PENELOPE'S POSTSCRIPTS



KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN

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Penelope's Postscripts

BY

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN

AUTHOR OF

"PENELOPE'S EXPERIENCES: ENGLAND, IRELAND,"

"TIMOTHY'S QUEST," "REBECCA OF SUNNYBROOK FARM," ETC.

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I
PENELOPE IN SWITZERLAND

A DAY IN PESTALOZZI-TOWN

SALEMINA and I were in Geneva. If you had ever travelled through Europe with a charming spinster who never sat down at a Continental *table d'hôte* without being asked by an American *vis-à-vis* whether she were one of the P.'s of Salem, Massachusetts, you would understand why I call my friend Salemina. She doesn't mind it. She knows that I am simply jealous because I came from a vulgarly large tribe that never had any coat-of-arms, and whose ancestors always sealed their letters with their thumb nails.

Whenever Francesca and I call her "Salemina," she knows, and we know that she knows, that we are seeing a group of noble ancestors in a sort of halo over her serene and dignified head, so she remains unruffled under her *petit nom*, inasmuch as the casual public comprehends nothing of its spurious origin and thinks it was given her by her sponsors in baptism.

Francesca, Salemina, and I have very different backgrounds. The first-named is an extremely pretty person of large income who is travelling with us simply because her relatives think that she will "see Europe" more advantageously under our chaperonage than if she were accompanied by persons of her own age or "set."

Salemina is a philanthropist and educator of the first rank, and is collecting all sorts of valuable material to put at the service of her own country when she returns to it, which will not be a moment before her letter of credit is exhausted.

I, too, am quasi-educational, for I had a few years of experience in mothering and teaching little waifs and strays of the streets before I began to paint pictures. Never shall I regret those nerve-racking, back-breaking, heart-warming, weary, and beautiful years, when, all unconsciously, I was learning to paint children by living with them. Even now the spell still works and it is the curly head, the "shining morning face," the ready tear, the glancing smile of childhood that enchains me and gives my brush whatever skill it possesses.

We had not been especially high-minded or educational in Switzerland, Salemina and I. The worm will turn; and there is a point where the improvement of one's mind seems a farce, and the service of humanity, for the moment, a duty only born of a diseased imagination.

How can one sit on a vine-embowered balcony facing lovely Lake Geneva and think about modern problems,—Improved Tenements, Child Labour, Single Tax, Sweat Shops, and the Right Training of the Rising Civilization? Blue Lake Geneva!—blue as a woman's eye, blue as the vault of heaven, dropped into the lap of the green earth like a great sparkling sapphire! Mont Blanc you know to be just behind the clouds on the other side, and that presently, after hours or days of patient waiting, he may condescend to unveil himself to your worshipful gaze.

"He is wise in his dignity and reserve," mused Salemina as we sat on the veranda. "He is all the more sublime because he withdraws himself from time to time. In fact, if he didn't see fit to cover himself occasionally, one could neither eat nor sleep, nor do anything but adore and magnify."

The day before this interview we had sailed to the end of the sapphire lake and visited the "snow-white battlements" of the Castle of Chillon; seen its "seven pillars of Gothic mould," and its dungeons deep and old, where poor Bonnivard, Byron's famous "Prisoner of Chillon," lay captive for so many years, and where Rousseau fixes the catastrophe of his Héloïse.

We had just been to Coppet too; Coppet where the Neckers lived and Madame de Staël was born and lived during many years of her life. We had wandered through the shaded walks of the magnificent château garden, and strolled along the terrace where the eloquent Corinne had walked with the Schlegels and other famous *habitués* of her salon. We had visited Calvin's house at 11 Rue des Chanoines, Rousseau's at No. 40 on the Grande Rue, and Voltaire's at Ferney.

And so we had been living the past, Salemina and I. But

> "Early one morning,
> Just as the day was dawning."

my slumbering conscience rose in Puritan strength and asserted its rights to a hearing.

"Salemina," said I, as I walked into her room, "this life that we are leading will not do for me any longer. I have been too much immersed in ruins. Last night in writing to a friend in New York I uttered the most disloyal and incendiary statements. I said that I would rather die than live without ruins of some kind; that America was so new, and crude, and spick and span, that it was obnoxious to any æsthetic soul; that our tendency to erect hideous public buildings and then keep them in repair afterwards would make us the butt of ridicule among future generations. I even proposed the founding of an American Ruin Company, Limited,—in which the stockholders should purchase favourably situated bits of land and erect picturesque ruins thereon. To be sure, I said, these ruins wouldn't have any associations at first, but what of that? We have plenty of poets and romancers; we could manufacture suitable associations and fit them to the premises. At first, it is true, they might not fire the imagination; but after a few hundred years, in being crooned by mother to infant and handed down by father to son, they would mellow with age, as all legends do, and they would

end by being hallowed by rising generations. I do not say they would be absolutely satisfactory from every standpoint, but I do say that they would be better than nothing.

"However," I continued, "all this was last night, and I have had a change of heart this morning. Just on the borderland between sleeping and waking, I had a vision. I remembered that to-day would be Monday the 1st of September; that all over our beloved land schools would be opening and that your sister pedagogues would be doing your work for you in your absence. Also I remembered that I am the dishonourable but Honorary President of a Froebel Society of four hundred members, that it meets to-morrow, and that I can't afford to send them a cable."

"It is all true," said Salemina. "It might have been said more briefly, but it is quite true."

"Now, my dear, I am only a painter with an occasional excursion into educational fields, but you ought to be gathering stories of knowledge to lay at the feet of the masculine members of your School Board."

"I ought, indeed!" sighed Salemina.

"Then let us begin!" I urged. "I want to be good to-day and you must be good with me. I never can be good alone and neither can you, and you know it. We will give up the lovely drive in the diligence; the luncheon at the French restaurant and those heavenly little Swiss cakes" (here Salemina was almost unmanned); "the concert on the great organ and all the other frivolous things we had intended; and we will make an educational pilgrimage to Yverdon. You may not remember, my dear,"—this was said severely because I saw that she meditated rebellion and was going to refuse any programme which didn't include the Swiss cakes,—"you may not remember that Jean Henri Pestalozzi lived and taught in Yverdon. Your soul is so steeped in illusions; so submerged in the Lethean waters of the past; so emasculated by thrilling legends, paltry titles, and ruined castles, that you forget that Pestalozzi was the father of popular education and the sometime teacher of Froebel, our

patron saint. When you return to your adored Boston, your faithful constituents in that and other suburbs of Salem, Massachusetts, will not ask you if you have seen the Castle of Chillon and the terrace of Corinne, but whether you went to Yverdon."

Salemina gave one last fond look at the lake and picked up her Baedeker. She searched languidly in the Y's and presently read in a monotonous, guide-book voice. "Um—um—um—yes, here it is, 'Yverdon is sixty-one miles from Geneva, three hours forty minutes, on the way to Neuchâtel and Bâle.' (Neuchâtel is the cheese place; I'd rather go there and we could take a bag of those Swiss cakes.) 'It is on the southern bank of Lake Neuchâtel at the influx of the Orbe or Thiele. It occupies the site of the Roman town of Ebrodunum. The castle dates from the twelfth century and was occupied by Pestalozzi as a college.'"

This was at eight, and at nine, leaving Francesca in bed, we were in the station at Geneva. Finding that we had time to spare, we went across the street and bargained for an *in-transit* luncheon with one of those dull native shopkeepers who has no idea of American-French.

Your American-French, by the way, succeeds well enough so long as you practise, in the seclusion of your apartment, certain assorted sentences which the phrase-book tells you are likely to be needed. But so far as my experience goes, it is always the unexpected that happens, and one is eternally falling into difficulties never encountered by any previous traveller.

For instance, after purchasing a cold chicken, some French bread, and a bit of cheese, we added two bottles of lemonade. We managed to ask for a glass, from which to drink it, but the man named two francs as the price. This was more than Salemina could bear. Her spirit was never dismayed at any extravagance, but it reared its crested head in the presence of extortion. She waxed wroth. The man stood his ground. After much crimination and recrimination I threw myself into the breach.

“Salemina,” said I, “I wish to remark, first: That we have three minutes to catch the train. Second: That, occupying the position we do in America,—you the member of a School Board and I the Honorary President of a Froebel Society,—we cannot be seen drinking lemonade from a bottle, in a public railway carriage; it would be too convivial. Third: You do not understand this gentleman. You have studied the language longer than I, but I have studied it more lately than you, and I am fresher, much fresher than you.” (Here Salemina bridled obviously.) “The man is not saying that two francs is the price of the glass. He says that we can pay him two francs now, and if we will return the glass to-night when we come home he will give us back one franc fifty centimes. That is fifty centimes for the rent of the glass, as I understand it.”

Salemina’s right hand, with the glass in it, dropped nervelessly at her side. “If he uttered one single syllable of all that rigmarole, then Ollendorf is a myth, that’s all I have to say.”

“The gift of tongues is not vouchsafed to all,” I responded with dignity. “I happen to possess a talent for languages, and I apprehend when I do not comprehend.”

Salemina was crushed by the weight of my self-respect, and we took the tumbler, and the train.

It was a cloudless day and a beautiful journey, along the side of the sapphire lake for miles, and always in full view of the glorious mountains. We arrived at Yverdon about noon, and had eaten our luncheon on the train, so that we should have a long, unbroken afternoon. We left our books and heavy wraps in the station with the porter, with whom we had another slight misunderstanding as to general intentions and terms; then we started, Salemina carrying the lemonade glass in her hand, with her guide-book, her red parasol, and her Astrakhan cape. The tumbler was a good deal of trouble, but her heart was set on returning it safely to the Geneva pirate; not so much to reclaim the one franc fifty centimes as to decide conclusively whether he had ever proposed such restitution. I knew her mental processes, so I

refused to carry any of her properties; besides, the pirate had used a good many irregular verbs in his conversation, and upon due reflection I was a trifle nervous about the true nature of the bargain.

The Yverdon station fronted on a great open common dotted with a few trees. There were a good many mothers and children sitting on the benches, and a number of young lads playing ball. The town itself is one of the quaintest, quietest, and sleepiest in Switzerland. From 1803 to 1810 it was a place of pilgrimage for philanthropists from all parts of Europe; for at that time Pestalozzi was at the zenith of his fame, having under him one hundred and sixty-five pupils from Europe and America, and thirty-two adult teachers, who were learning his method.

But Yverdon has lost its former greatness now! Scarcely any English travellers go there and still fewer Americans. We fancied that there was nothing extraordinary in our appearance; nevertheless a small crowd of children followed at our heels, and the shopkeepers stood at their open doors and regarded us with intense interest.

"No English spoken here, that is evident," said Salemina ruefully; "but you have such a gift for languages you can take the command to-day and make the blunders and bear the jeers of the public. You must find out where the new Pestalozzi Monument is,—where the Château is,—where the schools are, and whether visitors are admitted,—whether there is a respectable hotel where we can get dinner,—whether we can get back to Geneva to-night, whether it's a fast or a slow train, and what time it gets there,—whether the methods of Pestalozzi are still maintained,—whether they know anything about Froebel,—whether they know what a kindergarten is, and whether they have one in the village. Some of these questions will be quite difficult even for you."

Well, the monument was not difficult to find, at all events. We accosted two or three small boys and demanded boldly of one of them, "*Où est le monument de Pestalozzi, s'il vous plaît*?"

He shrugged his shoulders like an American small boy and said vacantly, "*Je ne sais pas*."

"Of course he does know," said Salemina; "he means to be disagreeable; or else 'monument' isn't monument."

"Well," I answered, "there is a monument in the distance, and there cannot be two in this village."

Sure enough it was the very one we sought. It stands in a little open place quite "in the business heart of the city,"—as we should say in America, and is an exceedingly fine and impressive bit of sculpture. The group of three figures is in bronze and was done by M. Gruet of Paris.

The modelling is strong, the expression of Pestalozzi benign and sweet, and the trusting upturned faces of the children equally genuine and attractive.

One side of the pedestal bears the inscription:—

À
Pestalozzi
1746–1827
Monument érigé
par souscription populaire
MDCCCXC

On a second side these words are carved in the stone:—

Sauveur des Pauvres à Neuhof
Père des Orphelins à Stanz
Fondateur de l'école
populaire à Burgdorf
Éducateur de l'humanité
à Yverdon
Tout pour les autres, pour lui,—rien!

An older monument erected in 1846 by the Canton of Argovia bears this same inscription, save that it adds, “Preacher to the people in ‘Leonard and Gertrude.’ Man. Christian. Citizen. Blessed be his name!”

On the third side of the Yverdon Monument is Pestalozzi’s noble speech, fine enough indeed, to be cut in stone:—

“*J’ai vécu moi-même*
comme un mendiant,
pour apprendre à des
mendiants à vivre comme
des hommes.”

We sat a long time on the great marble pedestal, gazing into the benevolent face, and reviewing the simple, self-sacrificing life of the great educator, and then started on a tour of inspection. After wandering through most of the shops, buying photographs and mementoes, Salemina discovered that she had left the expensive tumbler in one of them. After a long discussion as to whether tumbler was masculine or feminine, and as to whether “*Ai-je laissé un verre ici*?” or “*Est-ce que j’ai laissé un verre ici*?” was the proper query, we retraced our steps, Salemina asking in one shop, “*Excusez-moi*, *je vous prie*, *mais ai-je laissé un verre ici*?”,—and I in the next, “*Je demands pardon*, *Madame*, *est-ce que j’ai laissé un verre dans ce magasin-ci*?—*J’en ai perdu un*, somewhere.” Finally we found it, and in response not to mine but to Salemina’s question, so that she was superior and obnoxious for several minutes.

Our next point of interest was the old castle, which is still a public school. Finding the caretaker, we visited first the museum and library—a small collection of curiosities, books, and mementoes, various portraits of Pestalozzi and his wife, manuscripts and so forth. The simple-hearted woman who did the honours was quite overcome by our knowledge of

and interest in her pedagogical hero, but she did not return the compliment. I asked her if the townspeople knew about Friedrich Froebel, but she looked blank.

"Froebel? Froebel?" she asked; "*qui est-ce*?"

"*Mais*, *Madame*," I said eloquently, "*c'était un grand homme*! *Un héros*! *Le plus grand élève de Pestalozzi*! *Aussi grand que Pestalozzi soi-même*!"

("PLUS grand! Why don't you say *plus grand*?" murmured Salemina loyally.)

"*Je ne sais*!" she returned, with an indifferent shrug of the shoulders. "*Je ne sais*! *Il y a des autres*, *je crois*; *mais moi*, *je connais Pestalozzi*, *c'est assez*!"

All the younger children had gone home, but she took us through the empty schoolrooms, which were anything but attractive. We found an unhappy small boy locked in one of them. I slipped behind the concierge to chat with him, for he was so exactly like all other small boys in disgrace that he made me homesick.

"*Tu étais méchant*, *n'est ce-pas*?" I whispered consolingly; "*mais tu seras sage demain*, *j'en suis sûre*!"

I thought this very pretty, but he wriggled from under my benevolent hand, saying "*Va*!" (which I took to be, "Go 'long, you!") "*je n'étais méchant aujourd'hui et je ne serai pas sage demain*!"

I asked the concierge if the general methods of Pestalozzi were still used in the schools of Yverdon, "*Mais certainement*!" she replied as we went into a room where twenty to thirty girls of ten years were studying. There were three pleasant windows looking out into the street; the ordinary platform and ordinary teacher's table, with the ordinary teacher (in an extraordinary state of coma) behind it; and rather rude desks and seats for the children, but not a single ornament, picture, map, or case of objects and specimens around the room. The children

were nice, clean, pleasant, stolid little things with braided hair and pinafores. The sole decoration of the apartment was a highly-coloured chart that we had noticed on the walls of all the other schoolrooms. Feeling that this must be a sacred relic, and that it probably illustrated some of the Pestalozzian foundation principles, I walked up to it reverently,

"*Qu'est-ce-que c'est cela, Madame*?" I inquired, rather puzzled by its appearance.

"*C'est la méthode de Pestalozzi*," the teacher replied absently.

I wished that we kindergarten people could get Froebel's educational idea in such a snug, portable shape, and drew nearer to gaze at it. I can give you a very complete description of the pictures from memory, as I copied the titles *verbatim et literatim*. The whole chart was a powerful moral object-lesson on the dangers of incendiarism and the evils of reckless disobedience. It was printed appropriately in the most lurid colours, and divided into nine tableaux.

These were named as follows:—

I—La Vraie Gaîté

Twelve or fifteen boys and girls are playing together so happily and innocently that their good angels sing for joy.

II—Une Proposition Fatale!

Suddenly "*le petit* Charles" says to his comrades, "Come! let us build a fire!" *Le petit* Charles is a typical infant villain and is surrounded at once by other incendiary spirits all in accord with his insidious plans.

III—La Protestation

The Good Little Marie, a Sunday-school heroine of the true type, approaches the group and, gazing heavenward, remarks that it is wicked to play with matches. The G. L. M. is of saintly presence,—so clean and well groomed that you feel inclined to push her into a puddle. Her hands are not full of vulgar toys and sweetmeats, like those of the other children, but are extended graciously as if she were in the habit of pronouncing benedictions.

IV—Insouciance!

Le petit Charles puts his evil little paw in his dangerous pockets and draws out a wicked lucifer match, saying with abominable indifference, "Bah! what do we care? We're going to build a fire, whatever you say. Come on, boys!"

V—Un Plaisir Dangereux!

The boys "come on." Led by "*le petit vilain* Charles" they light a dangerous little fire in a dangerous little spot. Their faces shine with unbridled glee. The G. L. M. retires to a distance with a few saintly followers, meditating whether she shall run and tell her mother. "*Le petit* Paul," an infant of three summers, draws near the fire, attracted by the cheerful blaze.

VI—Malheur et Inexpérience

Le petit Paul somehow or other tumbles into the fire. Nothing but a desire to influence posterity as an awful example could have induced him to take this unnecessary step, but having walked in he stays in, like an infant John Rogers. The bad boys are so horror-stricken it does not occur to them to pull him out, and the G. L. M. is weeping over the sin of the world.

VII—Trop Tard!!

The male parent of *le petit* Paul is seen rushing down an adjacent Alp. He leads a flock of frightened villagers who have seen the smoke and heard the wails of their offspring. As the last shred of *le petit* Paul has vanished in said smoke, the observer notes that the poor father is indeed "too late."

VIII—Desespoir!!

The despair of all concerned would draw tears from the dryest eye. Only one person wears a serene expression, and that is the G. L. M., who is evidently thinking: "Perhaps they will listen to me the next time."

IX—La Fin!

The charred remains of *le petit* Paul are being carried to the cemetery. The G. L. M. heads the procession in a white veil. In a prominent place among the mourners is "*le pauvre petit* Charles," so bowed with grief and remorse that he can scarcely be recognized.

It was a telling sermon! If I had been a child I should never have looked at a match again; and old as I was, I could not, for days afterwards, regard a box of them without a shudder. I thought that probably Yverdon had been visited in the olden time by a series of disastrous holocausts, all set by small boys, and that this was the powerful antidote presented; so I asked the teacher whether incendiarism was a popular failing in that vicinity and whether the chart was one of a series inculcating various moral lessons. I don't know whether she understood me or not, but she said no, it was "*la méthode de Pestalozzi*."

Just at this juncture she left the room, apparently to give the pupils a brief study-period, and simultaneously the concierge was called downstairs by a crying baby. A bright idea occurred to me and I went hurriedly into the corridor where my friend was taking notes.

“Salemina,” said I, “here is an opportunity of a lifetime! We ought to address these children in their native tongue. It will be something to talk about in educational pow-wows. They do not know that we are distinguished visitors, but we know it. A female member of a School Board and the Honorary President of a Froebel Society owe a duty to their constituents. You go in and tell them who and what I am and make a speech in French. Then I’ll tell them who and what you are and make another speech.”

Salemina assumed a modest violet attitude, declined the honour absolutely, and intimated that there were persons who would prefer talking in a language they didn’t know rather than to remain sensibly silent.

However the plan struck me as being so fascinating that I went back alone, looked all ways to see if any one were coming, mounted the platform, cleared my throat, and addressed the awe-struck youngsters in the following words. I will spare you the French, but you will perceive by the construction of the sentences, that I uttered only those sentiments possible in an early stage of language-study.

“My dear children,” I began, “I live many thousand miles across the ocean in America. You do not know me and I do not know you, but I do know all about your good Pestalozzi and I love him.”

“*Il est mort*!” interpolated one offensive little girl in the front row.

Salemina tittered audibly in the corridor, and I crossed the room and closed the door. I think the children expected me to put the key in my pocket and then murder them and stuff them into the stove.

“I know perfectly well that he is dead, my child,” I replied winningly,—“it is his life, his memory that I love.—And once upon a time, long ago, a great man named Friedrich Froebel came here to Yverdon and studied with your great Pestalozzi. It was he who made kindergartens for little children, *jardins des enfants*, you know. Some of your grand-mothers remember Froebel, I think?”

Hereupon two of the smaller chits shouted some sort of a negation which I did not in the least comprehend, but which from large American experience I took to be, “My grandmother doesn’t!” “My grandmother doesn’t!”

Seeing that the others regarded me favourably, I continued, “It is because I love Pestalozzi and Froebel, that I came here to day to see your beautiful new monument. I have just bought a photograph taken on that day last year when it was first uncovered. It shows the flags and the decorations, the flowers and garlands, and ever so many children standing in the sunshine, dressed in white and singing hymns of praise. You are all in the picture, I am sure!”

This was a happy stroke. The children crowded about me and showed me where they were standing in the photograph, what they wore on the august occasion, how the bright sun made them squint, how a certain *malheureuse* Henriette couldn’t go to the festival because she was ill.

I could understand very little of their magpie chatter, but it was a proud moment. Alone, unaided, a stranger in a strange land, I had gained the attention of children while speaking in a foreign tongue. Oh, if I had only left the door open that Salemina might have witnessed this triumph! But hearing steps in the distance, I said hastily, “*Asseyez-vous*, *mes enfants*, *tout-de-suite*!” My tone was so authoritative that they obeyed instantly, and when the teacher entered it was as calm as the millennium.

We rambled through the village for another hour, dined at a quaint little inn, gave a last look at the monument, and left for Geneva at seven o’clock in the pleasant September twilight. Arriving a trifle after ten, somewhat weary in body and slightly anxious in mind, I followed Salemina into the tiny cake-shop across the street from the station. She returned the tumbler, and the man, who seemed to consider it an unexpected courtesy, thanked us volubly. I held out my hand and reminded him timidly of the one franc fifty centimes.

He inquired what I meant. I explained. He laughed scornfully. I remonstrated. He asked me if I thought him an imbecile. I answered no, and wished that I knew the French for several other terms nearer the truth, but equally offensive. Then we retired, having done our part, as good Americans, to swell the French revenues, and that was the end of our day in Pestalozzi-town; not the end, however, of the lemonade glass episode, which was always a favourite story in Salemina's repertory.

II
PENELOPE IN VENICE

> This noble citie doth in a manner chalenge this at my hands, that I should describe her also as well as the other cities I saw in my journey, partly because she gave me most louing and kinde entertainment for the sweetest time (I must needes confesse) that euer I spent in my life; and partly for that she ministered vnto me more variety of remarkable and delicious objects than mine eyes euer suruayed in any citie before, or euer shall . . . the fairest Lady, yet the richest Paragon and Queene of Christendome.
>
> *Coryat's Crudities*: 1611

I

Venice, *May* 12
Hotel Paolo Anafesto.

I have always wished that I might have discovered Venice for myself. In the midst of our mad acquisition and frenzied dissemination of knowledge, these latter days, we miss how many fresh and exquisite sensations! Had I a daughter, I should like to inform her mind on every other possible point and keep her in absolute ignorance of Venice. Well do I realize that it would be impracticable, although no more so, after all, than Rousseau's plan of educating Émile, which certainly obtained a wide hearing and considerable support in its time. No, tempting as it would be, it would be difficult to carry out such a theory in these days of

logic and common sense, and in some moment of weakness I might possibly succumb and tell her all about it, for fear that some stranger, whom she might meet at a ball, would have the pleasure of doing it first.

The next best woman-person in the world with whom to see Venice, barring the lovely non-existent daughter, is Salemina.

It is our first visit, but, alas! we are, nevertheless, much better informed than I could wish. Salemina's mind is particularly well furnished, but, luckily she cannot always remember the point wished for at the precise moment of need; so that, taking her all in all, she is nearly as agreeable as if she were ignorant. Her knowledge never bulks heavily and insistently in the foreground or middle-distance, like that of Miss Celia Van Tyck, but remains as it should, in the haze of a melting and delicious perspective. She has plenty of enthusiasms, too, and Miss Van Tyck has none. Imagine our plight at being accidentally linked to that encyclopædic lady in Italy! She is an old acquaintance of Salemina's and joined us in Florence, where she had been staying for a month, waiting for her niece Kitty Schuyler,—Kitty Copley now,—who is in Spain with her husband.

Miss Van Tyck would be endurable in Sheffield, Glasgow, Lyons, Genoa, Kansas City, Pompeii, or Pittsburg, but she should never have blighted Venice with her presence. She insisted, however, on accompanying us, and I can only hope that the climate and associations will have a relaxing effect on her habits of thought and speech. When she was in Florence, she was so busy in "reading up" Verona and Padua that she had no time for the Uffizi Gallery. In Verona and Padua she was absorbed in Hare's "Venice," vaccinating herself, so to speak, with information, that it might not steal upon, and infect her, unawares. If there is anything that Miss Van abhors, it is knowing a thing without knowing that she knows it; while for me, the most charming knowledge is the sort that comes by unconscious absorption, like the free grace of God.

We intended to enter Venice in orthodox fashion, by moonlight, and began to consult about trains when we were in Milan. The porter said that there was only one train between the eight and the twelve, and gave me a pamphlet on the subject, but Salemina objects to an early start, and Miss Van refuses to arrive anywhere after dusk, so it is fortunate that the distances are not great.

They have a curious way of reckoning time in Italy, for I found that the train leaving Milan at eight-thirty was scheduled to arrive at ten minutes past eighteen.

"You could never sit up until then, Miss Van," I said; "but, on the other hand, if we leave later, to please Salemina, say at ten in the morning, we do not arrive until eight minutes before twenty-one! I haven't the faintest idea what time that will really be, but it sounds too late for three defenceless women—all of them unmarried—to be prowling about in a strange city."

It proved on investigation, however, that twenty-one o'clock is only nine in Christian language (that is, one's mother tongue), so we united in choosing that hour as being the most romantic possible, and there was a full yellow moon as we arrived in the railway station. My heart beat high with joy and excitement, for I succeeded in establishing Miss Van with Salemina in one gondola, while I took all the luggage in another, ridding myself thus cleverly of the disenchanting influence of Miss Van's company.

"Do come with us, Penelope," she said, as we issued from the portico of the station and heard, instead of the usual cab-drivers' pandemonium, only the soft lapping of waves against the marble steps—"Do come with us, Penelope, and let us enter 'dangerous and sweet-charmed Venice' together. It does, indeed, look a 'veritable sea-bird's nest.'"

She had informed me before, in Milan, that Cassiodorus, Theodoric's secretary, had thus styled Venice, but somehow her slightest remark is out of key. I can always see it printed in small type in a footnote at the

bottom of the page, and I always wish to skip it, as I do other footnotes, and annotations, and marginal notes and addenda. If Miss Van's mother had only thought of it, Addenda would have been a delightful Christian name for her, and much more appropriate than Celia.

If I should be asked on bended knees, if I should be reminded that every intelligent and sympathetic creature brings a pair of fresh eyes to the study of the beautiful, if it should be affirmed that the new note is as likely to be struck by the 'prentice as by the master hand, if I should be assured that my diary would never be read, I should still refuse to write my first impressions of Venice. My best successes in life have been achieved by knowing what not to do, and I consider it the finest common sense to step modestly along in beaten paths, not stirring up, even there, any more dust than is necessary. If my friends and acquaintances ever go to Venice, let them read their Ruskin, their Goethe, their Byron, Shelley, and Wordsworth, their Rogers, Gautier, Michelet, their Symonds and Howells, not forgetting old "Coryat's Crudities," and be thankful I spared them mine.

It was the eve of Ascension Day, and a yellow May moon was hanging in the blue. I wished with all my heart that it were a little matter of seven or eight hundred years earlier in the world's history, for then the people would have been keeping vigil and making ready for that nuptial ceremony of Ascension-tide when the Doge married Venice to the sea. Why can we not make pictures nowadays, as well as paint them? We are banishing colour as fast as we can, clothing our buildings, our ships, ourselves, in black and white and sober hues, and if it were not for dear, gaudy Mother Nature, who never puts her palette away, but goes on painting her reds and greens and blues and yellows with the same lavish hand, we should have a sad and discreet universe indeed.

But so long as we have more or less stopped making pictures, is it not fortunate that the great ones of the olden time have been eternally fixed on the pages of the world's history, there to glow and charm and burn for ever and a day? To be able to recall those scenes of marvellous beauty so

vividly that one lives through them again in fancy, and reflect, that since we have stopped being picturesque and fascinating, we have learned, on the whole, to behave much better, is as delightful a trend of thought as I can imagine, and it was mine as I floated toward the Piazza of San Marco in my gondola.

I could see the Doge descend the Giant's Stairs, and issue from the gate of the Ducal Palace. I could picture the great Bucentaur as it reached the open beyond the line of the tide. I could see the white-mitred Patriarch walking from his convent on the now deserted isle of Sant' Elena to the shore where his barge lay waiting to join the glittering procession.

And then there floated before my entranced vision the princely figure of the Doge taking the Pope-blessed ring, and, advancing to the little gallery behind his throne on the Bucentaur, raising it high, and dropping it into the sea. I could almost hear the faint splash as it sank in the golden waves, and hear, too, the sonorous words of the old wedding ceremony: "*Desponsamus te, Mare, in signum veri perpetuique dominii*!"

Then when the shouts of mirth and music had died away and the Bucentaur and its train had drifted back into the lagoon, the blue sea, new-wedded, slept through the night with the May moon on her breast and the silent stars for sentinels.

II

La Giudecca, *May* 15,
Casa Rosa.

Not for a moment have we regretted leaving our crowded, conventional hotel in Venice proper, for these rooms in a house on the Giudecca. The very vision of Miss Celia Van Tyck sitting on a balcony surrounded by a group of friends from the various Boston suburbs, the vision of Miss

Celia Van Tyck melting into delicious distance with every movement of our gondola, even this was sufficient for Salemina's happiness and mine, had it been accompanied by no more tangible joys.

This island, hardly ten minutes by gondola from the Piazza of San Marco, was the summer resort of the Doges, you will remember, and there they built their pleasure-houses, with charming gardens at the back—gardens the confines of which stretched to the Laguna Viva. Our Casa Rosa is one of the few old *palazzi* left, for many of them have been turned into granaries.

We should never have found this romantic dwelling by ourselves; the Little Genius brought us here. The Little Genius is Miss Ecks, who draws, and paints, and carves, and models in clay, preaching and practising the brotherhood of man and the sisterhood of woman in the intervals; Miss Ecks, who is the custodian of all the talents and most of the virtues, and the invincible foe of sordid common sense and financial prosperity. Miss Ecks met us by chance in the Piazza and breathlessly explained that she was searching for paying guests to be domiciled under the roof of Numero Sessanta, Giudecca. She thought we should enjoy living there, or at least she did very much, and she had tried it for two years; but our enjoyment was not the special point in question. The real reason and desire for our immediate removal was that the padrona might pay off a vexatious and encumbering mortgage which gave great anxiety to everybody concerned, besides interfering seriously with her own creative work.

"You must come this very day," exclaimed Miss Ecks. "The Madonna knows that we do not desire boarders, but you are amiable and considerate, as well as financially sound and kind, and will do admirably. Padrona Angela is very unhappy, and I cannot model satisfactorily until the house is on a good paying basis and she is putting money in the bank toward the payment of the mortgage. You can order your own meals, entertain as you like, and live precisely as if you were in your own home."

The Little Genius is small, but powerful, with a style of oratory somewhat illogical, but always convincing at the moment. There were a good many trifling objections to our leaving Miss Van Tyck and the hotel, but we scarcely remembered them until we and our luggage were skimming across the space of water that divides Venice from our own island.

We explored the cool, wide, fragrant spaces of the old *casa*, with its outer walls of faded, broken stucco, all harmonized to a pinkish yellow by the suns and winds of the bygone centuries. We admired its lofty ceilings, its lovely carvings and frescoes, its decrepit but beautiful furniture, and then we mounted to the top, where the Little Genius has a sort of eagle's eyrie, a floor to herself under the eaves, from the windows of which she sees the sunlight glimmering on the blue water by day, and the lights of her adored Venice glittering by night. The walls are hung with fragments of marble and wax and stucco and clay; here a beautiful foot, or hand, or dimple-cleft chin; there an exquisitely ornate façade, a miniature campanile, or a model of some ancient *palazzo* or *chiesa*.

The little bedroom off at one side is draped in coarse white cotton, and is simple enough for a nun. Not a suggestion there of the fripperies of a fine lady's toilet, but, in their stead, heads of cherubs, wings of angels, slender bell-towers, friezes of acanthus leaves,—beauty of line and form everywhere, and not a hint of colour save in the riotous bunches of poppies and oleanders that lie on the broad window-seats or stand upright in great blue jars.

Here the Little Genius lives, like the hermit crab that she calls herself; here she dwells apart from kith and kin, her mind and heart and miracle-working hands taken captive by the charms of the siren city of the world.

When we had explored Casa Rosa from turret to foundation stone we went into the garden at the rear of the house—a garden of flowers and grape-vines, of vegetables and fruit-trees, of birds and bee-hives, a full acre of sweet summer sounds and odours, stretching to the lagoon,

which sparkled and shimmered under the blue Italian skies. The garden completed our subjugation, and here we stay until we are removed by force, or until the padrona's mortgage is paid unto the last penny, when I feel that the Little Genius will hang a banner on the outer ramparts, a banner bearing the relentless inscription: "No paying guests allowed on these premises until further notice."

Our domestics are unique and interesting. Rosalia, the cook, is a graceful person with brown eyes, wavy hair, and long lashes, and when she is coaxing her charcoal fire with a primitive fan of cock's feathers, her cheeks as pink as oleanders, the Little Genius leads us to the kitchen door and bids us gaze at her beauty. We are suitably enthralled at the moment, but we suffer an inevitable reaction when the meal is served, and sometimes long for a plain cook.

Peppina is the second maid, and as arrant a coquette as lives in all Italy. Her picture has been painted on more than one fisherman's sail, for it is rumoured that she has been six times betrothed and she is still under twenty. The unscrupulous little flirt rids herself of her suitors, after they become a weariness to her, by any means, fair or foul, and her capricious affections are seldom good for more than three months. Her own loves have no deep roots, but she seems to have the power of arousing in others furious jealousy and rage and a very delirium of pleasure. She remains light, gay, joyous, unconcerned, but she shakes her lovers as the Venetian thunderstorms shake the lagoons. Not long ago she tired of her chosen swain, Beppo the gardener, and one morning the padrona's ducks were found dead. Peppina, her eyes dewy with crocodile tears, told the padrona that although the suspicion almost rent her faithful heart in twain, she must needs think Beppo the culprit. The local detective, or police officer, came and searched the unfortunate Beppo's humble room, and found no incriminating poison, but did discover a pound or two of contraband tobacco, whereupon he was marched off to court, fined eighty francs, and jilted by his perfidious lady-love, who

speedily transferred her affections. If she had been born in the right class and the right century, Peppina would have made an admirable and brilliant Borgia.

Beppo sent a stinging reproof in verse to Peppina by the new gardener, and the Little Genius read it to us, to show the poetic instinct of the discarded lover, and how well he had selected his rebuke from the store of popular verses known to gondoliers and fishermen of Venice:—

"*No te fidar de l' albaro che piega*,
Ne de la dona quando la te giura.
La te impromete, e po la te denega;
No te fidar de l' albaro che piega."

("Trust not the mast that bends.
Trust not a woman's oath;
She'll swear to you, and there it ends,
Trust not the mast that bends.")

Beppo, Salemina, and I were talking together one morning,—just a casual meeting in the street,—when Peppina passed us. She had a market-basket in each hand, and was in her gayest attire, a fresh crimson rose between her teeth being the last and most fetching touch to her toilet. She gave a dainty shrug of her shoulders as she glanced at Beppo's hanging head and hungry eye, and then with a light laugh hummed, "Trust not the mast that bends," the first line of the poem that Beppo had sent her.

"It is better to let her go," I said to him consolingly.

"*Si*, *madama*; but"—with a profound sigh—"she is very pretty."

So she is, and although my idea of the fitness of things is somewhat unsettled when Peppina serves our dinner wearing a yoke and sleeves of coarse lace with her blue cotton gown, and a bunch of scarlet poppies in her hair, I can do nothing in the way of discipline because Salemina approves of her as part of the picture. Instead of trying to develop some

moral sense in the little creature, Salemina asked her to alternate roses and oleanders with poppies in her hair, and gave her a coral comb and ear-rings on her birthday. Thus does a warm climate undermine the strict virtue engendered by Boston east winds.

Francesco—Cecco for short—is general assistant in the kitchen, and a good gondolier to boot. When our little family is increased by more than three guests at dinner, Cecco is pressed into dining-room service, and becomes under-butler to Peppina. Here he is not at ease. He scrubs his tanned face until it shines like San Domingo mahogany, brushes his black hair until the gloss resembles a varnish, and dons coarse white cotton gloves to conceal his work-stained hands and give an air of fashion and elegance to the banquet. His embarrassment is equalled only by his earnestness and devotion to the dreaded task. Our American guests do not care what we have upon our bill of fare when they can steal a glance at the intensely dramatic and impassioned Cecco taking Pina into a corner of the dining-room and, seizing her hand, despairingly endeavour to find out his next duty. Then, with incredibly stiff back, he extends his right hand to the guest, as if the proffered plate held a scorpion instead of a tidbit. There is an extra butler to be obtained when the function is a sufficiently grand one to warrant the expense, but as he wears carpet slippers and Pina flirts with him from soup to fruit, we find ourselves no better served on the whole, and prefer Cecco, since he transforms an ordinary meal into a beguiling comedy.

“What does it matter, after all?” asks Salemina. “It is not life we are living, for the moment, but an act of light opera, with the scenes all beautifully painted, the music charming and melodious, the costumes gay and picturesque. We are occupying exceptionally good seats, and we have no responsibility whatever: we left it in Boston, where it is probably rolling itself larger and larger, like a snowball; but who cares?”

“Who cares, indeed?” I echo. We are here not to form our characters or to improve our minds, but to let them relax; and when we see anything which opposses the Byronic ideal of Venice (the use of the concertina as

the national instrument having this tendency), we deliberately close our eyes to it. I have a proper regard for truth in matters of fact like statistics. I want to know the exact population of a town, the precise total of children of school age, the number of acres in the Yellowstone Park, and the amount of wheat exported in 1862; but when it comes to things touching my imagination I resent the intrusion of some laboriously excavated truth, after my point of view is all nicely settled, and my saints, heroes, and martyrs are all comfortably and picturesquely arranged in their respective niches or on their proper pedestals.

When the Man of Fact demolishes some pretty fallacy like William Tell and the apple, he should be required to substitute something equally delightful and more authentic. But he never does. He is a useful but uninteresting creature, the Man of Fact, and for a travelling companion or a neighbour at dinner give me the Man of Fancy, even if he has not a grain of exact knowledge concealed about his person. It seems to me highly important that the foundations of Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester, or Spokane Falls should be rooted in certainty; but Verona, Padua, and Venice—well, in my opinion, they should be rooted in Byron and Ruskin and Shakespeare.

III

CASA ROSA, *May* 18.

Such a fanfare of bells as greeted our ears on the morning of our first awakening in Casa Rosa!

"Rise at once and dress quickly, Salemina!" I said. "Either an heir has been born to the throne, or a foreign Crown Prince has come to visit Venice, or perhaps a Papal Bull is loose in the Piazza San Marco. Whatever it is, we must not miss it, as I am keeping a diary."

But Peppina entered with a jug of hot water, and assured us that there were no more bells than usual; so we lay drowsily in our comfortable little beds, gazing at the frescoes on the ceiling.

One difficulty about the faithful study of Italian frescoes is that they can never be properly viewed unless one is extended at full-length on the flat of one's honourable back (as they might say in Japan), a position not suitable in a public building.

The fresco on my bedroom ceiling is made mysteriously attractive by a wilderness of mythologic animals and a crowd of cherubic heads, wings and legs, on a background of clouds; the mystery being that the number of cherubic heads does not correspond with the number of extremities, one or two cherubs being a wing or a leg short. Whatever may be their limitations in this respect, the old painters never denied their cherubs cheek, the amount of adipose tissue uniformly provided in that quarter being calculated to awake envy and jealousy on the part of the predigested-food-babies pictured in the American magazine advertisements.

Padrona Angela furnishes no official key to the ceiling-paintings of Casa Rosa; and yesterday, during the afternoon call of four pretty American girls, they asked and obtained our permission to lie upon the marble floor and compete for a prize to be given to the person who should offer the cleverest interpretation of the symbolisms in the frescoes. It may be stated that the entire difference of opinion proved that mythologic art is apt to be misunderstood. After deciding in the early morning what our bedroom ceiling is intended to represent (a decision made and unmade every day since our arrival), Salemina and I make a leisurely toilet and then seat ourselves at one of the open windows for breakfast.

The window itself looks on the Doge's Palace and the Campanile, St. Theodore and the Lion of St. Mark's being visible through a maze of fishing-boats and sails, some of these artistically patched in white and yellow blocks, or orange and white stripes, while others of grey have smoke-coloured figures in the tops and corners.

Sometimes the broad stone-flagging pavement bordering the canal is busy with people: gondoliers, boys with nets for crab-catching, 'longshoremen, and *facchini*. This is when ships are loading or

unloading, but at other times we look upon a tranquil scene.

Peppina brings in *dell' acqua bollente*, and I make the coffee in the little copper coffee-pot we bought in Paris, while Salemina heats the milk over the alcohol-lamp, which is the most precious treasure in her possession.

The butter and eggs are brought every morning before breakfast, and nothing is more delicious than our freshly churned pat of solidified cream, without salt, which is sweeter than honey in the comb. The cows are milked at dawn on the campagna, and the milk is brought into Venice in large cans. In the early morning, when the light is beginning to steal through the shutters, one hears the tinkling of a mule's bell and the rattling of the milk-cans, and, if one runs to the window, may see the *contadini*, looking, in their sheepskin trousers, like brethren of John the Baptist, driving through the streets and delivering the milk at the *vaccari*. It is then heated, the cream raised and churned, and the pats of butter, daintily set on green leaves, delivered for a seven-o'clock breakfast.

Finally *la colazione* is spread on our table by the window. A neat white cloth covers it, and we have gold-rimmed plates and cups of delicate china. There is a pot of honey, an egg *à la coque* for each, a plate of brown and white bread, on some days a dish of scarlet cherries on a bed of green, on others a mound of luscious berries in their frills; sometimes, too, we have a bowl of tiny wild strawberries that seem to have grown with their faces close pressed to the flowers, so sweet and fragrant are they.

This *al fresco* morning meal makes a delicious prelude to our comfortable *déjeuner à la fourchette* at one o'clock, when the Little Genius, if not absorbed in some unusually exacting piece of work, joins us and gives zest to the repast. Her own breakfast, she explains, is a *déjeuner à la* thumb, the sort enjoyed by the peasant who carves a bit of bread and cheese in his hand, and she promises us a sight, some leisure day, of a certain *déjeuner à la* toothpick celebrated for the moment among the artists. A mysterious painter, shabby, but of a certain

elegance and distinction even in his poverty, comes daily at noon into a well-known restaurant. He buys for five sous a glass of chianti, a roll for one sou, and with stately grace bestows another sou upon the waiter who serves him. These preparations made, he breaks the roll in small bits, and poising them delicately on the point of a wooden toothpick, he dips them in wine before eating them.

"This may be a frugal repast," he has an air of saying, "but it is at least refined, and no man would dare insult me by asking me whether or not I leave the table satisfied."

IV

CASA ROSA, *May* 20.

One of the pleasantest sights to be noted from our windows at breakfast time is Angelo making ready our private gondola for the day. Angelo himself is not attractive to the eye by reason of the silliest possible hat for a man of forty-five whose hair is slightly grey. It is a white straw sailor, with a turned-up brim, a blue ribbon encircling the crown, and a white elastic under the chin; such a hat as you would expect to see crowning the flaxen curls of mother's darling boy of four.

I love to look at the gondola, with its solemn caracoling like that of a possible water-horse, of which the arched neck is the graceful *ferro*. This is a strange, weird, beautiful thing when the black gondola sways a little from side to side in the moonlight. Angelo keeps ours polished so that it shines like silver in the morning sun, and he has an exquisite conscientiousness in rubbing every trace of brass about his precious craft. He has a little box under the prow full of bottles and brushes and rags. The cushions are laid on the bank of the canal; the pieces of carpet are taken out, shaken, and brushed, and the narrow strips are laid over the curved wood ends of the gondola to keep the sun from cracking them. The *felze*, or cabin, is freed of all dust, the tiny four-legged stools and the carved chair are wiped off, and occasionally a thin coat of black paint is needed here and there, and a touching-up of the gold lines which

relieve the sombreness. The last thing to be done is to polish the vases and run back into the garden for nosegays, and when these are disposed in their niches on each side of the *felze*, Angelo waves his infantile hat gaily to us at the window, and smiles his readiness to be off.

On other mornings we watch the loading and unloading of grain. There are many small boats always in view, their orange sails patched with all sorts of emblems and designs in a still deeper colour, and day before yesterday a large ship appeared at our windows and attached itself to our very doorsteps, much to the wrath of Salemina, who finds the poetry of existence much disturbed under the new conditions. All is life and motion now. The men are stripped naked to the waist, with bright handkerchiefs on their heads, and, in many cases, others tied over their mouths. Each has a thick wisp of short twine strings tucked into his waistband. The bags are weighed by one, who takes out or puts in a shovelful of grain, as the case may be. Then the carrier ties up his bag with one of the twine strings, two other men lift it to his shoulder, while a boy removes a pierced piece of copper from a long wire and gives it to him, this copper being handed in turn to still another man, who apparently keeps the account. This not uninteresting, indeed, but sordid and monotonous operation began before eight yesterday morning and even earlier to-day, obliging Salemina to decline strawberries and eat her breakfast with her back to the window.

This afternoon at four the injured lady departed on a tour in Miss Palett's gondola. Miss Palett is a water-colourist who has lived in Venice for five years and speaks the language "like a native." (You are familiar with the phrase, and perhaps familiar, too, with the native like whom they speak.)

Returning after tea, Salemina was observed to radiate a kind of subdued triumph, which proved on investigation to be due to the fact that she had met the *comandante* of the offending ship and that he had gallantly

promised to remove it without delay. I cannot help feeling that the proper time for departure had come; but this destroys the story and robs the *comandante* of his reputation for chivalry.

As Miss Palett's gondola neared the grain-ship, Salemina, it seems, spied the commanding officer pacing the deck.

"See," she said to her companion, "there is a gang-plank from the side of the ship to that small flat-boat. We could perfectly well step from our gondola to the flat-boat and then go up and ask politely if we may be allowed to examine the interesting grain-ship. While you are interviewing the first officer about the foreign countries he has seen, I will ask the *comandante* if he will kindly tie his boat a little farther down on the island. No, that won't do, for he may not speak English; we should have an awkward scene, and I should defeat my own purposes. You are so fluent in Italian, suppose you call upon him with my card and let me stay in the gondola."

"What shall I say to the man?" objected Miss Palett.

"Oh, there's plenty to say," returned Salemina. "Tell him that Penelope and I came over from the hotel on the Grand Canal only that we might have perfect quiet. Tell him that if I had not unpacked my largest trunk, I should not stay an instant longer. Tell him that his great, bulky ship ruins the view; that it hides the most beautiful church and part of the Doge's Palace. Tell him that I might as well have stayed at home and built a cottage on the dock in Boston Harbour. Tell him that his steam-whistles, his anchor-droppings, and his constant loadings or unloadings give us headache. Tell him that seven or eight of his sailormen brought clean garments and scrubbing brushes and took their bath at our front entrance. Tell him that one of them, almost absolutely nude, instead of running away to put on more clothing, offered me his arm to assist me into the gondola."

Miss Palett demurred at the subject-matter of some of these remarks, and affirmed that she could not translate others into proper Italian. She therefore proposed that Salemina should write a few dignified protests on her visiting-card, and her own part would be to instruct the man in the flat-boat to deliver it at once to his superior officer. The *comandante* spoke no English,—of that fact the sailorman in the flat-boat was certain,—but as the gondola moved away, the ladies could see the great man pondering over the little piece of pasteboard, and it was plain that he was impressed. Herein lies perhaps a seed of truth. The really great thing triumphs over all obstacles, and reaches the common mind and heart in some way, delivering its message we know not how.

Salemina's card teemed with interesting information, at least to the initiated. Her surname was in itself a passport into the best society. To be an X— was enough of itself, but her Christian name was one peculiar to the most aristocratic and influential branch of the X—s. Her mother's maiden name, engraved at full length in the middle, established the fact that Mr. X— had not married beneath him, but that she was the child of unblemished lineage on both sides. Her place of residence was the only one possible to the possessor of three such names, and as if these advantages were not enough, the street and number proved that Salemina's family undoubtedly possessed wealth; for the small numbers, and especially the odd numbers, on that particular street, could be flaunted only by people of fortune.

You have now all the facts in your possession, and I can only add that the ship weighed anchor at twilight, so Salemina again gazed upon the Doge's Palace and slept tranquilly.

V

CASA ROSA, *May* 22

I am like the schoolgirl who wrote home from Venice: "I am sitting on the edge of the Grand Canal drinking it all in, and life never seemed half so full before." Was ever the city so beautiful as last night on the arrival

of foreign royalty? It was a memorable display and unique in its peculiar beauty. The palaces that line the canal were bright with flags; windows and water-steps were thronged, the broad centre of the stream was left empty. Presently, round the bend below the Rialto, swept into view a double line of gondolas—long, low, gleaming with every hue of brilliant colour, most of them with ten, some with twelve, gondoliers in resplendent liveries, red, blue, green, white, orange, all bending over their oars with the precision of machinery and the grace of absolute mastery of their craft. In the middle, between two lines, came one small and beautifully modelled gondola, rowed by four men in red and black, while on the white silk cushions in the stern sat the Prince and Princess. There was no splash of oar or rattle of rowlock; swiftly, silently, with an air of stately power and pride, the lovely pageant came, passed, and disappeared under the shining evening sky and the gathering shadows of "the dim, rich city." I never saw, or expect to see, anything of its kind so beautiful.

I stay for hours in the gondola, writing my letters or watching the thousand and one sights of the streets, for I often allow Salemina and the Little Genius to tread their way through the highways and byways of Venice while I stay behind and observe life from beneath the grateful shade of the black *felze*.

The women crossing the many little bridges look like the characters in light opera; the young girls, with their hair bobbed in a round coil, are sometimes bareheaded and sometimes have a lace scarf over their dark, curly locks. A little fan is often in their hands, and one remarks the graceful way in which the crepe shawl rests upon the women's shoulders, remembering that it is supposed to take generations to learn to wear a shawl or wield a fan.

My favourite waiting-place is near the Via del Paradiso, just where some scarlet pomegranate blossoms hang out over the old brick walls by the canal-side, and where one splendid acanthus reminds me that its leaves inspired some of the most beautiful architecture in the world; where,

too, the ceaseless chatter of the small boys cleaning crabs with scrubbing-brushes gives my ear a much-needed familiarity with the language.

Now a girl with a red parasol crosses the Ponte del Paradiso, making a brilliant silhouette against the blue sky. She stops to prattle with the man at the bell-shop just at the corner of the little *calle*. There are beautiful bells standing in rows in the window, one having a border of finely traced crabs and sea-horses at the base; another has a top like a Doge's cap, while the body of another has a delicately wrought tracery, as if a fish-net had been thrown over it.

Sometimes the children crowd about me as the pigeons in the Piazza San Marco struggle for the corn flung to them by the tourists. If there are only three or four, I sometimes compromise with my conscience and give them something. If one gets a lira put into small coppers, one can give them a couple of *centesimi* apiece without feeling that one is pauperizing them, but that one is fostering the begging habit in young Italy is a more difficult sin to face.

To-day when the boys took off the tattered hats from their bonny little heads, all black waves and riotous curls, and with disarming dimples and sparkling eyes presented them to me for alms, I looked at them with smiling admiration, thinking how like Raphael's cherubs they were, and then said in my best Italian: "Oh, yes, I see them; they are indeed most beautiful hats. I thank you for showing them to me, and I am pleased to see you courteously take them off to a lady."

This American pleasantry was passed from mouth to mouth gleefully, and so truly enjoyed that they seemed to forget they had been denied. They ran, still laughing and chattering, to the wood-carver's shop near-by and told him the story, or so I judged, for he came to his window and smiled benignly upon me as I sat in the gondola with my writing-pad on my knees. I was pleased at the friendly glance, for he is the hero of a pretty little romance, and I long to make his acquaintance.

It seems that, some years ago, the Queen, with one lady-in-waiting in attendance, came to his shop quite early in the morning. Both were plainly dressed in cotton gowns, and neither made any pretensions. He was carving something that could not be dropped, a cherub's face that had to be finished while his thought of it was fresh. Hurriedly asking pardon, he continued his work, and at end of an hour raised his eyes, breathless and apologetic, to look at his visitors. The taller lady had a familiar appearance. He gazed steadily, and then, to his surprise and embarrassment, recognized the Queen. Far from being offended, she respected his devotion to his art, and before she left the shop she gave him a commission for a royal staircase. I am going to ask the Little Genius to take me to see his work, but, alas! there will be an unsurmountable barrier between us, for I cannot utter in my new Italian anything but the most commonplace and conventional statements.

VI

CASA ROSA, *May* 28.

Oh, this misery of being dumb, incoherent, unintelligible, foolish, inarticulate in a foreign land, for lack of words! It is unwise, I fear, to have at the outset too high an ideal either in grammar or accent. As our gondola passed one of the hotels this afternoon, we paused long enough to hear an intrepid lady converse with an Italian who carried a mandolin and had apparently come to give a music lesson to her husband. She seemed to be from the Middle West of America, but I am not disposed to insist upon this point, nor to make any particular State in the Union blush for her crudities of speech. She translated immediately everything that she said into her own tongue, as if the hearer might, between French and English, possibly understand something.

"*Elle nay pars easy*—he ain't here," she remarked, oblivious of gender. "*Elle retoorneray ah seas oors et dammi*—he'll be back sure by half-past six. *Bone swar*, I should say *Bony naughty*—Good-night to you, and I won't let him forget to show up to-morrer."

This was neither so ingenious nor so felicitous as the language-expedient of the man who wished to leave some luggage at a railway station in Rome, and knowing nothing of any foreign tongue but a few Latin phrases, mostly of an obituary character, pointed several times to his effects, saying, "*Requiescat in pace*," and then, pointing again to himself, uttered the one pregnant word "*Resurgam*." This at any rate had the merit of tickling his own sense of humour, if it availed nothing with the railway porters, and if any one remarks that he has read the tale in some ancient "Farmers' Almanack," I shall only retort that it is still worth repeating.

My little red book on the "Study of Italian Made Easy for the Traveller" is always in my pocket, but it is extraordinary how little use it is to me. The critics need not assert that individuality is dying out in the human race and that we are all more or less alike. If we were, we should find our daily practical wants met by such little books. Mine gives me a sentence requesting the laundress to return the clothes three days hence, at midnight, at cock-crow, or at the full of the moon, but nowhere can the new arrival find the phrase for the next night or the day after to-morrow. The book implores the washerwoman to use plenty of starch, but the new arrival wishes scarcely any, or only the frills dipped.

Before going to the dressmaker's yesterday, I spent five minutes learning the Italian for the expression "This blouse bags; it sits in wrinkles between the shoulders." As this was the only criticism given in the little book, I imagined that Italian dressmakers erred in this special direction. What was my discomfiture to find that my blouse was much too small and refused to meet. I could only use gestures for the dressmaker's enlightenment, but in order not to waste my recently gained knowledge, I tried to tell a melodramatic tale of a friend of mine whose blouse bagged and sat in wrinkles between the shoulders. It was not successful, because I was obliged to substitute the past for the present tense of the verb.

Somebody says that if we learn the irregular verbs of a language first, all will be well. I think by the use of considerable mental agility one can generally avoid them altogether, although it materially reduces one's vocabulary; but at all events there is no way of learning them thoroughly save by marrying a native. A native, particularly after marriage, uses the irregular verbs with great freedom, and one acquires a familiarity with them never gained in the formal instruction of a teacher. This method of education may be considered radical, and in cases where one is already married, illegal and bigamous, but on the whole it is not attended with any more difficulty than the immersing of one's self in a study day after day and month after month learning the irregular verbs from a grammar.

My rule in studying a language is to seize upon some salient point, or one generally overlooked by foreigners, or some very subtle one known only to the scholar, and devote myself to its mastery. A little knowledge here blinds the hearer to much ignorance elsewhere. In Italian, for example, the polite way of addressing one's equal is to speak in the third person singular, using *Ella* (she) as the pronoun. "*Come sta Ella*?" (How are you? but literally "How is she?")

I pay great attention to this detail, and make opportunities to meet our *padrona* on the staircase and say "How is she?" to her. I can never escape the feeling that I am inquiring for the health of an absent person; moreover, I could not understand her symptoms if she should recount them, and I have no language in which to describe my own symptoms, which, so far as I have observed, is the only reason we ever ask anybody else how he feels.

To remember on the instant whether one is addressing equals, superiors, or inferiors, and to marshal hastily the proper pronoun, adds a new terror to conversation, so that I find myself constantly searching my memory to decide whether it shall be:

Scusate or *Scusi*, *Avanti* or *Passi*, *A rivederci* or *Addio*, *Che cosa dite*? or *Che coma dice*? *Quanto domandate*? or *Quanto domanda*? *Dove andate*? or *Dove va*? *Come vi chiamate*? or *Come si chiama*? and so forth and so forth until one's mind seems to be arranged in tabulated columns, with special N.B.'s to use the infinitive in talking to the gondolier.

Finding the hours of time rather puzzling as recorded in the "Study of Italian Made Easy," I devoted twenty-four hours to learning how to say the time from one o'clock at noon to midnight, or thirteen to twenty-three o'clock. My soul revolted at the task, for a foreign tongue abounds in these malicious little refinements of speech, invented, I suppose, to prevent strangers from making too free with it on short acquaintance. I found later on that my labour had been useless, and that evidently the Italians themselves have no longer the leisure for these little eccentricities of language and suffer them to pass from common use. If the Latin races would only meet in convention and agree to bestow the comfortable neuter gender on inanimate objects and commodities, how popular they might make themselves with the English-speaking nations; but having begun to "enrich" their language, and make it more "subtle" by these perplexities, centuries ago, they will no doubt continue them until the end of time.

If one has been a devoted patron of the opera or student of music, one has an Italian vocabulary to begin with. This, if accompanied by the proper gestures (for it is vain to speak without liberal movements, of the hands, shoulders, and eyebrows), this, I maintain, will deceive all the English-speaking persons who may be seated near your table in a foreign café.

The very first evening after our arrival, Jack Copley asked Salemina and me to dine with him at the best restaurant in Venice. Jack Copley is a well of nonsense undefiled, and he, like ourselves, had been in Italy only a few hours. He called for us in his gondola, and in the row across from the Giudecca we amused ourselves by calling to mind the various Italian

words or phrases with which we were familiar. They were mostly titles of arias or songs, but Jack insisted, notwithstanding Salemina's protestations, that, properly interlarded with names of famous Italians, he could maintain a brilliant conversation with me at table, to the envy and amazement of our neighbours. The following paragraph, then, was our stock in trade, and Jack's volubility and ingenuity in its use kept Salemina quite helpless with laughter:—

Guarda che bianca luna—Il tempo passato—Lascia ch' io pianga—Dolce far niente—Batti batti nel Masetto—Da capo—Ritardando—Andante—Piano—Adagio—Spaghetti—Macaroni—Polenta—Non è ver—Ah, non giunge—Si la stanchezza—Bravo—Lento—Presto—Scherzo—Dormi pura—La ci darem la mano—Celeste Aïda—Spirito gentil—Voi che sapete—Crispino e la Comare—Pietà, Signore—Tintoretto—Boccaccio—Garibaldi—Mazzini—Beatrice Cenci—Gordigiani—Santa Lucia—Il mio tesoro—Margherita—Umberto—Vittoria Colonna—Tutti frutti—Botticelli—Una furtiva lagrima.

No one who has not the privilege of Jack Copley's acquaintance could believe with what effect he used these unrelated words and sentences. I could only assist, and lead him to ever higher flights of fancy.

We perceive with pleasure that our mother tongue presents equal difficulties to Italian manufacturers and men of affairs. The so-called mineral water we use at table is specially still and dead, and we think it may have been compared to its disadvantage with other more sparkling beverages, since every bottle bears a printed label announcing, "To Distrust of the mineral waters too foaming, since that they do invariable spread the Stomach."

We learn also by studying another bottle that "The Wermouth is a white wine slightly bitter, and parfumed with who leso me aromatic herbs." *Who leso me* we printed in italics in our own minds, giving the phrase a pure Italian accent until we discovered that it was the somewhat familiar adjective "wholesome."

In one of the smaller galleries we were given the usual pasteboard fans bearing explanations of the frescoes:—

Room I. *In the middle*. The sin of our fathers.

On every side. The ovens of Babylony. Möise saved from the water.

Room II. *In the middle*. Möise who sprung the water.

On every side. The luminous column in the dessert and the ardent wood.

Room III. *In the middle*. Elia transported in the heaven.

On every side. Eliseus dispansing brods.

Room IV. The wood carvings are by Anonymous. The tapestry shows the multiplications of brods and fishs.

VII

Casa Rosa, *May* 30.

We have had a battle royal in Casa Rosa—a battle over the breaking of a huge blue pitcher valued at eight francs, a pitcher belonging to the Little Genius.

The room that leads from the dining-room to the kitchen is reached by the descent of two or three stone steps. It is always full, and is like the orthodox hell in one respect, that though myriads of people are seen to go into it, none ever seem to come out. It is not more than twelve feet square, and the persons most continuously in it, not counting those who are in transit, are the Padrona Angela; the Padrona Angela's daughter, Signorina Rita; the Signorina Rita's temporary suitor; the suitor's mother and cousin; the padrona's great-aunt; a few casual acquaintances of the two families, and somebody's baby: not always the same baby; any baby answers the purpose and adds to the confusion and chatter of tongues.

This morning, the door from the dining-room being ajar, I heard a subdued sort of Bedlam in the distance, and finally went nearer to the scene of action, finding the cause in a heap of broken china in the centre of the floor. I glanced at the excited company, but there was nothing to show me who was the criminal. There was a spry girl washing dishes; the fritter-woman (at least we call her so, because she brings certain goodies called, if I mistake not, *frittoli*); the gardener's wife; Angelo, the gondolier; Peppina, the waiting-maid; and the men that had just brought the sausages and sweetmeats for the gondolier's ball, which we were giving in the evening. There was also the contralto, with a large soup-ladle in her hand. (We now call Rosalia, the cook, "the contralto," because she sings so much better than she cooks that it seems only proper to distinguish her in the line of her special talent.)

The assembled company were all talking and gesticulating at once. There was a most delicate point of justice involved, for, as far as I could gather, the sweetmeat-man had come in unexpectedly and collided with the sausage-man, thereby startling the fritter-woman, who turned suddenly and jostled the spry girl: hence the pile of broken china.

The spry girl was all for justice. If she had carelessly or wilfully dropped the pitcher, she would have been willing to suffer the extreme penalty,—the number of saints she called upon to witness this statement was sufficient to prove her honesty,—but under the circumstances she would be blessed if she suffered anything, even the abuse that filled the air. The fritter-woman upbraided the sweetmeat-man, who in return reviled the sausage-vender, who remarked that if Angelo or Peppina had received the sausages at the door, as they should, he would never have been in the house at all; adding a few picturesque generalizations concerning the moral turpitude of Angelo's parents and the vicious nature of their offspring.

The contralto, who was divided in her soul, being betrothed to the sausage-vender, but aunt to the spry girl, sprang into the arena, armed with the soup-ladle, and dispensed injustice on all sides. The feud now

reached its height. There is nothing that the chief participants did not call one another, and no intimation or aspersion concerning the reputation of ancestors to the remotest generation that was not cast in the others' teeth. The spry girl referred to the sausage-vender as a *generalissimo* of all the fiends, and the compliments concerning the gentle art of cookery which flew between the fritter-woman and the contralto will not bear repetition. I listened breathlessly, hoping to hear one of the party refer to somebody as the figure of a pig (strangely enough the most unforgettable of insults), for each of the combatants held, suspended in air, the weapon of his choice—broken crockery, soup-ladle, rolling-pin, or sausage. Each, I say, flourished the emblem of his craft wildly in the air—and then, with a change of front like that of the celebrated King of France in the Mother Goose rhyme, dropped it swiftly and silently; for at this juncture the Little Genius flew down the broad staircase from her eagle's nest. Her sculptor's smock surmounted her blue cotton gown, and her blond hair was flying in the breeze created by her rapid descent. I wish I could affirm that by her gentle dignity and serene self-control she awed the company into silence, or that there was a holy dignity about her that held them spellbound; but such, unhappily, is not the case. It was her pet blue pitcher that had been broken—the pitcher that was to serve as just the right bit of colour at the evening's feast. She took command of the situation in a masterly manner—a manner that had American energy and decision as its foundation and Italian fluency as its superstructure. She questioned the virtue of no one's ancestors, cast no shadow of doubt on the legitimacy of any one's posterity, called no one by the name of any four-footed beast or crawling, venomous thing, yet she somehow brought order out of chaos. Her language (for which she would have been fined thirty days in her native land) charmed and enthralled the Venetians by its delicacy, reserve, and restraint, and they dispersed pleasantly. The sausage-vender wished good appetite to the cook,—she had need of it, Heaven knows, and we had more,—while the spry girl embraced the fritter-woman ardently, begging her to come in again soon and make a longer visit.

VIII

CASA ROSA, *June* 10

I am saying all my good-byes—to Angelo and the gondola; to the greedy pigeons of San Marco, so heavy in the crop that they can scarcely waddle on their little red feet; to the bees and birds and flowers and trees of the beautiful garden behind the *casa*; to the Little Genius and her eagle's nest on the house-top; to "the city that is always just putting out to sea." It has been a month of enchantment, and although rather expensive, it is pleasant to think that the padrona's mortgage is nearly paid.

It is a saint's day, and to-night there will be a *fiesta*. Coming home to our island, we shall hear the laughter and the song floating out from the wine shops and the *caffès*; we shall see the lighted barges with their musicians; we shall thrill with the cries of "*Viva Italia*! *viva el Re*!" The moon will rise above the white palaces; their innumerable lights will be reflected in the glassy surface of the Grand Canal. We shall feel for the last time "the quick silent passing" of the only Venetian cab.

> "How light we move, how softly! Ah,
> Were life but as the gondola!"

To-morrow we shall be rowed against the current to Padua. We shall see Malcontenta and its ruined villa: Oriago and Mira and the campanile of Dolo. Venice will lie behind us, but she will never be forgotten. Many a time on such a night as this we shall say with other wandering Venetians:—

> "O Venezia benedetta!
> Non ti voglio più lasciar!"

III
PENELOPE'S PRINTS OF WALES

> And at length it chanced that I came to the fairest Valley in the World, wherein were trees of equal growth; and a river ran through the Valley, and a path was by the side of the river. And I followed the path until midday, and I continued my journey along the remainder of the Valley until the evening: and at the extremity of a plain I came to a lone and lustrous Castle, at the foot of which was a torrent.

We are coaching in Wales, having journeyed by easy stages from Liverpool through Llanberis, Penygwryd, Bettws-y-Coed, Beddgelert and Dolgelly on our way to Bristol, where we shall make up our minds as to the next step; deciding in solemn conclave, with floods of argument and temperamental differences of opinion, what is best worth seeing where all is beautiful and inspiring. If I had possessed a little foresight I should have avoided Wales, for, having proved apt at itinerary doggerel, I was solemnly created, immediately on arrival, Mistress of Rhymes and Travelling Laureate to the party—an office, however honourable, that is no sinecure since it obliges me to write rhymed eulogies or diatribes on Dolgelly, Tan-y-Bulch, Gyn-y-Coed, Llanrychwyn, and other Welsh hamlets whose names offer breakneck fences to the Muse.

I have not wanted for training in this direction, having made a journey (heavenly in reminiscence) along the Thames, stopping at all the villages along its green banks. It was Kitty Schuyler and Jack Copley who insisted that I should rhyme Henley and Streatley and Wargrave before I should be suffered to eat luncheon, and they who made me a crown of

laurel and hung a pasteboard medal about my blushing neck when I succeeded better than usual with Datchett!—I well remember Datchett, where the water-rats crept out of the reeds in the shallows to watch our repast; and better still do I recall Medmenham Abbey, which defied all my efforts till I found that it was pronounced Meddenam with the accent on the first syllable. The results of my enforced tussles with the Muse stare at me now from my Commonplace Book.

"Said a rat to a hen once, at Datchett,
'Throw an egg to me, dear, and I'll catch it!'
'I thank you, good sir,
But I greatly prefer
To sit on mine *here* till I hatch it.'"

"Few hairs had the Vicar of Medmenham,
Few hairs, and he still was a-sheddin' 'em,
But had none remained,
He would not have complained,
Because there was *far* too much red in 'em!"

It was Jack Copley, too, who incited me to play with rhymes for Venice until I produced the following *tour de force*:

"A giddy young hostess in Venice
Gave her guests hard-boiled eggs to play tennis.
She said 'If they *should* break,
What odds would it make?
You can't *think* how prolific my hen is.'"

Reminiscences of former difficulties bravely surmounted faded into insignificance before our first day in Wales was over.

Jack Copley is very autocratic, almost brutal in discipline. It is he who leads me up to the Visitors' Books at the wayside inns, and putting the quill in my reluctant fingers bids me write in cheerful hexameters my impressions of the unpronounceable spot. My martyrdom began at

Penygwryd (Penny-goo-rid'). We might have stopped at Conway or some other town of simple name, or we might have allowed the roof of the Cambrian Arms or the Royal Goat or the Saracen's Read to shelter us comfortably, and provide me a comparatively easy task; but no; Penygwryd it was, and the outskirts at that, because of two inns that bore on their swinging signs the names: *Ty Ucha* and *Ty Isaf*, both of which would make any minor poet shudder. When I saw the sign over the door of our chosen hostelry I was moved to disappear and avert my fate. Hunger at length brought me out of my lair, and promising to do my duty, I was allowed to join the irresponsible ones at luncheon.

Such a toothsome feast it was! A delicious ham where roses and lilies melted sweetly into one another; some crisp lettuces, ale in pewter mugs, a good old cheese, and that stodgy cannon-ball the "household loaf," dear for old association's sake. We were served at table by the granddaughter of the house, a little damsel of fifteen summers with sleek brown hair and the eyes of a doe. The pretty creature was all blushes and dimples and pinafores and curtsies and eloquent goodwill. With what a sweet politeness do they invest their service, some of these soft-voiced British maids! Their kindness almost moves one to tears when one is fresh from the resentful civility fostered by Democracy.

As we strolled out on the greensward by the hawthorn hedge we were followed by the little waitress, whose name, however pronounced, was written Nelw Evans. She asked us if we would write in the "Locked Book," whereupon she presented us with the key. It seems that there is an ordinary Visitors' Book, where the common herd is invited to scrawl its unknown name; but when persons of evident distinction and genius patronize the inn, this "Locked Book" is put into their hands.

I found that many a lord and lady had written on its pages, and men mighty in Church and State had left their mark, with much bad poetry commendatory of the beds, the food, the scenery, and the fishing. Nobody, however, had given a line to pretty Nelw Evans; so I pencilled her a rhyme, for which I was well paid in dimples:—

"At the Inn called the Penygwryd
A sweet little maiden is hid.
  She's so rosy and pretty
  I write her this ditty
And leave it at Penygwryd."

Our next halt was at Bettws-y-Coed, where we passed the week-end. It was a memorable spot, as I failed at first to rhyme the name, and only succeeded under threats of a fate like unto that of the immortal babes in the wood. I left the verse to be carved on a bronze tablet in the village church, should any one be found fitted to bear the weight of its eulogy:—

"Here lies an old woman of Bettws-y-Co*ed*;
Wherever she went, it was there that she go*ed*.
She frequently said: 'My own row have I ho*ed*,
And likewise the church water-mark have I to*ed*.
I'm therefore expecting to reap what I've sow*ed*,
And go straight to heaven from Bettws-y-Co*ed*.'"

At another stage of our journey, when the coaching tour was nearly ended, we were stopping at the Royal Goat at Beddgelert. We were seated about the cheerful blaze (one and sixpence extra), portfolio in lap, making ready our letters for the post. I announced my intention of writing to Salemina, left behind in London with a sprained ankle, and determined that the missive should be saturated with local colour. None of us were able to spell the few Welsh words we had picked up in our journeyings, but I evaded the difficulties by writing an exciting little episode in which all the principal substantives were names of Welsh towns, dragged in bodily, and so used as to deceive the casual untravelled reader.

I read it aloud. Jack Copley declared that it made capital sense, and sounded as if it had happened exactly as stated. Perhaps you will agree with him:—

Ddolghyhggllwn, Wales.

. . . We left Bettws-y-Coed yesterday morning, and coached thirty-three miles to this point. (How do you like this point when you see it spelled?) We lunched at a wayside inn, and as we journeyed on we began to see pposters on the ffences announcing the ffact that there was to be a Festiniog that day in the village of Portmadoc, through which we were to pass.

I always enoyw a Festiniog yn any country, and my hheart beat hhigh with anticipation. Yt was ffive o'clock yn the cool of the dday, and ppresently the roadw became ggay with the returning festinioggers. Here was a fine Llanberis, its neck encircled with shining meddals wonw in previous festiniogs; there, just behind, a wee shaggy Rhyl led along proudly by its owner. Evydently the gayety was over for the day, for the ppeople now came yn crowds, the women with gay plaid Rhuddlans over their shoulders and straw Beddgelerts on their hheads.

The guardd ttooted his hhorn continuously, for we now approached the principalw street of the village, where hhundreds of ppeople were conggreggated. Of course there were allw manner of Dolgelleys yn the crowd, and allw that had taken pprizes were gayly decked with ribbons. Just at this moment the hhorn of our gguard ffrightened a superb Llanrwst, a spirited black creature of enormous size. It made a ddash through the lines of tterrified mothers, who caught their innocent Pwllhelis closer to their bbosoms. In its madd course it bruised the side of a huge Llandudno hitched to a stout Tyn-y-Coed by the way-side. It bbroke its Bettws and leaped ynto the air. Ddeath stared us yn the face. David the whip grew ppale, and signalled to Absalom the gguard to save as many lives as he could and leave the rrest to Pprovidence. Absalom spprang from his seat, and taking a sharp Capel Curig from his ppocket (Hheaven knows how he chanced to have it about his pperson), he aimed straight between the Llangollens of the infuriated Llandudno. With a moan of baffled rrage, he sank to earth with a hheavy thuddw. Absalom withdrew the bbloody Capel Curig from the dying Llandudno, and wiping yt on his Penygwryd, replaced yt yn his pocket for future possible use.

The local Dolwyddelan approached, and ordered a detachment of Tan-y-Bulchs to remove the corpse of the Llandudno. With a shudder we saw him borne to his last rrest, for we realized that had yt not bbeen for Absalom's Capel Curig we had bbeen bburied yn an unpronounceable Welsh ggrave.

IV
PENELOPE IN DEVON

We are in Bristol after a week's coaching in Wales; the Jack Copleys, Tommy Schuyler, Mrs. Jack's younger brother, and Miss Van Tyck, Mrs. Jack's "Aunt Celia," who played a grim third in that tour of the English Cathedrals during which Jack Copley was ostensibly studying architecture but in reality courting Kitty Schuyler. Also there is Bertram Ferguson, whom we call "Atlas" because he carries the world on his shoulders, gazing more or less vaguely and absent-mindedly at all the persons and things in the universe not in need of immediate reformation.

We had journeyed by easy stages from Liverpool through Carnarvon, Llanberis, Penygwyrd, Bettws-y-Coed, Beddgelert, and Tan-y-Bulch. Arriving finally at Dolgelly, we sent the coach back to Carnarvon and took the train to Ross,—the gate of the Wye,—from whence we were to go down the river in boats. As to that, everybody knows Symond's Yat, Monmouth, Raglan Castle, Tintern Abbey, Chepstow; but at Bristol a brilliant idea took possession of Jack Copley's mind. Long after we were in bed o' nights the blessed man interviewed landlords and studied guidebooks that he might show us something beautiful next day, and above all, something out of the common route. Mrs. Jack didn't like common routes; she wanted her appetite titillated with new scenes.

At breakfast we saw the red-covered Baedeker beside our host's plate. This was his way of announcing that we were to "move on," like poor Jo in "Bleak House." He had already reached the marmalade stage, and

while we discussed our bacon and eggs and reviled our coffee, he read us the following:—

“Clovelly lies in a narrow and richly-wooded combe descending abruptly to the sea.”—

“Any place that descends to the sea abruptly or otherwise has my approval in advance,” said Tommy.

“Be quiet, my boy.”—“It consists of one main street, or rather a main staircase, with a few houses climbing on each side of the combe so far as the narrow space allows. The houses, each standing on a higher or lower level than its neighbour, are all whitewashed, with gay green doors and lattices.”—

“Heavenly!” cried Mrs. Jack. “It sounds like an English Amalfi; let us take the first train.”

—“And the general effect is curiously foreign; the views from the quaint little pier and, better still, from the sea, with the pier in the foreground, are also very striking. The foundations of the cottages at the lower end of the village are hewn out of the living rock.”

“How does a living rock differ from other rocks—dead rocks?” Tommy asked facetiously. “I have always wanted to know; however, it sounds delightful, though I can’t remember anything about Clovelly.”

“Did you never read Dickens’s ‘Message from the Sea,’ Thomas?” asked Miss Van Tyck. Aunt Celia always knows the number of the unemployed in New York and Chicago, the date when North Carolina was admitted to the Union, why black sheep eat less than white ones, the height of the highest mountain and the length of the longest river in the world, when the first potato was dug from American soil, when the battle of Bull Run was fought, who invented the first fire-escape, how woman suffrage has worked in Colorado and California, the number of trees felled by Mr. Gladstone, the principle of the Westinghouse brake and the Jacquard loom, the difference between peritonitis and appendicitis, the date of the

introduction of postal-cards and oleomargarine, the price of mileage on African railways, the influence of Christianity in the Windward Islands, who wrote "There's Another, not a Sister," "At Midnight in his Guarded Tent," "A Thing of Beauty is a Joy Forever," and has taken in through the pores much other information likely to be of service on journeys where an encyclopædia is not available.

If she could deliver this information without gibes at other people's ignorance she would, of course, be more agreeable; but it is only justice to say that a person is rarely instructive and agreeable at the same moment.

"It is settled, then, that we go to Clovelly," said Jack. "Bring me the A B C Guide, please" (this to the waiter who had just brought in the post).

"Quite settled, and we go at once," said Mrs. Jack, whose joy at arriving at a place is only equalled by her joy in leaving it. "Penelope, hand me my letters, please; if you were not my guest I should say I had never witnessed such an appetite. Tommy, what news from father? Atlas, how can you drink three cups of British coffee? Oh-h-h, how more than lucky, how heavenly, how providential! Egeria is coming!"

"Egeria?" we cried with one rapturous voice.

"Read your letter carefully, Kitty," said Jack; "you will probably find that she wishes she might come, but finds it impossible."

"Or that she certainly would come if she had anything to wear," drawled Tommy.

"Or that she could come perfectly well if it were a few days later," quoth I.

Mrs. Jack stared at us superciliously, and lifting an absurd watch from her antique chatelaine, observed calmly, "Egeria will be at this hotel in one hour and fifteen minutes; I telegraphed her the night before last, and this letter is her reply."

“Who is Egeria?” asked Atlas, looking up from his own letters. “She sounds like a character in a book.”

Mrs. Jack: “You begin, Penelope.”

Penelope: “No, I’d rather finish; then I can put in everything that you omit.”

Atlas: “Is there so much to tell?”

Tommy: “Rather. Begin with her hair, Penelope.”

Mrs. Jack: “No; I’ll do that! Don’t rattle your knives and forks, shut up your Baedeker, Jackie, and listen while I quote what a certain poet wrote of Egeria when she last visited us:—

> “‘She has a knot of russet hair:
> It seems a simple thing to wear
> Through years, despite of fashion’s check,
> The same deep coil about the neck,
> But there it twined
> When first I knew her,
> And learned with passion to pursue her,
> And if she changed it, to my mind
> She were a creature of new kind.
>
> “‘O first of women who has laid
> Magnetic glory on a braid!
> In others’ tresses we may mark
> If they be silken, blonde, or dark,
> But thine we praise and dare not feel them,
> Not Hermes, god of theft, dare steal them;
> It is enough for eye to gaze
> Upon their vivifying maze.’”

Jack: “She has beautiful hair, but as an architect I shouldn’t think of mentioning it first. Details should follow, not precede, general characteristics. Her hair is an exquisite detail; so, you might say, is her nose, her foot, her voice; but viewed as a captivating whole, Egeria might be described epigrammatically as an animated lodestone. When a man approaches her he feels his iron-work gently and gradually drawn out of him.”

Atlas looked distinctly incredulous at this statement, which was reinforced by the affirmative nods of the whole party.

Penelope: “A man cannot talk to Egeria an hour without wishing the assistance of the Society for First Aid to the Injured. She is a kind of feminine fly-paper; the men are attracted by the sweetness, and in trying to absorb a little of it, they stick fast.”

Tommy: “Egeria is worth from two to two and a half times more than any girl alive; I would as lief talk to her as listen to myself.”

Atlas: “Great Jove, what a concession! I wish I could find a woman—an unmarried woman (with a low bow to Mrs. Jack)—that would produce that effect upon me. So you all like her?”

Aunt Celia: “She is not what I consider a well-informed girl.”

Penelope: “Now don’t carp, Miss Van Tyck. You love her as much as we all do. ‘Like her,’ indeed! I detest the phrase. Werther said when asked how he liked Charlotte, ‘What sort of creature must he be who merely liked her; whose whole heart and senses were not entirely absorbed by her!’ Some one asked me lately how I ‘liked’ Ossian.”

Atlas: “Don’t introduce Ossian, Werther and Charlotte into this delightful breakfast chat, I beseech you; the most tiresome trio that ever lived. If they were travelling with us, how they would jar! Ossian would tear the scenery in tatters with his apostrophes, Werther would make

love to Mrs. Jack, and Charlotte couldn't cut an English household loaf with a hatchet. Keep to Egeria,—though if one cannot stop at liking her, she is a dangerous subject."

Jack: "Don't imagine from these panegyrics that, to the casual observer, Egeria is anything more than a nice girl. The deadly qualities that were mentioned only appeal to the sympathetic eye (which you have not), and the susceptible heart (which is not yours), and after long acquaintance (which you can't have, for she stays only a week). Tommy, you can meet the charmer at the station; your sister will pack up, and I'll pay the bills and make arrangements for the journey."

Jack Copley (*when left alone with his spouse*): "Kitty, I wonder, why you invited Egeria to travel in the same party with Atlas."

Mrs. Jack (*fencing*): "Pooh! Atlas is safe anywhere."

Jack: "He is a man."

Mrs. Jack: "No; he is a reformer."

Jack: "Even reformers fall in love."

Mrs. Jack: "Not unless they can find a woman to reform. Egeria is too nearly perfect to attract Atlas; besides, what does it matter, anyway?"

Jack: "It matters a good deal if it makes him unhappy; he is too good a fellow."

Mrs. Jack: "I've lived twenty-five years and I have never seen a man's unhappiness last more than six months, and I have never seen a woman make a wound in a man's heart that another woman couldn't heal. The modern young man is as tough as—well, I can't think of anything tough enough to compare him to. I've always thought it a pity that the material of which men's hearts is made couldn't be utilized for manufacturing purposes; think of its value for hinges, or for the toes of little boys' boots, or the heels of their stockings!"

Jack: “I should think you had just been jilted, my dear; how has Atlas offended you?”

Mrs. Jack: “He hasn’t offended me; I love him, but I think he is too absent-minded lately.”

Jack: “And is Egeria invited to join us in order that she may bring his mind forcibly back to the present?”

Mrs. Jack: “Not at all; I consider Atlas as safe as a—as a church, or a dictionary, or a guide-post, or anything; he is too much interested in tenement-house reform to fall in love with a woman.”

Jack: “I think a sensible woman wouldn’t be out of place in Atlas’ schemes for the regeneration of humanity.”

Mrs. Jack: “No; but Egeria isn’t a—yes, she is, too; I can’t deny it, but I don’t believe she knows anything about the sweating system, and she adores Ossian and Fiona Macleod, so she probably won’t appeal to Atlas in his present state, which, to my mind, is unnecessarily intense. The service of humanity renders a young man perfectly callous to feminine charms. It’s the proverbial safety of numbers, I suppose, for it’s always the individual that leads a man into temptation, if you notice, never the universal;—Woman, not women. I have studied Atlas profoundly, and he is nearly as blind as a bat. He paid no attention to my new travelling-dress last week, and yesterday I wore four rings on my middle finger and two on each thumb all day long, just to see if I could catch his eye and hold his attention. I couldn’t.”

Jack: “That may all be; a man may be blind to the charms of all women but one (and precious lucky if he is), but he is particularly keen where the one is concerned.”

Mrs. Jack: “Atlas isn’t keen about anything but the sweating system. You needn’t worry about him; your favourite Stevenson says that a wet rag goes safely by the fire, and if a man is blind, he cannot expect to be much impressed by romantic scenery. Atlas momentarily a wet rag and

temporarily blind. He told me on Wednesday that he intended to leave all his money to one of those long-named regenerating societies—I can't remember which."

Jack: "And it was on Wednesday you sent for Egeria. I see."

Mrs. Jack (*haughtily*): "Then you see a figment of your own imagination; there is nothing else to see. There! I've packed everything that belongs to me, while you've been smoking and gazing at that railway guide. When do we start?"

Jack: "11.59. We arrive in Bideford at 4.40, and have a twelve-mile drive to Clovelly. I will telegraph for a conveyance to the inn and for five bedrooms and a sitting-room."

Mrs. Jack: "I hope that Egeria's train will be on time, and I hope that it will rain so that I can wear my five-guinea mackintosh. It poured every day when I was economizing and doing without it."

Jack: "I never could see the value of economy that ended in extra extravagance."

Mrs. Jack: "Very likely; there are hosts of things you never can see, Jackie. But there she is, stepping out of a hansom, the darling! What a sweet gown! She's infinitely more interesting than the sweating system."

We thought we were a merry party before Egeria joined us, but she certainly introduced a new element of interest. I could not help thinking of it as we were flying about the Bristol station, just before entering the first-class carriage engaged by our host. Tommy had bought us rosebuds at a penny each; Atlas had a bundle of illustrated papers under his arm—*The Sketch*, *Black and White*, *The Queen*, *The Lady's Pictorial*, and half a dozen others. The guard was pasting an "engaged" placard on the carriage window and piling up six luncheon-baskets in the corner on the cushions, and speedily we were off.

It is a sincere tribute to the intrinsic charm of Egeria's character that Mrs. Jack and I admire her so unreservedly, for she is for ever being hurled at us as an example in cases where men are too stupid to see that there is no fault in us, nor any special virtue in her. For instance, Jack tells Kitty that she could walk with less fatigue if she wore sensible shoes like Egeria's. Now, Egeria's foot is very nearly as lovely as Trilby's in the story, and much prettier than Trilby's in the pictures; consequently, she wears a hideous, broad-toed, low-heeled boot, and looks trim and neat in it. Her hair is another contested point: she dresses it in five minutes in the morning, walks or drives in the rain and wind for a few hours, rides in the afternoon, bathes in the surf, lies in a hammock, and, if circumstances demand, the creature can smooth it with her hands and walk in to dinner! Kitty and I, on the contrary, rise a half-hour earlier to curl or wave; our spirit-lamps leak into our dressing-bags, and our beauty is decidedly damaged by damp or hot weather. Most women's hair is a mere covering to the scalp, growing out of the head, or pinned on, as the case may be. Egeria's is a glory like Eve's; it is expressive, breathing a hundred delicate suggestions of herself; not tortured into frizzles, or fringes, or artificial shapes, but winding its lustrous lengths about her head, just high enough to show the beautiful nape of her neck, "where this way and that the little lighter-coloured irreclaimable curls run truant from the knot,—curls, half curls, root curls, vine ringlets, wedding-rings, fledgling feathers, tufts of down, blown wisps,—all these wave, or fall, or stray, loose and downward in the form of small, silken paws, hardly any of them thicker than a crayon shading, cunninger than long, round locks of gold to trick the heart."

At one o'clock we lifted the covers of our luncheon-baskets.

"Aren't they the tidiest, most self-respecting, satisfying things!" exclaimed Egeria, as she took out her plate, and knife, and fork, opened her Japanese napkin, set in dainty order the cold fowl and ham, the pat of butter, crusty roll, bunch of lettuce, mustard and salt, the corkscrew, and, finally, the bottle of ale. "I cannot bear to be unpatriotic, but compare this with the ten minutes for refreshments at an American

lunch-counter, its baked beans, and pies, and its cream cakes and doughnuts under glass covers. I don't believe English people are as good as we are; they can't be; they're too comfortable. I wonder if the little discomforts of living in America, the dissatisfaction and incompetency of servants, and all the other problems, will work out for the nation a more exceeding weight of glory, or whether they will simply ruin the national temper."

"It's wicked to be too luxurious, Egeria," said Tommy, with a sly look at Atlas. "It's the hair shirt, not the pearl-studded bosom, that induces virtue."

"Is it?" she asked innocently, letting her clear gaze follow Tommy's. "You don't believe, Mr. Atlas, that modest people like you, and me, and Tommy, and the Copleys, incur danger in being too comfortable; the trouble lies in the fact that the other half is too uncomfortable, does it not? But I am just beginning to think of these things," she added soberly.

"Egeria," said Mrs. Jack sternly, "you may think about them as much as you like; I have no control over your mental processes, but if you mention single tax, or tenement-house reform, or Socialism, or altruism, or communism, or the sweating system, you will be dropped at Bideford. Atlas is only travelling with us because he needs complete moral and intellectual rest. I hope, oh, how I hope, that there isn't a social problem in Clovelly! It seems as if there couldn't be, in a village of a single street and that a stone staircase."

"There will be," I said, "if nothing more than the problem of supply and demand; of catching and selling herrings."

We had time at Bideford to go into a quaint little shop for tea before starting on our twelve-mile drive; time also to be dragged by Tommy to Bideford Bridge, that played so important a part in Kingsley's "Westward Ho!" We did not approach Clovelly finally through the beautiful Hobby Drive, laid out in former years by one of the Hamlyn ladies of Clovelly

Court, but by the turnpike road, which, however, was not uninteresting. It had been market-day at Bideford and there were many market carts and "jingoes" on the road, with perhaps a heap of yellow straw inside and a man and a rosy boy on the seat. The roadway was prettily bordered with broom, wild honeysuckle, fox-glove, and single roses, and there was a certain charming post-office called the Fairy Cross, in a garden of blooming fuchsias, where Egeria almost insisted upon living and officiating as postmistress.

All at once our driver checked his horses on the brink of a hill, apparently leading nowhere in particular.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Jack, who is always expecting accidents.

"Clovelly, mum."

"Clovelly!" we repeated automatically, gazing about us on every side for a roof, a chimney, or a sign of habitation.

"You'll find it, mum, as you walk down-along."

"How charming!" cried Egeria, who loves the picturesque. "Towns are generally so obtrusive; isn't it nice to know that Clovelly is here and that all we have to do is to walk 'down-along' and find it? Come, Tommy. Ho, for the stone staircase!"

We who were left behind discovered by more questioning that one cannot drive into Clovelly; that although an American president or an English chancellor might, as a great favour, be escorted down on a donkey's back, or carried down in a sedan chair if he chanced to have one about his person, the ordinary mortal must walk to the door of the New Inn, his luggage being dragged "down-along" on sledges and brought "up-along" on donkeys. In a word, Clovelly is not built like unto other towns; it seems to have been flung up from the sea into a narrow rift between wooded hills, and to have clung there these eight hundred years of its existence. It has held fast, but it has not expanded, for the very good reason that it completely fills the hollow in the cliffs, the

houses clinging like limpets to the rocks on either side, so that it would be a costly and difficult piece of engineering indeed to build any extensions or additions.

We picked our way "down-along" until we caught the first glimpse of white-washed cottages covered with creepers, their doors hospitably open, their windows filled with blooming geraniums and fuchsias. All at once, as we began to descend the winding, rocky pathway, we saw that it pitched headlong into the bluest sea in the world. No wonder the painters have loved it! Shall we ever forget that first vision! There were a couple of donkeys coming "up-along" laden, one with coals, the other with bread-baskets; a fisherman was mending his nets in front of his door; others were lounging "down to quay pool" to prepare for their evening drift-fishing. A little further on, at a certain abrupt turning called the "lookout," where visitors stop to breathe and villagers to gossip, one could catch a glimpse of the beach and "Crazed Kate's Cottage," the drying-ground for nets, the lifeboat house, the pier, and the breakwater.

We were all enchanted when we arrived at the door of the inn.

"Devonshire for me! I shall live here!" cried Mrs. Jack. "I said that a few times in Wales, but I retract it. You had better live here, too, Atlas; there aren't any problems in Clovelly."

"I am sure of that," he assented smilingly. "I noticed dozens of live snails in the rocks of the street as we came down; snails cannot live in combination with problems."

"Then I am a snail," answered Mrs. Jack cheerfully; "for that is exactly my temperament."

We found that we could not get room enough for all at the tiny inn, but this only exhilarated Egeria and Tommy. They disappeared and came back triumphant ten minutes later.

“We got lodgings without any difficulty,” said Egeria. “Tommy’s isn’t half bad; we saw a small boy who had been taking a box ‘down-along’ on a sledge, and he referred us to a nice place where they took Tommy in; but you should see my lodging—it is ideal. I noticed the prettiest yellow-haired girl knitting in a doorway. ‘There isn’t room for me at the inn,’ I said; ‘could you let me sleep here?’ She asked her mother, and her mother said ‘Yes,’ and there was never anything so romantic as my vine-embowered window. Juliet would have jumped at it.”

“She would have jumped out of it, if Romeo had been below,” said Mrs. Jack, “but there are no Romeos nowadays; they are all busy settling the relations of labour and capital.”

The New Inn proved some years ago to be too small for its would-be visitors. An addition couldn’t be built because there wasn’t any room; but the landlady succeeded in getting a house across the way. Here there are bedrooms, a sort of quiet tap-room of very great respectability, and the kitchens. As the dining-room is in house number one, the matter of serving dinner might seem to be attended with difficulty, but it is not apparent. The maids run across the narrow street with platters and dishes surmounted by great Britannia covers, and in rainy weather they give the soup or joint the additional protection of a large cotton umbrella. The walls of every room in the inn are covered with old china, much of it pretty, and some of it valuable, though the finest pieces are not hung, but are placed in glass cabinets. One cannot see an inch of wall space anywhere in bedrooms, dining- or sitting-rooms for the huge delft platters, whole sets of the old green dragon pattern, quaint perforated baskets, pitchers and mugs of British lustre, with queer dogs, and cats, and peacocks, and clocks of china. The massing of colour is picturesque and brilliant, and the whole effect decidedly unique. The landlady’s father and grandfather had been Bideford sea-captains and had brought here these and other treasures from foreign parts. As Clovelly is a village of seafolk and fisher-folk, the houses are full of curiosities, mostly from the Mediterranean. Egeria had no china in her room, but she had huge branches of coral, shells of all sizes and hues,

and an immense coloured print of the bay of Naples. Tommy's landlady was volcanic in her tastes, and his walls were lined with pictures of Vesuvius in all stages of eruption. My room, a wee, triangular box of a thing, was on the first floor of the inn. It opened hospitably on a bit of garden and street by a large glass door that wouldn't shut, so that a cat or a dog spent the night by my bed-side now and then, and many a donkey tried to do the same, but was evicted.

Oh, the Clovelly mornings! the sunshine, the salt air, the savour of the boats and the nets, the limestone cliffs of Gallantry Bower rising steep and white at the head of the village street, with the brilliant sea at the foot; the walks down by the quay pool (not *key pool*, you understand, but *quaäy püül* in the vernacular), the sails in a good old herring-boat called the *Lorna Doone*, for we are in Blackmore's country here.

We began our first day early in the morning, and met at nine-o'clock breakfast in the coffee-room. Egeria came in glowing. She reminds me of a phrase in a certain novel, where the heroine is described as always dressing (seemingly) to suit the season and the sky. Clad in sea-green linen with a white collar, and belt, she was the very spirit of a Clovelly morning. She had risen at six, and in company with Phoebe, daughter of her house (the yellow-haired lassie mentioned previously), had prowled up and down North Hill, a transverse place or short street much celebrated by painters. They had met a certain bold fisher-lad named Jem, evidently Phoebe's favourite swain, and explored the short passage where Fish Street is built over, nicknamed Temple Bar.

Atlas came in shortly after and laid a nosegay at Egeria's plate.

"My humble burnt-offering, your ladyship," he said.

Tommy: "She has lots of offerings, but she generally prefers to burn 'em herself. When Egeria's swains talk about her, it is always '*ut vidi*,' how I saw, succeeded by '*ut perii*,' how I sudden lost my brains."

Egeria: "*You* don't indulge in burnt-offerings" (laughing, with slightly heightened colour); "but how you do burn incense! You speak as if the skeletons of my rejected suitors were hanging on imaginary lines all over the earth's surface."

Tommy: "They are not hanging on 'imaginary' lines."

Mrs. Jack: "Turn your thoughts from Egeria's victims, you frivolous people, and let me tell you that I've been 'up-along' this morning and found—what do you think?—a library: a circulating library maintained by the Clovelly Court people. It is embowered in roses and jasmine, and there is a bird's nest hanging just outside one of the open windows next to a shelf of Dickens and Scott. Never before have young families of birds been born and brought up with similar advantages. The snails were in the path just as we saw them yesterday evening, Atlas; not one has moved, not one has died! Oh, I certainly must come and live here. The librarian is a dear old lady; if she ever dies, I am coming to take her place. You will be postmistress at the Fairy Cross then, Egeria, and we'll visit each other. And I've brought Dickens' 'Message from the Sea' for you, and Kingsley's 'Westward Ho!' for Tommy, and 'The Wages of Sin' for Atlas, and 'Hypatia' for Egeria, 'Lorna Doone' for Jack, and Charles Kingsley's sermons for myself. We will read aloud every evening."

"I won't," said Tommy succinctly. "I've been down by the quay pool, and I've got acquainted with a lot of A1 chaps that have agreed to take me drift-fishing every night, and they are going to put out the Clovelly lifeboat for exercise this week, and if the weather is fine, Bill Marks is going to take Atlas and me to Lundy Island. You don't catch me round the evening lamp very much in Clovelly."

"Don't be too slangy, Tommy, and who on earth is Bill Marks?" asked Jack.

"He's our particular friend, Tommy's and mine," answered Atlas, seeing that Tommy was momentarily occupied with bacon and eggs. "He told us more yarns than we ever before heard spun in the same length of

time. He is seventy-seven, and says he was a teetotaler until he was sixty-nine, but has been trying to make up time ever since. From his condition last evening, I should say he was likely to do it. He was so mellow, I asked him how he could manage to walk down the staircase. 'Oh, I can walk down neat enough,' he said, 'when I'm in good sailing trim, as I am now, feeling just good enough, but not too good, your honour; but when I'm half seas over or three sheets in the wind, I roll down, your honour!' He spends three shillings a week for his food and the same for his 'rummidge.' He was thrilling when he got on the subject of the awful wreck just outside this harbour, 'the fourth of October, seventy-one years ago, two-and-thirty men drowned, your honour, and half of 'em from Clovelly parish. And I was one of the three men saved in another storm twenty-four years agone, when two-and-twenty men were drowned; that's what it means to plough the great salt field that is never sown, your honour.' When he found we'd been in Scotland, he was very anxious to know if we could talk 'Garlic,' said he'd always wanted to know what it sounded like."

Somehow, in the days that followed, Tommy was always with his particular friends, the fishermen, on the beach, at the Red Lion, or in the shop of a certain boat-builder, learning the use of the calking-iron. Mr. and Mrs. Jack, Aunt Celia, and I unexpectedly found ourselves a quartette for hours together, while Egeria and Atlas walked in the churchyard, in the beautiful grounds of Clovelly Court, or in the deer park, where one finds as perfect a union of marine and woodland scenery as any in England.

Atlas may have taken her there because he could discuss single tax more eloquently when he was walking over the entailed estates of the English landed gentry, but I suspect that single tax had taken off its hat, and bowing profoundly to Egeria, had said, "After you, Madam!" and retired to its proper place in the universe; for not even the most blatant economist would affirm that any other problem can be so important as that which confronts a man when he enters that land of Beulah, which is upon the borders of Heaven and within sight of the City of Love.

Atlas was young, warm of heart, high of mind, and generous of soul. All the necessary chords, therefore, were in him, ready to be set in vibration. No one could do this more cunningly than Egeria; the only question was whether love would "run out to meet love," as it should, "with open arms."

We simply waited to see. Mrs. Jack, with that fine lack of logic that distinguished her, disclaimed all responsibility. "He is awake, at least," she said, "and that is a great comfort; and now and then he observes a few very plain facts, mostly relating to Egeria, it is true. If it does come to anything, I hope he won't ask her to live in a college settlement the year round, though I haven't the slightest doubt that she would like it. If there were ever two beings created expressly for each other, it is these two, and for that reason I have my doubts about the matter. Almost all marriages are made between two people who haven't the least thing in common, so far as outsiders can judge. Egeria and Atlas are almost too well suited for marriage."

The progress of the affair had thus far certainly been astonishingly rapid, but it might mean nothing. Egeria's mind and heart were so easy of access up to a certain point that the traveller sometimes overestimated the distance covered and the distance still to cover. Atlas quoted something about her at the end of the very first day, that described her charmingly: "Ordinarily, the sweetest ladies will make us pass through cold mist and cross a stile or two, or a broken bridge, before the formalities are cleared away, to grant us rights of citizenship. She is like those frank lands where we have not to hand out a passport at the frontier and wait for dubious inspection." But the description is incomplete. Egeria, indeed, made no one wait at the frontier for a dubious inspection of his passport; but once in the new domain, while he would be cordially welcomed to parks, gardens, lakes, and pleasure grounds, he would find unexpected difficulty in entering the queen's private apartments, a fact that occasioned surprise to some of the travellers.

We all took the greatest interest, too, in the romance of Phoebe and Jem, for the course of true love did not run at all smooth for this young couple. Jack wrote a ballad about her, and Egeria made a tune to it, and sang it to the tinkling, old-fashioned piano of an evening:—

"Have you e'er seen the street of Clovelly?
The quaint, rambling street of Clovelly,
With its staircase of stone leading down to the sea,
To the harbour so sleepy, so old, and so wee,
The queer, crooked street of Clovelly.

"Have you e'er seen the lass of Clovelly?
The sweet little lass of Clovelly,
With kirtle of grey reaching just to her knee,
And ankles as neat as ankles may be,
The yellow-haired lass of Clovelly.

"There's a good honest lad in Clovelly,
A bold, fisher lad of Clovelly,
With purpose as straight and swagger as free
As the course of his boat when breasting a sea,
The brave sailor lad of Clovelly.

"Have you e'er seen the church at Clovelly?
Have you heard the sweet bells of Clovelly?
The lad and the lassie will hear them, maybe,
And join hand in hand to sail over life's sea
From the little stone church at Clovelly."

When the nights were cool or damp we crowded into Mrs. Jack's tiny china-laden sitting-room, and had a blaze in the grate with a bit of driftwood burning blue and green and violet on top of the coals. Tommy sometimes smelled of herring to such a degree that we were obliged to keep the door open; but his society was so precious that we endured the odours.

But there were other evenings out of doors, when we sat in a sheltered corner down on the pier, watching the line of limestone cliffs running westward to the revolving light at Hartland Point that sent us alternate flashes of ruby and white across the water. Clovelly lamps made glittering disks in the quay pool, shining there side by side with the reflected star-beams. We could hear the regular swish-swash of the waves on the rocks, and to the eastward the dripping of a stream that came tumbling over the cliff.

Such was our last evening in Clovelly; a very quiet one, for the charm of the place lay upon us and we were loath to leave it. It was warm and balmy, and the moonlight lay upon the beach. Egeria leaned against the parapet, the serge of her dress showing white against the background of rock. The hood of her dark blue yachting-cape was slipping off her head, and her eyes were as deep and clear as crystal pools.

Presently she began to sing,—first, "The Sands o' Dee," then,—

> "Three fishers went sailing out into the west,
> Out into the west as the sun went down;
> Each thought of the woman who loved him the best,
> And the children stood watching them out of the town."

Egeria is one of the few women who can sing well without an accompaniment. She has a thrilling voice, and what with the scene, the hour, and the pathos of Kingsley's verses, tears rushed into my eyes, and Bill Marks' words came back to me—"Two-and-twenty men drowned; that's what it means to plough the great salt field that is never sown."

Atlas gazed at her with eyes that no longer cared to keep their secret. Mrs. Jack was still uncertain; for me, I was sure. Love had rushed past him like a galloping horseman, and shooting an arrow almost without aim, had struck him full in the heart, that citadel that had withstood a dozen deliberate sieges.

It was midnight, and our few belongings were packed. Egeria had come to the Inn to sleep, and stole into my room to warm her toes before the blaze in my grate, for I was chilly and had ordered a sixpenny fire. When I say that she came in to warm her toes, I am asking you to accept her statement, not mine; it is my opinion that she came in for no other purpose than to tell me something that was in her mind and heart pleading for utterance.

I didn't help her by leading up to the subject, because I thought her fib so flagrant and unnecessary; accordingly, we talked over a multitude of things,—Phoebe and Jem and their hard-hearted parents, our visit to Cardiff and Ilfracombe, Bill Marks and his wife, the service at the church, and finally her walk with Atlas in the churchyard.

"We went inside," said Egeria, "and I copied the inscription on the bronze tablet that Atlas liked so much on Sunday: 'Her grateful and affectionate husband's last and proudest wish will be that whenever Divine Providence shall call him hence, his name may be engraved on the same tablet that is sacred in perpetuating as much virtue and goodness as could adorn human nature.'" Then she went on, with apparent lack of sequence: "Penelope, don't you think it is always perfectly safe to obey a Scriptural command, because I have done it?"

"Did you find it in the Old or the New Testament?"

"The Old."

"I should say that if you found some remarks about breaking the bones of your enemy, and have twisted it out of its connection, it would be particularly bad advice to follow."

"It is nothing of that sort."

"What is it, then?"

She took out a tortoise-shell dagger just here, and gave her head an absent-minded shake so that her lustrous coil of hair uncoiled itself and fell on her shoulders in a ruddy spiral. It was a sight to induce

covetousness, but one couldn't be envious of Egeria. She charmed one by her lack of consciousness.

> "The happy lot
> Be his to follow
> Those threads through lovely curve and hollow,
> And muse a lifetime how they got
> Into that wild, mysterious knot,"—

quoted I, as I gave her head an insinuating pat. "Come, Egeria, stand and deliver! What is the Scriptural command, that having first obeyed, you ask my advice about afterwards?"

"Have you a Bible?"

"You might not think it, but I have, and it is here on my table."

"Then I am going into my room, to lock the door, and call the verse through the keyhole. But you must promise not to say a word to me till to-morrow morning."

I was not in a position to dictate terms, so I promised. The door closed, the bolt shot into the socket, and Egeria's voice came so faintly through the keyhole that I had to stoop to catch the words:—

"Deuteronomy, 10:19."

I flew to my Bible. Genesis—Exodus—Leviticus—Numbers—Deuteronomy—Deut-er-on-omy—Ten—Nineteen—

"*Love ye therefore the stranger—*"

V
PENELOPE AT HOME

"'Tis good when you have crossed the sea and back
To find the sit-fast acres where you left them."

EMERSON.

BERESFORD BROADACRES,
April 15, 19–.

PENELOPE, in the old sense, is no more! No mound of grass and daisies covers her; no shaft of granite or marble marks the place where she rests;—as a matter of fact she never does rest; she walks and runs and sits and stands, but her travelling days are over. For the present, in a word, the reason that she is no longer "Penelope," with dozens of portraits and three volumes of "Experiences" to her credit, is, that she is Mrs. William Hunt Beresford.

As for Himself, he is just as much William Hunt Beresford as ever he was, for marriage has not staled, nor fatherhood withered, his infinite variety. There may be, indeed, a difference, ever so slight; a new dignity, and an air of responsibility that harmonizes well with the inch of added girth at his waist-line and the grey thread or two that becomingly sprinkle his dark hair.

And where is Herself, the vanished Penelope, you ask; the companion of Salemina and Francesca; the traveller in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales; the wanderer in Switzerland and Italy? Well, if she is a thought less irresponsible, merry, and loquacious, she is happier and wiser. If her easel and her palette are not in daily evidence, neither are they

altogether banished from the scene; and whatever measure of cunning Penelope's hand possessed in other days, Mrs. Beresford has contrived to preserve.

If she wields the duster occasionally, in alternation with the paint-brush and the pen, she has now a new choice of weapons; and as for models,—her friends, her neighbours, even her enemies and rivals, might admire her ingenuity, her thrift, and her positive genius in selecting types to paint! She never did paint anything beautifully but children, though her backgrounds have been praised, also the various young things that were a vital part of every composition. She could never draw a horse or a cow or an ox to her satisfaction, but a long-legged colt, or a newborn Bossy-calf were well within her powers. Her puppies and kittens and chickens and goslings were always admired by the public, and the fact that the mothers and fathers in the respective groups were never quite as convincing as their offspring,—this somehow escaped the notice of the critics.

Very well, then, what was Penelope inspired to do when she became Mrs. Beresford and left the Atlantic rolling between the beloved Salemina, Francesca, and herself? Why, having "crossed the sea and back" repeatedly, she found "the sit-fast acres" of the house of Beresford where she "left them" and where they had been sitting fast for more than a hundred years.

"Here is the proper place for us to live," she said to Himself, when they first viewed the dear delightful New England landscape over together. "Here is where your long roots are, and as my roots have been in half a hundred places they can be easily transplanted. You have a decent income to begin on; why not eke it out with apples and hay and corn and Jersey cows and Plymouth Rock cocks and hens, while I use the scenery for my pictures? There are backgrounds here for a thousand canvases, all within a mile of your ancestral doorstep."

“I don’t know what you will do for models in this remote place,” said Himself, putting his hands in his pockets and gazing dubiously at the abandoned farm-houses on the hillsides; the still green dooryards on the village street where no children were playing, and the quiet little brick school-house at the turn of the road, from which a dozen half-grown boys and girls issued decorously, looking at us like scared rabbits.

“I have an idea about models,” said Mrs. Beresford.

And it turned out that she had, for all that was ten years ago, and Penelope the Painter, merged in Mrs. Beresford the mother, has the three loveliest models in all the countryside!

Children, of course, are common enough everywhere; not, perhaps, as common as they should be, but there are a good many clean, well-behaved, truthful, decently-featured little boys and girls who will, in course of time, become the bulwarks of the Republic, who are of no use as models. The public is not interested in, and will neither purchase nor hang on its walls anything but a winsome child, a beautiful child, a pathetic child, or a picturesquely ragged and dirty child. (The latter type is preferably a foreigner, as dirty American children are for some reason or other quite unsalable.)

All this is in explanation of the foregoing remarks about Mrs. Beresford’s ingenuity, thrift, and genius in selecting types to paint. The ingenuity lay in the idea itself; the thrift, in securing models that should belong to the Beresford “sit-fast acres” and not have to be searched for and “hired in” by the day; and the genius, in producing nothing but enchanting, engrossing, adorable, eminently “paintable” children. They are just as obedient, interesting, grammatical, and virtuous as other people’s offspring, yet they are so beautiful that it would be the height of selfishness not to let the world see them and turn green with envy.

When viewed by the casual public in a gallery, nobody of course believes that they are real until some kind friend says: “No, oh, no! not ideal heads at all; perfect likenesses; the children of Mr. and Mrs. Beresford;

Penelope Hamilton, whose signature you see in the corner, *is* Mrs. Beresford."

When they are exhibited in the guise of, and under such titles as: "Young April," "In May Time," "Girl with Chickens," "Three of a Kind" (Billy with a kitten and a puppy tumbling over him), "Little Mothers" (Frances and Sally with their dolls), "When all the World is Young" (Billy, Frances, and Sally under the trees surrounded by a riot of young feathered things, with a lamb and a Jersey calf peeping over a fence in the background), then Himself stealthily visits the gallery. He stands somewhere near the pictures pulling his moustache nervously and listening to the comments of the bystanders. Not a word of his identity or paternity does he vouchsafe, but occasionally some acquaintance happens to draw near, perhaps to compliment or congratulate him. Then he has been heard to say vaingloriously: "Oh, no! they are not flattered; rather the reverse. My wife has an extraordinary faculty of catching likenesses, and of course she has a wonderful talent, but she agrees with me that she never quite succeeds in doing the children justice!"

Here we are, then, Himself and I, growing old with the country that gave us birth (God bless it!) and our children growing up with it, as they always should; for it must have occurred to the reader that I am Penelope, Hamilton that was, and also, and above all, that I am Mrs. William Hunt Beresford.

April 20, 19–.

Himself and I have gone through the inevitable changes that life and love, marriage and parenthood, bring to all human creatures; but no one of the dear old group of friends has so developed as Francesca. Her last letter, posted in Scotland and delivered here seven days later, is like a breath of the purple heather and brings her vividly to mind.

In the old days when we first met she was gay, irresponsible, vivacious, and a decided flirt,—with symptoms of becoming a coquette. She was capricious and exacting; she had far too large an income for a young girl

accountable to nobody; she was lovely to look upon, a product of cities and a trifle spoiled.

She danced through Europe with Salemina and me, taking in no more information than she could help, but charming everybody that she met. She was only fairly well educated, and such knowledge as she possessed was vague, uncertain, and never ready for instant use. In literature she knew Shakespeare, Balzac, Thackeray, Hawthorne, and Longfellow, but if you had asked her to place Homer, Schiller, Dante, Victor Hugo, James Fenimore Cooper, or Thoreau she couldn't have done it within a hundred years.

In history she had a bowing acquaintance with Napoleon, Washington, Wellington, Prince Charlie, Henry of Navarre, Paul Revere, and Stonewall Jackson, but as these gallant gentlemen stand on the printed page, so they stood shoulder to shoulder, elbowing one another in her pretty head, made prettier by a wealth of hair, Marcel-waved twice a week.

These facts were brought out once in examination, by one of Francesca's earliest lovers, who, at Salemina's request and my own, acted as her tutor during the spring before our first trip abroad, the general idea being to prepare her mind for foreign travel.

I suppose we were older and should have known better than to allow any man under sixty to tutor Francesca in the spring. Anyhow, the season worked its maddest pranks on the pedagogue. He fell in love with his pupil within a few days,—they were warm, delicious, budding days, for it was a very early, verdant, intoxicating spring that produced an unusual crop of romances in our vicinity. Unfortunately the tutor was a scholar at heart, as well as a potential lover, and he interested himself in making psychological investigations of Francesca's mind. She was perfectly willing, for she always regarded her ignorance as a huge joke, instead of viewing it with shame and embarrassment. What was more natural, when she drove, rode, walked, sailed, danced, and "sat out" to her heart's content, while more learned young ladies stayed within doors and went

to bed at nine o'clock with no vanity-provoking memories to lull them to sleep? The fact that she might not be positive as to whether Dante or Milton wrote "Paradise Lost," or Palestrina antedated Berlioz, or the Mississippi River ran north and south or east and west,—these trifling uncertainties had never cost her an offer of marriage or the love of a girl friend; so she was perfectly frank and offered no opposition to the investigations of the unhappy but conscientious tutor, meeting his questions with the frankness of a child. Her attitude of mind was the more candid because she suspected the passion of the teacher and knew of no surer way to cure him than to let him know her mind for what it was.

When the staggering record of her ignorance on seven subjects was set down in a green-covered blank book, she awaited the result not only with resignation, but with positive hope; a hope that proved to be ill-founded, for curiously enough the tutor was still in love with her. Salemina was surprised, but I was not. Of course I had to know anatomy in order to paint, but there is more in it than that. In painting the outsides of people I assure you that I learned to guess more of what was inside them than their bony structures! I sketched the tutor while he was examining Francesca and I knew that there were no abysmal depths of ignorance that could appall him where she was concerned. He couldn't explain the situation at all, himself. If there was anything that he admired and respected in woman, it was a well-stored, logical mind, and three months' tutoring of Francesca had shown him that her mental machinery was of an obsolete pattern and that it was not even in good working order. He could not believe himself influenced (so he confessed to me) by such trivial things as curling lashes, pink ears, waving hair (he had never heard of Marcel), or mere beauties of colour and line and form. He said he was not so sure about Francesca's eyes. Eyes like hers, he remarked in confidence, were not beneath the notice of any man, be he President of Harvard University or Master of Balliol College, for they seemed to promise something never once revealed in the green examination book.

"You are quite right," I answered him; "the green book is not all there is of Miss Monroe, but whatever there is is plainly not for you"; and he humbly agreed with my dictum.

Is it not strange that a man will talk to one woman about the charms of another for days upon days without ever realizing that she may possibly be born for some other purpose than listening to him? For an hour or two, of course, any sympathetic or generous-minded person can be interested in the confidences of a lover; but at the end of weeks or months, during which time he has never once regarded his listener as a human being of the feminine gender, with eyes, nose, and hair in no way inferior to those of his beloved,—at the end of that time he should be shaken, smitten, waked from his dreams, and told in ringing tones that in a tolerably large universe there are probably two women worth looking at, the one about whom he is talking, and the one to whom he is talking!

May 12, 19–.

To go on about Francesca, she always had a quick intelligence, a sense of humour, a heart, and a conscience; four things not to be despised in the equipment of a woman. The wit she used lavishly for the delight of the world at large; the heart had not (in the tutor's time) found anything or anybody on which to spend itself; the conscience certainly was not working overtime at the same period, but I always knew that it was there and would be an excellent reliable organ when once aroused.

Of course there is no reason why the Reverend Ronald MacDonald, of the Established Church of Scotland, should have been the instrument chosen to set all the wheels of Francesca's being in motion, but so it was; and a great clatter and confusion they made in our Edinburgh household when the machinery started! If Ronald was handsome he was also a splendid fellow; if he was a preacher he was also a man; and no member of the laity could have been more ardently and satisfactorily in love than he. It was the ardour that worked the miracle; and when Francesca was once warmed through to the core, she began to grow. Her modest

fortune helped things a little at the beginning of their married life, for it not only made existence easier, but enabled them to be of more service in the straggling, struggling country parishes where they found themselves at first.

Francesca's beautiful American clothes shocked Ronald's congregations now and then, and it was felt that, though possible, it was not very probable, that the grace of God could live with such hats and shoes, such gloves and jewels as hers. But by the time Ronald was called from his Argyllshire church to St. Giles's Cathedral in Edinburgh there was a better understanding of young Mrs. MacDonald's raiment and its relation to natural and revealed religion. It appeared now that a clergyman's wife, by strict attention to parochial duties; by being the mother of three children all perfectly well behaved in church; by subscribing generously to all worthy charities; by never conducting herself as light-mindedly as her eyes and conversation seemed to portend,—it appeared that a woman *could* live down her clothes! It was a Bishop, I think, who argued in Francesca's behalf that godliness did not necessarily dwell in frieze and stout leather and that it might flourish in lace and chiffon. Salemina and I used to call Ronald and Francesca the antinomic pair. Antinomics, one finds by consulting the authorities, are apparently contradictory poles, which, however, do not really contradict, but are only correlatives, the existence of one making the existence of the other necessary, explaining each other and giving each other a real standing and equilibrium.

May 7, 19–.

What immeasurable leagues of distance lie between Salemina, Francesca, and me! Not only leagues of space divide us, but the difference in environment, circumstances, and responsibilities that give reality to space; yet we have bridged the gulf successfully by a particular sort of three-sided correspondence, almost impersonal enough to be published, yet revealing all the little details of daily life one to the other.

When we three found that we should be inevitably separated for some years, we adopted the habit of a "loose-leaf diary." The pages are perforated with large circular holes and put together in such a way that one can remove any leaf without injuring the book. We write down, as the spirit moves us, the more interesting happenings of the day, and once in a fortnight, perhaps, we slip a half-dozen selected pages into an envelope and the packet starts on its round between America, Scotland, and Ireland. In this way we have kept up with each other without any apparent severing of intimate friendship, and a farmhouse in New England, a manse in Scotland, and the Irish home of a Trinity College professor and his lady are brought into frequent contact.

Inspired by Francesca's last budget, full of all sorts of revealing details of her daily life, I said to Himself at breakfast: "I am not going to paint this morning, nor am I going to 'keep house'; I propose to write in my loose-leaf diary, and what is more I propose to write about marriage!"

When I mentioned to Himself the subject I intended to treat, he looked up in alarm.

"Don't, I beg of you, Penelope," he said. "If you do it the other two will follow suit. Women cannot discuss marriage without dragging in husbands, and MacDonald, La Touche, and I won't have a leg to stand upon. The trouble with these 'loose leaves' that you three keep for ever in circulation is, that the cleverer they are the more publicity they get. Francesca probably reads your screeds at her Christian Endeavour meetings just as you cull extracts from Salemina's for your Current Events Club. In a word, the loosened leaf leads to the loosened tongue, and that's rather epigrammatic for a farmer at breakfast time."

"I am not going to write about husbands," I said, "least of all my own, but about marriage as an institution; the part it plays in the evolution of human beings."

“Nevertheless, everything you say about it will reflect upon me,” argued Himself. “The only husband a woman knows is her own husband, and everything she thinks about marriage is gathered from her own experience.”

“Your attitude is not only timid, it is positively cowardly!” I exclaimed. “You are an excellent husband as husbands go, and I don’t consider that I have retrograded mentally or spiritually during our ten years of life together. It is true nothing has been said in private or public about any improvement in me due to your influence, but perhaps that is because the idea has got about that your head is easily turned by flattery.—Anyway, I shall be entirely impersonal in what I write. I shall say I believe in marriage because I cannot think of any better arrangement; also that I believe in marrying men because there is nothing else *to* marry. I shall also quote that feminist lecturer who said that the bitter business of every woman in the world is to convert a trap into a home. Of course I laughed inwardly, but my shoulders didn’t shake for two minutes as yours did. They were far more eloquent than any loose leaf from a diary; for they showed every other man in the audience that you didn’t consider that *you* had to set any ‘traps’ for *me*!”

Himself leaned back in his chair and gave way to unbridled mirth. When he could control his speech, he wiped the tears from his eyes and said offensively:—

“Well, I didn’t; did I?”

“No,” I replied, flinging the tea-cosy at his head, missing it, and breaking the oleander on the plant-shelf ten feet distant.

“You wouldn’t be unmarried for the world!” said Himself. “You couldn’t paint every day, you know you couldn’t; and where could you find anything so beautiful to paint as your own children unless you painted me; and it just occurs to me that you never paid me the compliment of asking me to sit for you.”

"I can't paint men," I objected. "They are too massive and rugged and ugly. Their noses are big and hard and their bones show through everywhere excepting when they are fat and then they are disgusting. Their eyes don't shine, their hair is never beautiful, they have no dimples in their hands and elbows; you can't see their mouths because of their moustaches, and generally it's no loss; and their clothes are stiff and conventional with no colour, nor any flowing lines to paint."

"I know where you keep your 'properties,' and I'll make myself a mass of colour and flowing lines if you'll try me," Himself said meekly.

"No, dear," I responded amiably. "You are very nice, but you are not a costume man, and I shudder to think what you would make of yourself if I allowed you to visit my property-room. If I ever have to paint you (not for pleasure, but as a punishment), you shall wear your everyday corduroys and I'll surround you with the children; then you know perfectly well that the public will never notice you at all." Whereupon I went to my studio built on the top of the long rambling New England shed and loved what I painted yesterday so much that I went on with it, finding that I had said to Himself almost all that I had in mind to say, about marriage as an institution.

June 15, 19–.

We were finishing luncheon on the veranda with all out of doors to give us appetite. It was Buttercup Sunday, a yellow June one that had been preceded by Pussy Willow Sunday, Dandelion Sunday, Apple Blossom, Wild Iris, and Lilac Sunday, to be followed by Daisy and Black-Eyed Susan and White Clematis and Goldenrod and Wild Aster and Autumn Leaf Sundays.

Francie was walking over the green-sward with a bowl and spoon, just as our Scottish men friends used to do with oat-meal at breakfast time. The Sally-baby was blowing bubbles in her milk, and Himself and I were discussing a book lately received from London.

Suddenly I saw Billy, who had wandered from the table, sitting on the steps bending over a tiny bird's egg in his open hand. I knew that he must have taken it from some low-hung nest, but taken it in innocence, for he looked at it with solicitude as an object of tender and fragile beauty. He had never given a thought to the mother's days of patient brooding, nor that he was robbing the summer world of one bird's flight and one bird's song.

"Did you hear the whippoorwills singing last night, Daddy?" I asked.

"I did, indeed, and long before sunrise this morning. There must be a new family in our orchard, I think; but then we have coaxed hundreds of birds our way this spring by our little houses, our crumbs, and our drinking dishes."

"Yes, we have never had so many since we came here to live. Look at that little brown bird flying about in the tall apple-tree, Francie; she seems to be in trouble."

"P'r'haps it's Mrs. Smiff's wenomous cat," exclaimed Francie, running to look for a particularly voracious animal that lived across the fields, but had been known to enter our bird-Eden.

"Hear this, Daddy; isn't it pretty?" I said, taking up the "Life of Dorothy Grey."

Billy pricked up his ears, for he can never see a book opened without running to join the circle, so eager he is not to lose a precious word.

"The wren sang early this morning" (I read slowly). "We talked about it at breakfast and how many people there were who would not be aware of it; and E. said, 'Fancy, if God came in and said: "Did you notice my wren?" and they were obliged to say they had not known it was there!'"

Billy rose quietly and stole away behind the trees, returning in a few moments, empty-handed, to stand by my side.

“Does God know how many eggs there are in a bird’s nest, mother?” he asked.

“People have so many different ideas about what God sees and takes note of, that it’s hard to say, sonny. Of course you remember that the Bible says not one sparrow falls to the ground but He knows it.”

“The mother bird can’t count her eggs, can she, mother?”

“Oh! Billy, you do ask the hardest questions; ones that I can never answer by Yes and No! She broods her eggs all day and all night and never lets them get cold, so she must know, at any rate, that they are going to *be* birds, don’t you think? And of course she wouldn’t want to lose one; that’s the reason she’s so faithful!”

“Well!” said Billy, after a long pause, “I don’t care quite so much about the mother, because sometimes there are five eggs in a weeny, weeny nest that never could hold five little ones without their scrunching each other and being uncomfortable. But if God should come in and say: ‘Did you take my egg, that was going to be a bird?’ I just couldn’t bear it!”

June 15, 19–.

Another foreign mail is in and the village postmistress has sent an impassioned request that I steam off the stamps for her boy’s album, enriched during my residence here by specimens from eleven different countries. (“Mis’ Beresford beats the Wanderin’ Jew all holler if so be she’s be’n to all them places, an’ come back alive!”—so she says to Himself.) Among the letters there is a budget of loose leaves from Salemina’s diary, Salemina, who is now Mrs. Gerald La Touche, wife of Professor La Touche, of Trinity College, Dublin, and stepmother to Jackeen and Broona La Touche.

It is midsummer, College is not in session, and they are at Rosnaree House, their place in County Meath.

Salemina is the one of our trio who continues to move in grand society. She it is who dines at the Viceregal Lodge and Dublin Castle. She it is who goes with her distinguished husband for week-ends with the Master of the Horse, the Lord Chancellor, and the Dean of the Chapel Royal. Francesca, it is true, makes her annual bow to the Lord High Commissioner at Holyrood Palace and dines there frequently during Assembly Week; and as Ronald numbers one Duke, two Earls, and several Countesses and Dowager Countesses in his parish, there are awe-inspiring visiting cards to be found in the silver salver on her hall table, —but Salemina in Ireland literally lives with the great, of all classes and conditions! She is in the heart of the Irish Theatre and the Modern Poetry movements,—and when she is not hobnobbing with playwrights and poets she is consorting with the Irish nobility and gentry.

I cannot help thinking that she would still be Miss Peabody, of Salem, Massachusetts, had it not been for my generous and helpful offices, and those of Francesca! Never were two lovers, parted in youth in America and miraculously reunited in middle age in Ireland, more recalcitrant in declaring their mutual affection than Dr. La Touche and Salemina! Nothing in the world divided them but imaginary barriers. He was not rich, but he had a comfortable salary and a dignified and honourable position among men. He had two children, but they were charming, and therefore so much to the good. Salemina was absolutely "foot loose" and tied down to no duties in America, so no one could blame her for marrying an Irishman. She had never loved any one else, and Dr. La Touche might have had that information for the asking; but he was such a bat for blindness, adder for deafness, and lamb for meekness that because she refused him once, when she was the only comfort of an aged mother and father, he concluded that she would refuse him again, though she was now alone in the world. His late wife, a poor, flighty, frivolous invalid, the kind of woman who always entangles a sad, vague, absent-minded scholar, had died six years before, and never were there two children so in need of a mother as Jackeen and Broona, a couple of affectionate, hot-headed, bewitching, ragged, tousled Irish darlings. I

would cheerfully have married Dr. Gerald myself, just for the sake of his neglected babies, but I dislike changes and I had already espoused Himself.

However, a summer in Ireland, undertaken with no such great stakes in mind as Salemina's marriage, made possible a chance meeting of the two old friends. This was followed by several others, devised by us with incendiary motives, and without Salemina's knowledge. There was also the unconscious plea of the children working a daily spell; there was the past, with its memories, tugging at both their hearts; and above all there was a steady, dogged, copious stream of mental suggestion emanating from Francesca and me, so that, in course of time, our middle-aged couple did succeed in confessing to each other that a separate future was impossible for them.

They never would have encountered each other had it not been for us; never, never would have become engaged; and as for the wedding, we forcibly led them to the altar, saying that we must leave Ireland and the ceremony could not be delayed.

Not that we are the recipients of any gratitude for all this! Rather the reverse! They constantly allude to their marriage as made in Heaven, although there probably never was another union where creatures of earth so toiled and slaved to assist the celestial powers.

I wonder why middle-aged and elderly lovers make such an appeal to me! Is it because I have lived much in New England, where "ladies-in-waiting" are all too common,—where the wistful bride-groom has an invalid mother to support, or a barren farm out of which he cannot wring a living, or a malignant father who cherishes a bitter grudge against his son's chosen bride and all her kindred,—where the woman herself is compassed about with obstacles, dragging out a pinched and colourless existence year after year?

And when at length the two waiting ones succeed in triumphing over circumstances, they often come together wearily, soberly, with half the joy pressed out of life. Young lovers have no fears! That the future holds any terrors, difficulties, bugbears of any sort they never seem to imagine, and so they are delightful and amusing to watch in their gay and sometimes irresponsible and selfish courtships; but they never tug at my heart-strings as their elders do, when the great, the long-delayed moment comes.

Francesca and I, in common with Salemina's other friends, thought that she would never marry. She had been asked often enough in her youth, but she was not the sort of woman who falls in love at forty. What we did not know was that she had fallen in love with Gerald La Touche at five-and-twenty and had never fallen out,—keeping her feelings to herself during the years that he was espoused to another, very unsuitable lady. Our own sentimental experiences, however, had sharpened our eyes, and we divined at once that Dr. La Touche, a scholar of fifty, shy, reserved, self-distrustful, and oh! so in need of anchor and harbour,—that he was the only husband in the world for Salemina; and that he, after giving all that he had and was to an unappreciative woman, would be unspeakably blessed in the wife of our choosing.

I remember so well something that he said to me once as we sat at twilight on the bank of the lake near Devorgilla. The others were rowing toward us bringing the baskets for a tea picnic, and we, who had come in the first boat, were talking quietly together about intimate things. He told me that a frail old scholar, a brother professor, used to go back from the college to his house every night bowed down with weariness and pain and care, and that he used to say to his wife as he sank into his seat by the fire: "Oh! praise me, my wife, praise me!"

My eyes filled and I turned away to hide the tears when Dr. Gerald continued absently: "As for me, Mistress Beresford, when I go home at night I take my only companion from the mantelshelf and leaning back in my old armchair say, 'Praise me, my pipe, praise me!'"

And Salemina Peabody was in the boat coming toward us, looking as serenely lovely in a grey tweed and broad white hat as any good sweet woman of forty could look, while he gazed at her "through a glass darkly" as if she were practically non-existent, or had nothing whatever to do with the case.

I concealed rebellious opinions of blind bats, deaf adders, meek lambs, and obstinate pigs, but said very gently and impersonally: "I hope you won't always allow your pipe to be your only companion;—you, with your children, your name and position, your home and yourself to give—to somebody!"

But he only answered: "You exaggerate, my dear madam; there is not enough left in me or of me to offer to any woman!"

And I could do nothing but make his tea graciously and hand it to him, wondering that he was able to see the cup or the bread-and-butter sandwich that I put into his modest, ungrateful hand.

However, it is all a thing of the past, that dim, sweet, grey romance that had its rightful background in a country of subdued colourings, of pensive sweetness, of gentle greenery, where there is an eternal wistfulness in the face of the natural world, speaking of the springs of hidden tears.

Their union is a perfect success, and I echo the Boots of the inn at Devorgilla when he said: "An' sure it's the doctor that's the satisfied man an' the luck is on him as well as on e'er a man alive! As for her ladyship, she's one o' the blessings o' the wurruld an' 't would be an o'jus pity to spile two houses wid 'em."

July 12, 19–.

We were all out in the orchard sunning ourselves on the little haycocks that the "hired man" had piled up here and there under the trees.

“It is not really so beautiful as Italy,” I said to Himself, gazing up at the newly set fruit on the apple boughs and then across the close-cut hay field to the level pasture, with its rocks and cow paths, its blueberry bushes and sweet fern, its clumps of young sumachs, till my eyes fell upon the deep green of the distant pines. “I can’t bear to say it, because it seems disloyal, but I almost believe I think so.”

“It is not as picturesque,” Himself agreed grudgingly, his eye following mine from point to point; “and why do we love it so?”

“There is nothing delicious and luxuriant about it,” I went on critically, “yet it has a delicate, ethereal, austere, straight-forward Puritanical loveliness of its own; but, no, it is not as beautiful as Italy or Ireland, and it isn’t as tidy as England. If you keep away from the big manufacturing towns and their outskirts you may go by motor or railway through shire after shire in England and never see anything unkempt, down-at-the-heel, out-at-elbows, or ill-cared-for; no broken-down fences or stone walls; no heaps of rubbish or felled trees by the wayside; no unpainted or tottering buildings—”

“You see plenty of ruins,” interrupted Himself in a tone that promised argument.

“Yes, but ruins are different; they are finished; they are not tottering, they *have* tottered! Our country is too big, I suppose, to be ‘tidy,’ but how I should like to take just one of the United States and clear it up, back yards and all, from border line to border line!”

“You are talking like a housewife now, not like an artist,” said Himself reprovingly.

“Well, I am both, I hope, and I don’t intend that any one shall know where the one begins or the other leaves off, either! And if any foreigner should remark that America is unfinished or untidy I shall deny it!”

“Fie! Penelope! You who used to be a citizen of the world!”

“So I am still, so far as a roving foot and a knowledge of three languages can make me; but you remember that the soul ‘retains the characteristic of its race and the heart is true to its own country, even to its own parish.’”

“When shall we be going to the other countries, mother?” asked Billy. “When shall we see our aunt in Scotland and our aunt in Ireland?” (Poor lambs! Since the death of their Grandmother Beresford they do not possess a real relation in the world!)

“It will not be very long, Billy,” I said. “We don’t want to go until we can leave the perambulator behind. The Sally-baby toddles now, but she must be able to walk on the English downs and the Highland heather.”

“And the Irish bogs,” interpolated Billy, who has a fancy for detail.

“Well, the Irish bogs are not always easy travelling,” I answered, “but the Sally-baby will soon be old enough to feel the spring of the Irish turf under her feet.”

“What will the chickens and ducklings and pigeons do while we are gone?” asked Francie.

“An’ the lammies?” piped the Sally-baby, who has all the qualities of Mary in the immortal lyric.

“Oh! we won’t leave home until the spring has come and all the young things are born. The grass will be green, the dandelions will have their puff-balls on, the apple blossoms will be over, and Daddy will get a kind man to take care of everything for us. It will be May time and we will sail in a big ship over to the aunts and uncles in Scotland and Ireland and I shall show them my children—”

“And we shall play ‘hide-and-go-coop’ with their children,” interrupted Francie joyously.

“They will never have heard of that game, but you will all play together!” And here I leaned back on the warm haycock and blinked my eyes a bit in moist anticipation of happiness to come. “There will be eight-year-old Ronald MacDonald to climb and ride and sail with our Billy; and there will be little Penelope who is named for me, and will be Francie’s playmate; and the new little boy baby—”

“Proba’ly Aunt Francie’s new boy baby will grow up and marry our girl one,” suggested Billy.

“He has my consent to the alliance in advance,” said Himself, “but I dare say your mother has arranged it all in her own mind and my advice will not be needed.”

“I have not arranged anything,” I retorted; “or if I have it was nothing more than a thought of young Ronald or Jack La Touche in—another quarter,”—this with discreetly veiled emphasis.

“What is another quarter, mother?” inquired Francie, whose mental agility is somewhat embarrassing.

“Oh, why,—well,—it is any other place than the one you are talking about. Do you see?”

“Not so very well, but p’r’aps I will in a minute.”

“Hope springs eternal!” quoted Francie’s father.

“And then, as I was saying before being interrupted by the entire family, we will go and visit the Irish cousins, Jackeen and Broona, who belong to Aunt Salemina and Uncle Gerald, and the Sally-baby will be the centre of attraction because she is her Aunt Salemina’s godchild—”

“But we are all God’s children,” insisted Billy.

“Of course we are.”

“What’s the difference between a god-child and a God’s child?”

“The bottle of chloroform is in the medicine closet, my poor dear; shall I run and get it?” murmured Himself *sotto voce*.

“Every child is a child of God,” I began helplessly, “and when she is somebody’s godchild she—oh! lend me your handkerchief, Billy!”

“Is it the nose-bleed, mother?” he asked, bending over me solicitously.

“No, oh, no! it’s nothing at all, dear. Perhaps the hay was going to make me sneeze. What was I saying?”

“About the god—”

“Oh, yes! I remember! (*Ka-choo*!) We will take the Irish cousins and the Scotch cousins and go all together to see the Tower of London and Westminster Abbey. We’ll go to Bushey Park and see the chestnuts in bloom, and will dine at Number 10, Dovermarle Street—”

“I shall not go there, Billy,” said Himself. “It was at Number 10, Dovermarle Street that your mother told me she wouldn’t marry me; or at least that she’d have to do a lot of thinking before she’d say Yes; so she left London and went to North Malvern.”

“Couldn’t she think in London?” (This was Billy.)

“Didn’t she always want to be married to you?” (This was Francie.)

“Not always.”

“Didn’t she like *us*?” (Still Francie.)

“You were never mentioned,—not one of you!”

“That seems rather queer!” remarked Billy, giving me a reproachful look.

“So we’ll leave the Irish and Scotch uncles and aunts behind and go to North Malvern just by ourselves. It was there that your mother concluded that she *would* marry me, and I rather like the place.”

“Mother loves it, too; she talks to me about it when she puts me to bed.” (Francie again.)

“No doubt; but you’ll find your mother’s heart scattered all over the Continent of Europe. One bit will be clinging to a pink thorn in England; another will be in the Highlands somewhere,—wherever the heather’s in bloom; another will be hanging on the Irish gorse bushes where they are yellowest; and another will be hidden under the seat of a Venetian gondola.”

“Don’t listen to Daddy’s nonsense, children! He thinks mother throws her heart about recklessly while he loves only one thing at a time.”

“Four things!” expostulated Himself, gallantly viewing our little group at large.

“Strictly speaking, we are not four things, we are only four parts of one thing;—counting you in, and I really suppose you ought to be counted in, we are five parts of one thing.”

“Shall we come home again from the other countries?” asked Billy.

“Of course, sonny! The little Beresfords must come back and grow up with their own country.”

“Am I a little Beresford, mother?” asked Francie, looking wistfully at her brother as belonging to the superior sex and the eldest besides.

“Certainly.”

“And is the Sally-baby one too?”

Himself laughed unrestrainedly at this.

“She is,” he said, “but you are more than half mother, with your unexpectednesses.”

“I love to be more than half mother!” cried Francie, casting herself violently about my neck and imbedding me in the haycock.

“Thank you, dear, but pull me up now. It’s supper-time.”

Billy picked up the books and the rug and made preparations for the brief journey to the house. I put my hair in order and smoothed my skirts.

“Will there be supper like ours in the other countries, mother?” he asked. “And if we go in May time, when do we come back again?”

Himself rose from the ground with a luxurious stretch of his arms, looking with joy and pride at our home fields bathed in the afternoon midsummer sun. He took the Sally-baby’s outstretched hands and lifted her, crowing, to his shoulder.

“Help sister over the stubble, my son.—We’ll come away from the other countries whenever mother says: ‘Come, children, it’s time for supper.’”

“We’ll be back for Thanksgiving,” I assured Billy, holding him by one hand and Francie by the other, as we walked toward the farmhouse. “We won’t live in the other countries, because Daddy’s ‘sit-fast acres’ are here in New England.”

“But whenever and wherever we five are together, especially wherever mother is, it will always be home,” said Himself thankfully, under his breath.

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