So I said good-bye to Délécluse and Lasar, and to my pension, and from here I shall go straight to London in about a fortnight.

I lost last week while I was at the Salon an old friend, a trusty and faithful old friend, who had been my "compagnon de voyage" days and nights from Naples to Switzerland all last year, a companion who helped me to carry my bundle, and helped me in many climbs. I speak of my big strong fig stick, which I had bought in Naples. Poor old friend, I miss him dreadfully. Is it not curious how one can get attached to a piece of wood ? I left him on a sofa in the Salon, and in spite of many inquiries he has gone where all my numerous sticks have gone. I will write some day a piece of poetry on that stick, which began its life on the sunny slopes of Castellamare, and after many adventures in all the big cities of Italy, long struggles on the roads of Umbria and Toscana, went to a finish sadly abandoned on a red velvet in front of Puvis de Chavanne's picture in the Paris Salon. Now that I am here in peace and calm for a few days, I will write again ; I have still long, long to say, but this I wish to reach you for Sunday. I intend to go to Clifton, where I shall paint my first portrait on my arrival in England, unless I have one in London on my arrival, which is possible.



An artist friend



The land of Nod

POIGNY, le 18 Mai 1899.

Les senteurs des bois me montent à la tête ; à l'ombre des pins sur la mousse douce aux tendres verts, j'écoute le chant des mésanges et des pinsons, l'appel du coucou traverse l'air pour me dire que je suis seule ; rien ne vient troubler l'harmonie de mes pensées, une brise légère fait chanter les arbres, et ce concert des êtres et de la nature est bien doux à mon âme ! Et toi là-bas, âme-sœur ! que fais-tu ? Es-tu heureuse ? Ah oui, amie, je sais ce que tu fais, je te vois, je te suis dans tes moindres actes, tes travaux, je vois dans tes lettres cette existence si active. Que je voudrais à cette heure t'avoir à mes côtés, te faire partager ce bonheur !

If one could always keep oneself away from the world, its duties, its numerous promiscuity, I mean if it would be permitted to choose only a select few friends to whom to talk, and with whom to act the social duties (just in order not to become altogether selfish), I say that just now—I hope not to be of the same selfish opinion in a few days. But you can understand well that I wish to keep all my finer sensations. I desire to nurse myself in my best self. When I return to the Inn here for my meals, I meet Ertz and his four lady pupils, and soon a great many of their thoughts and talks jar on my nerves. I am essentially sociable, and I *will* rectify, argue, impress my ideas, and often “preach” in the desert land. Result : it effaces what nature has done ; if not altogether, it sponges it over. Oh ! I wish I could just now have you here, and that we could work and paint, and only think of producing pictures, fine pictures, and never to think of making money for a long, long time.

Mais c'est un rêve que je rêve sous ces arbres. La réalité que j'éloigne de moi le plus que possible, de jour en jour approche. Jeudi prochain je retournerai à Paris pour deux jours et je compte être à Londres le 28 Mai.

Je fais de plein air ici, et je donnerais quelques années de ma vie pour ne pas quitter ces lieux charmants. Vous

savez que Rambouillet est à une heure du chemin de fer de Versailles, c'est une des belles forêts de France, chasse royale.

PARIS, 26th Mai.

I have just left the woodlands with a heart full of calm and peace, and now that I am again in the turmoil of life, I turn at once to business. I shall dine to-night with M. Délécluse, and to-morrow with the good doctor. Till Wednesday will be saying good-bye to all my friends here. It might be a long time before I shall come back to this city. All those friends, old and new, have been very good to me, and I shall regret them very much. But I shall see old friends in the other land, and I hope to arrive at Charing Cross Hotel on Wednesday or Thursday.

[A farewell visit was paid to a Swiss schoolfellow, whom he found so ill in bed that he sat with him for a long time, and was suddenly attacked by violent influenza, caught from the sick man. The journey to London was impossible, and after several days of high fever, oppressed by illness and the great heat of Paris, he insisted on struggling back to Poigny, but broke down on the way near Versailles, eventually arriving at the little hamlet almost speechless, and more dead than alive.]

POIGNY, 9th June 1899.

Yes, I take care, and do no more foolish rash things. I feel so childish to be mastered by the common stupid ailments inherent to our poor humanity. It's so inferior to be ill. I got your good motherly letter, and will follow your advice. It is good news about the portraits. You do not tell me if you find time to paint a little yourself among your numerous duties.

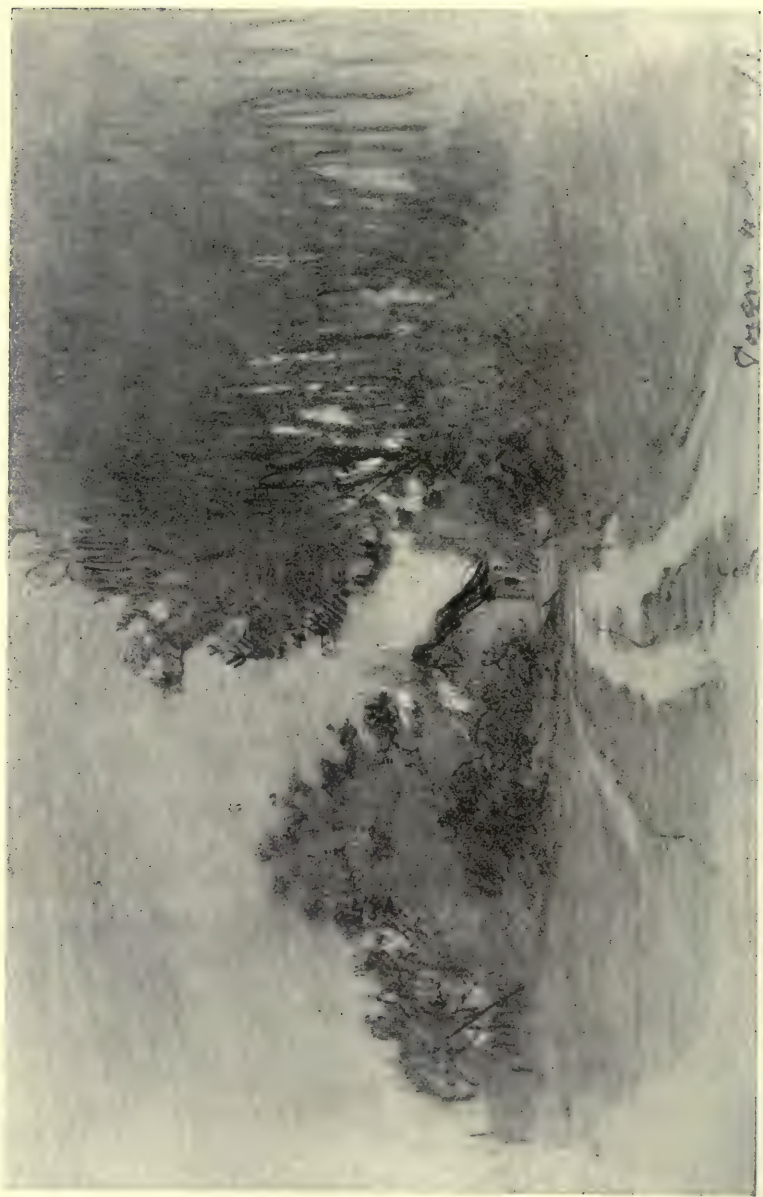
The quinsy, which was the offspring of the sudden *grippe* which struck me, is, after all, not a trifling matter. The *grippe* and fever brought it to light, but it was there in bud, and hiding for a long time (so says the doctor), and I believe he was right. Already during my long walks and



An enthusiast!



A meditative moment



Design by [illegible]

"A little collage of my own"

excessive overheating in Italy last summer, I had once or twice little warnings of something not in order. On these warnings I gave up smoking. Brief, as everything has a beginning, here I have the explanation of the thunderbolt that almost annihilated me. At present I can swallow nourishment, but can only speak in a whisper; for several days I could not do the one or the other. It is a great comfort to be here in the wood, and I drink bottle after bottle of good fresh milk.

12th June.

I had this morning a visit from my friend Yule, who came from Paris to see me, bringing me news of the studio and the friends. He rode on the bicycle from Versailles. Also I had a visit from two ladies from the Pension, who spent a whole day here with me. I have to use all the odd sheets of letters, for I have to wait till I go to Rambouillet to buy writing paper.

Ertz is still here with his pupils. I have a little cottage of my own at the far end of the village, a secluded, tranquil spot, where I dream long dreams. We had a terrible storm on Wednesday afternoon. I was caught in it about half-an-hour's walk from my house, sitting in a beautiful pine wood reading Carlyle's "Apprenticeship and Travels."

25th June.

This is going to be my last letter from Poigny. I am all nerves to go away into the battle once more and begin to work. I feel like a horse stamping in its stall before going for a race. Yet I shall regret this beautiful spot, the lonely woods of Rambouillet, peopled with stags, deer, and birds of all sorts. Good-bye, dear spot! To-morrow morning I shall be in Paris, and Tuesday evening in London. I feel well and strong, and can sing again as of old.

CHARING CROSS HOTEL, *July 1899.*

MY DEAR MISS THOMPSON,—If yesterday evening you had been one of the diners at the opposite table at Gatti's, you might have got a hearty laugh at a hairy-bearded foreigner and his pile of correspondence; the soup got cold, the beefsteak remained half-way on the fork, and the people round about smiled aloud! Some letters were already a month old.

On Sunday I expect some friends to dinner; Rosetti is one of them, and a Swiss pastor, a most interesting man in my collection of new acquaintances. Miss Purser and Miss Webb from Dublin called on me. I went one evening to a farcical comedy with Miss Purser, where we laughed to split our sides.

The lady who was to be painted is not willing to sit now, as she finds it too hot in London, and may go into the country any moment, and made appointment with me for the beginning of winter.

Oh! how artistically ugly London is, large quantity of buildings with no architecture at all; what a depressing aspect. Of course there are beautiful houses lost in the crowd, and public buildings of splendid architectural merit, as fine as any great nation could be proud of, but they are drowned in the beastly mass of ugliness; the finest buildings are surrounded with vulgar stone walls with square holes in them for windows. Nothing can compare with the great ensemble of Pompeii of old, where every house had the stamp of good taste and proportion. That will do for to-day; I cannot help it, it must come out, it's such a strong feeling.

I am very busy all day long between galleries and looking up people; every morning my first visit for half-an-hour or an hour is to the National Gallery, which is so close by. It is Turner who attracts me more and more. I do understand him now so well. His Bay of Baiae near Naples moved me almost to trembling. It's the second time in my life that I felt so electrified before a master of art. Once before Michel Ange, and now this morning. Is



Cornhill House, Aberdeen

it because Baiae I have still in my mind, I have wandered through last year, or is it that I feel just now good, well, and happy; the change and the different air of this island seem to agree with me? I cannot say. But, oh me! what a delicious feeling to be able to feel like that. Turner is great. Turner is the greatest landscape painter that ever was!

The heat is getting intense here, and people are taking to the country all round; I believe I will go down to Somerset very soon. I went to the Temperance meeting at the Crystal Palace the day before yesterday, and was exceedingly interested with all that I heard and saw. Indeed, I do begin to believe in Temperance myself in good earnest, although they have not succeeded in making me sign the total abstinence. I see strong ground for those good people to work on that line, but for myself it would not do to be in the extreme. You know that I have given up smoking, except just in case of special company, and I remain sometimes a week without a smoke. I have done two pencil portraits of my friend the pastor Wysard for a book of poetry he is going to print.

Yes, London has immense interest indeed! I went again to the Guild Hall collection. What a pity you could not come to see that unique collection, more than a hundred Turners together, think of that! This is learning indeed. To-day I am going once more to the Kensington Gallery, and I do believe after all those intoxicating views I shall be able to work in a corner at ten shillings a week for the next two or three years.

I got a very hospitable welcome at a business man's house lately, very, very good people, but so "English," you know, no more life than a worm, yet steady, plodding, and regular; for their whole existence going without deviating from their groove, which makes their strength and power. And a big power it is! While we scatter all our gifts and energy all along the road, they nurse and keep all that they get.

I go to Somerset and Bristol, and then to Belfast. Three cheers for Ireland!

CHAPTER XII

HONEYMOON WANDERINGS

“The shadow of his presence made my world
A paradise. All familiar things he touched,
All common words he spoke, became to me
Like forms and signs of a diviner world.”

—SHELLEY.

“Are we ever truly read, save by the one that loves us best? Love is blind, the phrase runs; nay, I would rather say Love sees us as God sees, and with infinite wisdom has infinite pardon.

“We went in silence up the hilly road, with the stars shining overhead. . . . We spoke but little, what need was there for words? We went slowly after awhile, homeward, up the road, which at another time would have seemed steep and dreary enough, but to me was beautiful as the earth can only be once in the length of any life . . . it is only life *together* that is worth a wish or a prayer.”—OUIDA.

“The face of all the world is changed, I think,
Since first I heard the footsteps of thy soul.”

—E. B. BROWNING.

ANOTHER year given to sketching and portrait painting in England, Ireland, and Scotland passed peacefully away, the new century had commenced, and with it our radiantly happy married life also began. It was on the 2nd of June 1900 that we were married in the country church we knew so well, and started on our leisurely journey to the English Lakes.

Seven years of friendship lay behind us, but how different everything becomes when “you and I” changes into “we.”

We wandered about Keswick in search of apartments to our fancy, and seeing a nice white cat watching its master at work in the garden—we both loved cats—we interviewed him, found his wife sunny and pleasant; one

saw Skiddaw from the windows. What more could lovers of mountains and nature want ?

We amused ourselves by noting down our respective impressions of places and events, deriving much amusement from comparing our very different points of view. My husband held that women had no sense of proportion, letting minor matters bulk too largely for their own peace of mind, and discovered in me relics of my father's love of a methodical ordered existence, tempered by my own instinctive desire of liberty, resulting in mental readiness to appreciate greater freedom, coupled with absolute inability to get out of life-long habits. His was the genuinely appreciative and cheery view, the true artist's aptitude to assimilate and mould surroundings, and, by adapting himself to them, adapt them in turn to his needs.

A few extracts from the notes of that happy holiday will illustrate my meaning.

LATRIGG HOUSE, KESWICK.

Le paysage des Lacs est délicieux ; les pâturages et les bois respirent le calme et la prospérité. L'air est pur et vivifiant. Sydney et moi avons trouvé une course le long de la falaise à travers une forêt de chêne qui chaque jour nous procure de nouvelles joies. Nous sommes arrivés ici le soir de notre premier jour, et depuis les heures coulent rapides comme le bonheur.

Sur les hauteurs où l'air dessine nettement les détails du paysage dans le lointain, les bruits de la plaine montent avec la brise fraîche et caressante ; avec ma chère Syd je laisse passer les moments dans le repos et la tranquillité d'une joie calme et saine.

Pendant la semaine qui vient de s'écouler, j'ai eu plusieurs fois l'occasion d'observer les conséquences du despotisme des règles de Macedon, et de l'influence qu'elles ont eu sur Sydney. Ce cher ami, étendu dans son fauteuil, somnolait paisiblement après dîner. La porte s'ouvre, c'est la servante qui apporte le thé : aussitôt Sydney d'un bon a repris une posture attentive, et en un clin d'œil elle a le

nez enfoncé dans un livre, comme une personne bien occupé. Pauvre lapin! nous allons changer tout cela. Nous nous couchons quand nous voulons, nous changeons l'heure de nos repas presque chaque jour.

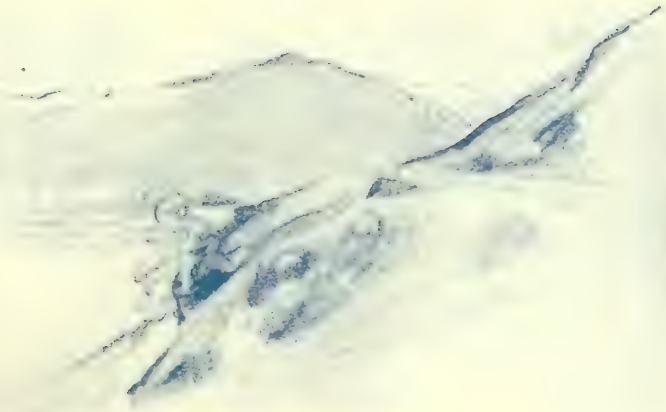
OUR THORN TREE

Poised upon the verge of dark grey slaty rocks, on the edge of a little precipice in the mountain stream that murmured near the Falcon Crag, stood our thorn bush.

A mass of snowy blossoms, with only a few dark green leaves, its slender stem showed against a background of underwood, birches, and oaks, ferns, moss, and stones—a glory of fresh green, rejoicing in their sister, clothed in her robe of virgin white. Self-contained, satisfied to bloom unseen save by the wild creatures around, the lovely young tree seemed to us an embodiment of Nature, her loveliness so open to the world, yet too often so little appreciated. To us, who adore Nature in all her moods, to whom she comes as the tender mother, soothing away all worries, all anxieties and disappointments, as the sympathising recipient of our intense joy in her beauty, her peace, her restfulness; it seems amazing in this lovely Lake district, just as it so often did when we wandered over the hills about Belfast, that so few seem to care to be alone with her!

As we sit amongst the bracken far up on the hillside, cyclists slip past below, great coaches full of tourists, and boatloads on the lake. But not one human being have we met on the lovely paths through the woods, where sheets of hyacinths spread like blue lakelets spilled from the heavens above!

We are told that this is an age of too much reading, and it is no doubt true, and of rushing about, of restlessness. Examinations have killed the true spirit of education; the drawing out of mind and thought have been replaced by the cramming in of unassimilated facts, discarded again as soon as the examination is over.



Falcon Cruz, over Derwentwater



"Pauvre Lapin!"

Our honeymoon here makes one think much. In this district, full of memories of the past, one looks back and wonders had Wordsworth come now, who would have listened to him?

We two love to stroll on the hills, to watch the changing effects on the noble mossy shoulders of the mountains, to pause and note the exquisite grouping of a stray birch and a few fallen blocks of stone. Rodolphe sketches it, and I watch him, and an ineffaceable picture of beauty is engraven on our minds. The cyclists see nothing of this—wholesome exercise, no doubt, a certain acquaintance with the country, but that is all. They cannot leave the high roads. The world goes too fast, and the tours with the cheap tickets that might be utilised in such a wide spirit, and bring such helpful rest and change for mind and body, are made too crowded and hurried.

We start on our double journey, hand in hand, resolved that for us life shall be full of work, yet full of rest also.

“Ohn Rast, ohn Ruh,” in the best sense.

Our exquisite thorn bush is content to be as perfect as possible, she seems to bloom just to be lovely, she blooms for us to whisper, as we visit her day after day, and watch her hand in hand (loving each other better, because we so love Nature), that to live true to our mission in this life we need not the standard of what seems, what is usual, what is done by others—no, the thorn bush has done her best, perfuming and beautifying a lovely and lonely spot for yards around.

We pass through the years, through the world—let us live our own life also, and be true to our own natures, and we, too, can give pleasure, as our thorn bush made us happy as we gazed on her snowy wealth of blossoms on our favourite hillside at Derwentwater.

6th June 1900.

The end of the Lake offers such wild scenery; one gets nearer the hills, and there are very few habitations. To-day,

June the 8th, we only encountered one family during our long walk along Cat Bells. We did the whole tour of the Lake, although we only started at 6 P.M. for a stroll, and were back, nicely tired, to have our supper at ten. When Syd has walked for six or seven miles she begins to get wobbly, but it is wonderful what delightful times we get out of these leisurely strolls.

June 10.—Our second Sunday here, and again to church, and such a pleasing nice old man to preach. The spirit of "we two," close together in communion of thought and peaceful friendship, has an indescribable charm during the time we are in the lovely little church. . . .

As our ideal of life included leisurely walking tours, we had provided ourselves with light waterproof knapsacks. Mine carried some light sketching materials as well as clothing, and strapped on the outside a thin mackintosh and sketching stool. My husband's heavy load of painting things included food and an aluminium saucepan wherewith to make tea. Thus equipped we started one afternoon for Wastwater, taking the coach as far as Lodore Hotel, and pausing at Grange in Borrowdale to have tea with some friends, we passed on to Seathwaite, refreshed by several showers on the way.

Stye Head Pass was grand in the deepening twilight, with tremendous storm-clouds rolling amongst the mountains, and we paused to let my husband sketch the lonely little tarn, planning to return to Seathwaite and paint a picture of it on some future occasion. Night came on, and the steep path down the scree-covered side of the Great Gable was in very bad order, nothing having been done to it since the winter storms. We went slowly down, down, almost groping our way in the darkness, till at last a welcome glimmer of light revealed the whereabouts of Wastdale Head Hotel, with a few belated tourists in the smoking-room, every one else having gone to bed. But the hospitable landlady soon appeared in her dressing-gown, gave us an excellent supper, and had a room prepared, and I tumbled gladly into bed, after discovering



From the "Gallery of portraits," p. 28



Dinner House.
Dinner.

that I had nearly cut the heels off my boots on the scree—a serious matter with the prospect of a fourteen-mile walk on the morrow. But after seven or eight hours' walking such misfortunes make little impression, and sleep seemed the only thing in the world of any importance.

Every one was off for the day when we descended for a late breakfast in an airy room with interesting photographs of mountain-climbers and the extraordinary peaks they had surmounted, making one wonder whence the photograph had been taken, and recalling an artist's exclamation as she and I gazed in the Academy at Millais' wonderful boggy foreground in "Over the Hills and Far Away," "Where on earth did he set his easel?"

A hammer and nails patched up the boots for the moment, and after a hasty walk along the shore of Wastwater, away we went for Black Sail Pass, armed with a few verbal directions and assurances that there was a track all the way. We could not see it, but meandering to avoid a stream, came on swampy ground, and had to cross it ere starting on as hot and toilsome a walk up that pass as I ever experienced. As we turned joyfully downwards towards Ennerdale we found a stream and a shady nook to take lunch and make some tea. That aluminium saucepan was such a charming invention. The little spirit-lamp went inside the little saucepan, the two little aluminium cups went over the lamp also, and it weighed scarcely anything—and we *were* so hungry and thirsty. But alas! the metal cups grew so unbearably hot that we could not drink the tea till it was provokingly cold, and the rolled tongue provided by our good Keswick landlady had not stood the heat, so we left it for the birds and beasts, and lunched lightly on biscuits and chocolate. But with two happy people in the open air nothing matters, and we went gaily down into Ennerdale, and up another sunny slope to Scarf-gap, where we rested a long, long time, fascinated by the beautiful panorama of Buttermere sleeping in the sunshine far below us. Colour, flitting light and shade, everything that could add perfection to that exquisite view,

were there! Then on again downwards, with the stimulating hope that at Gatesgarth there *might* be food, and at Buttermere Hotel, two miles further, there *must* be! What an afternoon tea we had there, in a cool and shady room, and then a glorious drive home.

Even intense bodily fatigue could not quench the geographical ardour that made me ask the coachman the name of every peak, pass, and river, while my husband, who was contented to *admire* them, chaffed me mercilessly in French as he strode tirelessly beside the carriage up the many steep ascents on the way. We noted with pleasure the merciful little hollows cut across the road to catch the wheels, allowing the horses a moment's relief in their climb.

Many a time since have I listened to him, mischievously warning friends to beware of his wife, when she began to ask the names of mountains, as she had talked a coachman in the Lake district and a photographer at Inverness to death!

Buttermere, Wastwater et tous les lacs Anglais, avec les montagnes qui les entourent, ont inspiré plus d'un poète; et plus d'un écrivain a décrit ces cites pittoresques. Je voudrais un jour demeurer au bout de Derwentwater pour faire des excursions artistiques autour de ce coin du lac. Il y a là une maison bien située, appelée "Grange," où nous avons découvert des amis Ecossais. Ce fut une curieuse rencontre; et la première présentation de ma femme aux "gens d'Aberdeen."

Il y a un bon tableau à peindre au sommet de "Styhead" avec un torrent sauvage qui sort du petit lac d'en haut. L'effet que nous avons vu vers les huit heures du soir était grandiose et simple de majesté.

Pour la descente du côté de Wastwater je ne recommande pas les Pinet extra fin, on peut même au besoin se dispenser de prendre avec soi de souliers de bal!

Ce fut une journée ce 14 Juin, pleine de charme et de fatigue, que nous terminâmes en voiture de Buttermere à Keswick, le soleil couchant dorait les cimes. . . .



Home from sketching



The Gobbins from Black Head, County Antrim



Loch Dearan, from Fairy Dell.

Nous dejeunâmes au coin d'un ruisseau, et le lourd bagage que j'avais sur l'épaule depuis hier devint de grand utilité, le petit appareil pour le thé fonctionne bien. La dernière descente du côté Sydney "wobblais" pas mal! . . .

Je ne pourrai égaler Coleridge, Southey, Wordsworth, ou Thomas Gray, qui chacun à son tour ont chanté ces grandioses beautés; nous avons passé par où ils ont passé, senti et admiré tout ce qui a fait chanter leur muses, mais il y a un vaste champ entre la sensation et l'amour du beau, et l'art de le faire partager à d'autre même après que l'on n'est plus!

John Ruskin, qui sans nul doute est venu souvent se retremper dans cette belle nature, a dit: "I think that the view over Derwentwater from Friar's Crag on a fine day is one of the four supremely beautiful views that I have seen in Europe!"

Enfin il faut quitter Keswick, où nous avons passé nos premiers quinze jours de cette nouvelle vie à deux, dans une parfaite harmonie et un bonheur sans nuage! . . .

We spent from Saturday the 16th June until the following Wednesday in bustling friendly old London, comfortably located in the Charing Cross Hotel. London was at its best, a nice breeze, only a pleasant amount of heat, and the rhododendrons in the park a mass of gorgeous bloom. We had such a happy time! We shopped—for many little things were needed for our walking tours; we saw many pictures, and a few dear friends; and everything was full of pleasure at the time, and full of happy anticipations of the future, and my husband said he had never enjoyed London so much before; he made acquaintance with a fine-looking German carpenter, and a lithe Italian model, on the top of omnibuses; a pretty girl pupil of his dashed at him in the Strand; met an artist friend of Paris days, now a successful portrait painter in America. We invited him to supper with us, and then strolled on the Embankment in the peaceful night air, watching the beautiful quivering lines of light on the water in the soft summer

darkness. We wandered along to Cleopatra's Needle, watching silently the tide of Thames and tide of life that ebbs and flows, as life and time ebbed and flowed under the burning Egyptian sun. That solemn monolith always sets a chord vibrating, remembering the feelings of intense interest with which we followed its travels, when Sir Erasmus Wilson brought it to its northern resting-place. I confess I always feel sorry for it, it looks so lonely!

Our American artist talked regretfully of the past, confessing that he found life much less interesting in prosperity than in the old merry scanty student days.

I think an artist, above all other men, should most jealously preserve plenty of space around his own individuality, should always assert his right to stand outside the conventionalities. Else he may become saturated with them, and they may mould his life too much, and fatally injure the joy in his art; its finer issues are so disastrously interfered with if he cannot "let himself go." The man in the street imagines that an artist can go to his work as a business man to his office, work for so many hours, and return to his meals at a fixed hour! The very need of such punctuality paralyses; for who can lose himself in his picture, working at highest pressure to record a passing effect—or carry his work on at one sitting to a certain preconceived point with the utter absorption so essential to success, if a little corner of his consciousness is worriedly wondering about the flight of time?

We went one evening to "San Toy"; the very antithesis of the Embankment, with its silent river, glittering reflections, and great spacious heaven above! Daly's Theatre was crowded, the laughter incessant, the play a feast for eyes and ears, lovely in colour and light, merry in fancy, and admirably acted. We had a delightful, happy evening, as full of enjoyment as two children.

Besides meeting many human friends, we met many old acquaintances amongst the pictures in the Tate Gallery, and were often in the National Gallery, especially the portrait section, revelling again and again in Watts'

marvellous series of character studies. M. Christen had the deepest admiration for Watts' work, with its noble aims and lofty idealism. His feeling ever was that the demand for technique was exaggerated nowadays, giving an undue value to mere handling, without proportionately valuing the deeper qualities of insight into the character and personality of the sitter.

It was very hot in London, and we wearied of bricks and mortar and felt it a very "happy thought" when my husband suddenly suggested going to Scotland instead of Paris; and off we went in the Aberdeen steamer, arriving there very early on a hushed lovely June morning.

The "Granite City" has certainly a character of its own, a restfulness of effect, partly due to long experience in dealing with granite, which does not lend itself readily to petty detail. At the foot of Union Street, close to the old Market Cross, stands a noble statue of the last Duke of Gordon, showing what a good sculptor can do with that rather intractable material. Passing westward up that great artery of the city, it is curiously satisfying to see house after house of the same harmonious grey colour, instead of the wearisome variety of tints in the painted stucco houses of most other towns. Unusual also is the gradual change in the great continuous roadway, imperceptibly altering from the chief shopping street into the best residential quarter, with handsome single houses of the same grey granite, each standing in their respective gardens. My mental picture of a granite city was something rather grim and forbidding—the reality on that sunny June morning was an ineffaceable impression of calm clean spaciousness, with pleasant, easy, purposeful streams of inhabitants. The Scottish love of flowers, which seems a national characteristic, helps this effect, streets of quite small houses having carefully tended bits of garden in front.

We only remained for a day or two in Aberdeen, and then went up the Dee to Dinnet; and I straightway fell in love with sunny beautiful Deeside, as my husband had done nearly twenty years earlier.

The moor of Dinnet is a splendid expanse of heather, encircled by hills crowned with ancient forts, with Byron's favourite Morven towering mightily above them. Two lakes still remain, survivors of a great sheet of water dotted with islands, that once rolled where the heather now flourishes. We found accommodation at a farmhouse on the northern shore of Loch Davan, where we led a deliciously primitive and open-air life, revelling in the glorious colouring and exhilarating air. The broom was still in bloom, but soon gave way to miles of purple heather, tempting us to wander in every direction over its elastic surface. I was surprised to see the *Pyrola* in flower amongst the heather, having associated it with damper localities; it is locally called wild lily of the valley.

To any one accustomed to the Irish mountains with their knee-deep heather, it is very interesting to see the Highland gamekeeper's method of burning it carefully in systematic patches, for the sake of the young grouse, who must have access to water, and cannot struggle through dense growths. What we call ling in Ireland is called heather in Scotland, the ordinary purple heather being described as bell heather. The burnt patches on the mountains give a curious chess-board appearance, but the vividly intense mass of blossom on the young shoots the next season is something astonishing. Recalling many tramps over the Irish hills, stumbling over stones and into hollows, or struggling upwards against deep tough stems, the wandering pedestrian in Scotland rejoices over the care lavished on keeping the heather within bounds.

Dinnet Station is dropped down in the middle of the moor, a small two-story house, covered with such roses as I never saw elsewhere, and gardens blazing with flowers; clean, fresh, simple; that is the Scotch style. Every one lets their houses, every one on Deeside knows about every one else, their lodgers, and their doings. The Dee dashes finely under a suspension bridge at Dinnet, on its way to charming Aboyne.

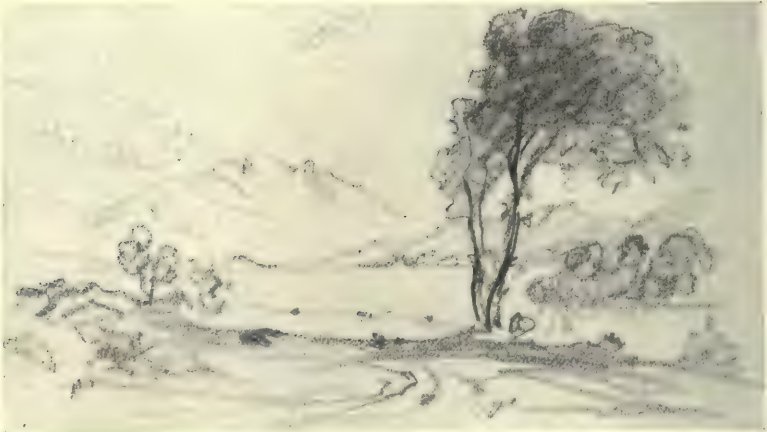
My husband had known Dinnet well some dozen years



Monsun und Dinner Moor, Abendstunde



Cutting the wedding cake



Composition Study

earlier, and we had many of his old acquaintances to visit, who were full of stories of those early days; of his bush of curly hair, quaint broken English, and merry ways.

Our first visit was to Mrs. Laing, at Kinnord Farm, on the high ground between Loch Davan and Loch Kinnord. It was typical of all the Aberdeenshire farms. They have huge, well-built granite homesteads, spacious barns and cow-houses, a good dwelling-house, and a tiny old-fashioned cottage, into which the family move in summer when the house is let. These old cottages are very picturesque, the light streaming in so locally from the tiny windows, set without any splay in wonderfully thick walls, the wooden ceiling richly tinted by the peat smoke of several generations, and a turf fire burning on a capacious hearth, usually large enough to allow of a seat at each side underneath the immense hooded open chimney. The walls seem panelled with wood, but at a touch they roll along, revealing recessed box beds, with panelling at head and foot, giving but little air to the occupants. One is not surprised to hear that consumption was common in the Highlands, in spite of the glorious air; those closed-in sleeping places must have been hot-beds of infection. How could any one be properly nursed during illness when the only access to the bed was an aperture at one side?

That rising ground between the lakes is covered with the most poetical and beautiful birch wood imaginable, with a little plateau in the centre, called the Fairy Dell. Great mossy stones are scattered amongst the birches and hollies, and a hoary grey light seems to fill the wood with magical possibilities. Here we often spent glorious afternoons with the tea-basket and our sketching materials, and here we brought the upper tier of our wedding cake, and cut it for the first time amidst these ideal surroundings.

We spent many delightful hours at Dinnet Manse, with an old friend of my husband's, the Rev. J. G. Michie, whose archæological writings have happily rescued many

interesting Deeside records from oblivion;¹ unfortunately most of these books are now out of print. Time flew by unheeded inspecting his geological collections, and listening to stories of his rambles over the Scottish mountains with Professor Heddle; of a walk with Peter Graham after a storm, which resulted in the famous "Spate in the Highlands"—and many reminiscences of his archæological researches. In his book on Loch Kinnord he has described the interesting prehistoric remains on the southern shores of Loch Davan, long lines and circles still testifying to the extent of an encampment that has been depleted for many centuries to build up walls and houses.

During Mr. Michie's lifetime the level of Loch Kinnord was lowered more than once, disclosing many prehistoric relics. His friend, Sir William Cunliffe Brooks (whose Glentanar property extended for miles along the southern side of the Dee), built a charming little museum on the shore of Kinnord Lake, constructing it out of the various stones found on the estate. Here the canoes, bronze and iron implements, and other relics of that primitive race were safely housed. A more charming token of friendship and more enlightened and ideal treatment of such treasures could scarcely be imagined.

But the Dinnet property was subsequently sold, and the little museum was cleared out, and its invaluable contents flung out upon the moor, to be picked up by any passing visitor. Listening to the veteran archæologist, and noting the quiet pain with which he spoke of this dispersal of relics that can never be replaced, one felt there was something lacking in our country as regards the custody of ancient relics, when such an act of vandalism was possible.

To another friend of Mr. Michie's, Dr. Davidson, minister of the adjoining parish of Logie-Coldstone, belonged

¹ "History of Loch Kinnord," 1877; "History of Logie-Coldstone," 1897; "Records of Invercauld," 1901, &c.

Mr. Michie's "Deeside Tales," first published in 1872, were reissued, after his death, with an autobiography edited by F. C. Diack, M.A. (Aberdeen, D. Wyllie & Son), in 1908.



Prehistoric Encampment on shores of Loch Darian.



Burn o' V'at,
Dinnet.

the honour of diagnosing a curious deposit exposed on the margin of the loch during the progress of drainage operations. The inhabitants of Dinnet call it the "white bog"; it is a rare deposit, called "Kieselguhr" (or diatomaceous earth), used in the manufacture of dynamite. We visited the Dinnet works near the little village of Ordie, where it is cut out in bricks and dried by artificial heat. In the north of Ireland a similar deposit has long been worked at Toome Bridge on the shores of Lough Neagh. It resembles Barbadoes earth, and is identical with the little blocks of white earth sold for cleaning jewellery. The diatoms are most minute members of the vegetable kingdom, mere specks of living jelly, yet capable of constructing these exquisite little transparent cases of flinty matter whose infinite variety of beautiful decoration is so fine that they are used as tests of the magnifying power of microscope lenses.

Let us return to the little plateau of Fairy Dell, where tradition says the Queen and Prince Albert once thought of building their Highland Home. Westward, in front of us, lie the foot-hills of "mighty Morven," with the Burn of the Vat issuing from their folds. The Vat itself is a curiosity of nature, a cavern with smooth incurved sides, like an enormous partially over-arched "pot-hole," traversed by a burn quite inadequate for the work that has been accomplished. The lower lip of the cavity has given way, allowing access; no stone lies inside large enough to have acted as the grinding tool. It remains a geological puzzle, offensively defaced by the stupid names of vandal visitors. We were interested when visiting it some years later with Professor Carr of Nottingham to hear that it figured amongst a set of geological lantern-slides in his possession.

On the right hand of the Dell lies the sloping ground leading down to Loch Davan, covered with prehistoric stonework; on the left lies Loch Kinnord with its crannoge and fortified island, formerly connected with the mainland by a causeway. Beyond Kinnord stretches the moor, undulating

with masses of heather-covered moraines and a few tiny dammed-in sheets of water, to the Dee, which runs at too low a level to be visible from our standpoint. Beyond it, on its southern bank, rise the heights of Glentanar, and the slopes of Ballaterich Farm, where Byron stayed during those early years that were so closely associated with Aberdeen.

In his book on Loch Kinnord, Mr. Michie gives the following interesting particulars of this visit during the convalescence after a fever. No doubt the close proximity to Pannanich Spa was duly taken into account in the selection of Ballaterich. This description of the youthful poet's wilful ways was given to Mr. Michie by one who knew little Geordie Byron well at the time: "He was a very takin' laddie, but no easily managed. He was very fond of coming up to see my father's shop (a carpenter's workshop), and particularly fond o' the turning lathe; but he widna haud his hands frae ony o' the tools, and he spoiled them completely before he would let them go. My father couldna lay hands on him, and he wid tak' nae telling; so at last he always set some o' us to watch when we wid see him coming up the brae from Ballaterich; and when he got word that he was coming he would lock the door an' gang awa' out about. There was nae ither way o' deein wi' him."¹ Visions rise of the "little boy with the red jacket and nankeen trowsers," always more ready to give a blow than take one;² so fleet of foot in spite of the deformity that cost him so much, wandering over these hills and climbing "Morven of Snow"; he subsequently left Aberdeen when ten years of age, yet never forgot those Highland days nor Mary Robertson of Ballaterich, his early flame.³ Mrs. Robertson of Ballaterich was daughter of a Captain Macdonald, supposed to be descended from a Lord of the Isles, and "Byron's Mary," her second daughter, was six years older than her precocious admirer. She subsequently

¹ "Loch Kinnord," by Rev. J. G. Michie, chap. vii. pp. 80, 81, 82.

² "The Works of Lord Byron," by Thomas Moore, Esq., 1832, vol. i. p. 19.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. vii. p. 54.



Loch Kinnord and Ballaterich.

married an excise officer called Kenneth Stewart, and was buried in the little graveyard in Glentanar. . . .

Another favourite walk took us over the Lump of Culbleen, above the Burn of Vat, on the fine close grass of an old drovers' road, with splendid views over Ballater to Lochnagar and backwards over the moors and lakes. Hereabouts a fierce battle raged between the English and Scottish forces, led by Athole and Montrose. The delightful old track crosses the watershed, descending near the great granite quarries of Culbleen, and striking into the Deeside road not far from the Pass of Ballater. Occasionally a viper may be encountered about Dinnet, but they do not seem to be much dreaded in these northern regions, although Mr. Michie mentioned cases of dogs having died from their bite. My husband killed two of them on Dinnet moor; I believe they occasionally bite the numerous sheep that graze upon the hills.

After a fortnight in our farmhouse, we greatly improved our comfort by moving into the stationmaster's house at Cambus o' May. Surely this is the most picturesque little station in the world, with its platform set amongst heather-clad rocks fringed with birches, its seats cut out of mossy granite, and the Dee running a few feet below it. Here we spent two enchanting months, surrounded by beauty wherever we turned our eyes. How modern is the intense appreciation of wild scenery is interestingly proved by Moore's disparaging remarks about the Valley of the Dee, now a playground of all nations. In speaking of Ballaterich, he says:¹ "Though this house, where they still show with much pride the bed in which young Byron slept, has become naturally a place of pilgrimage for the worshippers of genius, neither its own appearance, nor that of the small bleak valley in which it stands, is at all worthy of being associated with the memory of a poet."

How Moore, who wrote these lines early in the nineteenth century, would have been amazed could he have

¹ "The Works of Lord Byron," by Thomas Moore, Esq., 1832, vol. i. p. 21.

foreseen that within a generation eager crowds would flock to Deeside to breathe the bracing air that had done so much for Byron, and to rusticate joyously in its many "small, bleak" valleys.

My husband had grateful recollections of Sir William Brooks' kindness and sympathy with him when a very young artist, of permission given to sketch throughout his deer forest, of his collection of pictures, including the famous "Spate"; and we made a pilgrimage one day to Glentamar to visit his grave beside the picturesque little heather-covered church. The house was closed, and everything looked desolate and deserted. We wandered into the interesting wild garden, where a tiny brown stream stole amongst noble fir stems, and all was poetical and unusual. But over everything brooded the melancholy atmosphere of an empty house that had been much beloved, yet whose owner had had to bid it a long farewell! As we returned over the watershed between the Tanar and the Dee, there was a grand sunset effect over Morven and miles of moorland; it seemed to suit our mood.

We had not been long at Dinnet ere we started on a little walking tour up Glengairn, where my husband had often stayed at the hospitable manse. It was a hot and beautiful summer day, and we rambled pleasantly beside the gushing brown Gairn, the largest affluent of the Dee, into which it falls a couple of miles above Ballater. The Gairnside road is typically Highland; the glen winds amongst hills giving constantly changing vistas of distant mountains, the slopes are purple with heather, exquisite birch woods abound, occasionally thinning out into scattered trees, extending, like skirmishers, up the hillside; on others armies of foxgloves were nodding in the breeze. Sometimes the road ran down along the river's edge, then rose like a switchback over wooded heights, with sheets of vivid oak-fern amongst mossy roots and stones. We ate our lunch beside the water where a ford crosses the Gairn, giving access to Donside. A footbridge crosses the river, and the manse rises opposite, some two miles distant

from Glengairn church. We looked at the little window of the room where my husband used to sleep;—but the old minister had entered into rest, and strangers inhabited it now.

We spent the night at a farm, high up on a sunny hill, and had our first experience of a box-bed! The charming and cordial hospitality of the Highlanders is perfect, as we had many opportunities of finding out during our happy Scottish summer, when short walking tours and long wandering excursions brought us much into contact with the inhabitants. Their characteristic love of flowers, excellent education, and natural self-possessed courtesy, combined with a strong sense of personal dignity and individuality, constantly reminded me of George MacDonald's books.

We had a glorious five-mile walk next day over the mountains past a hamlet called Piper's Hole, rejoining the main road to Braemar by an abrupt descent just above Balmoral Castle. With what intense interest I gazed for the first time on the turrets of the Queen's Highland home!

A visit to Braemar, and we drove back to Ballater on the coach through a splendid storm, the thunder echoing grandly from mountain to mountain, all shrouded in angry storm-clouds pouring down liberal rain that hissed in turbid torrents by the wayside, making an impressive conclusion to our first Highland tramp.

Alas! on the 1st of September we had to leave our charming station-house, so we determined to wind up with another little walking tour, to visit the "Window in Thrums." We rose soon after six, as many things were to be packed and parted from for months, as we turned our faces southward for the winter; nor could we bear to start from Ballater until the afternoon, because the Queen was to arrive about midday, and we felt we must be there to see her. How little any one thought it was her last visit to Scotland!

Every one was on the move, visitors leaving, others

arriving, and it was four o'clock before we arrived at Loch Muick, where our walk was to commence, where we tried in vain to induce the "only inhabitant" to give us a cup of tea before we started on our long zigzag walk over the hills to Glen Clova. Up we went by a zigzag path with our knapsacks, my husband being well laden in addition with his painting materials. As we mounted, a most glorious view of Lochnagar and the Dubh Loch necessitated a pause and hasty sketch. Then came a five-mile walk across a wet moor, that seemed a mere trifle in the guide-book, but proved a tedious journey in the rapidly darkening twilight of September. We certainly saw the guide-posts at intervals, and avoided being "bogged," but skipping from stone to stone with trickling water between is tedious travelling. Presently a shepherd from Donside overtook us, and thankfully joined us, as he explained he would have dreaded meeting "boggarts"; but he richly repaid us by helping to carry some of our impedimenta when I grew too tired to struggle on with mine. The rain and darkness came on simultaneously, and we plodded doggedly on, finding with great difficulty the path down the Capel Mounth, only to be completely bewildered below, in total darkness, our feet in splashy ground, on every side the sound of rushing burns. At last some one stumbled against a wire fence, and we clambered along it like monkeys until we reached firmer ground. A match was struck and we found ourselves lost at ten o'clock on a Saturday night.

But oh! what joy when a bicycle lamp flashed suddenly past in the distance, and a shout to its rider brought us welcome help. It was a young gamekeeper from Glen Callater on his way to spend the Sunday at Clova, who pointed out his destination to the shepherd, but told us *we* had still four miles of road before reaching the hotel; but he promised to warn them that we were coming. My husband shouldered all the burdens, but even so—four long miles! However, there was nothing for it but to tramp through the rain and the darkness, thankful



The Dec. at Cambus o' Maty.

that we were on a road and a roof awaiting us. It was midnight ere we arrived at the hotel, which was full, but a room had been prepared at the schoolhouse, and a cheery fire and cordial welcome from the schoolmaster's niece soon made us dry and comfortable again. We straggled up in time for midday service at the tiny church across the road, and had a lovely ramble in the afternoon. After a day or two more spent in exploring the valley we drove to Kirriemuir, and saw the window immortalised by Barrie.

A short visit to Forfar and Montrose in search of an artist friend of my husband's, and we returned to Aberdeen, and started regretfully on our southward journey. In our daybook the following notes have now a special pathos of their own:—

“Cambus o' May is a spot where we should like to build our summer home. The exact spot has already been chosen, and to-day we found its name 'Wisdom How,' very appropriate! It would be wise indeed to come every year and breathe the pure air of the moor, and rest our eyes on this lovely country; this green and purple heather, ever-changing sky, and graceful birches.”

“After so many years absence I came here to Dinnet with Sydney, in those haunts where I dreamed the dreams of youth. Loch Kinnord, where I tried once ten years ago to fish the eels with Chollet, the Fairy Dell where good Lindstrom gave me my first lesson of painting among those same silver birches. Mill of Dinnet, where we had that ever-memorable 'birth tea,' in company of Sim and Murray, and of the day that followed when I called for Mary of the Mill. Again, when I sketched here with Mademoiselle Lambert, and Miss Mackenzie and Miss Sanderson from Aboyne, and then when I came back from Paris I had near this loch a meeting with Miss Lucy Walker and Miss Skinner. I do remember the struggle for painting; how I used to draw and sketch for ever, and every one had to be a model. Now as I walk again among these people here, I meet some few of the

people I know, but many have passed away. The fellow-artists have all disappeared—Mackenzie! Lee! Sim! are gone! Still the heather takes the same brilliant hues as of old, the breeze is fresh and invigorating near the blue loch.”



Loch Kinord from Burn o' Vat.

CHAPTER XIII

FROM NORTH TO SOUTH

“Memories of days that were,
And therefore are for ever.”

—GEORGE MACDONALD.

STRAIGHT from the pure northern air and the quiet northern hills we went down to the stir and glitter of Paris in an Exhibition year. It was now the middle of September, and the city was inundated with strangers and country excursionists, and infested with the riff-raff of the world. Robberies with violence were perpetrated in the open day, and police raids to clear out the unwelcome visitors were of almost nightly occurrence.

But all this side of an International Exhibition was forgotten when one stood in front of the Palais des Beaux Arts, and looked across that lovely statue-crowned bridge to the dream of beauty beyond it! A vista of white and gold, blue sky and brilliant sunshine, and the coming and going of the happy cheery crowd.

What an extent of ground, what endless objects of interest—yet how utterly worn out with fatigue one often was.

We spent two months in Paris and saw the Exhibition leisurely, renting a spacious studio, whose rightful owner was sketching in Holland. There were forty studios in our court, but most of them were empty at that season, and the silence was profound, though within a stone's throw of the busy Rue Vaugirard, the longest street in Paris. My husband warned me never to open the door during his absence without ascertaining first who was there.

We had a delightful unconventional time, cooking

breakfast and supper on little spirit lamps, and wandering hither and thither for our dinner. One day we had an excellent unpretentious meal in the cabman's restaurant of his student days; sometimes we dined at Madame Henriette's covered court, with the frescoes of the "Queen of Hearts"; frequently we went to the Rue Bréa restaurant of prolonged credit fame, where the former *chef* now reigned as "patron," the latter having retired from business. My husband made a long excursion to the distant suburb where the retired owner lived, and the old fellow welcomed him with intense delight. He was the only client of former days who had ever come to see him. He confessed that the grandeur of "living private" (as we say in Ireland) was a poor compensation for the varied interest of keeping a restaurant.

Our picnic life was very cosy, and we met such numbers of friends, and visited M. Christen's old haunts, climbing many flights of stairs to see old acquaintances of engraving days, when life was such a hard struggle for daily bread. He showed me the district where the Bastille stood, where revolutions are hatched, and others where the toiling multitudes work in handsome old houses with courtyards into which in bygone days powdered beauties drove in lumbering chariots. We passed the window where he watched a pretty girl as he passed to his engraving every morning, of whom he dreamt, and for whom he dressed, but had never even spoken to. He told me of a young couple whose frugal lives were full of mutual love and devotion, who lost health and then hope in the bitter struggle for a living, and went out of it, hand in hand, by the help of a pan of charcoal.

We penetrated to the old studio in a picturesque court draped with Virginian creeper, where Monsieur Guillaume so narrowly escaped with his life, and saw the street where a bevy of students successfully flitted all the household belongings of a debt-stricken fellow-sufferer, in spite of the indignant remonstrances of the outwitted concierge. We saw sculptors and painters who had "arrived," and others



Portrait of an Artist.



Fort St. Jean
Chicoutimi
1881

A fortress of the Middle Ages

who had not. We visited large theatres and small ones—saw the perfection of acting in the Comédie Française, and heterogeneous performances in strange resorts where men smoked, and one sat on narrow benches, and every one ordered a “consommation!” An utterly careless, cheery drifting two months of enjoyment.

Years have passed away, and what are the salient points of the great Exhibition that remain vividly in the retrospect? That view across the Alexander Bridge—the grand collection of pictures, and the noble sculpture, especially the Rodins—the Swiss village with its astonishing effect of aloofness, its wrestlers and sauerkraut, and the beautiful illusion of the Wengern Alp panorama.

But above all else, the marvellous acting of Madame Sadi Yacco in the little Japanese play at Loie Fuller's theatre.

What a marvel of perfect art; all the emotions of a lifetime crowded into twenty minutes of dumb show! The audience sat in the darkness in silence tense with feeling. I felt my face wet with tears.

After that matchless impersonation of despair and death, Loie Fuller's dancing was so utterly banal that we hurried out of the theatre. Out in the sunny air we stood silently arm in arm, vaguely watching a man making hot gauffrettes, which we ate as in a dream, striving to recover from the tremendous impression of painful sympathy.

Winter drew on, the Exhibition closed its doors, and we turned our faces southwards with a little luggage only, confiding the remainder, as was our wont, to Messrs. Wheatley for safe despatch when needed. If travellers would pay the trifling sums required for insurance they would not have to mourn over robberies in transit. We moved about for a couple of years on the continent with our silver tea service, spoons, Crown Derby cups, and a few ornaments to make our temporary rooms seem homelike, and not a single thing was tampered with. When our things were ready their agent came and sealed them with their own leaden seal. If a frontier had to be crossed they took charge of

the keys, though sometimes it was months before we sent for them.

We had spent a few days at Poigny, in September. This was where my husband had stayed the year before when recovering from quinsy. We revelled then in the change from Paris to the heart of Rambouillet forest, its glades golden with bracken, and the woodlands a blaze of colour. And we dreamt of having a tiny cottage there, but a couple of days amidst the chilly mists and fallen leaves of November sent us hurrying southward by Chartres, where we happened on a fair, and saw cheapjacks and crowds of interesting peasants, and my husband sketched the grand old cathedral. In the cold dark afternoon we moved on to Thouars, which is a quaint and interesting town built on a steep hill protected by a mediæval castle, surrounded by a loop of deep sluggish river. The gateways at the bridges are also fortified.

Our next stopping-place was a great contrast. We suddenly stepped back into the twentieth century when entering the busy commercial city of Bordeaux. It was a muggy, mizzling, November day; nothing could look nice. We visited a museum and a public park, and sat on damp benches listening to a band, and pretended to enjoy ourselves.

But we spoke of it ever after as "Dirty Bordeaux." Not even in "dear dirty Dublin" had we waded through such seas of mud.

Then came a long dim journey to Bayonne in the winter twilight, traversing the Landes, so ague-stricken and full of fever in olden times. We watched eagerly but in vain for the traditional shepherds on stilts, as we sped along past gleaming pools and marshes in the twilight.

Bayonne is charming, with plenty of sketching possibilities, and we settled down comfortably in the Hotel au Panier Fleuri. It was interesting as we came southward to observe the change in architecture, the patio arrangement beginning in this hotel, whose staircase wound round and round in a central space, with unglazed windows open to the winter air.

The inner windows of the lower rooms opened into the same space, giving glimpses of the maids busy at their work. It was thence that our beautiful Pepita blew a kiss to my husband that he mischievously declared wafted us over the frontier next morning!

She was indeed "a vision of delight," a daughter of that Basque race, said to be the oldest in Europe. She had come to the hotel to learn French, and looked like a princess in disguise, with her splendid carriage and beautifully set head. My husband frequently beckoned her from the outer restaurant into the inner room where we residents had our meals, that he might have the pleasure of watching her graceful movements and beautiful face.

We went to Biarritz one Sunday by the little tramway that winds along quiet roads and ends in brisk sea-breezes and the sight of glorious breakers rolling in from the Bay of Biscay. It was a beautiful winter day, with a grand sunset, the spurs of the Pyrenees showing purple in the distance. As twilight fell we found a little Scottish church, and attended the evening service. How soothing such an opportunity is! Nothing seems to link the British race so closely together as prayers in their mother tongue.

Another afternoon we visited the pathetic little enclosure on a wild and picturesque hillside, where our English soldiers who fell during the Peninsular war lie buried. It is a small railed-in enclosure with a few inscriptions, and was well kept. We looked at the tender memorial words, standing hand in hand, with deep sympathy.

We had only intended spending a night in Bayonne, but had lingered on for a week, and our money began to run short, so we reluctantly bade farewell to our kind hostess and the interesting little town with its fortifications, cathedral, and noble avenues of trees, and started for the Spanish frontier to meet our remittances at Irun.

"Au Panier Fleuri" was one of the most charming little hotels we came across during our protracted wanderings. Travelling leisurely to see the people as well as the country, my husband habitually talked to his fellow-travellers, and

was constantly recommended to hotels and pensions in the towns we were approaching. Naturally these were rarely places frequented by English or Americans, and consequently less expensive and more characteristic of the country.

How immensely the habit of travelling has developed during the last two decades, especially in Germany. A Parisian friend tells me that French girls are also encouraged nowadays to study other languages and grow up less exclusively French in habits and ideas than was the case in her own young days.

Surely all this intercourse must be a good omen for the peace of mankind? Must we not inevitably have our sympathies quickened towards nations on whose shores we have landed, whose streets we have trodden, whose modes of life and thought we have in ever so tiny a degree understood?

Only we must go with open minds, not equipped in the invulnerable armour of a hopelessly blind belief in British ways and the absolute perfection of British foods and fads, else we shall return no wiser than we went, units in the melancholy multitude who learn nothing and forget nothing!



Port St. Eloi, Bordeaux



At Fuentarrabia.

CHAPTER XIV

WINTER IN SPAIN

1900-1901

ON a beautiful winter morning we bade good-bye to France at Hendaye, entering Spain by the bridge across the Bidassoa at Irun. The feeling of excitement and anticipation inseparably connected with the first entry into romantic Spain were mingled in my own case with regrets that the lessons of history and of Wellington's campaigns had been much too easily forgotten!

Leaving our luggage at Irun, we took the little tramway to Fuenterrabia, whose picturesque charm had been glowingly described to my husband by M. Delance, the well-known French artist, who spent some months in these southern parts when painting frescoes in a church near the Pyrenees.

Leaving the quaint mediæval fortifications of the little town behind us, we made our way straight to the splendid bay at the mouth of the Bidassoa, inhaled with delight the sunny saltness of the air, and gazed at the beautiful panorama.

Our advent aroused much interest and curiosity. It was their dead season, and not a tourist had been seen for months, when my husband in knickerbockers and shooting stockings, with sketching-stool and coat on one arm, and his stout Irish blackthorn over the other shoulder, from which hung our beloved tea-basket, strode along the beach, followed by a straggling wife with sketching-stool, mufflings, and suggestive paper parcels of bread and fruit.

The various national systems of staring form an interesting study for artists. Our Irish children discuss the sketch in stage whispers, half serious, half mischievous,

wondering is it "a draft of a man"? "No," replies another, "it's a tree!" In Scotland they sit solemnly down, like the Highlander's sheep dog, at a little distance; the Spanish method is silent and observant; in Southern Italy shrill and chattering, only to be repressed by vehement scolding in any unknown tongue, fortified by sudden lunges with the blackthorn; but for utter shameless impudence in disturbing a sketcher, Dutch children bear away the palm!

We settled down on the dry sand in a sunny nook, and I lighted the spirit lamp and boiled water for our tea, whilst my husband went in search of rooms, which he found in the pleasant Miramar Hotel, on the verge of the beautiful bay, where the tide receded almost out of sight over firm yellow sand; hissing back again with fussy vigour in foamy blue wavelets, as if to convince us that we could not really walk across to Hendaye, which basked in a poetical sea haze, backed by a serrated ridge of mountains beyond what had all the appearance of being really terra firma.

We were the only visitors in the great hotel, whose echoing spaciousness of polished carpetless floors and wide airy staircases spoke eloquently of hot summer seasons. Just behind the hotel lay the wonderful old frontier fortress, with its picturesque gateways, narrow tortuous streets with sudden floods of light and spots of colour. Outside the fortifications were little brightly-tinted houses with outer staircases and verandahs, hung with picturesque strings of brightly-coloured pepper pods, and extensive pergolas, formed by pollarding plane trees, with which we soon grew familiar throughout Spain.

I settled down to sketch and look after our belongings, whilst my husband returned by the little tramway to bring our baggage from Irun, having decided to remain at Fuenterrabia as headquarters for some time, it was such an excellent place for sketching.

We spent an interesting day at San Sebastian, the fashionable summer resort of Spanish royalty. Its lovely curving bay rejoices in the poetical name of La Concha, and



Bayonne

8 Dec 1900



The Spires of Bayonne

is almost enclosed by low ranges of hills. Reposing in the centre of The Shell is the pearl, a little rocky island called Santa Clara. The old town, with the usual steep narrow streets, nestles close to the castle, but wide promenades and public gardens line the remainder of the bay, and intersect the handsome streets of the modern town. We spent a charming day, sketching and wandering round the bay past the Royal Palace, returning in time for an afternoon train back to Irun. Great was our annoyance when we found that this train, though included in the December guide-book, only ran in summer, and we would have to wait till eight o'clock at San Sebastian. To our natural inquiry why it should be in the winter time-tables, they only shrugged their shoulders. Spanish railways and their officials left much to be desired in those days.

The short winter day was closing in, so we returned to a café in the town, and whiled away the hours with coffee and games of piquet. Punctually we returned to the dreary station, where the unpleasant foreign habit of penning the passengers off the platform in an outer hall, left us a mortal hour and a half to wait in the cold for that unpunctual train. We were lucky in having our sketching-stools, upon which we sat with the patience and philosophy with which my companion always met such mishaps, and turned them into "trifles light as air."

Of course we arrived at Irun quite too late for the last tramway to Fuenterrabia, and not a carriage was to be seen, so we started perforce in the darkness for the lonely three-mile walk to our destination.

Passing through Irun that morning my husband had received our expected remittance in a registered letter at the post-office; it was therefore with considerable suspicion that he became conscious as we left the town that some one was following behind us, lingering if we lingered to allow him to pass us, and then quickening his pace as we did. It was a wild lonely walk, marshy in places, with only a rare house here and there, and I confess I was distinctly frightened. My husband desired me, should the

man attack him, to run on and give the alarm, and he would keep the assailant off.

After about a mile of tense anxiety on my part, our unwelcome follower dropped off near some ruined houses, and we finished our journey unmolested; finding all the town lights extinguished, and having some difficulty in rousing them at the hotel. A blazing wood fire and some warm food soon restored us to comfort again. But I shall never forget the feeling on that lonely midnight road with the stealthy footsteps coming on behind us.

Our other days were spent in sketching, wandering through the town, and dreaming on its ramparts. There was a wonderfully strong and grim old castle which we visited; it had been built in the tenth century by a king of Navarre;—its custodian earnestly besought us to rent it as a summer residence.

Northern Spain, as seen from the railroad in winter, is not a beautiful country; there are dreary stretches of yellowish grey country, bare desolate mountains, rapid torrents, and empty torrent beds, gorges and occasional fertile valleys as the train flashes in and out of innumerable tunnels. Our train broke down for a couple of hours on our way to Burgos, shortly after we had passed through the wild gorge of Pancorbo, giving us time to walk about and sketch the characteristically serrated outlines of the mountain ranges that secured for them the name of Sierra. Stratified rocks are tilted at such an angle that their truncated ends are high in air, like the teeth of a gigantic saw.

When the train at last reaches the city of Burgos, it has climbed nearly three thousand feet since leaving Irun, traversing vast stretches of now bare cornland that extend over Old Castile. Burgos is said to be one of the coldest cities in Spain, snow having been known to fall in the month of June, although the heat of summer is intense, and the saying, "Nueve meses de invierno, tres de infierno,"¹ is said to belong really to Burgos, and not, as is generally

¹ "Nine months of winter, three of the infernal regions."



On the Frontier of Spain

supposed, to the capital of the country. Yet we spent several enchanting days there, in spite of bitterly cold December weather, the brilliant sun and endless sights of the city all culminating in its noble cathedral. It was with quite a possessive thrill of satisfaction that we learned that one of its founders was an English bishop.

It is indeed a lovely building! Never had we seen one that made such a deep and lasting impression, so rich in ornament, so complete, and somehow so alive! Why do cathedrals, both Protestant and Catholic, have such a dead deserted look, as if they belonged only to sightseers? I cannot analyse the feeling, but in Burgos the cathedral seemed never to have died, to be still a living part of the life of to-day.

Burgos is the city of the gallant Cid Campeador, the warlike hero of Spain; his own and his beloved wife Ximena's bones, after many vicissitudes, repose finally in the Town Hall, and his coffer, with its massive metal mountings, is one of the cherished treasures of the cathedral. Tradition says that he filled it with sand, and pledged it for six hundred marks to a couple of Jews, who believed it to be full of treasure; but the Cid, needless to relate, loyally redeemed his pledge in later and more prosperous times.

Burgos is very rich in churches, and my husband sketched St. Stephen's, which stands high up on the fringe of the town, near an ancient castle, where the Cid wedded Ximena in 1074. In the same castle, nearly two hundred years later, Edward the First of England was married to Eleanor of Castile. It seems trivial to allude to anything as recent as the Peninsular war after these ancient matrimonial records, yet it is interesting to know that though the French held this castle successfully against the Duke of Wellington, and he besieged it in vain four different times in 1812, yet it yielded in the following year.

No one should leave Burgos without visiting the Cartuja de Miraflores, for the sake of its little chapel with magnificent marble tombs, which are considered the

masterpieces of Gil de Siloe. These monuments were erected by Isabella the Catholic to the memory of her parents and of her brother the Infante Alonso, whose death at the early age of sixteen raised her to the throne, and their exquisitely elaborate carvings seemed to express the love and regret that deemed nothing too costly to commemorate the beloved dead.

It was a cold, brilliant, winter day when we walked out to the Cartuja with M. Max Zürcher, a fellow-countryman of my husband's, who was staying at the same hotel. The monastery lies on a rather bleak hillside, a couple of miles out of Burgos; an intelligent lay Carthusian brother showed us over the buildings. The enthusiastic interest shown by the two gentlemen delighted him, and he invited them to be present at a special service about to be conducted by the monks. I was, of course, unceremoniously locked out in the cold but sunny little cloistered garden, where a few other visitors were waiting for admission, whilst they marched through gloomy passages and witnessed esoteric rites unpolluted by the presence of women. Monsieur Zürcher afterwards admitted that a strange creepy sensation came over him in the long gloom and silence, and the comfortable feeling with which he remembered that he had a small German pistol in an inner pocket. He travelled for a firm of Gruyère cheese merchants, and it was desirable to carry arms in some of the out-of-the-way districts he had to visit.

Our intelligent lay Carthusian (who was suffering from a violent cold) was deeply interested in news of the outer world, especially about the progress of the Boer war. When we met M. Zürcher next day at the station on our way to Valladolid, and found that he and I were equally afflicted with cold, the unwelcome truth that we had caught a Carthusian influenza dawned upon us. A comfortless night in a hotel with spacious brick-floored bedrooms, succeeded by a bitterly cold forenoon spent in sketching and sightseeing, unfortunately infected my husband, and we bade farewell to our fellow-traveller and

hurried on the same afternoon to Madrid by Avila and the Escorial, passing the highest point on the Spanish railway system in a tunnel through a spur of the Guadarrama mountains at an elevation of 4500 feet. No wonder that Madrid is so bitterly cold in winter.

To this Guadarrama range Madrid owes the treacherous winter climate that makes pneumonia such a dreaded scourge; when the wind changes and blows from the north-west over its lofty snow-clad peaks and sweeps over the exposed plain upon which the city stands, the temperature sometimes drops 35 degrees in a few hours. Castilians are supposed to dislike trees because of the shelter they afford to small birds, but probably this prejudice against our feathered favourites, which exists along the Mediterranean coast of Italy, will gradually yield, as it has done in France, to wider knowledge, and afforestation modify the climate and adorn the barren wastes of country.

We spent a week in Madrid, nursing each other, and coughing in unmusical chorus, consuming nearly five shillings' worth of wood every day in our stove. Muffled in greatcoats and railway rugs, my husband persisted in visiting the galleries, and revelled in their riches. Again and again he visited them, luxuriating in those wonderful Velasquez masterpieces that make the Madrid collection rank with those in Paris, Florence, and Dresden, as the finest in the world. As for me, I arrived in Madrid at night, spent a week there, and left it at night, and saw nothing but our rooms in the hotel.

I have often wondered why southern nations are content to shiver through their really cold winter nights and occasional grey weather, in spite of the sunshiny days that look so brilliant, but are so bitter the moment one is in the shade. Does any Briton crouch over an inadequate brasero in Italy or Spain, or patiently try to induce black egg-shaped briquettes to kindle in a tiny French stove, without pining for the grey northern winter with its cosy well-warmed rooms and cheery blazing fires? My husband visited an architect in Madrid to whom he had an intro-

duction, and found him working in a thick topcoat in a fireless office! We had pictured a winter in Spain as something ideal, Byronic, enervatingly luxurious, but subsequent experience convinced us that the northern Highlands of Scotland were much more comfortable in December.



The Gate of the Alhambra, 1901.

CHAPTER XV

ANDALUSIA

OUR hopes of shaking off the influenza sufficiently to enjoy the Spanish capital and visit Toledo vanished, and by Christmas Eve both were so prostrate that we determined in desperation to give up everything and take the night express to Seville, where we arrived worn out with fatigue on Christmas morning, and were cheerily welcomed by a delightful head waiter from the Hotel de Roma, whither we had telegraphed for rooms.

This hotel, chiefly frequented by Spaniards, was kept by a charming and cultivated Spanish widow lady, who added a comprehension of English habits to her kindly feeling towards the nation. Our stay was made thoroughly comfortable, a fire was lighted daily in the little salon which opened off the picturesque central patio round which the hotel was built—a fountain played musically in the centre of the patio amongst palms and other lofty foliage plants, the rooms on the ground floor were all glazed on the inner side, as the patio was open to the sky. Open passages wound round it to the different stories of the hotel, and our large and lofty bedroom was equipped with mosquito nettings, and a smaller room leading off it allowed us to be comfortably warmed with a brasero.

The lower windows of all the good houses in Seville are strongly barred with handsomely ornamented projecting ironwork, and the glimpses into brilliantly sunny patios, with plants, and flowers, and fountains, as we passed along the streets were delightfully southern and romantic, and we realised that at last we were in the land of *Almaviva!*

From our own room we used to watch a young man in the street below talking up to a girl in a balcony on the third floor of an adjacent house, and the appearance of the Spanish men in their invariable picturesque cloaks, flung over the left shoulder, was indeed suggestive of a hero on the stage. All ranks in life wore these capacious and charming garments, invariably with coloured linings, and the portion was flung deftly over the shoulder in such a manner as to turn the ornamental lining outwards in graceful draping; sometimes it was rich green or marone velvet, or brightly striped silk. Mantillas seem, unfortunately, to be doomed, which is a thousand pities, they are so graceful and becoming. We frequently admired a dark-haired, dark-eyed mother in that bewitching head-gear, with a daughter on each side of her in sailor hats and tailor-made costumes! It looked utterly out of keeping. I am sorry to confess that the beauty of Spanish women scarcely equalled our eager anticipations, lovely eyes were almost universal, and they seemed sweet and feminine, but usually short and plump, not to be compared to our beautiful Basque, Pepita, with her tall figure, regal carriage, and elastic step.

Spaniards are wonderful smokers; even at the dinner-table cigars were only laid down during a course, and resumed until the next dish was handed. We came to the conclusion that Spanish ladies did not travel much, the preponderance of gentlemen in the hotels being very noticeable. Although French was my husband's native tongue, we usually conversed in English, and we found that insular language unfortunately quite as unpopular in Spain, where every one speaking it was supposed to be an American, and connected with the war in the Philippines; as it had proved to be in France, where England was just then bitterly detested on account of the South African war. We had grown quite accustomed in France to watch a cold shade of disapproval creep over those who were eagerly conversing with my husband, from the moment when he spoke to me in English; and the avoidance of the



Burgos
Pl. Estaban 2.
17.5.1900

St. Stephen's, Burgos



at Sanville 26th Nov 1901

The Convalescents

natural little courtesies at table towards *me* was so marked as to amount to deliberate incivility. Our pleasant little hotel at Seville, thanks to the influence of its courteous owner, was perfectly free from anything of the kind, and we were included in a festive dinner on New Year's Day, to which all her Spanish clients were invited. I remember one dish consisted of an immense number of plump little roasted sparrows. Blocks of an excellent quince preserve seemed rather universal at Spanish table d'hôtes, and the delightful fresh juicy oranges were beyond all praise. The food in Spanish hotels was much the same as in France, and we never came across the supposed perpetual garlic. The chief difference is the *petit déjeuner*, which consists of rolls and a cup of chocolate, flavoured with cinnamon and a glass of cold water, instead of the Parisian *café au lait*.

Christmas Day in Seville, with floods of brilliant sunshine, tempted us out of doors in spite of great weariness, and after basking on the seat in the Plaza in front of the hotel, we took a passing tram which presently brought us to the quays along the Guadalquivir, where we alighted near the Golden Tower. On a quiet spot on the quay a quantity of timber had been stacked, and we settled comfortably on it, to bask in the glorious warmth of the sun, and listen to the soothing murmur of the river. Here we rested long, in warm and drowsy comfort, to the great delight and interest of a constantly increasing crowd of natives.

Seville was most enchanting, and the Andalusian climate much kinder than we anticipated, with less of the sudden treacherous chill at sunset that is so trying on the Riviera. The city is full of interesting buildings, one comes on them unexpectedly at sudden corners; everything is markedly southern and novel, even the narrow main street, the Calle de las Sierpes, where only foot passengers are admitted, the southern type of face, the mules covered with panniers and mountains of drapery, and the crumbling old yellow fortifications; very southern also were the

oranges, acacias, and palms in the open spaces, and the fascinating peeps into the patios in the narrow streets.

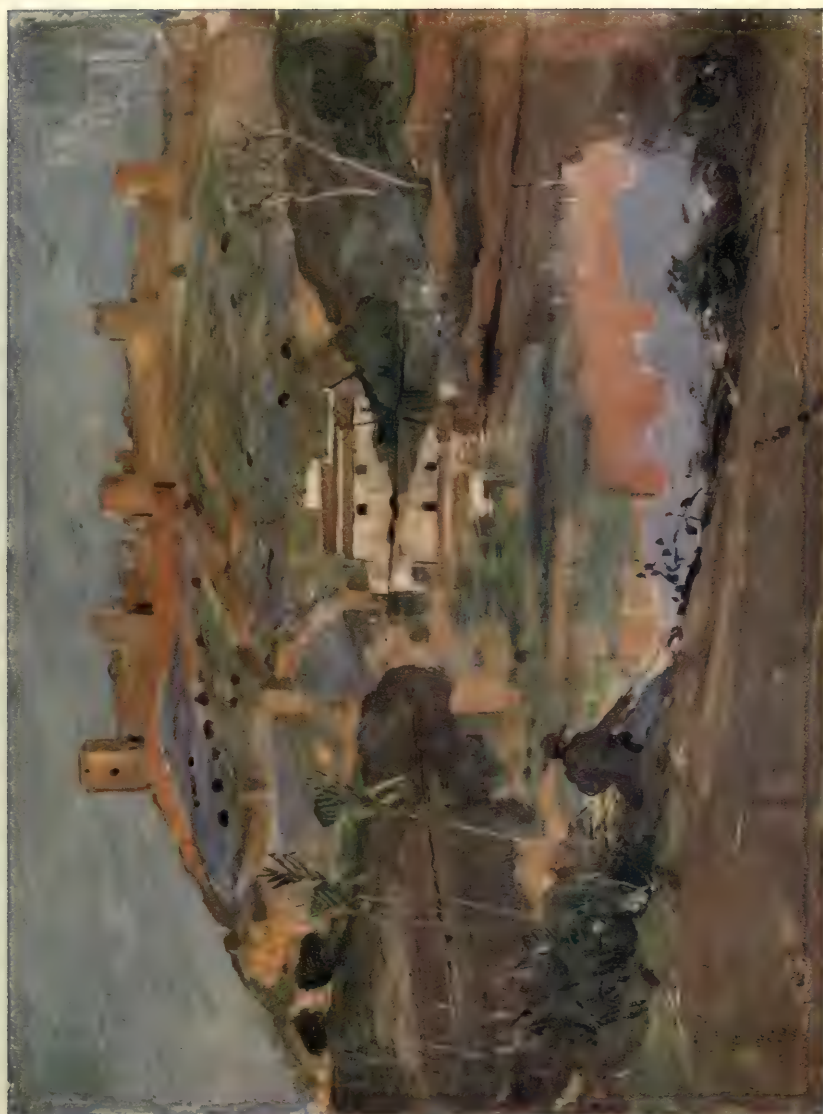
The little Plaza del Triunfo is the real heart of the town, for the Alcazar, Giralda, and Cathedral all rise from its graceful palms. The beautiful Alcazar, now much smaller than in Moorish times, was the royal residence of both Moorish and Christian kings. There is the stone seat of Pedro the Cruel, whence that just but rather stern ruler dispensed summary justice, and sentenced four corrupt judges, whose execution is cheerfully commemorated on the walls of his room by four death's heads. In the same palace he also murdered his brother, and a Moorish guest from Granada, whose jewels aroused his cupidity. One of these gems forms part of our British regalia, having been presented to our own Black Prince by its royal owner.

In the gorgeous hall of the ambassadors, Charles the Fifth was married; to him the Alcazar owes its lovely Patio de las Doncellas (the Court of the Maidens).

The exquisite Moorish decoration and colouring, the minute interlaced effect, all seem to indicate a leisurely delight in ornamentation and colour; one seems in contact with the teeming eastern imagination, with its riotous profusion, so unlike our western theories of decorative art. It is beautiful, lavish, impressive—yet we agreed that it could never satisfy mind and taste as western art can.

The Alcazar gardens were endlessly interesting; one goes out past the great cool bath used by Maria de Padilla, the beautiful morganatic wife of Pedro the Cruel, past other spacious tanks for irrigating the gardens into an old-world vision of quaintly tiled seats and terraces, with a maze, a Moorish pavilion, palms and oranges and flowers in sunken compartments all full of such a spirit of bygone days, a curious restfulness over all, unlike any other gardens we had seen. We sat for a long, long time in the deserted alleys, drinking in the atmosphere of the place.

But the most beautiful feature of Seville is, to my mind, the lovely Giralda Tower. This wonderful memorial of the Moorish domination is the oldest building in the city.



*Moonash Castle and modern Cane Dwellings
at Alcalá de Guadaíra.*

Originally the prayer-tower of the principal mosque, it was erected in 1184 from the remains of still older Roman buildings. Damaged by an earthquake in the fourteenth century, the upper portion was added two hundred years later. Being nearly fifty feet square, it can be ascended by easy sloping stages, and the view from its three hundred feet of altitude must be very interesting and extensive as it is visible from such a distance, towering up in the sunshine.

The cathedral at Seville is well named "la grande," being half as large again as our own St. Paul's, and only exceeded in area by St. Peter's in Rome. It is a noble and impressive building, contrasting very effectively with the coloured Giralda.

Seville's chief collection of pictures is somewhat inadequately housed in a disused convent church. Many of Murillo's masterpieces are here, and his works are certainly very tender, harmonious, and beautiful. Yet they cannot be compared to the robust and powerful works with which Velasquez has enriched the world. They did not appeal much to Monsieur Christen;—perhaps he had too recently seen the older artist's work at Madrid in all its glory; but I think it was that something in the works of Velasquez, of Rembrandt, and our own great painter, Watts, seemed to touch him most especially and nearly. Never were we in the Louvre without paying a visit to Rembrandt's little "Philosopher Absorbed in Meditation," which he considered one of the masterpieces of the world; a marvellous but quiet little painting, with light coming from under vaulted passages.

Both Velasquez and Murillo were born in Seville, and there the great Italian sculptor, Torrigiano, perished in the dungeons of the Inquisition.

We lingered in Seville for more than a week before moving out into country quarters, leaving many things at our friendly hotel, where we returned before starting for Granada. We had heard from artist friends of a charming little town about ten miles out of Seville, on the Carmona

line, called Alcalá di Guadaíra, and determined to make a picnic excursion to inspect its surroundings. Arriving there early in the forenoon, well provided with provisions by the waiter, my husband soon settled down to sketch, and I prepared a comfortable lunch with the tea-basket. We had an entire cold fowl in our package, but with exaggerated foresight I insisted on beginning with the legs, leaving all the nice white flesh untouched for our second meal, which, after all, was taken at the Casa de Huespedes, where we engaged rooms, and the plump and tempting breast was never eaten! In after days the words "Remember the chicken at Alcalá" never failed to make me capitulate at once, when I was set upon providing for a problematical future at the expense of an actual present—an ingrained habit of mine that delighted and tickled my husband's common-sense; *his* wiser philosophy was summed up in the French proverb, "Le mieux c'est l'ennemi du bien"!

The Casa de Huespedes of La Mina is at the end of a Roman aqueduct which conveys water to Seville. It is a boarding-house, a "House of Hospitality" as its name implies, where there is a table d'hôte twice a day, and across the street the house where we spent several pleasant weeks. An arched ferny grotto off the portico showed the clear mountain stream rushing rapidly into its underground tunnel on its way to Seville. The landlord, Don Juan Troncoso di Garcia, had been a *chef* in France, and kept an excellent establishment of the simple unpretentious kind beloved by artists. His knowledge of French was most useful, and his sweet-faced gentle wife left nothing undone to make her guests comfortable. Our restaurant and the kitchens were at the shady side of the main street of the village, the guest-chambers surrounding a picturesque patio across the street. This sunny patio was the centre of the house life. Paved with bricks and open to the sky, the projecting upper story sheltered part of the court. Here the sewing machine (a Singer) stood—here Anna and Mercedes, two pleasant sisters who attended to the guests,

carried on their work. In the centre a picturesque little draw-well, fringed with maidenhair, provided water, a passage under the upper story led into another back patio where other men and women and the donkey of the establishment lived. That inner court was dark and malodorous; for the water-courses and sewers at Alcala dated from Roman and Moorish times.

When we passed daily in a side street the broken surface of a great drain, we were inclined to doubt whether anything had been touched or repaired during the five Christian centuries that have elapsed, for the smell was simply terrific. But they assured us that in summer everything, *even the smells*, was dried up by the intense heat. In Alcala, as in all out-of-the-way parts of France, Italy, and Spain, we boiled every drop of water that we drank, with the help of our spirit lamp; this is an absolutely necessary precaution when travelling.

We were fortunate enough to secure a large room with a balcony facing due south and looking out on the street, and the use of another looking into the patio for our invaluable india-rubber bath, and were so snug and had such a restful happy time after our prolonged wanderings. I almost lived on that sunny little balcony, writing, knitting, and doing the innumerable sewing repairs that result from continental washing (which sometimes consists in pounding the clothes with stones in a stream), whilst my husband made innumerable sketches of the town and its ancient Moorish castle. I had a splendid opportunity of studying Spanish life in a village, with guests coming and going to La Mina opposite, and it proved endlessly interesting. All day long the men sat in the street astride on chairs, smoking in the sunshine, shifting their chairs as the sunshine shifted; they followed it across the street, evening finding them and their chairs on the opposite side of the road. No wonder Mercedes scornfully assured us she would never marry, as the men were too lazy, and the wives had to work for both. Certainly the long strings of mules and donkeys, laden with every conceivable article, showed the truth of her remark.

I have seen men too lazy even to carry their gun, placing it on a painfully overladen animal, and walking empty-handed beside it.

Alcala had a most ingenious brasero-table in all the houses we visited. Circular four-legged tables were covered with red drapery reaching like a toilet-cover down to the ground. A few inches above the ground, inside this petticoat, a broad circular step ran all round the legs, a huge brass or copper brasero, like a gigantic alms-dish, full of glowing charcoal, rested on the inner edge of this wooden circle, and every one round the table sat with their feet on this ledge inside the drapery in a delicious cavern of warmth. As our bedroom, although upstairs, was paved with brick, such an arrangement was very desirable. It is wonderful how long the charcoal retains the heat; even when it had been two or three hours in the room and looked grey and ashy, a slight stirring up and blowing of it made all anew in a glow. I believe it is chiefly made from vine twigs when the vineyards are pruned or the vines cut down.

We had interesting evening conversation lessons from the schoolmaster in Alcala, who lived next door to La Mina. His son, a lad of seventeen, was fond of going about with us when we photographed, to try and improve his French, which he spoke fairly but with a most unusual accent. The father was a regular Don Quixote in appearance, with long thin grey moustaches pendant from a lean narrow face. He smoked incessantly during the lessons, as we sat round the lamp on his red-draped table, and spat skilfully across the table at the inevitable spittoon as if it were quite a matter of course. We used to read the Seville newspaper aloud by turns, each armed with a little pocket dictionary, and he corrected our pronunciation and translated difficult passages.

One evening we were greatly startled by reading that the Queen of England was dangerously ill, but an immediate letter to London brought the reassuring intelligence that there was no such news in England. Yet we soon became aware that it was only too true, and before our happy five



The Bakery at Alcalá.

weeks in Alcala were ended, the news of Queen Victoria's death had saddened the entire civilised world.

There were not many guests during our sojourn, except a young Scandinavian artist, Mr. Sindling Larsen, of whom M. Christen expected to hear more in the future, believing him to be following good original ideals of his own in his artistic self-culture. We had also for two or three weeks a mysterious French couple, M. and Madame François—mysterious, because he was always going about the country, nominally to look at various properties, but nothing ever resulted from his vague wanderings. M. Christen suspected that he was a political agent, as he seemed to know Barcelona so well, which was and is the headquarters of Spanish disaffection, and at that time Spain was in a state of great unrest. His methods with his wife were certainly pretty drastic; loud quarrelling and violent weeping penetrated from below to our room, and once he even locked her in when he went away for several hours, to the great indignation of Anna and Mercedes. We never heard his surname, he was merely Don Francisco, as my husband was Don Rodolfo in the village, where he soon had acquaintances by the dozen, and he and his painting materials were eagerly followed, and every one pined to be a model.

The village is nicknamed "Alcala of the Bakers" from the quantity of little mills either worked by water or by mules, to supply all Seville with bread. Daily it is taken to Guadaira station in mule panniers, which are sent into the city, where another set of mules meet them and distribute their contents throughout the town. I believe Alcala has about two hundred little mills for its seven thousand inhabitants. To sketch the sunny patio of one of these bakery mills, with the mule grinding the daily meed of flour, was an opportunity not to be lost; I went with M. Christen to see it one day, and was warmly welcomed by the kindly mistress, who showed me all the processes of bread-making; she and I could exchange few words, but indicated our mutual goodwill by smiles and gesticulations. I was nevertheless somewhat taken aback when she threw her

arms round me and kissed me warmly, wishing us much felicity in the future as we bade them farewell.

Another time we were invited to be present at a dance given in the evening after a christening. On arrival we were conducted to inspect the baby, then all adjourned into the little back yard, dimly lighted by two or three lanterns hung from the walls, and the light that streamed out from a window. The dark figures of the spectators were crowded round a couple who danced in the middle, round and round each other, and back and forward, an interminable figure with many steps, like the handsome Spanish dancers we had seen at the Paris Exhibition, very graceful and pretty, but really hard work. When one couple was tired another took their place; as long as we remained it was always a man and woman dancing, and every one else looking on.

The goodwill shown to my husband did not permeate the children. Often when we were walking in the streets, they came rushing in an unruly, shouting, yelling crowd, quite mobbing us, but no one interfered. Spanish children seem little under control. In Granada they came rushing past and even against us in the same tumultuous fashion, sometimes even grasping my dress and almost knocking me down. Perhaps it was because I was the only woman in Guadaira who wore a hat, that once when I went out alone to sketch, they collected behind the great prickly pears and aloes and threw stones at me.

In spite of neglected sanitation there is a perfect passion for whitewash in the south of Spain; it abounds in Seville, which is, of course, a well-kept city, but it was far more striking in this little country town to see the very curbstones in the narrowest streets whitewashed. Groves of beautiful oranges abounded, and often when invited into gardens we were presented with handsome branches laden with glowing fruit, or bunches of delicious violets. We slung the oranges across cords in an angle of our room, revelling in the splendid decorative effect of the rich green leaves and fruits, and made refreshing orangeade with our insipid boiled water.



The Cathedral

Although it was only January, spring had begun in this favoured land, where the rich black earth seemed to drink in the fertilising rays of the sun. Many interesting wild flowers were in blossom. Amongst the irregular limestone rocks a curious evergreen creeper, with hooked stems and trumpet-shaped marone blossoms, rambled about, and beautiful little lilac irises, only a few inches high, starred the ground. Sweet violets were in full flower, and tiny, pale lilac crocuses were eagerly sought for by the children, who dug up and ate them raw. Madame François called them *pieds d'anes*. The creeper we afterwards found was an *Aristolochia*, as it grew and blossomed with my sister in Ireland.

The rich yellow-green of the elegantly-shaped pines was remarkable. Tall and slender, each bore a mass of cobwebby matter amongst its branches, from which there emerged later on an endless army of processional caterpillars, that descended the trunks and went undulating over the ground, each one holding by the tail of its predecessor. Underneath stones were half-dormant centipedes and scorpions, evil-looking flesh-coloured creatures, who turned up their tails over their heads, and tried to strike forward with the sting that arms the last joint. My husband brought several home in his pocket in paper, and we preserved them in spirits of wine for our little museum.

We had a most amusing picnic one day to the palace of a Spanish grandee a few miles south of Alcalá, organised by our landlord in our honour. He had a very smart donkey and cart, in front of which a very much smaller donkey, borrowed from a neighbour, was harnessed in tandem fashion. The nice little landlady, Madame François, and I were seated in chairs in the cart, and baskets of provisions and one or two of the pretty children filled the corners. My husband in his knickerbockers and M. François in correct Parisian costume walked beside us, the plump little landlord riding postilion on the first donkey, with his feet almost touching the ground.

With shouts and yells from an escorting crowd, and peals of laughter from the inhabitants of the cart, the comical procession started from the hotel. Excited by the noise the donkeys set off at a gallop, and the pedestrians were soon left behind as we dashed through the narrow streets, swaying about in helpless laughter on our chairs as the plucky little beasts tore down to the river, crossed the bridge, and mounted up the other side. On we went over rolling hill pastures, where many herds of fierce bulls, intended for the arena, were grazing in scattered groups. Bull fights are principally held during the summer; at least there were none during our sojourn, else M. Christen would have gone to see what they were really like. A Spanish gentleman took him to see one of the very popular and common cock-fights, but he found it more sickening than interesting, as the plucky little creatures were allowed to start again and again until the victor had killed the vanquished.

When our cavalcade reached its destination, we picnicked close to the ruins of an interesting old castle on the edge of a plateau overlooking the vast Andalusian plains that extend southward towards the Mediterranean. A few houses clustered below the brow, and close by was the handsome modern residence whose ducal owner was wintering in Madrid. We wandered round the closed building and through the gardens, scented with multitudes of violets. Surrounded by terraced pleasure grounds was a curious little bull-ring for foot combats. There were four openings in its circular wall at the four points of the compass, just wide enough for an agile man to slip through, the spectators on the surrounding terraces being able to look down into the arena in complete safety.

To spare the good little donkeys I walked home with M. Christen in the gloaming. The ruined Moorish castle that crowns the heights of Alcala looked grand against the sunset, with its picturesque yellow towers and long reaches of enclosing loopholed walls, now overgrown with gigantic aloes and prickly pears. The slopes of hillside



Pines at Aicata di Guadalupe.

are honeycombed with caves, inhabited from time immemorial by gipsies, like those who frequent the Albaicin at Granada. They seem a caste apart, and had no visible means of livelihood, yet possessed mules and donkeys. But in this favoured and fertile land every one has beasts of burden, though man does not seem to work much. Why should they when Mother Nature works so steadily for them ?

Andalusia is so fortunately situated, possessing the great basin of the Guadalquivir, sheltered between the Sierra Morena and the Sierra Nevada. It is redolent with memories of the Moorish domination that did so much to enrich and beautify Spain. Nature and art have combined to give it a peculiar charm. Moorish rule lasted longer here than in any other part of the Peninsula, and has left an indelible stamp on the music and dances, the customs and language of a district whose western portion was linked with the east in much earlier days, when it was known under the ancient name of Tarshish.

We were interested when we learned in Alcala that the old eastern custom of farming out official posts still prevailed to a certain extent in Spain, and were assured that even postmasters were not above accepting bribes. The financial purity of railway officials certainly was susceptible of improvement. A Spanish lady kindly pointed out to my husband, when purchasing tickets for Seville at the Madrid station, that the booking-office clerk had given him false coins amongst his change, and herself insisted upon proper money being substituted; and the first-class ticket sold to M. Zürcher in Burgos was coolly marked with pen and ink at a higher rate than its real value, and the official pocketed the difference. Friends who have visited Spain in its present condition report a great improvement in all such arrangements, and probably our experiences were somewhat exceptional. And we thoroughly enjoyed our Spanish winter, and hoped to return to dear little Alcala some other year, not in January,

but in March or April, to see the full beauty of an Andalusian spring, though we never really suffered from cold in that charming little corner of the South.

We returned to Seville for a day or two before starting for the Alhambra, to pack up our remaining boxes, and be ready for an early start on the interesting day's journey to Granada. We only regretted, as twilight came on, that we but dimly saw the precipice where Southey's "Laila and Manuel" flung themselves over, locked in each other's arms; and Pinos-Puente, where the fate of the great western continent depended upon Columbus being overtaken by Ferdinand and Isabella's belated messenger, when, in disgust at their shilly-shallying, he was on his way to France. What a glory nearly missed for Spain, and what honour when they welcomed him there—conqueror in a nobler and mightier battle than their own—on his grandly triumphant return!

It was with an eager thrill of excited anticipation that we started next morning for the Alhambra, recalling my brother's urgent words, "Whatever happens, do not leave Spain without seeing the Alhambra;" he, too, had come to Seville from his man-of-war in the Mediterranean, had gloried in its narrow streets and black-eyed señoritas, but the crowning glory of all he held to be that marvellous Alhambra. And here we were, mounting up the road that passes under trees planted by Wellington, to see the gateway with the hand and key, and enter its magic precincts.

It was a cold, brilliantly sunny day, the very essence of this southern clime was pictured in startling completeness as we emerged on the battlemented balcony of the Alcazaba, and gazed on the glorious snowy range of the Sierra Nevada, the highest mountains in Spain, across the caretaker's pots of scarlet geraniums in full flower in the open air, past the tops of the lofty trees, and past the warm red buildings, and then found thick ice covering the basin in the Fountain of the Lions.

One had dreamt of endless summer, of eastern warmth

and indolence, at least in the Alhambra; and behold, wherever that brilliant sun had not touched it, the ground was hard and frozen. Has the climate really changed? or did they shiver over antique braseros in those old, poetical, violent days?

Truly the Alhambra is a dream, a surprise, an endless delight. Is it Washington Irving's immortal pages that cause this deserted Moorish palace to pulsate with life? that gave us a creeping thrill as of ghostly visitants, as we loitered in the solitary passages, and stood in the lofty towers gazing dreamily out over their wondrous panoramas, making us shiver where the Abencarrages fell, and live day after day with the spirits of the past?

Time after time the magnetism of the Alhambra enticed us up that hill; we wandered up the valley of the Darro, and sketched the palace from many points, and were saturated with its charm. We execrated the vandalism of Charles V. in pulling down large portions of such a perfect gem to leave room for his uninteresting characterless palace. No sense of life survives in *it*; it is simply a blot on that interesting plateau, with the quaint little Queen's garden and ruddy Moorish buildings.

In the ruined peace of such buildings one is tempted to imagine that lawless violence passed away with the "good old times"; but one afternoon when descending towards our hotel in the town, we were turning aside towards the cathedral, when a gentleman stopped us, and advised my husband to turn back; at the same moment shots rang out in the Plaza beyond, where the mob were firing into a monastery, where some obnoxious persons had taken refuge. Very reluctantly he obeyed the advice, for my sake, and that evening when we listened to the rioters racing round the hotel, pursued by the Civil Guard, only my utter cowardice about being left kept him from going out to see the fun. Political unrest was seething throughout Spain at the time, and we had been warned that in a riot foreigners were naturally the first to be arrested, so I had no compunction in parading my terrors.

Time was running on; we had to catch a steamer at Gibraltar, and with deep regret we turned our backs on poetical Granada, and set off for Ronda, where we paused for a day on our journey. We arrived about eight in the evening, and next morning, strolling through the town, came to an open Plaza with railings, over which we suddenly looked down some six hundred feet of rocky precipice upon the fertile Vega below. One asks oneself what geological convulsion can have produced this unique formation. Surrounded by distant mountains hemming in the horizon, it was one of the strangest places we had ever seen. Looking sheer down its almost overhanging cliffs the river meandered like a silver cord over the extensive plain. This curiously isolated mountain is cleft by a deep ravine, down which a furious torrent foams, turning several mills on its way to join the river on its seaward journey. A bridge across this ravine connects the larger newer Ronda with the old town. The ancient Moorish buildings on the very verge of the dizzy height are very interesting, and the entire town so unique that no one should pass it without spending a few hours at least in visiting it. Some artists who visited it a couple of years ago when on a sketching expedition in Spain were driven away by the persistent stone-throwing of the inhabitants, who could amuse themselves with impunity from the heights above when the sketchers were down in the ravine.

It was dark when we reached Algeciras and crossed in the steamer to Gibraltar—the “Djebel Tarik” of the Moors, or “Hill of Tarik,” who first led them over into Spain by these very straits which only divide the continents by less than thirteen miles.

My impressions of Gibraltar were chiefly founded on my eldest brother's descriptions when stationed there with his regiment, after the cession of the Ionian Islands to Greece; in those old days Irish jaunting cars were the only public conveyances on the Rock. Now a modern, bustling town with tramways greeted us. A curious unanalysed revulsion of feeling after such meandering months in out-of-the-way

In Sunny
Spain.



places made the plunge into conventionality seem un congenial, and we sat, like trippers, eating oranges on a quiet bench on the Alameda, rejoicing nevertheless at the sight of the dear British uniforms again, and the sound of the old familiar tunes. I had always imagined that the couching lion that the Rock seems to suggest, watched across the Straits, and was astonished at its grim defiance, not of Moorish hordes, but of European foes.

Inquiry at the Orient office proving that we had time for a week-end in Africa, a lovely day in the fresh sea breezes saw us landed at Tangiers. How strange it all was, the white windowless wall spaces, how odd too the postal arrangements, several European countries seeming each to have their little post-offices. Our stay was too short to get more than a general impression of our first Mohammedan town, and make my husband wish to return thither to sketch. The market was very picturesque, with the costumes all so new to us. There had been rain, and the ground was very muddy and looked most uncomfortable, but people had come in from the country, and sat patiently cross-legged on the muddy ground, waiting silently for buyers for their wares. How utterly different from the lively chatter and competition of a French country market. It was rather pathetic to see some of the women with only a few vegetables or fruits for sale, one felt as if their life must be pretty hard if it was worth while to come to the market with a mere handful of goods. A great calm, a great patience, seemed to be their characteristic; one felt as if it would take much time to get in touch with them, to understand their standpoint. Here indeed was a different race, with different ideas from those of the many European types we had come across in our wanderings.

On our return journey to Gibraltar we made the acquaintance of an English lady, a missionary living at Tangiers, who happened, curiously enough, to be going on to Naples in the same steamer in which we had secured a cabin. She was going to meet friends there and accompany them to Palestine. She told us much of her life at Tangiers, and

we were filled with respect and sympathy for the Christian enthusiasm that expatriated that gentle, rather fragile little being. She was much interested when she and I discovered mutual acquaintances in a family from Belfast, who wintered regularly at Tangiers. I believe she interested herself specially in an endeavour to convince the natives that a merciful man is merciful to his beasts.



"Taking mine ease"

CHAPTER XVI

ITALY REVISITED

I HAD pictured a Mediterranean voyage as a delightful trip along sunny surf-beaten coasts, such as one reads of in some of Black's novels, where it never rains, and the passengers can land at every interesting port. Alas for the reality in our January weather! Bitter winds, spray and sleet made it impossible to enjoy the sea air on deck, and a cabin below sea-level, lighted by electricity, proved but a dull retreat, where one spent wonderfully uncomfortable hours speculating how to get on deck should an accident happen. Just opposite our cabin door was a suggestive inscription, "Emergency exit," or some such words, reviving the peculiar horror that I always feel in steamer cabins of being drowned like a rat in a trap. Of course there were saloons to sit in, but the vessel was very full, and after months of wandering in spacious freedom they were not attractive; and a "steamer headache" does not make one sociable. The old paddle steamers were delightfully free from that throbbing torture, born of screw propulsion.

We decided that we would have no more Mediterranean voyages until we could afford to go first cabin. My husband did suggest that steerage passengers were infinitely more interesting, but I was as adamant upon *that* subject.

We touched at Marseilles in wind and rain too bad for me to go ashore, and passed Corsica, which I longed to see, in darkness with a gale blowing; but the fourth day brought us into Naples, and I joyfully bade the ship good-bye. In my haste to reach land I left my sketching-easel in the cabin, where it made a little trip to Australia, and returned to us on the homeward journey.

My husband went on shore to hunt for a pleasant hotel, returning to escort me to a lovely balconied room looking over that sweep of sunny sparkling water, with the quaint Castel Uovo bounding our view on the left. We were soon out of doors in the sunshine, wandering through the quaint older streets with heavy shadows and vivid light and clothes-lines, giving brilliant bits of colour as they fluttered from the upper windows. Then along the public gardens to Dr. Anton Dohrn's aquarium, with which my husband had been so charmed on his previous visit. I never saw an aquarium where the inhabitants looked happy and at home until I saw this matchless Neapolitan institution. What fairy-like forms, floating gracefully through the crystal water with lazy dreamy wavings, the very poetry of motion; and what delicate play of colour!

Except a delightful visit with friends at Bordighera, this was my first experience of Italy, and it remains a vision of sunlight and beauty. The lovely view from the gardens at Capo-di-Monte, and a delicious afternoon walk along the lower Posilippo road until we rounded the corner and slowly mounted up the point when the splendid view over the Gulf of Pozzuoli burst on our delighted gaze. Of course there was a restaurant just there, with tempting shady seats—there always is on the continent—where a specially fine view can be enjoyed. We sat there for a long time sipping refreshing beverages and revelling in the splendid view. My husband conversed with an Italian gentleman who was seated there before we arrived. He proved to be a well-known artist, and invited M. Christen to see his studio.

What an atmosphere of art there is at Naples! The magnificent museum simply teems with the treasures of classical antiquity; one can wander through it day after day and always find something fresh to admire. And the immediate neighbourhood is equally rich in beautiful ruins.

We spent an intensely interesting day at Pozzuoli, once the greatest port of the Mediterranean. Its history reaches back into a remote antiquity when it was founded by the



Mademoiselle Boglio.

Greeks under the name of Dikearchia, changed into Puteoli when it fell into the possession of the Romans during the Samnite wars. But its most thrilling interest must ever be connected with a few lines in the twenty-eighth chapter of Acts: "After one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli: where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome." How intensely St. Paul must have enjoyed that peaceful week between the turmoil of the sea and the strife of the Eternal City!

Few traces remain of the palmy Greek times, with constant commercial intercourse with Egypt and the east, but Rome has left its impress in the wonderfully perfect arena, which could be submerged, and mimic naval battles enacted, before the delighted gaze of the spectators. We wandered through the lower passages, amongst the wild beasts' dens and gladiators' chambers, with a shuddering realisation of what it all meant. Here St. Januarius was exposed in vain to the fury of the animals; here Nero himself descended into the arena, during elaborately organised entertainments for a royal visitor. We climbed the stairways, and seating ourselves on one of the highest tiers of seats, looking down into the arena and outward over the lovely landscape, we sank into "long, long thoughts."

What a merciful change from those bygone days when human agonies and death were a welcome spectacle for the populace! What reverent admiration all must feel for those noble Christian martyrs who dared to meet their awful fate beneath the merciless gaze of crowded rows of spectators. Humbly the wondering doubt arises, "Could I have had such steadfast courage?"

From that vast deserted amphitheatre, with its silent memories of tyranny and suffering, we turned with relief to the Temple of Serapis, with its impressive proofs of the stupendous power of Nature's earth-movements.

In our earliest thoughts about our surroundings do we not instinctively measure the world by the circle of our own horizon? Time passes, and we learn that we are

wandering on the surface of a globe—a few more lessons, and we slowly realise that the “solid” earth itself is for ever changing, growing here, wasting there, the very rocks themselves partaking of the movement; nothing earthly is stable or unchanging; the very orbit in which we travel round the sun breathing in and out in leisurely oscillations; nay, even our solar system never resting, ever hastening on its mysterious path through the majestic solitudes of space! We listen, and learn, and believe. We gather fossils on a mountain range, thousands of feet above the seas where they lived and flourished, and believe in the existence of bygone elevations of the earth. Here and there around our coasts we can see “raised beaches” left high and dry some yards above sea-level; on other shores at low tide submerged land surfaces, full of leaves and insects, are exposed, but these dateless evidences can co-exist with the comfortable if unconscious feeling that such movements *have been* in the past.

When standing in the temple at Pozzuoli this pleasant sense of present stability is suddenly swept away. The columns of the Serapeum, untouched below, have been bored by a marine mollusc, still living in the Mediterranean, for a space of twelve feet. Within historic times this temple, with its columns still erect, sank slowly beneath the waves of the Mediterranean, the lower portion of the columns protected by eruptive products from the adjacent volcano, the Solfatara, the exposed portions as it descended were pierced by the *Lithodomus lithophagus*. It is believed that the eruption of Monte Nuovo in 1538, accompanied by a violent earthquake, reversed the process, and the temple slowly rose above the waves. By the commencement of the nineteenth century only a foot of water covered the bases of the columns—before the century closed they stood once more on dry ground, a foot above the level of the water. The Temple of Neptune, with its columns partly above the sea, the Temple of the Nymphs, some arches of the mole, and the ruins of Cicero’s villa are still covered by the waves.

After leaving the Serapeum we climbed the hot and

sunny paths leading to the Solfatara. This crater of a small, dormant volcano, is a remarkable rather oval expanse consisting apparently of partially solidified volcanic mud, with numerous orifices scattered on its surface, called "Fumaroli," whence steamy sulphurous emanations were rising, giving unpleasant hints of what lay beneath. Being an arrant coward, with a keen scent for possible dangers, I suggested doubts of the wisdom of venturing on its surface, but was scoffed at by my husband, who had been there two years before, and we traversed it in perfect safety, but I was inwardly delighted when we stepped safely off that uncanny little plain. The one historical eruption of this little volcano occurred in 1198, but who can say at what moment it might waken from its slumbers?

Visitors to Naples enjoy the sheltered comfort of its great covered arcade, the Galleria Humberto, with its shops, and restaurants, and music. Here we visited the schoolfellow of St. Imier days, and learned of a Verdi commemoration about to take place in the San Carlo theatre as the great Italian composer had died recently. We joined with them in engaging a box for the evening, and witnessed a most interesting outbreak of national enthusiasm. The great building was filled to overflowing, and when the curtain drew up, revealing the bust of the composer in the centre of the stage draped with crape and surrounded with laurels, the applause was prolonged and deafening. Numerous excerpts from his works were performed or sung during the first part of the entertainment. The second part was to consist of dramatic selections, and our sense of humour was keenly aroused when an official came in and calmly carried away the bust like a doll in his arms! It seemed too cruel to remove the effigy of the man in whose honour the entire evening had been organised. He might surely have found room in some corner whence he could have continued to preside over his own triumphs! But the excitable enthusiastic audience seemed perfectly contented to see him banished, and the humorous point of view did not apparently occur to them.

Soon after the Verdi commemoration we started for Amalfi, spending one night at Pompeii on the way, as we intended to make a more prolonged stay on our return, when warmer weather would permit us to sketch. I had always longed to see Pompeii, and found it even more impressive than I expected. One feels inclined to talk in whispers when traversing those silent streets, where the deep ruts worn by chariot wheels, the great amphoræ still standing in shops that were no doubt full of wine or oil when the catastrophe came, the little clusters of rooms laid bare to the gaze of visitors, combine to stimulate the keenest emotions of sympathy. I felt thankful that my husband's familiarity with Italy enabled us to wander about without a guide, and I was free to absorb all the impressions, assisted by his sympathetic comprehension. In traversing London, where houses were being removed during the progress of improvements, I often felt touched by the fragments of chambers, those desolated hearths that remain against partition walls, mere shattered remnants of homes once consecrated by human associations of sadness or gladness. How infinitely deeper is the pathos of an entire city of well-loved homes overwhelmed in one awful moment!

Pompeii, built upon an ancient lava flow, with encircling walls and strongly fortified gates, was a prosperous city of some 20,000 or 30,000 inhabitants when St. Paul landed at Puteoli in the year 62. Her history extended back over several centuries of unbroken stability. But Vesuvius awoke from this prolonged slumber in the following February, and a tremendous earthquake devastated a great portion of the city.

Untaught by this terrible experience (like their successors at San Francisco and Messina) the inhabitants proceeded to rebuild and improve their city. This reconstruction was not even completed when the final catastrophe of the 24th of August 79 left Pompeii a city of the dead; 2000 human beings perished.

Let us link the Vesuvian city with some other well-known dates and names. St. Peter and St. Paul must have



The Castle of Hormes
and the Mediterranean.

heard of that first earthquake before their death at Rome in the year 65; but they passed away without having the pain of hearing that Jerusalem had fallen into the hands of the Romans under Titus, and that both temple and city were destroyed in the year 70. The twelvemonth that witnessed the final destruction of Pompeii saw Titus succeeding to his father Vespasian, but his tenure of power was short, and the infamous Domitian succeeded him in the year 81. Tradition says that Domitian immersed St. John in a cauldron of boiling oil outside one of the gates of Rome, but the saint emerged unharmed, and was not banished to the isle of Patmos until the year 95, seventeen years after the final destruction of Pompeii.

At that time the Mediterranean was much closer to Pompeii than at present, and thousands of terrified inhabitants fled towards the port. Others irresolutely paused, some to collect their treasures, others to seek refuge in subterranean rooms. In the villa of Diomede, outside the walls of the city, eighteen women and children had taken refuge in the cellars, but the cinders and choking fumes penetrated through the narrow openings and destroyed the doomed refugees. The master of the house was found in the garden close to the gate, still grasping the key; beside him lay a slave bearing money and treasures. Some men at work amongst the buildings told us that a few days before they had come upon a group of seven people huddled together in a courtyard. Pompeian houses are oriental in arrangement, with a few small grated openings on the street, except in the case of shops, which occupy the lower story in many cases, and have no communication with the houses at all. The entrance leads into a patio-like court, the atrium, usually surrounded by small rooms or offices, which derive their light and air from it; here the public life of the household was carried on and the master received his clients. The family circle gathered in the inner court or peristylum, which was also surrounded by tiny chambers. Most of the houses are two stories, some even three stories high. Sometimes a third court existed with plants and

columns, as in an admirably excavated house we visited that had been cleared out quite recently, and flowers and shrubs planted as if to await its long-lost proprietor. Occasionally on the walls in the streets electoral inscriptions still remain, enjoining the passer-by to vote for this or that municipal candidate.

Although some of its inhabitants summoned courage to return to Pompeii after the eruption and search for cherished possessions, no attempt appears to have been made at general restoration, and oblivion settled over the ruined city for many centuries. Fully fifteen hundred years had elapsed when the constructors of a subterranean aqueduct to conduct water from the Sarno to Torre Annunziata came upon the site where Pompeii once flourished, but no investigations seem to have been made. In the year 1748 rumours of statues and bronze utensils found by a peasant reached the ears of Charles the Third, who ordered systematic excavations to be commenced. Little or no attention was given to the buildings, the object being to discover and collect into safety as many statues and other curios as possible. The present scientific excavations are carried out on very different lines, having commenced under the able guidance of the late Signor Fiorelli, head of the museum at Naples, to clear out the entire city. This work would, he anticipated, occupy almost a century, with a staff of eighty men constantly at work.

The culminating point is reached when visiting the little museum of antiquities with its utensils for domestic use, its fossilised foods, older than the Book of the Revelation, and the casts of suffocated men and women, reproduced from the ashes that entombed them with such merciless completeness that plaster poured into the cavities gave perfect images of the victims! Here lies a young girl with a ring upon her finger, another contracted figure, face downwards, in a vain attempt to avoid suffocation, and the terribly contorted form of a dog! One gazes silently at these eloquent witnesses of that awful tragedy, and a lump seems to rise and choke all utterance.



*The Cathedral,
Valladolid, 1900*



In the studio at St. Imier



"The ridged point above the Luna" (p. 187)

Truly, in these volcanic districts, "In the midst of life, we are in death," is illustrated with appalling vividness.

The next place to "revisit" was beautiful Amalfi, so beloved by my husband on his previous visit only two years before. We drove from Vietri, the station where the railway from Pompeii, after traversing the neck of the peninsula of Sorrento, arrives once more at the sea, close to Salerno, along the beautiful coast road to Amalfi. As our little open carriage, heavily laden with luggage, flew along, now close to the murmuring waves, now flying round an abrupt corner at such a pace that the swaying vehicle threatened to throw its occupants into the water several hundred feet below, in and out round the bays and gulfs, the promontories, and steep ascents of that wonderful road, one marvelled more and more at its engineering. Where were the scaffoldings supporting the builders of those airy viaducts and marvellously sheer embankments planted on the crumbling limestone? As if volcanic instability were not enough, the very limestone of which these pinnaled mountains consist is for ever wasting away. Every tiny terrace, every small projection has been utilised to build on or to cultivate; but ever and anon half a terrace gone, or the clinging inner walls of a vanished house, told a grim tale of insecurity. Yet the same spirit that impels the inhabitants who live on earthquake lines to rebuild instead of removing, impels the industrious inhabitants of this southern coast to persist in building up to the very edge of the precipice. When we wandered along westward of Amalfi we passed an *unfinished* house whose outer wall had fallen into the sea, with its foundation, *before the windows were in position.*

It was March, and our journey ended in the twilight as we rattled through the last village before reaching Amalfi. A young man and boy sprang out to the steps of the carriage and vociferously welcomed M. Christen back to Amalfi. They were the sons of our landlord, and a little further on our triumphal progress (followed by a cheering and excited crowd) ended, and Signor Prota and

Ucello¹ met us at the foot of the stairs leading up the cliff till we reached the ancient palace which was to be our temporary abode. Here Signora Prota and her handsome black-eyed daughter Teresina received us and conducted us through the gaudy state apartments they had prepared for our reception, but M. Christen was firm in insisting upon our being located in the uninhabited upper floor which he had formerly shared with M. Michel. Further experience made me deeply thankful that he had been wisely resolute on the subject. Next morning, before I had finished putting up my hair, the old father and both sons had wandered into our room. My presence did not count in the least; they only wanted to talk to their adored artist, as in his bachelor days. One could not be really angry at their affectionate, indiscreet intrusiveness, but my husband quietly got a lock for the door off the staircase, and rigged up a temporary bell. We lived in pleasant privacy for a day or two, till they bethought them of some disused steps near a water-tank that led up to the kitchen of our flat, whence they again swarmed in and out like rabbits in innocent delight. But a bolt was affixed to that entrance also, and we settled down comfortably for a prolonged sojourn in our quaint and interesting abode. It had once been the fortified palace of the Doges, when Amalfi was a small independent republic, but was now the property of Signor Prota, a retired custom-house official.

We had supped the night before in a lofty octagonal chamber, with dimly frescoed walls, and subsequently ascended to the upper regions by a narrow winding staircase in the thickness of the walls. On our way up we passed a well of water in the living rock, and we found next morning in our kitchen wall a profound narrow well-like shaft going down unfathomable depths through rock, down which all waste and refuse could be thrown. With these arrangements, and its terraces of oranges and lemons running up the face of the ridge enclosed by lofty walls, the palace must have been an admirably self-contained fortress

¹ See page 59.



*Looking west from our Terrace at Amalfi,
after the cliff above the archway had fallen.*

in the good old times when Amalfi was constantly at war with Salerno and Naples. Signor Prota told me that four crops of potatoes could be grown on his fertile terraces in the course of a twelvemonth.

Absolutely the only way to reach the palace was by mounting two hundred and fifty steep irregular stone steps. Half-way up this penitential staircase was a plateau with a church—another laborious zigzag, and the lower offices and vaulted guardroom of the castle were entered, yet more, and one arrived breathless on an exquisite white marble terrace, with soft red columns and olives and orange trees, ending in a circular gazebo, surrounded by picturesquely coloured tiled seats, whence one looked down on terrace after terrace of flat-roofed houses, where household life went on, into the very heart of Amalfi in its ravine. Upwards were a few more terraced houses, then a ruined modern building, and above it on the sharply jutting precipitous point of the ridge, the few remaining fragments of the Castle of Pontone. Above that again the rugged untamed mountain outlined sharply against intense blue sky. As our palace crowned the ridged point above the Hotel la Luna, we were so fortunately placed that an open balcony on our story looked eastward across the water at the mountains and gulf of Salerno; if we traversed two rooms and emerged on another flat roof we looked over the terraced gardens of Amalfi at the Capuccini Convent Hotel, and beyond it mountains, and road, and houses on the way to Sorrento and Capri glistened in the brilliant sunshine. Houses of white, of buff, of blue, of rosy pink, orange trees and oranges, brilliantly coloured tiles in the cupolas of numerous churches, coloured tiles in the wall, colours in the women's dresses, everywhere a riot of colour, a sparkle of the sea, a wealth of sunshine pouring down over everything—such was beautiful Amalfi.

Like Puteoli, the town has palmy memories of past greatness, when it rivalled Genoa and Pisa in commercial importance, under the fostering care of Greece. When it became independent, contending with Salerno, Naples, and

Pisa, its absorption by one or other was only a question of time. During one of these little wars, the Pisans ravished its most treasured possession, the manuscript Pandects of Justinian. Amalfi also prides itself upon the fact that a citizen, one Flavio Gioja, was the inventor of the compass. Her principal industries at present are visitors, and the manufacture of paper and macaroni. Along the tiny strip of strand, where sea and river meet at the mouth of the gorge in which the town nestles, many white cloths are daily spread upon the hot sand, upon which masses of macaroni in many shapes and forms are drying in the sun. A picturesque path leads up this ravine, the "valley of the mills," where eighteen paper mills are worked by the rushing stream. This is an interesting walk, very characteristic of the excursions round Amalfi, where there is practically only the one coast road, all inland walks involving an unknown quantity in the shape of steps. One village we visited, where a model lived, was approached by a thousand steps. Often the path traverses patches of woodland with grass and quantities of exquisite little cyclamens and other unfamiliar wild flowers, and everywhere one is apt to see the limestone-loving maidenhair. Olives, figs, oranges, and lemons are carefully grown on the smallest terraces. The industry of the Italians amazed me, little levels on which one might spread a couple of pocket-handkerchiefs had cress or other seedlings coming up; nothing seemed allowed to go to waste where the real peasantry were concerned; but close to the hotel, the only carriage road by which Amalfi can be reached had a large hole in it, through which one saw the waves beating in a cavern below. A portion of the roof of the cave fell in in winter; we arrived early in March. When we left in May the hole remained untouched! Apparently the middle classes do little. Our host's two sons did nothing except shoot any small migratory bird that arrived—as the spring went on and more and more came, we were indignant at the numbers of quite grown-up men all out with guns along the road to shoot every bird they could see. We visited many families

whose acquaintance M. Christen had previously made; the young ladies seemed to live on their balconies; except once or twice, when we invited them for a walk, they never seemed to go out for exercise unless they wanted to visit friends. Yet many of them could talk a little French, and had brothers who had settled in London or Paris; some were hungering themselves to go out into that world, of which their ideas were strangely unreal. Most of them had an uncle or brother in the priesthood; there is a seminary for priests at Amalfi, and we constantly met the string of students, led by older men, taking a constitutional walk; a long black line in the light and brilliant landscape.

Owing to the manner in which our castle was built against the mountain spur, we could step from our balcony through a narrow gateway on to the interminable flights of stairs that led upwards through terraced gardens and scattered houses to a sloping little plateau where stood the ruins of the Castle of Pontone. Access was only possible by a most rickety ladder, some of whose rungs were missing, but the magnificent view well repaid the toilsome climb. We often spent hours up there basking in the evening sunshine, with the tea-basket, and books or work—which were rarely used. From that little grassy slope we could have tossed a biscuit on either side down on Amalfi or Atrani. Above this eyrie towered the final narrow wedge-like point of the mountain spur that thus sharply divided the two valleys, and clinging to the face of it were some shattered remnants of a very ancient stronghold, said to have belonged to Barbarossa. There my husband had a critical experience in the year 1898, when up with three artist friends. Always a fearless climber, he had clambered on and on, until return proved impossible. He was inside the ruinous portion that clings to the crumbling limestone, with three loopholed openings. Two of these look down on steep slippery slopes ending in the precipice above Atrani, the third was some twenty feet above a narrow ledge whence a similar sheer face of rock overhung the houses of Amalfi, looking like toys down below. There was no escape except

by clambering out through that loophole, lowering himself as far as possible by his hands and dropping down as gradually and gently as might be, with two friends if possible to catch him should he slip. The perilous feat was safely accomplished, but the Polish artist was too nervous to remain watching what he deemed was certain death, and he ran away and would not speak to him for several days afterwards.

As we sat one day in the shadow of Pontone Castle, my husband sketching, I looking dreamily downward to Atrani, my attention was arrested by a speck advancing towards us along the face of the mountain spur. Idly watching its movement I suddenly realised with horrified gaze that it was a woman with a burden on her head.

"Look, look," I cried, "she will certainly fall when she reaches the precipice." But my husband coolly replied that there was no fear, he had often been along the track which led to Pontone and Scala, and intended to take me with him some day. "Never, I could not," I replied, in dismay.

On she came steadily and composedly; for about a mile it was the merest goat-track, one side of which was the sheer precipice against whose foot Atrani nestles; she crossed the broken connection between our little plateau and the spur (that always brought my heart to my mouth) without even looking at it, greeted my husband, and passed on statuesquely down that rotten ladder on her way to the village.

A day came when I actually did traverse that awful path. I have often wondered since how I did it, but it was sheer *will* that enabled me, for I wanted to please my husband, who had no conception of the irresistible powers of vertigo, and had seen me clambering cheerfully and successfully on many natural history excursions over much more fatiguing tracks. Only it so happened that there were no precipices in question! I do not think it is possible to describe to those who have never felt it, the awful sensation, the vivid imaginative picture of the fall,



Our Palace at Amalfi.
Original in the possession of Miss Charlotte Duffin.

the conscious horror and ultimate crash on the roofs some hundreds of feet below. One *lives* it, mentally! The mere thought is exhausting.

However, I made up my mind that I would go, and announced the heroic resolve, and he suggested tennis shoes to avoid slipping on the short mountain grass. That mile along the precipice (or was it a hundred miles?) I walked inside, clutching his hand with desperation to give me courage, and carefully avoiding a glance down below. He was at the very verge of the precipice, and perfectly happy and comfortable; he suggested that we should sit down to let me rest. When we did so and he put his arm round me to steady me, he exclaimed in amazement, "Why, you are shaking all over!" It was his first introduction to real vertigo, and was a revelation. We got safely on and visited Scala and its church, but he would not allow a return along that track, and we came home by a long and roundabout way, but with no awful precipices for cowards to shiver at.

I astonished him again a few days later when we were climbing up a steep zigzag path leading to a new part of the mountains. I was purposely in front, so that I might feel protected, should I slip. We reached a place where a few yards of path had slipped away, and he called to wait till he gave me a hand. I glanced back, saw the hard merciless road far beneath, and nothing between; instantly the vision of rolling down seized my imagination like a panic, and in a moment I was on all fours and scrambling like a cat to the top, where I lay exhausted on the grass and burst into tears from sheer relief. And the worst of it is that afterwards one feels such an utter fool.

In the interval between my husband's first and second visits to Amalfi, the terrible catastrophe occurred that buried seventeen people (including two English ladies) and the Santa Caterina Hotel under a mighty fall of rock. A projecting cliff, a portion of the Capuccini Convent, and most of its garden came down over the doomed building. The stupendous mass of rocks lies in a vast slope extending

high above the tunnelled archway through which runs the road to Sorrento; great blocks are scattered in the pure green water, as part of a new pier was shattered by the fall. When we first went to Amalfi the overhanging portions were being laboriously blasted away by men slung from above the archway. Close to that pier there is a wonderful grotto which we visited one day in a boat; rowing in every one must dip their heads and the boat shoots from sunshine and emerald water into a marvellously scintillating blue atmosphere inside the limestone cavern. It is not a lofty grotto, such as one sees at Capri, but very quaint and beautiful in its way. It is very delicious to hire a boat and be lazily rowed about, whilst the men sing together and the exquisitely irregular coast-line constantly changes its aspect. We had a wonderful evening excursion right round the Luna Point, past Atrani, and away to Minori. It was magical indeed; fireflies were dancing everywhere up the hillsides, and over the sea in myriads; it was late, a sort of clear warm darkness, and exquisitely calm; the soft dip of the oars, the singing of the men, and occasional voices from the shore or the watchful bark of a dog alone broke the stillness. We sat hand in hand in the stern, drinking in the poetry and beauty. Suddenly a shout, and a dark mass loomed high above us, and by a hair's-breadth we escaped being upset by a cable of a bark moored not far from a point jutting into the sea. We discovered that our boatmen had been drinking something stronger than poetry and beauty, and were little fitted to keep a proper look-out against danger.

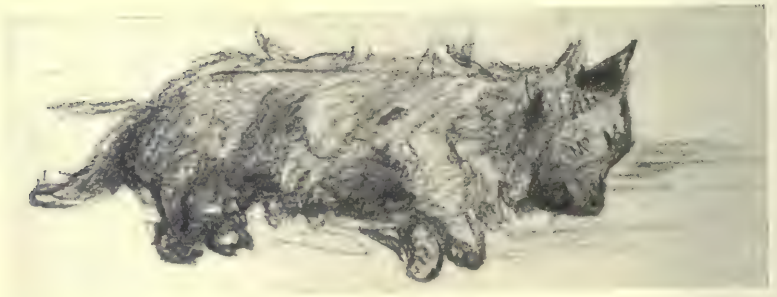
As we gazed upwards from the boat we saw the outlines of Ravello high above Atrani, showing dark against the dimly luminous sky. A few days before we had visited that wonderful place, where an English lady, a Mrs. Reid, had the beautiful old Palazzo Rufolo, with a wonderfully quaint garden-court reminiscent of the Moorish gardens in Spain, and a glorious terrace, with a view it would be difficult to match in this beautiful world! There is a famous church at Ravello with carvings, marbles, and mosaics. One of the



Composition Study



*Emile in our Studio,
Paris 1900.*



Dandie

latter, illustrating Jonah and the whale, delightfully varies one's ideas, as Jonah, lightly clad in a single garment, is taking a header into the enormous open maw of a benevolent-looking sea-green dolphin! Ruins of many churches and palaces remind one that Ravello was in bygone times a very famous city.

Amalfi possesses also a cathedral of the eleventh century, situated in the Plaza in the centre of the town, with flights of steps leading up to its portals. The front is more modern, but the picturesque coloured cupola and tiling date from the thirteenth century. It is dedicated to St. Andrew, whose relics repose in the crypt. We attended service once, but the want of reverence was so painful that we never went again. Whilst mass was being celebrated and worshippers were kneeling near the altar, a crowd of people with some priests amongst them were moving about in the nave and chatting together, as if in a secular building.

On our first morning at Amalfi we wakened to find an ominous thickness in the heavy oppressive atmosphere and impalpable red dust coating everything. We thought of an eruption of Vesuvius, the natives thought of the end of the world, but it proved to be merely the sirocco bearing the fine red African desert sand across the Mediterranean. Next day "showers of blood" were chronicled from various localities. This southerly wind is curiously enervating; it seems to sap away the little energy that survives the relaxing climate of Southern Italy. Although we never saw another fall of sand, we owed many idle days to the exhausting influence of the sirocco.

Spring came steadily on, the heat was often intense, and my husband caused delightful pergolas to be erected, with props and brushwood from the mountains, carried down on the heads of some of his models. We lived on the open roofs under this pleasant shade; there he painted sometimes, and we ate and read and wrote, watching the terraced fruit trees with swelling figs and great globes of ripening oranges. Were there ever such masses of delicious juicy

sweetness, such crisply crumbling rinds as those hot from the kisses of the sun in that Amalfi garden?

A neighbouring gentleman, whose house with pergolas and vast shady buildings overhung the sea, bought up the oranges of the neighbourhood, exporting them by sea to England and other countries. I pleased myself by imagining, as we stood looking at the mighty piles of glowing colour, that some of them would cross the water on and on to far-off Larne in County Antrim, where under grey northern skies, I had seen the bauxite used for making aluminium, shipped into vessels still perfumed with their vanished freight of oranges. This gentleman's son came to see us in his gorgeous regimentals, having gained an appointment as officer in the Italian army. My husband, when playing cards with him two years before, saw him cheat, and instantly rising, flung the cards on the table, and declared he would not play with him any more. The French and Polish artists looking helplessly on, feared a sudden reply with a knife from the fiery Italian. Amazement—then the sudden perception of a different standard of conduct made the Italian pause—and apologise! It was considered *clever* to cheat successfully. Surely it was well that this young fellow should apprehend, even momentarily, a loftier standard? Don't we often lose such opportunities for lack of the fearless calling of a spade a spade, I have so often admired and marvelled at in my husband. That charm of absolute single-mindedness, is the Ithuriel's spear that touches that inner nobler self that assuredly can be found in every human soul.

Two months had glided by, and we were into the month of May. The roads were deep in summer dust, and the weather oppressively warm, so summoning Wheatley's Amalfi agent, we confided our heavy baggage to his care to be sent to England, the lighter things awaiting us at his office in Naples, as we wished to make a little walking tour in the Sorrento Peninsula. We bade farewell to our host and his family, and had great difficulty in persuading their white hound Proto to stay behind. Poor dog, he got no



Painted 7 Sept 1901 R.E.

At Kinnord Farm.

caresses and occasional kicks from his owners, and had attached himself closely to my husband, and followed us in all our walks; he could not understand, as we mounted the little carriage that was to take us as far as Prajano, why he should be left behind.

When we left our carriage at the point that had hitherto bounded our walks and the view from our windows, all was new to me. As the road wound in and out, along that enchanting coast, my first impressions on seeing Amalfi were revived. The beauty of this district is very great, yet it did not touch me as much as our northern loveliness. It always impressed me as being rather theatrical, an unreal piling up of picturesque buildings, as if arranged for the sake of the effect. This curious sense of unreality grew as we receded from familiar surroundings. We found a secluded shady gorge near Positano, with a little tumbling stream, and picnicked in its refreshing coolness, with a pleasant sensation of adventure, as if anything novel might happen. Hot and tired with the five-mile walk in blazing sunshine, we enjoyed a comfortable siesta, with our knapsacks as pillows!

I prepared afternoon tea with our invaluable basket, whilst my husband went into Positano to conduct the prolonged bargaining inevitable in Italy, as he wanted a boat to take us to the point of the peninsula to visit his old Garibaldian friend. It was a lovely and restful afternoon's excursion, over water so intensely clear that it seemed impossible to pass over the submerged rocks without touching them. We passed along in the shadow of overhanging desolate cliffs, with an occasional gorge with its torrent, or fragment of ancient castle. Far out in the sunshine the islands of the Syrens slept on the peaceful water.

The shades of evening had begun to fall ere we landed at the little bay of Marina del Cantone, and welcomed the exercise and warmth as we climbed by rude paths up to the very crest of the peninsula at Termini, where we were most cordially welcomed by the old patriot and his wife. What a view there was of the Bay of Naples, with Capri, only

a few miles distant, seen against the gold of the setting sun.

We strolled to Sorrento next day, allowing ourselves several hours for the seven or eight mile walk; descending to the shore and lunching on flower-clad headlands close to the ancient piscina called "Queen Joanna's Bath," where my husband enjoyed a glorious swim.

Ere we reached Sorrento I began to feel strangely ill and shivery, the result of a severe feverish chill which we attributed to the pleasantly cool gorge of the previous day. We went to the hotel where M. Christen had stayed two years before, and I shall never forget the great kindness and attention I met with during the fortnight's severe illness that followed. Mother, sons, and daughters were all concerned in the hotel, and we subsequently heard from one of the girls that they had moved into a larger establishment on a cliff overhanging the sea—we always hoped to revisit Sorrento under more fortunate circumstances. I had daily visits from a small black-bearded Italian doctor, who gazed solemnly at me, and prescribed a strict and very limited diet of goat's milk. This was obtained at the door of the hotel from the herds of beautiful brown goats with drooping ears that are driven from house to house to be milked in these towns of Southern Italy.

M. Christen revisited his former friends, a pleasant Milanese architect and others, and was much interested in the beautiful Sorrento woodwork, so carefully fostered by the present Government, who have established schools of design to improve it. It is a pity this refined and artistic manufacture is not more widely known in Great Britain. How infinitely more elegant such beautiful inlaid woodwork would be for wedding presents, instead of the regulative massive silver articles so lavishly presented.

How very lovely Sorrento is! It is more attractive than Amalfi for a prolonged stay, as the walks are not limited to a single road—or steps! During my convalescence we spent many hours in the lovely gardens of an empty house, an ideal garden indeed with shaded nooks and seats, and a

terrace running along the very edge of the cliffs. Vegetation riots in Sorrento, the disintegrated volcanic rock is exceedingly fertile, such showers of roses tumbling over the edges of high walled vineyards or orange groves, whence they fall in great festoons towards the carriage road below. There are several extraordinary rifts in the ground, deep and straight-sided, recalling one's childish visions of how the earth opened to swallow Korah, Dathan and Abiram. With steep sides sparsely fringed with a few ferns and other plants, they were sinister reminders of the subterranean forces that slumber underneath this enchanting district.

It seemed difficult to regain strength in the enervating climate, so we reluctantly gave up our intended sketching at Pompeii, and after an indescribably beautiful drive along the coast to Castellamare, went on straight to Rome. In spite of chilly rain and wind that were a trying change after the sunny languor of Sorrento, I was able to see much of Rome under my husband's experienced guidance. The marvellous feast of sculptures and paintings—the Forum with the small but lovely Imperial palace—the whole charm of the classic capital of the world was around us for the few days ere we pushed on northward, craving for the bracing air of Switzerland.

I wonder whether other travellers feel the disappointment I did when I was first introduced to St. Peter's? But disappointment and every other feeling were suddenly forgotten when my husband led me up to the "Moses." What a tremendous conception! What a lesson! What an actual embodiment of the wrathful Moses who could say, "Hear now, ye rebels;" *not* the Moses of that wonderful intercessory prayer, "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written."

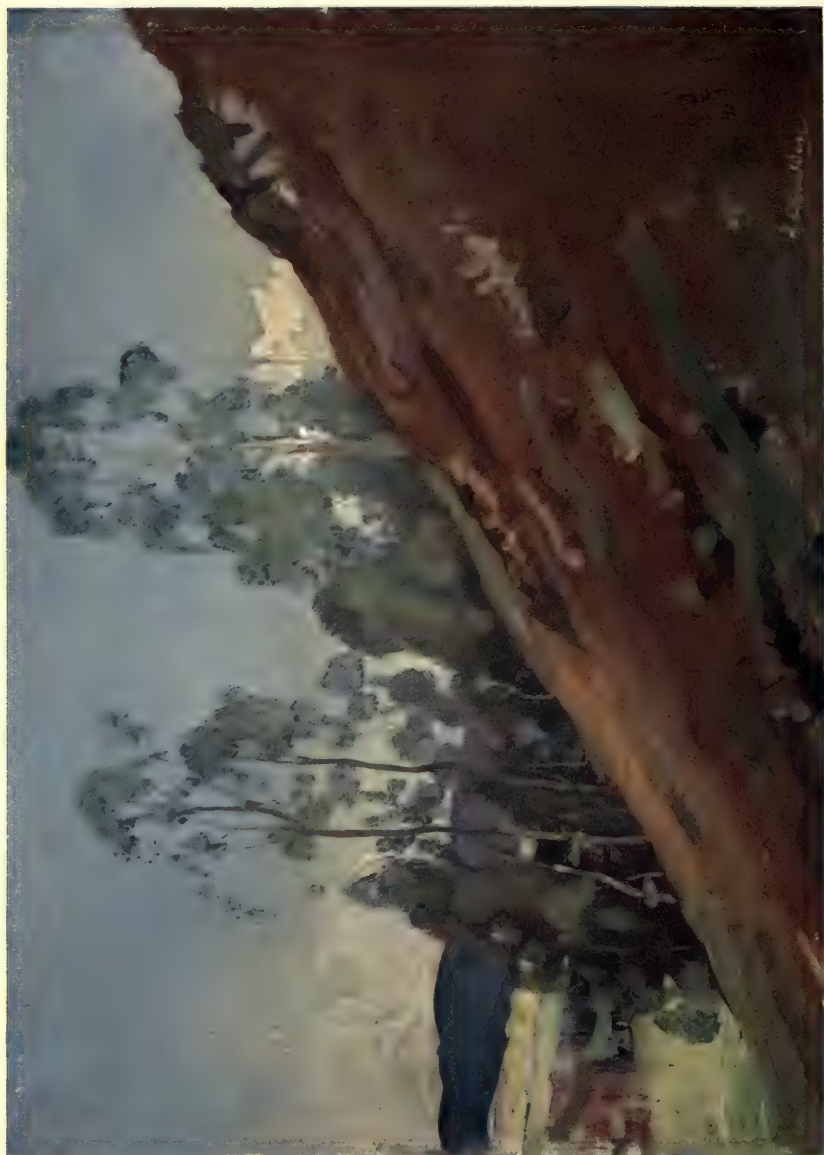
Ah! how it echoes down the ages, that sudden human rebellion against the unresponsiveness of the human hearers! Elijah with his desolate cry, "I, even I only, am left;" Jonah's resistance and discontent eliciting from the Lord the solemn question, "Doest thou well to be

angry?" coupled with the merciful reminder of the thousands in Nineveh, "also much cattle;" the "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge," in the sixth chapter of Revelation!

But divine patience whispers: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring." And we love to recall the beautiful old tradition that St. John, when borne in extreme old age into the assemblies of the faithful, his life's work completed, the last chapter of Revelation finished, raised feeble hands in blessing, with the final message to mankind, "Little children, love one another."

We moved on from Rome to Assisi, where we spent several delightful days at the Hotel Subassio, where my husband had first met Mr. Stewart. We moved on afterwards to Florence, to the pleasant Swiss Pension where they had stayed together in the year 1898. Both here and in Rome I much admired the handsome size and proportion of the rooms in these private houses. Utterly unlike the rooms in hotels, they were spacious enough to allow us to use them as sitting-rooms, such a wonderful boon to the weary traveller. Many a letter was written and games of patience or piquet enjoyed in their restful seclusion.

A night at Milan, a hurried peep at its wonderful pinnacled cathedral, and we swept through the St. Gothard tunnel into Switzerland, where we wished to spend the first anniversary of our happy wedding day.



A Hillside at Oulish,
Glengairn.

CHAPTER XVII

HOMELANDS AND HIGHLANDS

1901

"You should have seen that long hill-range
With gaps of brightness riven,
How through each pass and hollow streamed
The purpling lights of heaven.

Rivers of gold-mist flowing down
From far celestial fountains—
The great sun flaming through the rifts
Beyond the wall of mountains!

We paused at last where home-bound cows
Brought down the pasture's treasure,
And in the barn the rhythmic flails
Beat out a harvest measure.

We heard the night hawk's sullen plunge,
The crow his tree-mates calling:
The shadows lengthening down the slopes
About our feet were falling.

And through them smote the level sun
In broken lines of splendour,
Touched the grey rocks and made the green
Of the shorn grass more tender.

The maples bending o'er the gate,
Their arch of leaves just tinted
With yellow warmth, the golden glow
Of coming autumn hinted.

• • • • •
The sunset smouldered as we drove
Beneath the deep hill-shadows;
Below us wreaths of white fog walked
Like ghosts the haunted meadows.

Sounding the summer night, the stars
Dropped down their golden plummet; ;
The pale arc of the Northern lights
Rose o'er the mountain summits."

—J. G. WHITTIER (*from* "Among the Hills").

It seems difficult to believe that only a decade of years have made the horseless carriage a daily reality—in some localities a daily terror.

In the French Exhibition of 1900 were several automobiles, and we ordered for our own use a small Henriod, an enchanting little machine, to be duly fitted up with baskets for easels and umbrellas, and ingenious arrangement of leather covers and flaps, a shelf for paint-box or tea-basket, and neatly devised cases for clothes and other possessions. We christened it "Boros," in memory of an unpublished novelette, written by our charming French doctor, about Amalfi, in which my husband figured as the hero, under the fancy name of Boros. Our carriage should have met us at Marseilles, enabling us to motor along the Corniche road into Italy, wandering thence to Amalfi at our own sweet will. But manufacturer's promises are like pie-crust, and Boros only met us at Neuchâtel, after our Italian tour was ended.

We lingered for more than a month in flowery Switzerland, where my husband (who had no desire for a motor and only wished to gratify me) learned the secrets of its mechanism and management. We had some thrilling experiences and hairbreadth escapes in those early drives with Boros, whose idiosyncrasies and need of "cooling" and other indulgences would madden a modern chauffeur.

We were driven one day to the Val de Ruz, and alighting, walked together up that flower-bespangled valley where so many years before his youthful ardour had hurried him on. We crossed the divide, and looked down on St. Imier in its valley, stayed for several days in one of its hotels, visited the Combe Grède and the sunny cemetery, full of beautiful lilacs and other happy-looking flowers, where his father and mother sleep. A stone with the touchingly simple inscription, "A notre mère," marked the grave of the parent who first went home. He sketched the design for another monument to be placed over his father's grave.

We met old companions of his school days, one of



*Amina Marotta,
30th Jan. 1898*



A Parisian Artist, 1899



Bangor Bay, County Down

whom, a well-known artist, was home for the summer from Algiers. We spent a couple of days at Chaux-de-Fonds, said to be the largest "village" in the world, with its busy inhabitants, and there we visited Madame Leueberger, an aged aunt of his father's, whose sweet old weather-beaten face the experience of ninety years had neither hardened nor saddened. We saw other aunts and cousins, and visited the atelier of his fellow-apprentice, Emile Allement, still busy with his men engraving watch-backs, as my husband used to do in those far-off Neuchâtel days. La Chaux-de-Fonds and the Val de St. Imier are the very centre of the watchmaking trade. Thence we returned to spend a long and happy time with Monsieur Louis Guillaume in his picturesque chalet, with its huge wooden studio, and magnificent view of the whole range of the Alps.

Cultivated fields now replace the swampy marshes where the two young men, emerging from a swim in the lake, used to bestride the barebacked horses grazing in the water meadows for many a mad and merry gallop on the banks of the Thiele.

M. Ritter, whose gigantic scheme for supplying Paris with water from the Swiss lakes had so greatly interested my husband when a student, subsequently successfully "corrected" the meanderings of the Thiele, the river that conducts the water of Neuchâtel to Bienne. Immense tracts of fertile land were gained, and the level of Neuchâtel Lake was permanently lowered. The precipitous rocks on whose crest lay the beautiful garden of Madame de Pierre, no longer bathe their bases in the limpid waves. A broad road and tramway now pass outside them, and no ardent student need in future scramble down their rugged face to snatch a hasty swim in the lake.

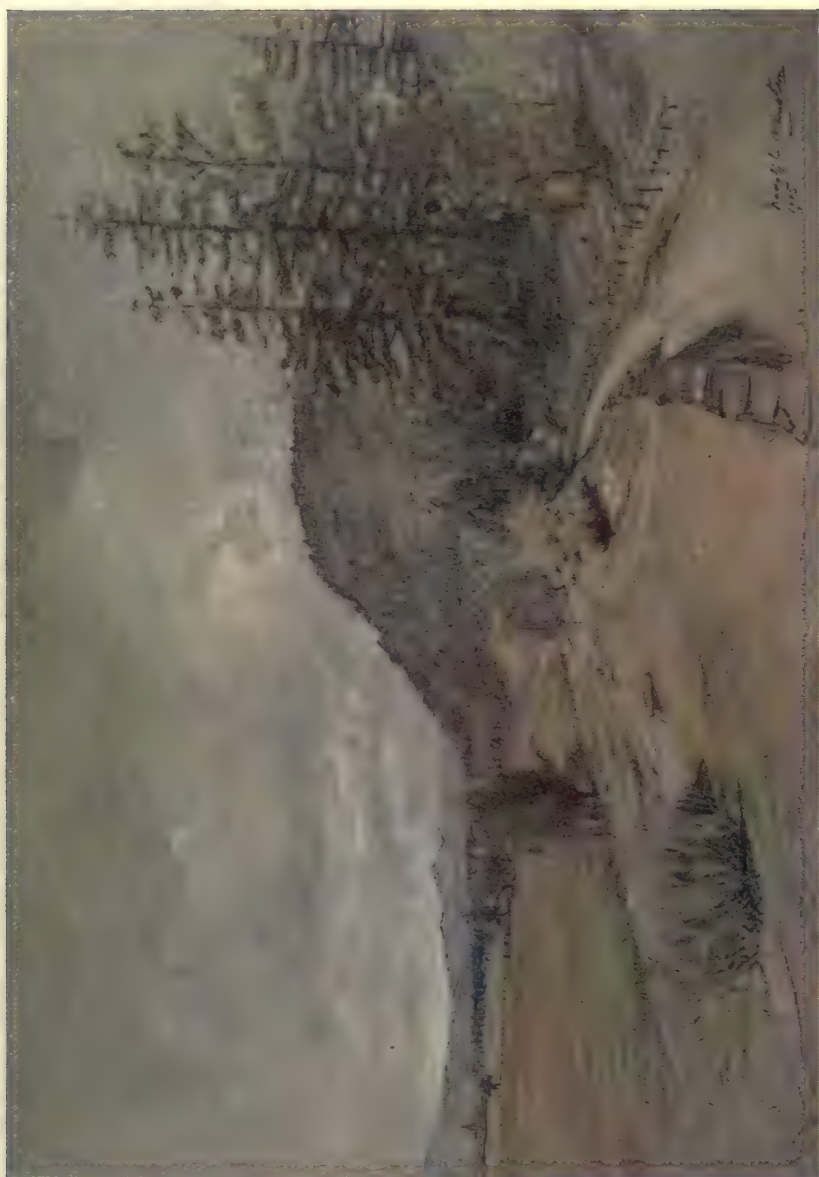
Anthropologists owe much to this feat of engineering, as the consequent lowering of the water revealed the famous colony of lake dwellings, whose remains we eagerly studied in the admirable little museum at Neuchâtel. It has an interesting and useful collection of the Swiss fauna,

and is a type of many excellent local museums which we came across on the continent.

As Boros needed repairs, a few days were pleasantly spent at Lausanne with another artist friend and his wife, chiefly in delightful steamer trips on the Lake of Geneva. We visited an interesting novelty at Lausanne, that impressed us most favourably. On a height above the town, served by a funicular railway, and close to an extensive forest with innumerable shady walks, is a pleasant park. Here a large central restaurant is available for visitors staying at the numerous picturesque chalets of all sizes, some minute enough to contain only two or three tenants, that are dotted about the grounds. I believe these chalets are taken by the week or month by visitors who bring no servants, and enjoy the rustic life and lovely views in perfect ease—all meals, entertainments (for music is essential in Switzerland), and public life being conducted in the restaurant. Surely this is an admirable scheme that might well be imitated elsewhere?

On our way from Lausanne to Sumiswald our Spanish trip was pleasantly recalled by dining at Langenau with Herr Max Zürcher. What fun and laughter we had over that day at the Cartuja, and the subsequent influenza epidemic!

Our time at Sumiswald was specially interesting to me, for here we were in the heart of the country where no tourists ever come, and it proved very restful and pleasant after the glitter and life of Lausanne. We stayed in the great brown wooden hotel, with huge projecting eaves; we went long rambling walks with President Eggiman and his beautiful wife, and gazed over the valley where my mother-in-law had been born. Here I was duly initiated into the mysteries of "Skat," a delightful game of cards much beloved by students at Heidelberg, where the President had graduated. We were now in the Suisse Allemande, and our knowledge of German became useful; Neuchâtel being in the Suisse Romande, where French is exclusively spoken. At St. Imier, although French is



*Chiguldarish and Ballates.
From the mouth of the Pass.*



really the language used, one occasionally sees a German advertisement in the papers, and the Bernese patois used by the peasantry there and at Sumiswald seemed to me to resemble German pretty closely. My husband, of course, was familiar with it, but the only word I can remember is "Haidüpfel," the patois equivalent of "Kartoffel," a potato!

We paused for a couple of nights at Berne to visit Dr. Guillaume, M. Louis Guillaume's father, who is head of the statistical departments in Switzerland. We found him in his spacious office in the noble Government buildings, and had much interesting chat with him. Dr. Guillaume is an authority on all subjects connected with prison and penitentiary questions, and has travelled all over the world on Government missions. He spoke of many men and women in England, whose efforts to raise and help mankind have made their names into household words; dwelling with especial pleasure on his friendship and intercourse with the Miss Hills, with whose pioneer work he had been in close touch. The capital picture gallery and the bears in their pits were not neglected during this visit to the capital, where we also had much pleasure in meeting nephews and a niece of M. Christen's, and other old acquaintances whom I had met when in Berne on previous sketching tours.

Alas! on our return to M. Guillaume's chalet at Epagnier, we were met by unwelcome intelligence about Boros. Farewell to our ideal of a leisurely picnic drive across the plains of France! Boros had so unmistakably demonstrated his inability (in spite of copious certificates to the contrary) to climb the hilly roads of Switzerland, that we had to make up our minds to travel in stuffy railway carriages, and send our little motor ignominiously home by goods train. It was a great blow to us after the long months of anticipation.

Again we traversed the Val de St. Imier, again we paused in its pleasant simple hotel on our way to Bâle to revisit Boecklin's wonderful pictures. Surely no other painter

ever grasped so well or presented so amazingly the half human, half animal life of the mythology ?

His "Battle of the Centaurs" is a tremendous picture. Huge forms full of animal rage, with something human added to its intensity, rear up in combat, and are seen against a strong blue sky with massive cumulus clouds, whose rolling bulk seems to echo the battle on the earth.

And his mermaids! How full of riotous animal enjoyment of the transparent green waves, that seem to hiss and sparkle over the dripping rocks! Surely we can smell the fresh brown seaweed that rises and sucks downwards with the water, as the rosy, glowing, healthy bodies plunge and play? See the leering, old, grey-haired merman, rising from the water with mischief in his eyes; what gambols they are having; and what an artist, whose imagination fixed them for ever on the canvases, perfect representations of the old-world fables!

We devoted a couple of lovely summer days to Heidelberg, dreaming away pleasant hours in the dear old castle, or watching the windings of the Neckar. We listened to lovely music in an open-air restaurant, and watched with interest the students with their scarred faces, noting that different tables seemed reserved for the different corps, with their picturesque coloured caps.

Thence we made our way to the Rhine, and floated easily down, sketching as we went. A beautiful Jewish lady and her sister came on board, accompanied by a young man. We moved along and made acquaintance with them, that my husband might crave permission to sketch the lovely outline of head and neck that so took his fancy. We had much chat with them, making out that the young man was her cousin and fiancé. He seemed rather jealous withal, being a stupid fellow, who could not understand my husband's love and frank pursuit of all things beautiful. A copy of the little sketch was promised and duly sent to her address in Hamburg, but we never had any acknowledgment, and imagined that the cousin had forbidden it.

Then London (how we enjoyed the English beefsteaks and new potatoes), visits to friends and the Academy, ushered in the month of August, which we spent in a pleasant picnic of fruitless house-hunting in Scotland. We became learned in transmuting the glowing descriptions in agents' catalogues into the very disappointing realities, and climbed down gradually from our first requirement of a house with a studio, situated amongst the heather. The first hope was near Loch Lomond, but snapped up ere we could see it. The second was most promising, on the Caledonian Canal. We spent some days at Inverness, and this deliciously picturesque wooden residence, where John Phillip had lived and painted, proved most fascinating. At the end of civilisation, looking down a beautiful glen at a waterfall, with garden, orchard, and tennis ground, nothing could have been more complete. But the conditions of tenure and its own condition made it impossible. A long day's journey from Inverness landed us on a dreary wind-swept *farm*, where all the scanty trees were inclined at a significant angle; this had figured in the catalogue as an "attractive country residence," and contrasted forcibly with a splendid modern castellated mansion, that would have required as many thousands as we had hundreds to live in it! We saw Speyside pleasantly, whilst inspecting houses at Carr Bridge, Kingussie, and Grantown, and moved on to pleasant Forres, but the comfortable house there was situated inside the rising ground that dominates the Moray Firth. A house without a view could not be thought of, so we wandered round the charming wooded height crowned by a memorial tower, and gazed delightedly over the extensive panorama of sea and sky. Here we ate our lunch, and whilst my eyes were looking seaward my thoughts were prosaically occupied with the discovery that our little tins of "salmon and shrimp" tasted exactly the same as those of "turkey and ham." I quote the subsequent record:—

"19th August.—The wood is silent, the view over the rugged inland shore is blue and calm, we respire the pine-scented air; and with a dreamy look in her sweet eyes,

Sydney says, 'When we have a house I will make nice potted meat in small pots!'

Nowhere could we find a house amongst the heather and birches such as we dreamt of, nor could Deeside even give us what we needed. We decided to spend September at Kinnord Farm, near Dinnet, and the charm of its splendid sketching ground on every side of the house eventually decided our future, and we determined to make a nest for ourselves somewhere on Deeside. It is lovely in autumn, the radiant cornfields and richly fading heather contrasting with yellowing birches, rowan and gean trees, whose brilliant masses of foliage recall the glowing tints of stained-glass windows; they seem to radiate light. A sense of peace and fulfilment brooded over the land, dozens of splendid pheasants were revelling in the ripening corn. Our little sitting-room was very bright and cosy in the shortening evenings, and we longed to live amongst these beautiful surroundings.

But building is not encouraged at Dinnet, and we subsequently rejoiced in what was then a disappointment, for we found the most ideal site imaginable at the foot of Glengairn, bounded on one side by the rushing river, and sheltered by a clump of fir trees from the northern blasts.

During the inevitably tedious negotiations about our feu, we made our way to Ireland, spending a very pleasant time with my sister amongst the old friends in the dear homeland. My husband crossed over to Scotland to superintend in person the arrangements and discuss our future home with his friend, Mr. Stewart, who had consented to realise our visionary "castle in the air," whilst I stayed with my brother near Cambridge until he rejoined me for a week together in London ere starting to winter on the continent.



Sans Souci
15 May 1902

Palace of Sans Souci,
Potsdam, Berlin.

CHAPTER XVIII

A WINTER IN SAXONY

IN the very heart of the continent, far from the seas so familiar to our minds, lies the little kingdom of Saxony, about the same size as Yorkshire. Yet this small tract of country is rich in natural beauty, rich in mineral wealth, and richer still in the priceless treasures of art which it possesses. Here we determined to spend the intervening winter before spring brought back to us the time of the singing of the birds and the building of our own nest in Scotland.

Some forty years had elapsed since I had seen Dresden, had bidden it good-bye with childish delight when our family returned to Ireland, after a three years' exile in Saxony. How the old-world town had changed from the Dresden formerly said to be fifty years behind the rest of Europe, whither every one might flock when the end of the world came, and claim another half century of time.

The Dresden of my childish memories had been delightful. Memory seemed to recall perpetual summer and out-of-door enjoyments, or perpetual winter with magnificent skating. A Dresden with the balconies to all the houses that were so novel and delightful to Irish children, of German stories, and long picturesque carts of wood emptied in the street below, to be sawn up in leisurely fashion on a portable tripod by two men. A Dresden where one went on Sundays to English service in an old Reformed church, with pictures of a fat and ugly Luther, and thin severe-looking John Huss, then the building of an English church for the growing English colony. Where, the people being Protestant, and the Royal family Roman Catholics, there were two cathedrals to be inspected and mysterious mid-

night masses on New Year's Eve, that one was considered too young to attend. Visions rose of the first experience of a day school, when our father led my sister and me to its portals, and the naughty little German school children yelled after us "Stroh Hut, Stroh Hut,"¹ until we petitioned for the cosy little quilted silk hoods worn by the little Germans of the period.

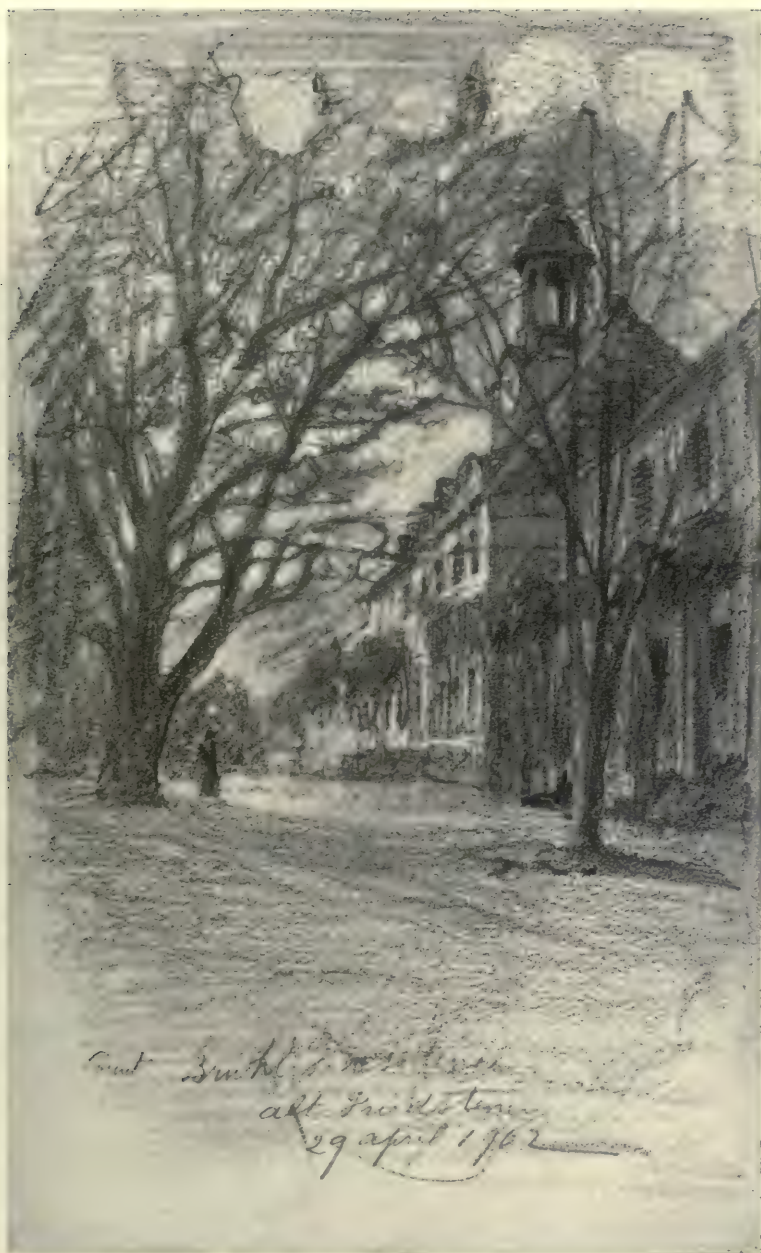
Dresden is no longer fifty years behind anywhere, for between to-day and my memories lies the Franco-German war, and all the far-reaching results of the unification of Germany. English, Scotch, and Americans each find their own church there, and its ancient pre-eminence in music and opera still attract to it crowds of musicians. An excellent electric tramway system sends its arms out for miles into the beautiful country along the banks of the Elbe, supplementing the trains and steamer services of summer.

Slowly we "oriented" my memories. We discovered our old street, which formerly looked across gardens, and ended in a field leading to the Bohemian railway station. It is now embedded in the heart of the residential quarter; the stations, formerly widely separated, are now centralised in the handsomest and best kept railway station I ever saw.

In an open space is a noble stone frontage, with spacious entrance, flanked on either side by largely conceived gigantic bronze figures in high relief, bearing in their hands bronze torches with clustered hanging lights. Inside is a vast well-lighted central hall, surrounded by offices and seats, where every information required by any traveller can be obtained, small shops supplying cigarettes, and literature, and other travellers' requisites. An excellent and spacious restaurant, as good as any other to be found in Dresden, completes this well-planned station.

The German railway system is excellent, and its punctuality proverbial. We lived for months in Kötzensbroda, through whose important junction innumerable trains thundered daily, including great expresses on their

¹ "Straw Hat, Straw Hat."



The summer palace of Count Bruhl near Dresden



Königstein on the Elbe

A fortress unsuccessfully besieged by Napoleon

way to Constantinople, and soon found that it was useless to hurry to the station expecting the train to give a minute's grace, and learned to set our watch by the starting of the local trains. Germany is the only country in which we saw fourth-class carriages. I believe they have no seats, but they are as carefully warmed as the first-class carriages, and are chiefly patronised by students and the poorest of the poor. Third-class carriages were excellent, and provided with many hooks whereon the German gentleman hangs his discarded overcoat as naturally as if going into his office. The heating, controlled, as on our own best lines, by a handle in each compartment, is usually kept at a point scarcely endurable to our British constitutions.

In our childish days one of our favourite walks from Dresden led us through waving cornfields and along a tiny burn whose banks were starred with flowers. Dresden now stretches over those pastoral fields, but the group of trees, still carefully tended, overshadows as of old the monument that commemorates the days when Napoleon swept like a tornado over Europe.

12 Janv. 1902.

Le monument du Général Moreau près de Dresde.

Sur un grand bloc de granit un casque d'airain couché sur une couronne de laurier et un sabre. Sur cette hauteur qui domine la ville ce souvenir simple et imposant fait rêver. "Le 27 Août 1813 le héros Moreau tomba ici aux côtés d'Alexandres," et c'est tout. Les trois arbres qui furent plantés là à peu près un siècle sont grands maintenant. Rien ne peut égaler cette impression; les grandes statues, les allégories sculptées font moins d'impression que cette simplicité sur une colline aride.

Taine écrivait en 1863 :—

"En ce monde quiconque est faible devient la proie d'autrui; *sitot qu'un peuple acquiert une forme d'organisation supérieure*, ses voisins sont tenus de l'imiter: celui qui aujourd'hui oublie de fabriquer des canons rayés et des vaisseaux cuirassés sera demain un protégé qu'on épargne,

après-demain un marche-pied qu'on foule, le jour après un butin qu'on mange ! ”

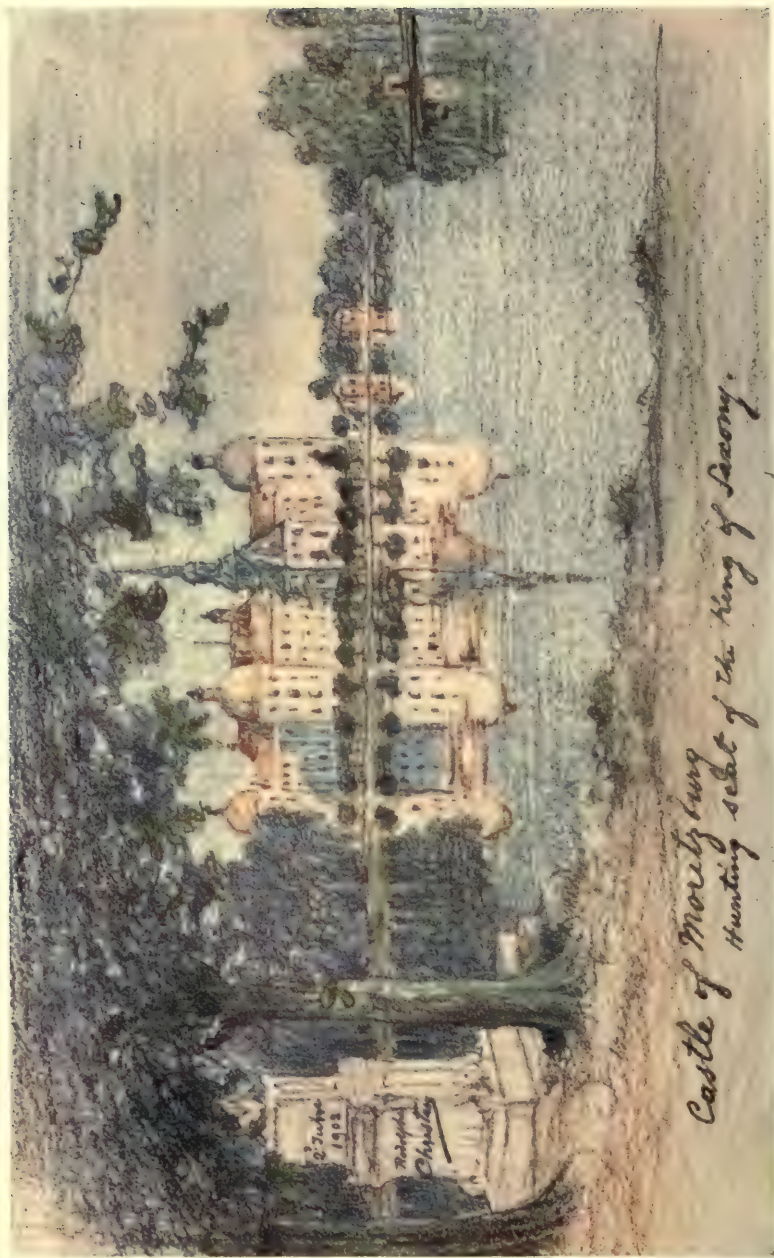
9 Mars 1901.

Et j'ajoute aujourd'hui que tel est le sort de l'Italie, grâce à qui : grâce à l'église catholique, que je blâme pour beaucoup de l'état d'ignorance qu'elle encourage autour d'elle, ce qui empêche le peuple d'entrer en compétition avec le progrès des peuples aux organisations supérieures.

The dread of draughts and want of fresh air so noticeable in France seems carried to an even greater extreme in Germany, making pensions to which we had recommendations quite impossible for us, driving us to apartments where we could moderate the heat of the stoves and open as many windows as we liked ; all these requirements were fulfilled in our quarters out at Kötzschenbroda, where an abundance of beautiful country walks more than compensated for the distance from the city, and electric light cheered our quiet winter evenings.

My husband was astonished and delighted with the wonderful collection of pictures, its richness in Dutch paintings specially impressing him. He had met comparatively few artists who had visited Dresden, whose distance from Paris is a serious obstacle. He decided to make a copy of "The Flight into Egypt" by Claude, a work which involved three months' labour, as at times he was forced to stop work owing to the oppressive heat in the gallery, where thermometers sometimes registered between seventy and eighty degrees.

When Christmas Day came we went for a long country walk, attending evening service in a Lutheran church out in the country, where there were *two* Christmas trees, one on each side of the chancel. Folklore students visiting Saxony might collect a few gleanings that would interest them. I forget whether it was on New Year's morning that the maid who attended us was going down before sunrise, when the dew was on the grass, to wash in the little river at the back



Castle of Morebyburg
Hunting seat of the King of Saxony.

of the house, to ensure good luck or some other mystic privilege during the coming twelvemonth.

Above Dresden the Elbe has carved a deep and wide trench in the red sandstone forming the picturesquely wooded hilly district called the "Saxon Switzerland." As it descends towards Dresden the valley widens out into a fertile alluvial plain, and the high ground recedes from the river, forming wooded plateaux. Below Dresden the plain gradually contracts, and a great series of igneous rocks commence, culminating near Meissen in a wonderful series of volcanic hills.

Kötzschenbroda was fortunate in having several pleasant little valleys reaching up to the level of the plateau, where moorland and cultivated ground extended for several miles, alternating with miles of hunting forests belonging to the King of Saxony. A tiny narrow-gauge railway that, crossing indiscriminately through fields and roads, gave notice of its coming by the clanging of a toy-like cymbal, took us up one sunny winter's day to the royal castle of Moritzberg. A grandly wooded road, like a mighty avenue with single trees on either side, stretches from Moritzberg to Dresden, and over its wooded miles King Albert comes every season for the hunting. Splendid leather-hangings decorate the castle, and a famous collection of horns of every description are suspended from its walls, ranging from the antlers of the extinct Irish elk down to the present day. One of the halls is entirely hung with antlers that are monstrosities or abnormal in their growth. Curious horns, entirely encrusted over with abortive points—others bending down over the face until the stag became partially starved by its own projecting weapons, some pairs so locked in deadly combat that the enemies in life perforce were joined in death—beautiful old inlaid furniture and quaint old gardens were all surpassed in interest by the daily afternoon feeding of the animals in the forest.

In an open space some mile or so from the castle visitors collect at a certain hour to see the keepers empty sacks of chestnuts and potatoes for quantities of evil-looking wild

boars. Amongst the trees are some troughs raised on long wooden legs. Watch and you will see deer, great and small, both plain and spotted, stealing towards the troughs, and eagerly devouring their contents. We longed for our kodak.

We had time for a cup of coffee at a restaurant near the station before the little toy train was due, and noticed the ingenious way in which the great china stove was embedded in the wall, so that one half of its great square mass was in the public room and the other half in the room next door, where the stoking could be attended to, the one stove heating both spaces.

We visited the castle of Moritzberg once more, on the anniversary of our wedding in June, strolling thither over country paths and past homesteads where foreigners were rarely seen; the little town outside its gates was gay with happy merry girls from some large school, whose youthful voices sounded pleasantly about the rather lonely looking building. We lingered late, chatting and sketching, and then started to walk the five miles homeward through the scented summer darkness by a new and unknown route. It was beautiful but very roundabout, and seemed at last unending, and I reached the stage of utter fatigue when constant pauses and rests were absolutely essential. Just then a sudden turn revealed to us a familiar landmark, and we fortunately perceived a light in the hotel garden of a champagne manufactory. Some food and a glass of champagne were quickly procured, and we eventually reached home towards midnight, finding our two kindly hostesses had given us up for the night and had retired to bed.

As our apartments were in a house whose inhabitants did not give attendance, save doing our rooms and providing coffee and rolls for the pleasant continental breakfast, we grew quite experienced in finding new resorts for dining. It is a life eminently suited to an artist, and we constantly went off for the day, returning only in the evening. It is so restful to dine thus under trees in the open air.

Dotted along the edge of the plateau overlooking the

windings of the Elbe are many restaurants, where one can sit for hours in the pleasant continental fashion enjoying the lovely view. Nothing is expected save an order for a glass of beer or a tumbler of the innumerable fruit syrups so popular on the continent. We frequently dined on these heights; the Germans have the usual continental breakfast of coffee and rolls, and practically two dinners, one at mid-day and another in the evening, but do not know anything of our delightful institution of afternoon tea. Tea in Saxony was very indifferent, served in glass tumblers with metal handles. Not liking beer, I learned to take coffee or chocolate in the afternoon's pauses. Of course in towns tea is given in English fashion, with cakes, but we were beyond the radius of Anglo-Saxon influence. The waiter in a little restaurant in our own special valley, where we frequently went on winter afternoons to read the newspapers, gave us much information about German habits. It is a source of pride with some German men to consume an inordinate quantity of beer. Some of his clients were able to swallow twenty-five glasses, yet one does not witness drunkenness on the continent. Is it that the light beers and wines have but little alcohol in them?

Appreciation of nature and love of the picturesque are highly developed in Germany, and the national habit of family life is most striking and admirable. On our Sundays in winter and early spring we frequently took long country walks, ending in some picturesquely placed restaurant where we could have food before attending evening service, and invariably the restaurants were filled with families, each with their tumbler of beer before them, listening contentedly for hours to good music, and chatting with their friends. Would that we could teach our working men this wholesome habit.

As spring stole on we got into the habit of going into Dresden for morning service on Sundays, and thence in the afternoons with the tea-basket by the railway to spend long afternoons in the innumerable little side valleys that ascend from the river. One of our favourite resorts rejoiced in the

poetical name of Obervogelgesang—"vogelgesang" meaning "songs of birds."

As we sat amongst the brushwood on a lovely afternoon, M. Christen sketching the beautiful Elbe below us, our attention was attracted by men who were examining the ground at the foot of the sandstone precipice that bounded our gorge. The people at the tiny restaurant below were full of sadness about an accident that had occurred there during the previous week. One of the garrison at Königstein, the adjacent fortress that so proudly and successfully resisted Napoleon, received a telegram telling that his mother was dangerously ill. He obtained immediate leave of absence, and hurried off the same evening, cutting across country to save time. He intended to strike a road that crossed the top of the gorge in which Obervogelgesang is situated, but unfortunately swerved aside too soon, and went over the sheer precipice, falling on his sword, which penetrated his side and killed him on the spot.

Another day we had a long chat with an ancient crone, who was cutting a stick wherewith to thrash a small grandson. My husband tried to induce her to adopt more winning measures, but she seemed rather soured by her experience of the world, and only trusted to the rod.

A friend in Ireland, who had been interested in our account of the White Bog of Dinnet, wished for information about similar deposits in Germany. Through Professor Bergt of the Geological Survey I obtained permission to copy and translate from the library of the Geological Survey, and there I spent many interesting hours whilst my husband painted in the gallery. We fortunately heard of a capital little work on the geological excursions in the neighbourhood of Dresden, which added a new interest to our expeditions in early spring, when the weather was too cold to permit of sketching. One very satisfactory day was spent across the Elbe in the Triebisch Thal at Meissen, where we hammered delightfully at a range of hills where rhyolites and beautiful transparent brown volcanic glasses were collected in such profusion that our weary limbs



*The Beach at Stearn, Suffolk; from *Openings*.*

demanded a rest, and we had a delicious midday siesta under some trees near a murmuring stream, with the tea-basket as my pillow. On our return journey to Meissen we picked up two or three flint implements, one of them strongly resembling Mr. Benjamin Harrison's Ightham "Eoliths." There are abundant cretaceous rocks in Saxony. Our last geological excursion was to the Plauen Valley, made famous by the classic researches of Werner, who established the identity of some of its rocks with the familiar stone from Syene in Egypt. We had moved from quarry to quarry, had extracted chalk fossils, had hammered specimens of syenite from the identical quarry where Werner made his famous diagnosis, and investigated the dykes and intrusions and unconformabilities that revealed such histories to his practised eye.

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We also made an excursion into Bohemia, and would have willingly lingered longer in the city of Prague, with its old-world portion quite unspoiled by modern innovations. How lovely it is down by the river, the quaint old churches and the ancient bridge, whence the martyr flung to

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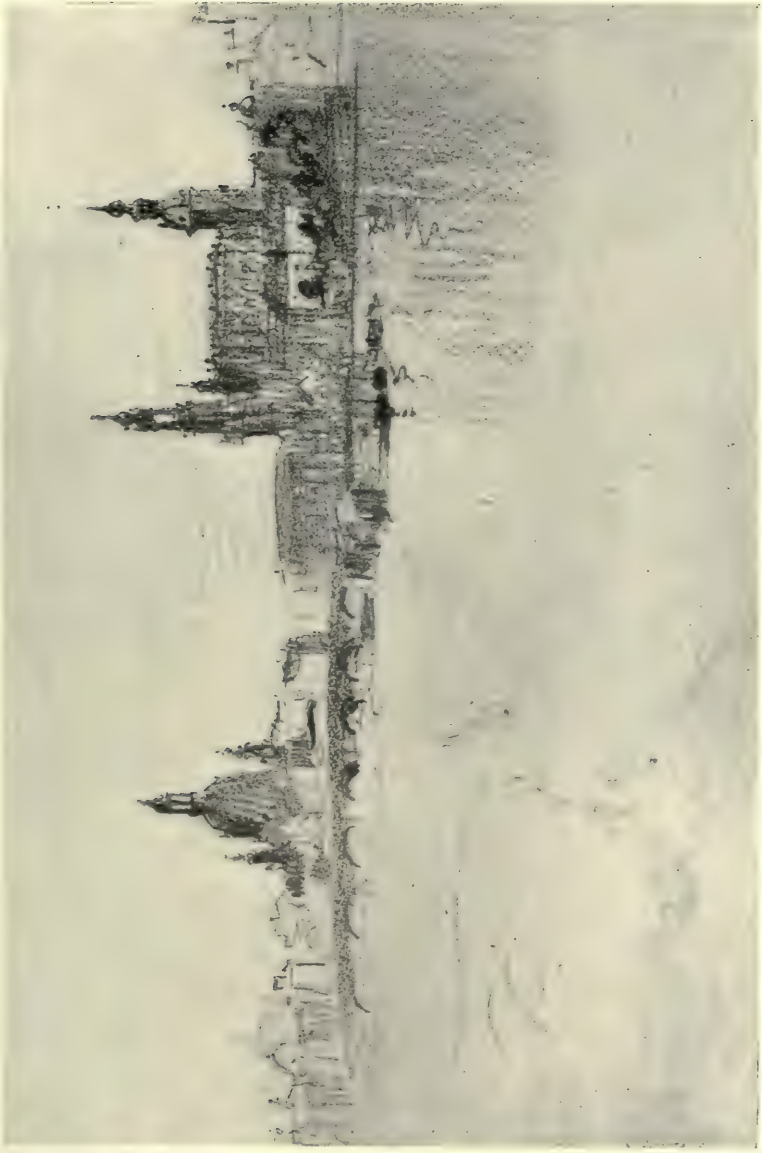
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drown floated into sainthood! We gazed across at the quaint Hradschin, towering on the other side, wandering across and round it to see the window of the Council Chamber whence irate hands flung a couple of recalcitrant councillors into the courtyard below. The great beauty of the Bohemian glass in the museum, and the fine arrangement and mounting of its collection of gems and crystals, were a great delight to M. Christen.

In railway cuttings near the frontier we noted a delightful little fairy causeway of small columns of basalt, a miniature of our own Giant's Causeway. We had been greatly interested a few days before in visiting the mediæval castle of Stolpen, to find that its foundation was really on a boss of columnar basalt that had risen through the floor of the country. We had been advised to go to Stolpen for a few days' sketching, but fortunately determined to see it before moving there, and we found its interest was chiefly geological. A small town clusters round the slopes of a basaltic hill formed of the most perfect little columns imaginable; not massive blocks, such as occur at the Giant's Causeway, but neat little toys so small that one could lift many of them quite easily. The architect of the castle, with commendable originality, had designed the lofty tower of the castle like a huge basaltic prism; on nearer inspection the interest deepened, for the walls were entirely constructed of cross sections of columns, looking exactly like huge black honeycombs! We wandered through the ruins of what must have been a strong fortress in olden times, with its dungeons in the solid rock, and complete control over any force approaching over the plain. There were several quaintly carved doorways, and the inside was tastefully kept with greensward, and wild roses tumbling about the battlements gave a touch of poetry to its blackness. It was a quaint and very unique relic of those "good old times," when might was right; well worth a day's excursion from Dresden.

The science of forestry, so neglected hitherto in Great Britain, has long been carefully studied in Germany, and



The Cathedrals, Dresden



The Valley of the Elbe
from Pirnath at Dresden.

遠山 1908 秋 晴 日 畫

Dresden has its own school out in the Tharandt district. The Saxons are lovers of trees, and Dresden abounds in shady roadways. The Saxon habit of planting fruit-trees along each side of the public roads has beautiful results in the time of blossoming, and the festivals one reads of in Japan can scarcely be more lovely than the valley of the Elbe, when the peaches are in bloom, and a delicate cloud of fairy-like pink seems to hover over the banks of the river.

Perhaps the Saxons are generously repaid for their great consideration for the wild birds by the notable success of their orchards. We were delighted, during our winter walks in rural districts, to see that almost every house had its hospitable little covered bird-stand, well raised above the ground, where crumbs and seeds were put out for the delectation of the birds; the public parks were also well supplied with regular wooden shelters, like hotbeds with an end removed, in which copious supplies were placed in frosty or snowy weather. How unlike the merciless shooting down of every feathered visitor that had vexed our souls a year before in Italy.

Another excellent German arrangement is a huge sand-heap as a children's playground. We used to go and sit watching the happy games that were going on in the public gardens of Dresden. The spacious circles of sand were surrounded by a ring of benches, where weary mothers and smartly dressed nurses sat and sewed or knitted whilst their little charges dug and built the very same castles with pebbled walks and pavements that rejoice the hearts of our seaside children.

Six months had slipped away since we left Scotland, and thrilling interest was aroused by news from Ballater that frosts were over and work had at last commenced upon our moorland. Photographs of its progress began to reach us, and the hunger for home drew us northward.

We paused for some hours at Leipzig that we might see its picture gallery, especially the four noble works

by Calame that are its crowning glory. Switzerland has not produced a very large number of artists, but any country that can number Boecklin and Calame amongst her children may well be contented.

Involuntarily we drew in our breath and paused as the wonderful painting of sunrise on Monte Rosa broke upon our view. Not the whole mountain. No; a solitary little tarn—but what a painted marvel! We stood in hushed silence before it. The stillness and grandeur in simplicity are extreme, and the utter loneliness of it all.

We travelled on to Hanover that afternoon, and wandered round its northern German streets next morning ere we travelled on to Rotterdam; for we were bound for our favourite little artist's hotel at Rijsoord, some five miles from that watery town, where we intended to linger until the Coronation in London was over, and the crowds had dispersed. Two pleasant English lady artists were there painting, and we thoroughly enjoyed the lazy life and boating on the broad and winding river.

On Coronation day our artists went into Rotterdam, whilst we went off for a long day's holiday on the river, rowing ourselves for miles in the well-provisioned hotel boat with our painting things and books, and the tea-basket, landing for wild flowers, spending happy hours amongst the reeds and water-lilies, speaking of the pageantry in London, but rejoicing in our absence from it all. We rowed slowly back in the peaceful evening light, and came cheerfully into the hotel to hear the latest reports from our artists.

But a thunderclap awaited us! With drawn, sad faces, they told us of the King's sudden and dangerous illness, and the postponement of the Coronation. An irresistible gloom settled down over the little company. The whole nation must have been passing through the same painful hours of suspense until next day's news could come. The impression of that evening at the little Dutch inn can never be forgotten. It made one realise sharply how much a sovereign counts for in the national life. Our thoughts went back to Saxony and the recent death of King Albert, so much



Edam, Holland

beloved and respected by his subjects, and the recollection seemed a chilly omen. Happily ere we crossed the water, the tension was over, and England looked her fairest in her summer beauty as, our exile ended, we travelled up to Cambridge to spend a few days with my brother before crossing over to Ireland. I remained behind whilst my husband ran up to have his first sight of our future home, which I was not to see in its preliminary stage. We met again at my sister's house near Belfast.

ST. IMIER, *Saturday, 5th July 1902, 3 P.M.*

MY DEAR WIFE,—I have just sent off a wire to you, which was intended only as a feeble idea of my satisfaction and enthusiasm. You must not be surprised that I have lost my last parcel of power to write English, it's intoxication with our home, and with the air I breathe here. Now that I see the building towering through the pines, I feel as never I felt before how right, how wise, and how lucky we have been in choosing and securing such a spot. From our bedroom I can see the Dee's windings in the valley towards Balmoral. Oh me, how well and solid it looked. In a fortnight the roof is going to be begun. The granite is of a lovely grey up to the windows, and of a reddish tint everywhere else, and it looks a palace in the sun.

I write to you just as I see it, just as I feel it, my dear, and what a panorama! The day is sultry and clear. I see patches of snow on Lochnagar. From behind the house, where I took some photographs, the range of hills is something glorious.

I have a lot more to tell about the sensation I had when I drove with the master mason, the carpenter, the plumber, and Stewart, and had the first glimpse of the house where we are going to glide together such happy hours. Darling, I felt a lump coming in my throat; it is simply beautiful.

Now a word about our Stewart. I do think he has worked like a brick; the work is carried splendidly and so solidly. I want to remain all afternoon on our darling

beautiful spot. It is a dream of a place, and, my love, I feel you will be just like me when you see it again.

The position of the house is absolutely all that can be desired. The sun gives well on the house in a very rotative nice way, as it is apt to do, I believe, in other countries. Every one thinks now that we have chosen the best site on Deeside. . . . I am only afraid by putting too many superlatives; by praising an object or person to some one, you might disappoint them when they see; but, oh me! what air, and what a house—to me it is simply a grand success. This morning there were twenty-four men working—think of two dozen strong Scotsmen all working their best for our happy home. I photographed them all. I am sending a boy down to post this at Ballater and fetch my bag. They are going to put me up for the night at Mrs. Mercer's.

Dimanche, 6th Juillet 1902, evening.

I wrote last afternoon under our pines, but now I write in the Mercers' room after a visit to Torran . . . they have had a great sorrow, and it has told on them, but they are strong and keep up wonderfully. Our Maggie from London is at home, she left her splendid position to come and help and cheer up her people. Is it not nice of her? I walked after lunch, it is such a beautiful day, my darling, what a country, and I feel so happy that it is going to be our home. I stayed on our ground till nine in the evening last night, and inspected everything carefully; you have no conception what a fortress it is going to be. I can tell you it is up to the mark in all solidity and careful work. Stewart is doing for us all that can be done. He is stubborn, it is true, but he has the way to make other people work, and they have all such respect for him here. There are several things which I was very glad to have seen, and I am very sure it was right I came. I shall go to Aberdeen to-morrow to see the men about the stoves and other things. I go to Glasgow on Tuesday, and certainly cross over on Wednesday, à toi.

ROUDI.

(Written to dictation from Rodolphe !)

I have great difficulty in keeping your tatie-bogle of a husband in proper control; he is bubbling over with nonsense, and keeps me in fear and trembling. There is only one subject on which he is stubborn and unbendable, it is on the subject of cutting down expenses about the house; whenever I have managed some little economy he proposes some new-fangled and costly additions, and I wish most earnestly you were here to conduct the transaction, instead of such a harum-scarum Aberdeen haddie!

I believe they have cut his hair too short in Glasgow, otherwise he is the same as you have seen him often enough, a "terror."—Yours affectionately,
JOCK.

CHAPTER XIX

“THE ISLAND OF DESTINY”

“ Erin, the tear and the smile in thine eyes,
Blend like the rainbow that hangs in thy skies!
Shining through sorrow’s stream,
Saddening through pleasure’s beam,
Thy suns with doubtful gleam,
Weep while they rise.

Erin, thy silent tear never shall cease,
Erin, thy languid smile ne’er shall increase,
Till, like the rainbow’s light,
Thy various tints unite,
And form in heaven’s sight
One arch of peace ! ”

—MOORE.

To the West of Ireland! There is magic in those words for all who have enjoyed her tender beauty. And we had drunk the philtre, whose influence never dies; and gladly turned our faces towards the west, the district of golden lights and sunsets Leighton loved and painted; steeped in the mists of the Atlantic, changeable as the sea itself, but always poetical, always beautiful.

Slowly but surely our future home was growing on its northern moor; my husband made several pilgrimages thither, but firmly refused to let me accompany him during its mud and mortar stage, decreeing that the month of August should be spent in County Donegal.

We passed by the railway that traverses the Gap of Barnesmore, and slid down past Lough Eask to the western coast to spend a few days in the town of Donegal. It is well worth while to pause here for a day, to visit the handsome ruined castle, and stroll along the river past the rather shapeless ruins that indicate where the cultured men of old penned the Annals of the Four Masters.



*Reading aloud,
Dresden*



Rijsdal, Holland

Visitors passing through County Donegal will notice the tangled masses of wool spread out upon the hedges to dry; the cottagers have been dyeing them, and will presently weave them in handlooms into excellent Donegal frieze. Plants from the moorland and lichen from their rocks, combined with other dyes, furnish the materials for harmonious heather mixtures. The colouring of each web is combined by the taste of the weaver, for this is no machine-made cloth, the individuality of the maker is woven into it, and it is hopeless to attempt to match one web with another, the moral of which is to buy plenty at the outset.

A man who was staying in the same hotel assured us that these local webs are frequently taken over to Scotland, smoked with peat, and return to Ireland to be sold at a greatly enhanced price as "Harris tweeds," the which—if true—is indeed another Irish grievance! But I write of the year 1902, and things may have changed since those days.

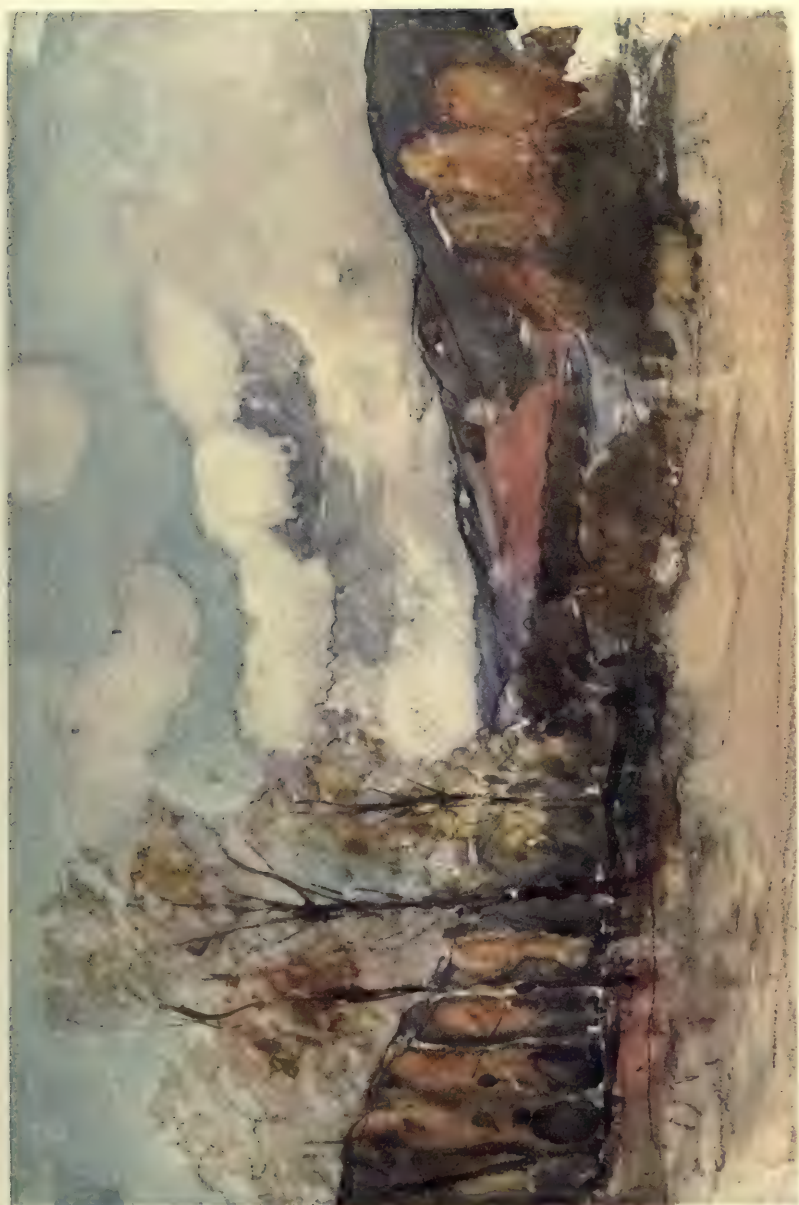
Investigations into the glacial deposits of the west were to be carried on during our tour in Donegal, and we combined with these a visit to one of the numerous underground limestone caverns for which Ireland is so noted. "The Pullans" form a series of grottos, some covered, some accessible, through which a river, clear as crystal, flows. Fringes of ivy and trees hang down. The extent is not great, but the place, within a walk of Donegal, is very interesting and well worth visiting. I had seen it many years before, and shuddered in youthful horror at the spot where some one falling at night from the avenue was engulfed by the subterranean river and swept away to oblivion.

We started on an exquisite morning for the long and beautiful drive from Killybegs to Carrick Hotel, where we failed to get accommodation, and were richly repaid by the splendid drive in the evening light over desolate mountains by Glengesh to Ardara, where we found excellent accommodation in its pleasant friendly fishing hotel.

It is somewhat saddening to return to Ireland, after a

prolonged sojourn in other countries, to see the distressful country and our dear Irish people, as it were, from the outside, to read certain characteristics through my husband's discerning eyes, the eyes of one who loved Ireland and the Irish, yet was not blind to their shortcomings. We were now in the heart of a congested district, and had abundant opportunities of studying the social side of the Irish question from a sympathetic and unpolitical point of view. The Congested Districts Board has a school for Irish crochet lace making in Ardara, which we visited. It gives valuable opportunities of earning money to the women and girls of the district, less expert workers getting employment in knitting socks and shooting-stockings. We saw the beautiful lace sprigs being made, and were interested in the various stages, as the sprigs are sown on paper in a selected design, and joined together by less skilled workers by bars of crochet. Probably no lace in the world is as durable as this admirable Irish crochet lace. How frequently in our walks did we meet handsome young girls with bare feet knitting as they walked, or carrying home bundles of wool, or carrying the finished stockings into Ardara. That is what Ireland needs—to be helped to help herself, and to be encouraged to do so, not to rely too much upon Government.

The easy-going indolence, partly due to the relaxing climate, that distinguishes the southern and western temperament from the more robust partially Scotch type in eastern Ulster, is very much in evidence at Ardara. They are very delightful, and sympathetic, and pleasant, but have learned to gauge tourists very shrewdly, but they could not quite "place" M. Christen in his many talks with them. In former years I had seen the men about Carrick sitting half the day in easy idleness, like the Spaniards at Alcala, whilst their women-kind laboured in the fields. We fell into conversation one day with a man who was resting his creel of peats against a wall. His engrossing trouble was his inability to keep a "baste" to bring down the fuel from the mountain. Further inquiry revealed that the supply



On Desist.

Clouds over
Cautigautbruch.



was unlimited, and he might cut as many peats as he chose. My husband assured him that in *his* country no one would grudge the trouble of bringing home an unlimited supply of free fuel.

The cottages, except in Ardara, were usually very miserable, poultry running in and out, and in one remote place a sick calf was tethered in the kitchen. No garden of fruit or vegetables, only a potato patch, and usually a dung-heap in front of the house.

But in the village of Ardara a handsome spacious stone chapel, costing several thousands, was rapidly approaching completion. We were told that not a quarter of the money to be spent upon this building had as yet been collected. Comment is needless. The Irish are essentially and by nature religious, and passionately loyal to their Church. Here we have surely the Irish question in a nutshell. If only the Roman Church would take thought for the bodies, not merely for the souls of her children, how different things would be in Ireland. In these remoter districts the current runs in the same unfortunate circle, cause and effect preceding and following in unbroken sequence. If a lad from such a neighbourhood goes to Maynooth to study for the priesthood, the spiritual side of his nature may be fully developed and his duty to the Church be most thoroughly inculcated, but what learns he of progress, of sanitation, of the movements that are raising the human race, of the yearly rising sense of the duties of citizenship? Simply nothing. He may not go to Protestants, he has not free access to newspapers, to books, is not in touch with the present, and may return to a country parish with purely Catholic ideals, devoted to the interests of his Church, and may give his whole life and energy to single-hearted labours amongst his flock, yet be utterly unable to elevate his people to that higher level of national life that is the crying need of our people. His training has been hopelessly narrow—the good of the Church its first aim. What a lamentable change from the early days when Ireland—the isle of saints—was a centre of culture and enlightenment, sending

teachers wholesale over the continent, even into Italy itself ! What a change even from a century ago, when Roman Catholic priests were sent abroad for education, and had some chance of comparing different national methods of life.

And what is the result that I have seen during my own lifetime ? In my childhood Protestants and Catholics learned their lessons side by side in village schools, protected against proselytism by a clause somewhat resembling the Cowper-Temple clause in England. Surely that wholesome opportunity of fellow-citizenship should never have been discontinued ? The same thing goes on still in Scotland with no apparent dissatisfaction. Yet when demands came from Rome that no Irish Catholic child should learn its spelling or arithmetic on the benches of a Protestant school, the Government of the day weakly yielded, and separate Catholic and Protestant schools may be seen in any village in Ulster. The cleavage, which formerly began only in maturer years, now extends from the cradle to the grave. Is this right, is it wholesome ? Aye, is it Christian at all ? Let our Scotch and English legislators ponder these things. There was a certain lesson given once, in response to the question, "Who is my neighbour ?" that divinely answers these queries.

I have purposely placed at the head of this chapter Moore's beautiful aspiration for a united peaceful Ireland. And the title of the chapter has been selected deliberately from one of the many names for Ireland. May it be her happy destiny ere long to be drawn to see the unity of interests that should be her social and national salvation. The enormous amount of energy expended at present in the great battle of the Irish language seems to onlookers somewhat academic and out of place. Surely that might wait ? If only those who love their country so well would begin with common things ; would insist upon a better education in the daily round of life ; would banish the pigs and poultry from the houses—



*Anthony O'Flaherty
Aranmore, Galway*



*Edward O'Flaherty
Aranmore, Galway*

why should it matter for the present in what language “domestic management” is taught? Begin first with the children.

The work *has* been begun, and nobly begun, in the agricultural co-operative movement; but is it fostered by the “patriots” as it should be? They still look askance on what has brought millions of money into Ireland, and given hope and prosperity to many an Irish home. The marvellous spectacle of an Ireland far ahead of England or Scotland in co-operative agriculture, whither Scottish girls are sent to study profitable dairying and poultry farming, gives hope for the future. Glancing back over the past we seem to see the first stirrings of life when Mr. Balfour and his sister spent welcome leisure in touring over Ireland, and discerned her urgent need of “Balfour’s railways,” and the Recess Committee with its invaluable generalisations; but the true “sun-burst” for Ireland was the advent of the “A.O.S.”—the Agricultural Organisation Society—and it seems to many (interested as my husband was in Ireland’s uncertain future) that when the history of these centuries comes to be written, it will be Plunkett’s name, not Redmond’s, that will shine in letters of gold! And now that Land Purchase has come, there is hope for “The Island of Destiny” at last.

Yet the deep lines of cleavage still remain; Ireland is fatally divided by the profound gulf between the two religions!

Neither England nor Scotland realise this. Where is the Horatius Cocles for this modern abyss? No phantom of Home Rule need attempt the task. Not in separation from England, not in isolation from the beneficent influences of the greatest empire the world has ever seen, will Ireland win her own. Nay, rather in a welding together of the divided nation by some white heat of patriotism, by putting *country* above either church or creed. If the day comes when Ireland’s priests resolve to look Homeward instead of Romeward, the work will be done; the “union of hearts” will be accomplished, and Ireland’s individuality as a

united nation invincibly secured, without separation from England.

"Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow."

Our hotel was full of ardent fishermen, with the usual amusing and ingenious reasons for non-success in their labours. I used to wonder if there were really many fish to be caught, but it was my first piscatorial experience, and subsequent residence near such a noted salmon river as the Dee has convinced me that salmon fishing is a veritable gamble. Evidently those lines about "Hope springing eternally" was meant to encourage anglers all over the world. We used to watch them starting off on outside cars in pours of rain or returning in dripping oilskins with compassion that I know now was quite misplaced, as the "glorious uncertainty" is part of the game. Probably, as they drove past us, perched on our sketching-stools and devoured by midges, they thought us equally deserving of pity. So much depends on the point of view.

During our stay at Ardara we were fortunate enough to come in for the local Feis, an annual performance of Gaelic songs and dances. It was held in the playground of the schoolhouse, and aroused much enthusiastic interest. Irish is still spoken in many parts of Donegal, but I do not think it is the exclusive language anywhere in the north, as is still the case in several districts further south. It was common enough when sketching to hear bystanders criticising in Gaelic, and politely addressing us in English.

It is rather wholesome at times to hear the criticisms of perfectly uneducated people. It takes away any self-conceit that might linger in quiet corners of the mind. I recollect some boys discussing a sketch of mine near Belfast; *they* had no kindly Gaelic wherewith to spare my feelings, and my careful drawing of seashore and a point of land was discussed in audible whispers thus:—

"Is it a tree she's doing?"

"No; don't ye see it's a draft of yon house she's making!"

"Ah! go along; don't ye see the branches of them trees?"

But most humiliating of all my personal experiences was our own man in the Macedon garden, who mistook my spirited picture of Spanish onions for a bunch of chrysanthemums. Those were my "salad days," and I had cordially invited him into the studio to gratify him with a sight of my productions. He knew that I had had a bunch of chrysanthemums to paint, and when admitted he espied the onions on the easel, and remarked, in a tone of flattering encouragement: "Ah! I see them's the chrysanthemums, miss!"

But it is not only amateurs who suffer. My husband laughingly told me how he once brought home a wet oil sunset study, and the concierge asked to have a look at it, and remarked that it was an excellent likeness; he would have known it anywhere!

When my husband first went home as an artist to St. Imier, his father demanded to be shown his work. After surveying it with extreme contempt, he asked if he could indeed find purchasers for such rubbish. When assured it was possible, he responded grimly that he did not think there were so many fools in the world.

We had brought our sensible continental bathing dresses with us, and enjoyed many a plunge in the sparkling waters of the Atlantic, which ran in and out for miles at each tide into the two long inlets called Loughros Beg and Loughros More. My husband's fearlessness in swimming gave me some acutely anxious moments, notably once when we were out near the mouth on the northern coast of Loughros Beg, and, seeing a car with some of our hotel fishermen along the other side of the inlet, he swam across to greet them—the distance was sufficient to make him invisible to me, and I awaited his return with some uneasiness, as the tide had turned and was racing outwards. He admitted that he

had considerable difficulty in returning, but had made up his mind to allow himself to drift down to the sand-bar, and there await the turn of the tide. He could see me, and had no idea that I could not see him.

Another time we had ourselves driven away along the lovely southern coast of Loughros Beg to the little hamlet called Maghera, where we left our car and toiled across a trackless stretch of sandhills to a charming little sheltered cove where we wanted to sketch, whence at very low tide some caves could be inspected by clambering over slippery rocks. Here we each found a dressing-room amongst the reefs, and were soon revelling in the waves. My husband swam out of hearing, and landed on the bar of sand over which the waves of the incoming tide were breaking. My swimming being very poor, I could not reach it, so, emerging from the waves, I began to dress as I watched him swimming towards the caves, which were out of sight round a corner of the cliffs. Presently he clambered on to the rocks, and plunging into the sea beyond, with a farewell wave of his hand, disappeared towards the caverns. I continued my toilet with some uneasiness; the tide and wind had risen, and the sand-bar was submerged. Twenty minutes passed without any sign of his whereabouts. I was facing out to sea, completely out of sight of any human being, with half-an-hour of sandhills between me and human help. Exceedingly alarmed at his prolonged absence, I knelt down in despair on that lonely strand and said my prayers. Comforted by that unailing resource, I climbed higher on the rocks, and sat waiting and watching that fateful corner. With intense thankfulness I presently saw him clambering round the rocks and swimming contentedly shorewards.

He had swam from cave to cave and enjoyed himself thoroughly, and never dreamt of danger or of causing me anxiety; but he laughed tenderly and kissed me in compunction when he heard of my agonised terror. Perhaps I really knew better than he did the risk of bathing in unknown seas; of the treacherous currents that have



The Caves at Magliera

many a time swept away inexperienced tourists around the coasts of Ireland.

We had a lovely excursion one beautiful afternoon in a large row-boat, being pulled for several miles south along the coast, past crowds of cormorants and other sea birds, and into caverns frequented by seals. Our most amusing trip was across the bay in a curragh, a lineal descendant of the skin canoes of our ancestors, now made of basket-work, covered with tarred canvas. Cautiously stepping in so as not to put our weight on the canvas, we were seated in the bottom of the boat, and our friend Pat, the owner of it and the other boats, paddled us across the bay. These fragile craft are wonderfully seaworthy. I have seen them dancing about many miles from land in the open water of Galway Bay. The motion is curious at first, as the water seems to glide along with a movement felt by the passengers.

Another pleasant excursion was to Dawros Head and Gweebarra Bay, giving us a completely new view of the coast northward, after a deliciously airy drive over low country fringed on both sides by the sea. We were anxious to investigate the prehistoric hearths that occur amongst the sandhills of Narran Strand, and succeeded in photographing one where three or four blackened stones were still *in situ*. Fragments of split marrow bones and abundant limpet shells remained; but the inhabitants are now well aware of the antiquarian interest attaching to implements or fragments of pottery, and we found little of value in our cursory examination. There was a small hotel at Narran, and another attractively placed on Dawros peninsula, which would have tempted us could we have lingered longer in Donegal, but we were limited by the approaching visit of the British Association to Belfast, as we were to be my sister's guests during its stay.

Large canvases had arrived from Belfast, and several pictures were in progress, but the changeable, boisterous weather that worried the fishermen so sadly proved equally inimical to art. One characteristic sketch of "Peat

Carrying" was thus completely stopped. Commenced in brilliantly breezy weather, with the marvellous amethystine colouring characteristic of the western seaboard, with grand white masses of cumulus cloud rolling in from the Atlantic, a sudden shift of wind came, and day after day we had only grey skies and sullen showers, and the picture, which was merely laid in, was never finished.

Moore must have been in the west of Ireland when he wrote these lovely lines:—

"How dear to me the hour when daylight dies,
 And sunbeams melt along the silent sea;
 For then sweet dreams of other days arise,
 And memory breathes her vesper sigh to thee.

And, as I watch the line of light that plays
 Along the smooth wave tow'rd the burning west,
 I long to tread that golden path of rays,
 And think 'twould lead to some bright isle of rest."

Do many people realise that Ireland counts the poet, William Allingham, amongst her distinguished children? His native town was Ballyshannon, not very far from those Brown Hall Caverns we visited. He was born in 1824 and died in 1889, and his memory is kept green in his native town by the following verses, whose beautiful thought is so simply and charmingly put in the following lines carved on the Bridge over the River Erne:—

"Here once he roved a happy boy,
 Along the winding banks of Erne,
 And now, please God, with finer joy,
 A fairer world his eyes discern."



Peat cutting in Donegal.



Our Highland Home.
Original crayon drawing in the
possession of Miss Thompson.

CHAPTER XX

OUR HOME ON DEESIDE

1902-1906

“If you want knowledge, you must toil for it; and if pleasure, you must toil for it. Toil is the law. Pleasure comes through toil, and not by self-indulgence and indolence. When one gets to love work, his life is a happy one.”

“To watch the corn grow and the blossoms set; to draw hard breath over ploughshare or spade; to read, to think, to love, to hope, to pray—these are the things that make men happy.”—RUSKIN.

IT was in beautiful autumnal weather that I first saw the ruddy roofs of our beloved home, as we drove up from Ballater, bringing our dog Hans with us. We had secured rooms at the edge of the moor, and for two pleasant months we superintended its progress. Day after day the magnetism of home drew us over to the unfinished building; we even tidied away all the straw and shavings that disfigured the heather, in our happy delight at this “poor thing, but mine own.” So, in a day or two another joiner’s cart full of doors and windows came, with a liberal supply of fresh shavings—and these we also industriously collected and burned. We cleared away the stones that jutted out of the turf in a grassy walk, we moved with extreme care and solemn ceremony a wild rose bush, and planted it in full view of the drawing-room windows, and commenced operations on a sloping bank where plants from the dear old Irish garden were to grow. No children were ever happier over their toys than we were over this home of ours, after more than two years during which we had “lived in our boxes.” The situation of the house was a constant delight, and work was frequently interrupted to watch the

shadows on the mountains, and look out for the shafts of sunlight that broke for some few minutes behind the nearer hills after sunset, irradiating distant crests with almost unearthly glory.

After some years' experience of Scotland I grew conscious that in these northern districts there were three marked periods in the year, a long summer, a long autumn, and a long winter, followed by a brief and sudden spring. We had sometimes hard frost and snow off and on in April and even into May, yet in the latter half of May frequently had intensely hot weather.

That first autumn was benevolent; winter scarcely came until December, and the weeks in November when I went over to Ireland to make arrangements about the removal of our stored furniture, were a busy time for my husband and our young Swiss chauffeur, Eugene. Daily letters reported progress from the moor to the exile in Erin.

11th November 1902.

MY DEAREST WIFE,—Oh me! what a change is here. Those walls only yesterday ringing with laughter, are now silent. Hans and I take our breakfast, looking at each other, with a drawn line along our pallid faces. We had a puncture in the tyre, and I left Eugene and the automobile at Crathes. I had not time to telegraph to Mrs. Mercer, and when Hans and I arrived by the last train there was no fire, no light, no supper, and no cheery face to welcome me home. Dear, what a difference life is without you now. . . . [Our little motor had been stored for months in Aberdeen.] The automobile is at last housed in the shed at St. Imier; and now it will cost us no more—at least very little—to keep. The cattle were inside our fence yesterday, and I had them hunted out. Three times this morning I had to do the same thing; and, would you believe it, I did not lose my temper. Did I tell you Hans had a stand-up fight with the farmer's dog at Crathes yesterday, and got the best of it, and showed himself a worthy son of Christen!



Happy Hans!

Photographed at St. Imier by Mr. William Gray, M.R.I.A., in the year 1903

Kind regards from Hans to Dandy. Hans looked for you in the bedroom and seemed very surprised not to find you.

14th November 1902.

Here we are again after a grand day of the most glorious sunshine. Eugene and your humble servant have watered your rockery with the perspiration of our brows. You will be pleased with the result, but it is only begun; we put in eight hours' hard work. Hans helped; it was really pathetic to see his desire to help. He came and scratched the turf, and pulled roots with his teeth. That dog is a treat, he has such a desire to help and be nice; every one in this family wishes to be nice. After his exertions he came and seated himself in front of me, and looked in my face, just as if to say: "Have we not done well?"

We made gentle gradations of steps down the bank, and carried big stones to make broad and long rustic steps. Yet, dear Théophile,¹ we missed you; you would have suggested this and that and everything, and I verily miss it dreadfully; we cleared a big patch, and when night came we sat and smoked a cigarette at the top of the bank, critically admiring our work, when a genial idea shot into my head, and we piled all the broomsticks and branches and made such a tremendous fire. It was beautiful in the lovely night, with the moon rising over the hill, and sparkled all over the place; the heat was so great that birds began to sing, thinking that summer was coming back.

The house is now painted outside and looks fine, and the date and border are gilt, and sparkle in the sun. In order not to crowd our dear little courtyard, we are going to begin a new store for wood between two of the pines, and have a great stock of fuel for the long winter evenings.

¹ One of my husband's nicknames for me, founded on a slight resemblance to his brother Théophile.

15th November.

It took four hours' hard picking to make a hole four feet deep to hold the water-cask, just at the edge of the top of the bank. I am going to put a lot of good earth round it, and there you will be able to plant some good big plants; you will be pleased, dear wife. Hans helps hard. Once when I was in the bottom of the hole made for the barrel, he walked over my head; another time he put his black wet nose full of earth right in my face, then ran down the bank into the stream, over the island, and in a tantrum, back all round, barking loudly. I tell you that child is happy.

Friday, 21st November.

People from Ballater and all about are trooping to have a look at our "wee thatched hoosie." The coal is all stored, all our chimney-tops pour forth long columns of smoke.

Sunday, 23rd.

We had the doors all open till three, then we closed them, and lighted all the fires. There were forty people up inspecting the house to-day. I went to church this morning with Hans; it was a lovely day. Just now I went outside; and saw our home all lighted up, there is a fire in every room. I start on Tuesday. Hans sends his love and Roudi is bringing you his! I shall be so glad to see your dear loving face again.

Notes of December 1902

Tuesday, 2nd December.—Arrived in a storm of wind and rain in Aberdeen, then to Ballater, driving up to our dear home in snow. Vans of furniture are at the station, but the range is not set in the kitchen yet, so we cannot sleep there to-night. Thirteen men still at work in the house.

Thursday, 4th.—The furniture began to go into the house to-day. We were there all day directing.

Friday, 5th.—Oh, joyful day! getting in the furniture all day, and stayed *in our own house* for the first time.

As the winter deepened and severe frost was followed by dry snow, we had the novel spectacle of bread carts and butchers' vans sliding silently up on runners instead of wheels; the farmer who supplied us with milk charitably cleared our avenue with his snow-plough when opening the road for the passage of his milk cart, and multitudes of birds, including seventeen partridges, come for their daily dole of food. Snow at our altitude of 850 feet is a clean, delightful substance; dry and powdery, it flies in the wind exactly like spindrift. I shall never forget the exhilaration of our first sledge drive. One felt inclined to laugh and shout with sheer exuberance of spirits in the intoxicating keenness of the air. In those northern latitudes with their daylight throughout the summer nights, the winter of course also differs, the arc described by the sun being so low that many houses never see the sun for weeks together. By a happy chance we had selected a spot bathed in sunshine all the day long; with our double windows and hot-water pipes we defied the cold, and our winters were long, delightful *tête-à-têtes* when much was accomplished that was only talked of during the rest of the year.

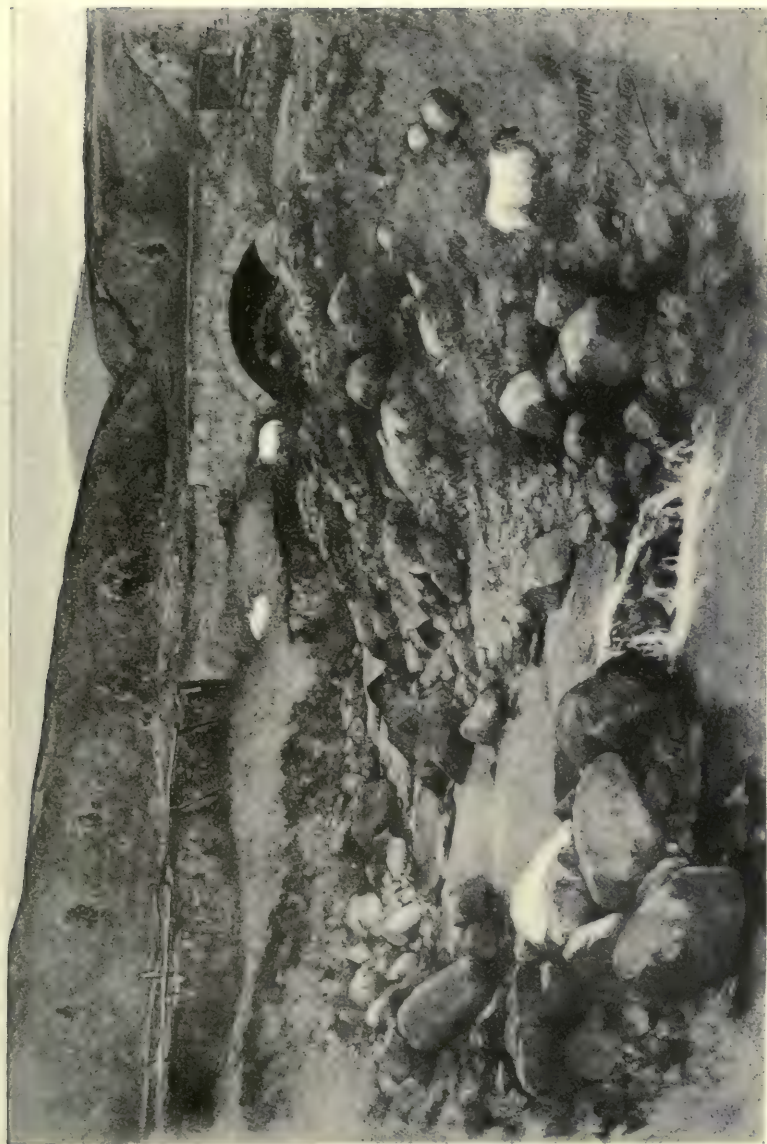
In the fulness of his goodwill towards all men, M. Christen suggested that our isolated little household should all dine together on Christmas Day. We carried out the plan that first year, but the result did not encourage its repetition.

Frost and snow are by no means continuous at Ballater; the snow rarely lasted longer than two or three weeks, varied by intervals of open weather, enabling us to work in the garden. Many rockeries, to break the wind, gradually rose up under my husband's now practised hands—when the planting of a rose involves the extrication of a barrow-load of stones, there is no lack of material! Neither of us knew much about gardening, but "where there's a will there's a

way," and we spared no trouble trying to coax roses up the house, and covered exposed places with honeysuckle and ivy. Daily after breakfast we strolled out, arm in arm, to see if a snowdrop could be found or another bud discovered, ere the duties of the day summoned us to heavier tasks. We loved planning and fitting carpets and curtains, and were expert in nailing down. My geological experiences had taught me the value of a loose wrist, and prevented the marvellous work with rigid muscles and short taps from a hammer, gripped close to the head, that I sometimes watch with nominally "experienced" feminine hands.

A bed of clay exposed during drainage of some land near the Pass of Ballater gave the chance of constructing a pond, which was scientifically "puddled" by the owner himself in his snow-boots. This involved a joint excursion the following summer to Dinnet to procure water-lilies and other aquatic plants from the lakes; and so the happy sequence went on that turned our bit of moorland into a veritable wild garden, where sudden surprises in the shape of garden plants, alternated with the brooms, blackberries, and heather, and the more evanescent sheets of wood anemone and *Trientalis Europæus* that starred its uneven surface.

We were considerably helped one summer by a tramp in whom my husband became interested. A tall, untidy, dreamy-faced man asked him one day for help, and was offered dinner if he chose to earn it by work. He willingly accepted this crucial test. M. Christen talked to him and found that he had come over from Prince Edward's Island some years before, and would like to return there (where he had a sister comfortably married to a farmer), but had never been able to gather up the price of a ticket. Offered steady work at a shilling a day and his food, he gratefully accepted. His box had been appropriated by some one, but his account of the why and wherefore was hazy—his only luggage consisted of a Bible. My husband had much trouble and endless patience with him ere he could induce him to be a little clean and tidy. Steady work he absolutely could not do, as some days he seemed in a dreamy trance, and would



Glengairn: Charcoal Study

tramp and settle the same little sod of turf over and over again with his mind far away from earth. A bed was knocked up for him in our tool-shed, my husband bought some boots and necessary clothing, and gradually the good food and peace seemed to clear his bewildered brain.

He was scrupulously honest,—one day, when he found a sixpence, pursuing us all to try and find its owner; and he even wished to pay for his food on Sundays, as he did no work, and thought he had not earned it. He was anxious at first to buy a bottle of whisky, as he felt weak, but my husband was firm in the rule that the first whisky he brought in would be the signal for his departure. All the summer he remained with us, a rigid teetotaller. Alcohol would have been fatal for that clouded brain! Evidently half starved for a long time, he had a wolfish appetite at first, and could dispose of a loaf at a sitting, but here also he followed my husband's advice with dog-like fidelity, and ate in greater moderation. Although deeply religious, he never went to church, but sat all Sunday amongst the heather with his Bible. He once began to sing to us a hymn with 140 verses, but, rather to our joy, he could only remember seven or eight of it! I suppose his mental attitude was that of the poet Whittier's friend:—

“With long-drawn breath and shrug, my guest
His sense of glad relief expressed.
Outside the hills lay warm in sun;
The cattle in the meadow-run
Stood half-leg deep; a single bird
The green repose above us stirred.
'What part or lot have you?' he said,
'In these dull rites of drowsy-head?
Is silence worship? Seek it where
It soothes with dreams the summer air,
Not in this close and rude-benched hall,
But where soft lights and shadows fall,
And all the slow, sleep-walking hours
Glide soundless over grass and flowers!
From time and place and form apart,
Its holy ground the human heart,

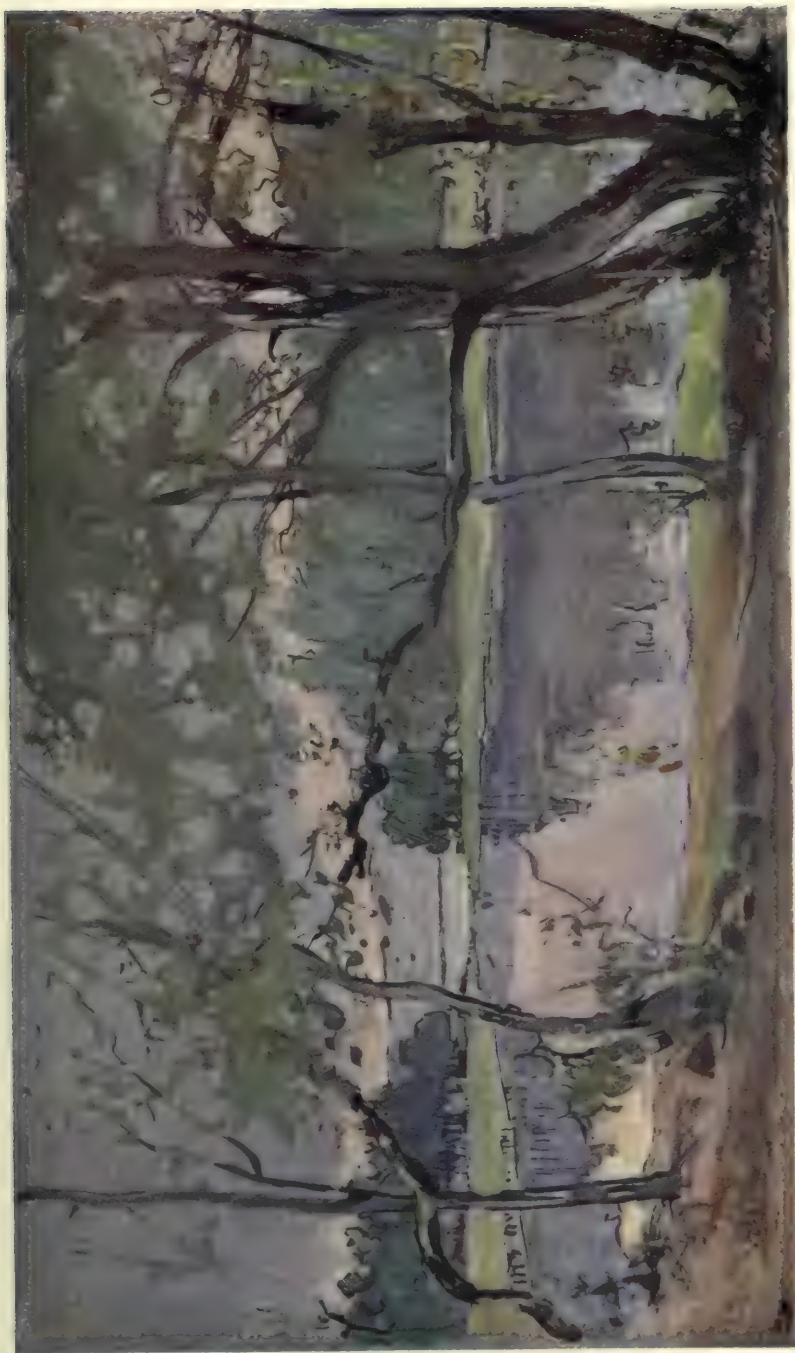
Nor ritual-bound nor templeward
 Walks the free spirit of the Lord!
 Our common Master did not pen
 His followers up from other men;
 His service liberty indeed,
 He built no church, He framed no creed.

‘Where in my name meet two or three,’
 Our Lord hath said, ‘I there will be!’

So, to the calmly gathered thought
 The innermost of truth is taught,
 The mystery dimly understood,
 That love of God is love of good,
 And, chiefly, its divinest trace
 In Him of Nazareth’s holy face
 That to be saved is only this—
 Salvation from our selfishness . . .
 That worship’s deeper meaning lies
 In mercy—not in sacrifice. . . .
 That Book and Church and Day are given
 For man, not God—for earth, not heaven—
 The blessed means to holiest ends,
 Not masters, but benignant friends;
 That the dear Christ dwells not afar,
 The king of some remoter star,
 Listening at times, with flattered ear
 To homage wrung from selfish fear,
 But here, amid the poor and blind,
 The bound and suffering of our kind,
 In works we do, in prayers we pray,
 Life of our life, He lives to-day.”

My husband devoted two whole years to the perfecting of our little domain. Once or twice he took a week for painting, but some household claim always turned up to interrupt him. He and Eugene painted all our walls with the beautiful simple tints of Zingessol, a washable water-colour patent mixture, a six weeks’ job—but eminently satisfactory—they built sheds, made seats and tables in the garden, and he even learnt how to solder up deficient watering-cans. In fact, ours was a little self-contained establishment, primitive and patriarchal.

True, we had little soil for our garden, as the moor



On Kinross Farm. An inlet of the lake.



Summer heat. Upper Glengaiton.

seemed to be the levelled stony contents of a moraine, but here and there pockets of earth rewarded my husband's delving, and some plants grew like magic in the warm light soil. Together, with a larger and a lesser barrow, he and I wheeled stones and plants; together, with the constant companionship of Hans, we wandered up our valley in search of ferns for shady corners.

Then, all being fairly started, and Eugene having departed back to Switzerland, the garden was formally handed over to me, and my husband, at last free to please himself, again took up his painting, and everything in the house circled round an artist's needs. Occasionally during winter, and constantly during summer, we had friends staying with us, frequently artists and their wives, naturalist friends, young people, children—all free to do as they chose in our temple of liberty, where the master's own work was not laid aside, but visitors loosely absorbed into the household ways. He revelled in these hospitable times, which were full of merry laughter. I always called him, "My sunshine;" everything and every one brightened when he came in. It was his desire that our house should not be only for our own enjoyment, but be shared by friends and acquaintances who needed cheering, or change, or rest. To have a chance of helping any one was to him an absolute joy.

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"As the sun lightens the world, so let our loving-kindness make bright this house of our habitation.

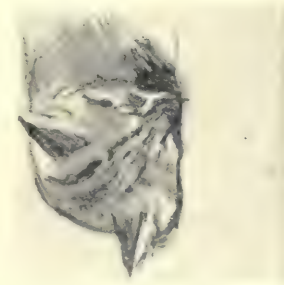
"In every part and corner of life, to lose oneself is to be gainer; to forget oneself is to be happy."—R. L. STEVENSON.

Freed from the claims of gardening and house-building, M. Christen flung himself with intense pleasure into his art, and he and the inseparable Hans lived in the valleys and on the hills with knapsack and paint-box. The advent of train motors facilitated distant sketching excursions to the upper valley of the Dee.

As he deemed no house complete without a cat and

dog, I presented him with a handsome Persian cat, which was named Bijou after a dog once much beloved. But poor Bijou came to an untimely end, and his successor was named Ulrich, so that dog and cat might have thoroughly Swiss names, in honour of their master; just as our house had been called—to please me—after his native village. Ulrich soon became shortened into Ricky; he and Hans became regular characters. It is remarkable how much animals develop when much talked to and constantly in association with human beings. Ricky has a pretty fashion of expecting a chair to be set for him at table, upon which he mounts and gravely sits until his plate is put in front of him, when he solemnly rises, places two sturdy forepaws on the table, and neatly eats what is provided. If he wanted more he nudged his master with his head, or laid a reproachful paw upon his arm. A covered passage led up the side of the house to an upper window, permanently fixed open far enough to allow the cat access to the house at all times—a precaution very necessary in a region where the thermometer has been known to descend nineteen degrees *below zero*!

As for Hans, no words could express his perfection and his charming ways. I used to say to him, "Where is the master?" and he flourished off proudly to lead me to him. When his master was going to Aberdeen for a day, and could not take Hans, and said so to me, Hans understood at once, and would implore to be taken, sometimes adopting all manner of ruses and ambushes to accomplish his purpose. When Ballater station was reached, he was desired to go home, and with lowered tail and unwilling mien would start the two miles homeward, but always with an air that said, "The pleasure of escorting you was worth this pain!" He always accompanied us to church, and was chained to a bench in the church hall, where he waited silently till service was over. He once distinguished himself by insisting on driving home, unpaid for, in the train motor. The conductor, who knew him well, could not induce him to come out, but when the



Ulrich
and
Hans

Hans;
A portrait



motor approached the foot of our road, where we usually alighted, he rose calmly and walked down to the door, and waited till the conductor stopped the omnibus and let him out. When his master heard it, he was delighted, and remarked, "That dog can do no wrong!"

He was known far and wide along Deeside. To the present day, in remote regions, strangers ask me, "Is not that Mr. Christen's dog?" For during the winter, when painting out of doors was impossible, he and Hans wandered far and wide, visiting in lonely cottages, or lending magazines or books and giving smiles and sympathy to some who sorely needed it.

Very early in our friendship he had quoted the following, which, I believe, was written by Carlyle: "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Truly, *he* lost no chances, and was loved by all who knew him; the reserved Scottish nature, when it has accepted any one, is so very loyal to its friends. I am still welcomed, through Hans, for my husband's sake, by many unknown faces.

I never saw such expressive eyes as Hans'; the look of radiant loving devotion to his adored master was absolutely human. Surely there is a hereafter for love like his? The most saintly clergyman I ever met, the late Achilles Daunt, of Dublin, believed there was, as indicated in the text about the spirits of the animals going downward. Hans and Ricky still wander round St. Imier, but that peculiar look of ecstasy in Hans' eyes vanished four years ago, with the only being who could call it forth. He loves *me*; but he worshipped *him*!

CHAPTER XXI

A CORNER OF PROVENCE—LOCH LOMOND

1904-1905

I dreamed of Paradise, and still,
Though sun lay soft on vale and hill
And trees were green and rivers bright,
The one dear thing that made delight
By sun or stars or Eden weather,
Was just that we two were together.

I dreamed of heaven—with God so near!
The angels trod the silent sphere,
And each was beautiful; the days
Were choral work, were choral praise;
And yet in Heaven's far-shining weather
The best was still—we were together!

I woke—and lo, my dream was true,
That happy dream of me and you!
For Eden, Heaven, no need to roam,
The foretaste of it all is Home,
When you and I through this world's weather
Still work and praise and thank together.

Together greet life's solemn real,
Together own one glad ideal,
Together laugh, together ache,
And think one thought, "each other's sake,"
And hope one hope,—in new-world weather
To still go on, and go together!

—WILLIAM C. GANNETT.

DURING the closing months of 1904, M. Christen was moved by a desire to revisit Paris and his friends on the continent. Just as the idea was slowly taking definite form, a letter from Mr. Edward Ertz arrived, describing a delightful sketching resort on the Riviera, unspoiled by tourists, whither he was about to conduct a sketching

class, and suggesting that we should join the party. We were pleased with the idea.

We travelled leisurely southward, seeing friends in London, and spending a cheery fortnight in Paris in a small hotel in our favourite district, near the Boulevard Montparnasse. Here we had many pleasant meetings with artists and friends, until my husband unfortunately got a sharp attack of influenza, which hastened our journey southward, as the weather in Paris was most trying, so damp and foggy. By sleeping the first night at Valence, we managed to stop at Avignon for a couple of days, and were richly repaid by its own charm and its historic interest. We wandered round the ancient palace where the Popes took refuge when they had to leave Rome; and gathered many seeds off the withered plants in their beautifully placed, but wintry garden. Quantities of a curiously coloured *Linaria* still spring up yearly in our garden at St. Imier, recalling that pleasant winter day! But tourists do not come to Avignon in January, and our handsome old-fashioned hotel, with its immense courtyard, and huge cavernous fireplaces, was bitterly cold, and my husband coughed half the night, reminding us that we should have been more careful not to linger during sundown that afternoon. Much alarmed at this relapse, I persuaded him to hasten our journey next day, travelling comfortably on to Bormes before sundown. By this time the influenza fiend had me also in his grip, and I was thankful to give way, and be imprisoned in the pleasant sunny modern Hotel des Pavillons at Bormes.

This delightful old town lies high above the little narrow-gauge railway that meanders along by the Mediterranean, starting from Hyères and rejoining the main line near Cannes. The winding road that leads in easy gradients from the station below, was shaded by magnificent mimosa trees, covered with feathery yellow blossoms. High above towered the white balconied front of the hotel, on its terrace and below was a wild picturesque garden of palms, aloes, and oranges, and irises in full flower. We came to

spend a month here, and we lingered in what proved to be a veritable artist's paradise for two months and a half.

The picturesque, irregular houses were red-roofed, the quaint narrow winding streets had ineffaceable ruts from ancient chariot-wheels, steps here and there, and arched passages; olive groves, and noble cork trees, with their stems denuded in portions for export; with all this, the magic of the south, and withal a wonderful friendliness and unmistakable good-will from the gentle Provençal inhabitants. It was very friendly and charming. We witnessed an extraordinarily well-acted and got-up play, carried out by the girls of the village in aid of some Catholic charity. The excellence of their acting, and composed self-possession of these quite young girls, was remarkable. At Bormes I wondered once again why we are all in such a hurry to wander south ere the sun has had time to warm the New Year for us? Too often a bitter wind made sketching a risky proceeding, some of our party were huddled in ulsters and rugs, and the pitying natives brought them warm boxes of charcoal to put under their feet. Sketching was not for me for many weeks to come, but I used to wander round the sunny places and find out pretty points of view for future delineation. There was a little studio at the top of the hotel where life classes were arranged in the evenings or on days when the most enthusiastic did not dare to sit out of doors, and our pleasant group of painters certainly did not waste their time.

The entire district was intersected by delightful little goat-tracks, where picturesquely clad goatherds wandered along, followed by browsing flocks of the rich chestnut and dark-brown Mediterranean goats. There was little level ground, and the flora of the district was as varied as its surface. Quite a different set of plants were here from those I had seen about Nice or Bordighera, quite different too from the wild things of Amalfi. I never saw so many aromatic plants, so many with thorny tips or tendrils; and, above all, so many with greyish green foliage.

Several packets of plants of course were sent home, but



*The "leading lady"
of the Children's Troupe at Bormes.*



A Well at Bormes

not even our high altitude and alpine soil, which content so many southern plants, could induce our exiles from Bormes to grow. We remembered Miss Jekyll's books, as we carefully packed the ubiquitous rock roses, but although they survived their tedious journey, and flowered that summer, the subsequent winter was more than they could tolerate, and next spring nothing but the labels remained.

It was at Bormes that we learned to appreciate pine-nut kernels! My husband, as usual, made friends in all directions, and the schoolboys, in their quaint black camlet overalls, used to rush out of school to watch him at his painting, and fill his pockets with the kernels, knocking the cones down from the umbrella pines above him, and husking them with expert rapidity.

Behind the mellow buff ruins of the inevitable castle that invariably crowns these southern heights, were stretches of almond trees, soon flushed with lovely pink. Down in the hollows, where streams meandered towards the rich alluvial lowlands, to lose themselves in the Mediterranean, were groves of the ever-poetical and mysterious-looking olives. Were ever stems as gnarled and tortured as those of the delicate and silvery-leaved olives? They seem made to be peopled by slender nymphs and shepherds on the flower-bespangled sward.

My husband and I used to wander on and on through this most lovely district, seeing picture after picture, and planning to return and paint them. We even looked at houses, dreaming of how charming it would be, could we find and furnish a couple of rooms, and come hither for the lovely Bormes springtides. As February wore away, and March passed, the climate was simply perfect, for this southern scrap of France is marvellously shielded by the Esterelles and other mountain ranges, and once spring commences its progress is surprising. Little wonder that further along the tiny railway is Le Dattier, the only district in France where date palms ripen their fruits.

During March my husband took a little walking tour to see the parts of the Riviera further east, where I had spent

such a pleasant time with friends three years before. His Amalfi acquaintance, Dr. Guède, was at Cagnes, and a Scotch artist friend, whom he wanted much to visit, was wintering at Antibes.

CANNES, *Tuesday, 21st March 1905.*

I have a great deal to tell you of my peregrinations of yesterday. I have so far seen nothing to compare to Bormes. It is all walled up, fenced in; and on the road by which I walked from Cannes to Antibes, I met hundreds of motor cars, that splashed and covered me with dust; this drove me to a side road up the hill, much longer, but far finer; and I arrived at Yule's in time for dinner. All my clothes are too hot, and for so far I do not see anything to lose my heart about. I arrived back at Cannes at midnight. I shall certainly take a long walk to-day. My kindest regards to Miss Tizard and Miss Galton; how are the Dêtrempists getting on?

CERCLE DES ESTRANGERS DE MONACO.

Here I am! I have made a good stand, and I have lost the 45 francs which I had laid out for the little gamble. After one whole hour and watching numerous players, and after having witnessed one young man clearing 32,000 francs in less than half-an-hour, I started. My first was on red and I lost, second the same and lost, again on red and No. 14 and lost. Result 20 francs gone; and then every stake I lost, not one single time did I win. That clears my luck that I boasted so much about.

I am leaving Monte Carlo in a few minutes for Menton, where I shall probably sleep to-night. I enjoyed my few hours here very much. It is very hot, very crowded, very unattractive to me. Very fine in its way, for those who need exciting times, &c., but, my dear Théophile, it is no good for two wise people like you and me.

Dr. Guède had yesterday his first day out of bed, but he has still a nurse; he was in a very good Hotel



*A Street in Bormes,
Provence.*



Twilight

Pension and seemed to be very comfortable. Michel has returned to Paris.

Our pleasant English party almost filled the Hôtel des Pavillons, many of Mr. Ertz's pupils were already trained artists, and the whole thing was a complete success.

Amongst the few French guests were a Monsieur Francis Auburtin and his wife, and several relatives of hers. M. Auburtin was a favourite pupil of Puvis de Chavannes, carrying on his traditions in grand decorative pictures and frescoes. When at Bormes he was working exclusively in "détrempe," a powerful water-colour medium, with much body and quite opaque, prepared in tubes like oil colours. M. Christen and M. Auburtin were soon inseparable companions, and the former adopted the détrempe medium, finding its solid opacity more satisfactory in preparatory studies for oil paintings than ordinary transparent water colours. The paper used being sold in wide rolls was most convenient when travelling. Madame Auburtin was a gifted musician, and she and some of the English artists helped to enrich the pleasures of our evenings with the charms of their art.

One of Mr. Ertz's pupils was a girl of some fifteen summers whose instinctive gift of harmonious dancing was marvellous. We spent many hours in fascinated admiration, as she invented steps and postures to harmonise with any piece of music played for her; it was indeed "the poetry of motion."

We lingered on into April, although Mr. Ertz and his class, excepting our sculptor friend, Miss Tizard, had departed homeward. It now began to be rather warm for comfort, and we three travelled together back to Paris. We visited Arles, and were delighted with its interesting Roman remains and fine amphitheatre; looking anxiously, but in vain, for the renowned beauty of the Arlesiennes! The journey up the Rhone valley was beautiful, the whole expanse of its orchards in full bloom, made my husband long to return some future year to paint the blossoming of the trees.

Visits to M. Auburtin and Miss Tizard in their respective

studios and to other old friends in Paris, another pause in London, then home by steamer to Aberdeen with all our paraphernalia; picking up the cat in Aberdeen and saluted by the dog at Ballater Station with wild transports of noisy joy; and we were once more delightedly ensconced in our darling home, comfortably deciding that nothing we had seen during our absence could excel the beauty of Scotland.

LOCH LOMOND

During the month of June Mr. Stewart had some architectural work on hand near Loch Lomond, which was a new district to my husband, who joined him there for a week. As my sister was staying with us, and Hans could therefore be spared from his duties as companion and guardian, he accompanied his master, with intense satisfaction and contentment on his part.

MILL BURN, LUSS, LOCH LOMOND,
Sunday, 10th June 1905.

MY DARLING WIFE,—Jock wanted a holiday. When I set my eye on him yesterday at Queen Street Station he looked almost like a man going into an illness. But he is better already. Strapped all round him were numerous baskets and bags, and he carried two fishing rods, one for me, and the other for him. We had just time to buy some bananas and biscuits, and take our last train to catch the steamer at Balloch.

In Aberdeen, I slept at Hector's, which you know means I was not in bed early. When I arrived at Crown Terrace at midnight from a game of billiards at Mr. Lorimer's, I found a few artists had gathered there to welcome me, among whom were the two Smiths; however, I slept beautifully. I had supper with Mr. and Mrs. Sim, then I had a long call at the Rosettis'. The picture¹ is creating a splendid effect among art lovers in Aberdeen.

¹ His copy of the Claude, which was in Aberdeen to be framed.



Glengarrn.



Now here comes the great adventure we had the first day. When we landed at Luss, Hans came and landed all right with Jock and me. In the confusion he missed me and returned on board, and I only discovered him when the steamer was moving off.

The poor beast ran up and down, and I was calling for him from the shore, and Jock holding me back. I wired to the captain on the second station landing, and Hans sailed by himself to the end of Loch Lomond, and came back by the next return steamer, to the great joy of his master.

He has been giving me no trouble at all. In Aberdeen he kept always at my heels, and had such a happy time; he said to me at night he thought Aberdeen was such a Paradise! he could smell such a lot of swells of dogs, and he talked to a number of dogs also.

We are in a lovely little cottage near the river, overlooking the loch; one room with two beds and a parlour, and I think we are going to keep this place all the time, and make excursions from it. Paterson is coming here on Wednesday for a day. We had such a lovely walk till nearly ten o'clock up a glen full of caterpillars; on my hat and coat I found I had about a hundred of those green things. Hans killed his first rabbit, a small animal, and I was very sorry, as I never yet had seen him catch one.

Now will you go to the dark room and take the kodak and a couple of unexposed spools and send them to me. Jock and Hans join in kind messages. Love to dear Evelyn.

12th June, evening.

I miss you already very much; it seems a long time since I left you; what are you at? I hope happy and not lonely, and enjoying your dear sister.

John is not so well as I would wish him to be, he has overworked himself, I think, again, and it will take him some days to recover. We have been to the other side of the lake in the steamer this afternoon, and a beautiful day it

was. I did two sketches ; Hans walked about with John. Yesterday afternoon we climbed a hill, and I think we overdid it a bit ; I did not sleep well, but to-night I feel sleepy.

What a charming surprise your letter was this morning ; I never expected it could possibly arrive so soon. This place is charming, and our landlord is an elder of the church ; he put us in a good pew yesterday, and we enjoyed a beautiful sermon in a very creditable artistic church.

The village here has only about thirty-five houses, at the foot of big hills ; we went to a slate quarry and had a tremendous walk up, it is really capital here for a lot of excursions. Hans is a treat and such a success ; he keeps well, and you were right, it would have been a pity to miss all this. But indeed I am also sorry you miss it, and some day we shall come here together. I feed Hans every night, and he is the friend of everybody. I washed him yesterday, he was so dirty, having been through Glasgow ! and in trains. Tell Evelyn I shall be back Monday, if not Saturday.

11 A.M., *Tuesday, 13th June.*

From an island opposite Luss where I was stranded and marooned, I am reading the loving letter from my dear wife while John is fishing in a boat with a native. Hans is gallivanting about this wooded island with joy and delight. All these surroundings remind one of Keswick, the blue hyacinths make a lovely carpet under wood, and everything is green. I must take you here some day.

This afternoon we are going by steamer to the end of the lake ; just at one o'clock we start, and we are to be back at 6.30 for dinner about seven. John has a lovely tea-bag, a new idea, and a splendid one, all complete, and it is very tidy to carry ; we had tea under the trees yesterday, and bread and butter. You see that way we are free and the whole day is ours. What a boon this fountain pen is, and how obliged I am to you, but you give me everything you have, my darling. Now I am going to sketch in

colour just here. Hans has had his tantrum and is peaceably at my feet.

Since the above we have been at the other end of Loch Lomond in the steamer, and a perfect day it was. We got this evening an invitation to dinner for Thursday night at the Manse here; the clergyman and his wife are just charming, they were on the boat with us. I made another sketch, and we went to see Rob Roy's cave, which is not a cave at all. My love to Ricky. I am writing to Auburtin to come when he thinks best; send me my address book, I intend to see some of the artists in Glasgow.

Thursday, 15th June.

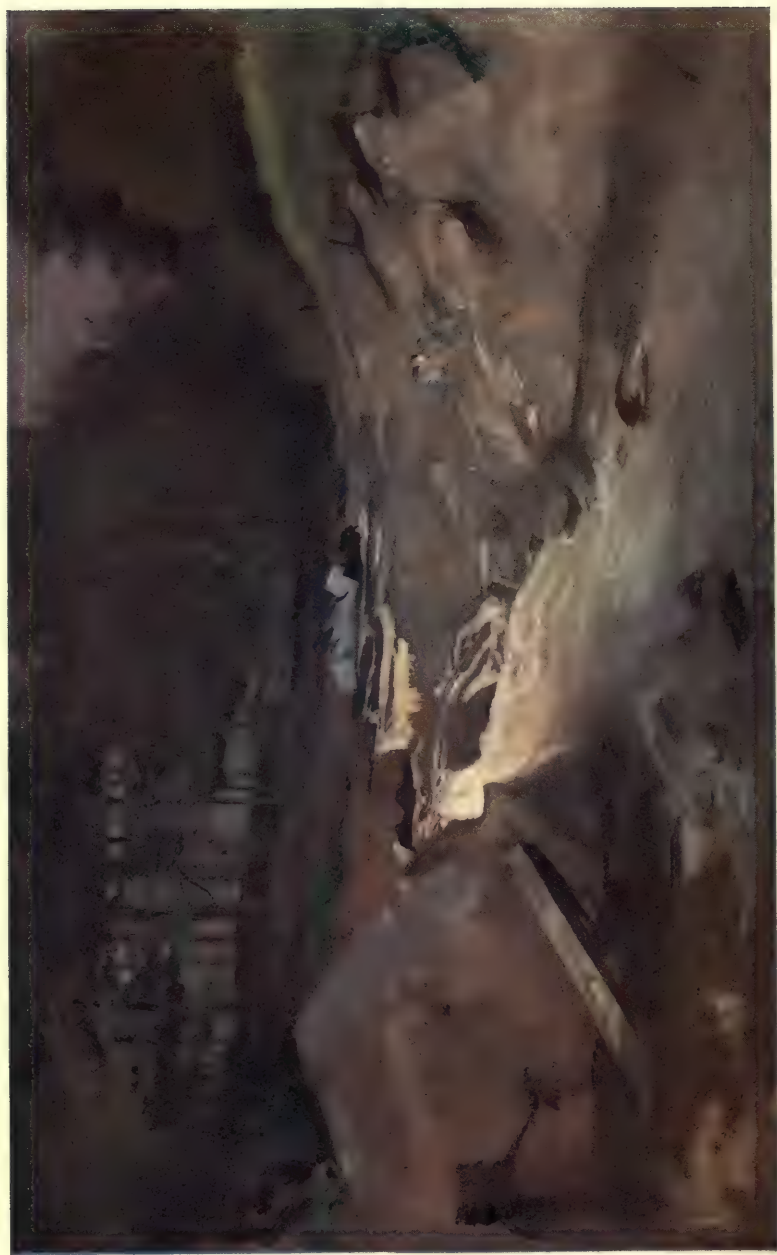
After Paterson left yesterday at five, John, Hans, and another with no hat nor waistcoat, nothing to carry but my stick, started the ascent of the biggest hill here. It was a perfect summer evening, with a promise of moonlight, and it fulfilled all its expectations and promises. Hills and hills away far in countless numbers. John was sure one of the hills was Lochnagar, Ben Nevis, Ben Macdhui, and a lot of others. I could see across where you were; then we sat down behind a peat moss and had a cigarette, with Hans at our feet. It is certainly one of the finest sights I ever saw. This morning I am pretty tired, and Hans looks as if he was going to take it easy.

Hurrah! at last they caught *one* fish, a small one indeed, but that is all. Your letter just come with the shirt and collars; just in time, as we are to dine with the clergyman and his wife at seven. He is a great scholar. We made acquaintance on board the steamer. He had noticed us in church looking so good and attentive; also had seen Hans tied to a tombstone in the churchyard. In fact, all round Loch Lomond they know about R. and his white collie dog. Every one has heard of their pranks; we had even a gamekeeper after us, but Hans melted his heart with his winning ways, so he has now a free pass everywhere. Your letter has just been brought in by John. I shall soon be with you, and I am nowhere

better than with my dear wife. I do not know all about our movements, but we have just decided to leave here early to-morrow before the people who have taken the house arrive, and we go by the Trossachs, I do not yet know where. But you may expect me on Saturday night or Sunday morning with Hans at my heels. Hans sends his love to you both.

That summer of 1905 was spent in steady hard work. Miss Tizard came to us first, then M. and Madame Auburtin for a month. M. Auburtin was astonished and delighted with the powerful colouring and grand cloud scenery of Scotland. I have seen him hurry round our house at sunset uncertain which of the many fine effects he should select to paint. He and M. Christen walked amazing distances, laden with heavy sketching materials, and somewhat regardless of their meals. Too often, when dinner and the evening should have brought repose, my husband—who was now a naturalised subject of King Edward—had to add to the day's fatigues by a walk into Ballater to attend a political or masonic meeting. I was glad when, towards the end of the year, he resolved that our continental trip should be a simple visit to Switzerland to re-visit old friends and old haunts, and show me what a Swiss winter really was.

We had a farewell New Year's gathering of Mr. Stewart, Mr. Hector, and another artist friend, Mr. Petrie, with his artist wife, ere we closed the house, and, depositing Hans and Ricky in careful keeping, started for our holiday, beginning by a visit to my sister in Ireland.



The murmuring Graven, near St. Imier.

CHAPTER XXII

SUNSET

1906

“NOT THOU, BUT I.”

“ It must have been for one of us, my own,
To drink this cup and eat this bitter bread.
Had not my tears upon thy face been shed,
Thy tears had dropped on mine; if I alone
Did not walk now, thy spirit would have known
My loneliness, and did my feet not tread
This weary path and steep, thy feet had bled
For mine, and thy mouth had for mine made moan;
And so it comforts me, yea, not in vain,
To think of thy eternity of sleep,
To know thine eyes are tearless though mine weep;
And when this cup's last bitterness I drain,
One thought shall still its primal sweetness keep—
Thou had the peace and I the undying pain.”

A BRIEF visit to Ireland, a week-end in London, and we were once more in Paris for the month of February, ensconced in comfortable rooms in Rue Vaneau. M. Christen wished to make a series of Parisian street sketches for an exhibition he purposed holding on our return, but he had caught cold in London and seemed unable to shake it off, as the weather in Paris was anything but favourable. During our first happy summer at Cambus o' May he had injured his tongue severely, by putting in mistake the burning end of a cigar into his mouth when absorbed in painting. Ere he had time to realise his error, he had given a pull at it, and burnt a painful hole, causing several weeks of suffering. During succeeding years much smoking sometimes irritated the scar, and tobacco was often laid aside completely for many weeks at a time.

Consulting a retired doctor of his acquaintance in Paris, we were reassured when his ill-health was attributed to the London chill, and an encouraging verdict that the cold would pass away with the change to his native air in Switzerland was pronounced. As February passed by the sore throat and pain increased instead of diminishing, and speaking becoming painful, we left rather earlier than we had intended for Neuchâtel, where we were most cordially welcomed by our kind friends at Epagnier, with whom we spent the month of March. The morning after our arrival my husband accompanied Monsieur Guillaume to Neuchâtel and consulted a doctor. A verdict of blood-poisoning was given; we were warned it must be tedious, very tedious, but was likely to yield to the remedies recommended; if not, others could be adopted. The doctor was leaving in a few days, and ere he went my husband asked was it anything malignant. The answer was, *absolument non*, and the terrible, unspoken dread that had lurked in his mind and mine was removed. Alas! a precious month was lost, my husband faithfully following the treatment under the substitute's instructions, enduring intense sufferings with characteristic courage, and persevering in the constant living as much in the open air as possible that was ordered. We wandered round the lake, we watched birds building nests, we even saw many friends in Neuchâtel, we revisited the beautiful picture gallery, the frescoes on whose staircase my husband admired so much; we gazed at Calame's lovely lake picture, and Robert's exquisite conception of "The Zephyrs," a line of graceful figures drifted through a glade; we wandered again together through the excellent museum. He was always brave and always patient. Many artist friends of M. Guillaume's called, and one of them sent afterwards the following lines, whose startled sympathy greatly touched my husband:—

ÉTRANGE PERSONNAGE.—O! Que dire, mais que dire, quand en face d'une gaie journée, je vis une grande figure sympathique marquée du sceau des maux atroces! Que

dire en lisant l'indifférence sur la physiognomie de la nature ! Que dire alors que mon cœur est tout prêt d'éclater sous cette impuissance en laquelle il git, de ne pouvoir rien contre votre maladie, rien contre l'enfer de flammes qui tourmente votre âme !

Ô ! si profonds yeux, quelle angoisse vous avez su me chanter ! Quelle tristesse vous remplit malgré les mots bizarrement rieurs que vous entendez.

Puisse une sympathie vous former quelque baume en vous, puisse l'idée de vous sentir souffert en un cœur étranger vous soulager un peu !

Vous souffrez comme un martyr ; nous jouissons comme des hommes en santé ! et quoi nous avance-t-il de jouir puisque tout est. . . .

Ô ! tristesse immuable, mon âme est triste de constater sa misérable impuissance !

Ô ! grande figure sympathique, permettez que je close ces courtes lignes par l'expression de mes vœux les plus chaleureux pour votre rétablissement de santé, et par l'expression de mes saluts profonds. CHAS. OLSOMMER.

Ah ! what infinite kindness and infinite sympathy were shown to us by M. and Madame Guillaume during the long weeks until the doctor returned from his change of air ; and, startled by my husband's condition, asked for an immediate consultation with a surgeon. Dr. de Coulon was called, and the dreaded blow fell. An operation as soon as possible was the only chance of life.

My husband remained in the Clinique du Cret (a private hospital on the edge of the lake, where Dr. de Coulon had his patients), and I went home alone to get his things and break the news to M. Guillaume. He took them in that evening, and brought back a report of my darling's great calmness and courage.

One of his oldest friends, Mademoiselle Justine Duvillard, had accompanied me to the Clinique to hear the verdict. Even in that supreme moment his thought was of others, and he begged her to take me under her roof,

that I might be close to him, as Epagnier was some miles distant. Her kind good heart responded at once, and I came to her next day, and had the unspeakable comfort of being within a few minutes' walk of my husband.

The officials there were very good to us. I was allowed to be with him all day long, and to help him to settle for the night, only going home for my meals. *What* a boon it was! Speaking had long been most difficult to him, and was now absolutely forbidden. During the few days that elapsed before the operation he was always so calm and cheerful, so interested in everything, and pretending to chaff me, or his admirable nurse, Sister Julia.

I always kept my tears for the hours of solitude. I prayed and trusted much, and hoped intensely.

The night before the operation, he wrote to me on his little book: "I trust in the Lord!" We parted in profound tenderness and perfect calmness, to wait for what the morrow might bring.

It brought immense comfort. But oh! what hours of torturing suspense until all was safely over, and I could see Dr. de Coulon and hear that a most severe and prolonged operation had been conducted to his complete satisfaction—that my beloved had recovered consciousness and was back in bed, having written on his tablets "Ma femme!" In a couple of hours I might return and see him.

All that afternoon and till late at night I was with him. Sister Julia asked me to hold his hand and see if the weary restlessness would pass, and I could soothe him to sleep. At last, thank God, he slept. I was allowed to remain after the place was closed at night. How kind every one was.

I was to come again the next afternoon, which was Sunday. I was there early in the morning to inquire, and heard that the night had passed favourably, and I went about the gardens by the lake, and to the little English church in the Palais Rougemont grounds with the perpetual inward refrain in my heart, "Thank God, thank God." I had so dreaded things on account of his weakened heart.

Our kind and most skilful surgeon told us that he never



had a better patient, nor one who was so obedient, so intelligently obedient to all directions; and the anæsthetist said even when almost unconscious he remembered what he had been told to do. His progress was amazingly rapid; all day long I was with him, encouraged to remain by kind Sister Julia, and he and I were in bliss. And oh! what joy when he was allowed to move out of the room, and pace a few steps along the pleasant airy corridor; a few more days and he and I were down in the garden of the Clinique, with Dr. de Coulon and the sister watching us from above. She told me that the doctor said "Voilà un brave homme."

I linger over those happy days in that beautiful fresh airy little hospital, we were *so* thankful and happy. And we came to know of two similar cases, one of which had been operated upon fifteen and the other eight years before, who had remained perfectly well ever since. And that was such a comfort. We could not be thankful enough.

Presently he could walk further, and even reached the English Gardens with their cages of birds and shady seats, and Mademoiselle Duvillard met us there. Of course he was not allowed to talk, but that did not matter; the next day was Sunday, he came in the tram alone and I met him, and we went to the fine old church near the castle, where in his youth he had worshipped for so many years. We sat together, and he held my hand in a firm calm grip.

When he was well enough to vacate his room at the Clinique, our kind hostess managed to make room for him also, and there we lived through many peaceful days, as he still had to visit Dr. de Coulon at regular intervals. We went out one day to our friends at Epagnier—how different *now*—with everything irradiated with renewed joy and hope! He was even able to undertake a day's journey to St. Imier and Chaux-de-Fonds to try his powers before attempting the journey home. Another day, in company with Mademoiselle Duvillard, we wandered past Madame de Pierre's house, pausing at her beautiful garden on the top of the cliff ere passing on to the sunny little cemetery where his brother Emile sleeps. We descended into a ravine, past

the great buildings whence Suchard sends his chocolates out all over the world, and we sampled his productions at the café ere returning by the steam tramway that now runs along below Madame de Pierre's cliffs. And many beautiful hours were spent on the heights above the town, to which we mounted by the funicular railway. There, amongst trees and bewildering wild flowers, we basked in the beauty of the view—over the irregular town below and the mirrored lake, and beyond and above, as if clouds themselves, the noble white peaks of the Oberland. And he suggested that if his health should be much broken, or anything else made us want to economise, we could let our dear house and come to live in kindly Neuchâtel.

On the afternoon of our last Sunday there he organised a little trip with our hostess, her niece and nephews (one of whom was his godson) to the gorges of the Reuse, the rapid torrent that drains the Val de Travers. Church and dinner over, it was discovered that but scanty time remained to catch the train, and Mademoiselle declared it was impossible for her to be ready. Suddenly the invalid arose and asserted himself, and, sweeping aside all objections, said that *go she must*—and go she did.

It was lovely as the train went slowly up the Pontarlier line, and we looked into the depths of the Val de Travers or backwards at the lake. Presently we alighted at Les Moulins and descended to the windings of the river, collecting quantities of plants as we went, most of which still flourish contentedly in our garden. It was a good long walk, occupying the entire afternoon. The valley narrowed, and presently the path ran so close to the turbulent and boiling water that its rushing made me dizzy. My husband made me take his arm, and kept me carefully at the inside as the well-kept track wound up and up, the boiling torrent raging at such a depth beneath us that when, to please him, I ventured one glance into those furious depths, I found I was looking down on the tops of lofty trees growing out of the rocky sides that hemmed in the river. The path was perfectly safe, and thoroughly fenced by a couple of

stout iron rails, but one *could* easily have slipped below them. Once more the awful, uncontrollable sensation of being dragged down seized me as we turned a lofty angle of the rock, and clinging tightly to his protecting arm I closed my eyes and dragged him back to lean against the mossy height, as if to resist those insidious beckonings from the seething cauldron below. Thanks to my husband's tender tact and patience I soon shook off the vertigo, and realised that the curious, sobbing, indrawn breaths of desperate terror that I had been listening to *were my own*, that nothing had happened or was going to happen. Soon afterwards we turned our backs on those wonderful but terrific gorges, and descended rapidly to a level spot where some trunks of trees allowed us all to rest, and gave me the opportunity of recovering from the extreme exhaustion of those short emotional moments.

The doctor now permitted our departure. M. Christen was longing for home and the bracing northern air, and we started before the middle of May, pausing for a night in Dijon, resting a day or two in Paris, and again with our kind friends at Wimbledon to prepare him for the tedious twelve hours' railway journey back to Aberdeen.

Again next day the cat and dog met us, and again with intense delight we found ourselves in home, sweet home. But we had left summer heat in Switzerland; we arrived on the 16th of May to find untimely sleet and snow and bitter winds, and he unfortunately caught cold with the sudden transition.

Alas! we were not three weeks home before he was ill again, and ere the anniversary of our wedding day we knew that his most terrible malady had broken out again.

After months of dumb heroic patience, of uncomplaining endurance, of obedient, unceasing use of every remedy, no matter how painful, every effort made to live for my sake (not for his own, for he only longed for rest), he entered into peace on the 7th of September.

We laid him to rest as he would have wished it. No hearse, nothing of all that he disliked was there. On a sunny autumn morning, such as he loved, he passed for the last time from our home, borne by hands that knew and loved him, and we laid him in a grave lined with his favourite heather and heaped with flowers, tokens of the love that sent them. The minister read, at my request, that immortal chapter on the Love that transcends even Faith and Hope, the chapter that he always liked me to read to him on Sundays when we could not get to church.

He was the first to be buried inside the ruined walls of that little church, where so many generations must have prayed and praised. I liked the thought of that specially hallowed ground for my darling's last earthly home. And all his favourite flowers bloom over him there—rich roses and the earliest snowdrops, and some gentians that come from far St. Imier, for why should we only give white things to our dead? Let us give them what they loved the best. We know they are not *there*, but what of that? It is where we bid them that long farewell on earth, and let no one chide the natural desire to hover round it. Nay, rather, *there* we feel more than in any other place, "He is not dead, he sleepeth."

Every Sunday as I pass home from church, I go round and enter that simple little gate; and Hans, who knows as well as I do, that on Sundays we always take that lower path, pushes on in front and settles down to wait, whilst I spend some silent loving moments in thinking of the happy past, when "my sunshine" still lighted up this world; and look forward with sure and certain hope to the future, when I shall go to him in that land where there is no more death, neither sorrow nor crying. . . .

Let those who love and suffer, judge for themselves how they can best endure. The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and no one should urge any special course of action, nor hurry those on whom God has laid affliction, to shake off in haste that burden. To me, our home, our district, our peaceful little graveyard are so saturated with memories of

happy, happy days, that no place else on earth can ever be as dear. Yet others cannot understand how one can endure to be there all alone. It suits me best. *His* spirit is everywhere; and time, soothing the first blinding misery of bereavement, gradually heals, bringing the sense of communion with him more and more into everything in life.

And may I say to those who lovingly try to help any thus bereft of what made life a paradise: "Do not insist on rousing, or 'changing the thoughts' that *must* be full of nothing but the vanished face! All your well-meant efforts are only an extra strain on nerves already overtaxed. *Let mind, and heart, and body rest, and adapt yourselves to their moods.*"

Because when that happy "we" is turned into the sad inexorable "I," there is nothing for it but to bow our heads in humble submission, and let the waves of anguished desolation sweep over us. And even God Himself seems very far away, when every stunned faculty seems absorbed in the hunger for the loved one's touch and voice. Yet one may mourn to the very depths without murmuring; and there is always *something* left to be thankful for; and I found it in that sentence in Revelation "and there shall be no more pain!" And I thanked God for *that*.

And I always felt so certain that the loving Father, who blessed our lives with that glory of undying love, triumphant, immortal, that links us with the Paradise beyond, can never be impatient with the grief that is as great as His gift to us was also great.

Our Saviour had wept over Lazarus, ere He restored him to his sisters.

"Grief, nor pain, nor any sorrow
Rends our hearts to Him unknown,
He to-day, and He to-morrow
Grace sufficient gives His own."

And gradually, as time goes on, we begin to take courage by thinking what *he* would wish us to do. And I know his answer would have been "Think of others, and find help in work; *be cheerful to-day.*"

How we long to pierce the veil? Is there anything that helps us as much as all that is summed up in that short sentence in the Burial Service, saying our dead have "entered into joy and felicity"? Let us also listen to St. Paul: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him."

If this world is so exquisitely beautiful as my darling's artist soul perceived it, what must not that other world of "joy and felicity" be? If he loved our own earthly home so intensely, how great must be the bliss of that Eternal Home where God, who is Love, reigns for ever?

His body sleeps beside the rushing Gairn, still making its eternal murmuring for him, and the sunlight shines on the inscription on the great block of mossy lichened granite—

"In loving memory of Rodolphe Christen, artist, son of Melchior Christen. Born at St. Imier, Canton Berne, Switzerland, on the 26th of April 1859. Died at St. Imier, Brig o' Gairn, Ballater, on the 7th of September 1906.

'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

His memory is ever with me, and the passing years merely deepen the sense of communion with him as a living spirit. Hand in hand we went down to the brink of the river; alone he crossed it, and I returned alone. But I feel humbly certain, when my summons also comes, and I also cross it alone, that the Father who gave us to one another, will send him to meet me on the other side, to lead me to the great White Throne.

"And so shall we ever be with the Lord" (2 Thess. iv. 17).

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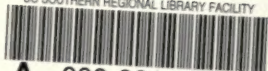
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