

Abroad with the Jimmies

Lilian Bell

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[Illustration:

Lilian Bell

Duogravure

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Abroad with the Jimmies

BY

LILIAN BELL,

AUTHOR OF

"THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF AN OLD MAID," "THE EXPATRIATES," ETC.

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO My Dear Father, WHOSE HIGH TYPE OF PATRIOTISM, STEADFAST LOYALTY TO THE GOVERNMENT, AND DEVOTION TO HIS FAMILY HAVE TAUGHT ME WHEREIN LIE THE IDEALS OF LIFE.

Preface

If the critical public had cared to snub Mr. and Mrs. Jimmie and Bee, I, who am a fighting champion of theirs, would never have run the risk of boring it by a further chronicle of their travels. But from a careful survey of my mail, I may say that the present volume of their doings and undoings is a direct result of the friendships they formed in "As Seen by Me," and has almost literally been written by request.

With which statement, as the flushed and nervous singer, who responds to friendly clappings, comes forward, bows, sings, and retires, so do I, and the curtain falls on the Jimmies and Bee and me, all kissing our hands to the gallery.

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CHAPTER I

OUR HOUSE-BOAT AT HENLEY

It speaks volumes for an amiability I have always claimed for myself through sundry fierce disputes on the subject with my sister, that, even after two years of travel in Europe with her and Mr. and Mrs. Jimmie, they should still wish for my company for a journey across France and Germany to Russia. Bee says it speaks volumes for the tempers of the Jimmies, but then Bee is my sister, or to put it more properly, I am Bee's sister, and what woman is a heroine to her own sister?

In any event I am not. Bee thinks I am a creature of feeble intelligence who must be "managed." Bee loves to "manage" people, and I, who love to watch her circuitous, diplomatic, velvety, crooked way to a straight end, allow myself to be so "managed;" and so after safely disposing of Billy in the grandmotherly care of Mamma for another six months, Bee and I gaily took ship and landed safely at the door of the Cecil, having been escorted up from Southampton by Jimmie.

While repeated journeys to Europe lose the thrill of expectant uncertainty which one's first held, yet there is something very pleasing about "going back." And so we were particularly glad again to join forces with our friends the Jimmies and travel with them, for they, like Bee and me, travel aimlessly and are never hampered with plans.

Everybody seems to know that we do not mean business, and nobody has ever dared to ask whether our intentions were serious or not.

In this frame of mind we floated over to England and had a fortnight of "the season" in London. But this soon palled on us, and we fell into the idle mood of waiting for something to turn up.

One Sunday morning Bee and Mrs. Jimmie and I were sitting at a little table near the entrance to the Cecil Hotel, when Jimmie came out of a side door and sat down in front of us, leaning his elbows on the table and grinning at us in a suspicious silence. We all waited for him to begin, but he simply sat and smoked and grinned.

"Well! Well!" I said, impatiently, "What now?"

You would know that Jimmie was an American by the way he smokes. He simply eats up cigars, inhales them, chews them. The end of his cigar blazes like a danger signal and breathes like an engine. He can hold his hands and feet still, but his nervousness crops out in his smoking. Finally, exasperated by his continued silence, Bee said, severely:

"Jimmie, have you anything up your sleeve? If so, speak out!"

"Well!" said Jimmie, brushing the cigar ashes off his wife's skirt, "I thought I'd take you all out to Henley this morning to look at the house-boat."

"House-boat!" shrieked Bee and I in a whisper, clutching Jimmie by the sleeve and lapel of his coat and giving him an ecstatic shake.

"Are we going to have a house-boat?" asked Bee.

"We!" said Jimmie. "I am going to have a house-boat, and I am going to take my wife. If you are good perhaps she will ask you out to tea one afternoon."

"How many staterooms are there, Jimmie? Can we invite people to stay with us over night?" demanded Bee.

"You cannot," said Jimmie, firmly. "I said a house-boat, not a house party."

"I shall ask the duke," said Bee, clearing her throat in a pleased way. "Can't I, Mrs. Jimmie?"

"Certainly, dear. Ask any one you like."

"If you do," growled Jimmie, who hates the duke because he wears gloves in hot weather, "I'll invite the chambermaid and the head-waiter of this hotel."

"We ought to be starting," said Mrs. Jimmie, pacifically, and we started and went and arrived.

As we were driving to the station I noticed all the way along, and I had noticed them ever since we had been in London, large capital H's on a white background, posted on stone walls, street corners, lampposts, and occasionally on the sidewalks.

"What are those H's for, Jimmie?" I asked. To which he replied with this record-breaking joke:

"Those are the H's that Englishmen have been dropping for generations, and being characteristic of this solid nation, they thus ossified them."

I forgave Jimmie a good deal for that joke.

At the pier at Henley a man met us with a little boat and rowed us up the river, past dozens of house-boats moored along the bank.

The river had been boomed off for the races, which were to begin the next day, with little openings here and there for small boats to cross and recross between races. Private house-boat flags, Union Jacks, bunting, and plants made all the house-boats gay, except ours, which looked bare and forlorn and guiltless of decoration of any sort. It was fortunately situated within plain view of where the races would finish, and by using glasses we could see the start.

Several crews were out practising. One shell which flashed past us held a crew in orange and black sweaters. We had previously noticed that there was no American flag on any of the house-boats.

Orange and black! We nearly stood up in our excitement.

"What's your college?" yelled Jimmie, hoping they were Americans.

"Princeton!" they yelled back.

With that Jimmie ripped open a long pole he was carrying, and the stars and stripes floated out over our shell. The Princeton crew shipped their oars, snatched off their caps, and responded by giving their college yell, ending with "Old Glo-ree! Old Glo-ree!! Old Glo-ree!!!" yelled three times with all the strength of their deep lungs.

That little glimpse of America made Bee and me shiver as if with ague, while Jimmie's chin quivered and he muttered something about "darned smoke in his eyes."

"Jimmie," I said, excitedly, "they are rowing toward us to let us speak if we want to."

Jimmie waved his hand to them and they pulled up alongside. We exchanged enthusiastic "How-do-do's" with them, although we had never seen one of them before.

"Are you going to row to-morrow?" asked Jimmie.

"If you are we will decorate the house-boat with orange and black," I said.

Their faces fell.

"We are only the Track Team," said one. "Princeton has no crew, you know."

"No crew," I cried. "Why not?"

"Well, we haven't any more water than we need to wash in, and we cannot row on the campus."

"Too many trees," said another.

"No water," I cried, "then won't you ever have a crew?"

"Not until some one gives us a million dollars to dam up a natural formation that is there and turn the river into it," said one.

"I'd give it to you in a minute, if I had it, the way I feel now," said Jimmie.

"Well, don't we send crews over here to row?" asked Bee.

"Cornell sent one, but they were beaten," said the Captain with a grin.

"But you wouldn't be beaten," said Bee, decidedly, with her eye on the Captain.

"Come to dinner, all of you, to-morrow night," I said, genially.

Mrs. Jimmie looked frightened, but Bee and Jimmie so heartily seconded

my generosity with Jimmie's boat that she resigned herself.

"Wear your sweaters," commanded Bee.

"To dinner?" they said.

"Certainly!" said Bee, decidedly. "That's the only way people will know we are in it. We'll wear shirt-waists to keep you in countenance."

They accepted with alacrity and we parted with mutual esteem.

"I wonder what their names are," said Mrs. Jimmie, reproachfully.

"And they don't know our boat," I added.

"Hi, there!" Jimmie shouted back, "that's our boat yonder--the _Lulu_."

And with that they all struck up "Lu, Lu, How I love my Lu," at which Bee blushed most unnecessarily, I thought, and murmured:

"How well a handsome athlete looks with bare arms."

"And bare legs," added Jimmie, genially.

We found so much to do on the house-boat, and Jimmie had brought so much bunting and so many flags, that Bee volunteered to go back to the Cecil and have our clothes packed up by Mrs. Jimmie's maid, while we decorated the house-boat.

The next morning bright and early we rowed down to the landing for Bee. Such a change had taken place on the Thames in twenty-four hours! There were hundreds upon hundreds of row-boats bearing girls in duck and men in flannels, and a funny sight it was to Americans to see fully half of them with the man lying at his ease on cushions at the end of the boat, while the girls did the rowing. English girls are very clever at punting, and look quite pretty standing up balancing in the boats and using the long pole with such skill.

It may be sportsmanlike, but it cannot fail to look unchivalrous, especially to the Southern-born of Americans, to see how willing Englishmen are to permit their women to wait upon them even _before_ they are married!

American women are not very popular with English women, possibly because we get so many of their Englishmen away from them, and we are popular with only certain of Englishmen, perhaps the more susceptible, possibly the more broad-minded, but certain it was that as we rowed along we heard whispers from the English boats of "Americans" in much the same tone in which we say "Niggers."

The river was literally alive with these small craft, going up and down, gathering their parties together and paying friendly little visits to the neighbouring house-boats, while gay parasols, striped shirt-waists, white flannels, sailor hats, house-boat flags, and gay coloured boat cushions, made the river flash in the sunshine like an electric lighted rainbow.

Jimmie had spared no expense in illuminating and decorating the house-boat. He had the American shield in electric lights surmounted by

the American Eagle holding in his beak a chain of electric bulbs which were festooned on each side down to the end of the boat and running down the poles to the water's edge. A band of red, white, and blue electric lights formed the balustrade of the upper deck, with a row of brilliant scarlet geraniums on the railing. The house-boat next to ours was called "The Primrose," and when they saw our American emblem they sent over a polite note asking where we got it, and at once ordered a St. George and the Dragon in electric lights, which never came until the Friday following, when all the races were over. Another house-boat, three boats from ours, was owned by a wealthy brewer and had a pavilion built on the land back of where it was moored and connected by a broad gangplank with the boat. They used this pavilion for dancing and vaudeville, but although it was very nice and we were immensely entertained, still we all decided that it was not much like a house-boat to be so much of the time on land.

Each morning we would be wakened by the lapping of the water between the boat and the bank, caused by the early swims of the men from the neighbouring boats. The weather was just cool enough and just warm enough to be delightful. They told us that it generally rained during Henley week, but some one must have been a mascot, and we, with our usual becoming modesty, announced that it must have been our Eagle. The English, however, did not take kindly to that little pleasantry, and only said, "Fancy" whenever we got it off.

The dining-room was too small to hold such a large dinner as we gave the night we entertained the Princeton Track Team, so we had the table spread on the upper deck in plain view of the craft on the river and our neighbours on each side. Jimmie had the piano brought up too, when he heard that two of them belonged to the Glee Club and could sing.

It seemed such a simple thing to us to take up an upright baby grand piano that we never thought we were doing anything out of the common, until we looked down over the railing and saw that no less than fifty boats had ranged themselves in front of our house-boat, with as much curiosity in our proceedings as if we were going to have a trained animal exhibit. There were two English women dining with us, and I privately asked one of them what under the sun was the matter.

"Oh! It is nothing much," she replied. "We cannot help thinking that you Americans are so queer."

"Queer, or not!" I replied, stoutly, "we have things just as we want them wherever we go. If we wanted to bring the punt up here and put it on the dining-table filled with flowers, Jimmie would let us," to which she replied, "Fancy!"

The table was very pretty that night. We had orange and black satin ribbon down the middle of it and across the sides, finishing in big bows. The centrepiece was made of black-eyed Susans. We women wore orange and black wherever we could, and the men wore their sweaters as they had been instructed. The dinner was slow in coming on, so between courses we got up and danced. Then the men sang college songs, much to the scandalisation of our English friends on the next boats, who seemed to regard dinner as a sacrament. Peters, the butler, would lie in wait for us while we were dancing, to whisper as we careered past him:

"Miss, the fowl is getting cold," or "Miss, the ice cream is getting warm," but he did it once too often, so Bee waltzed on his foot. Whereat

he limped off and we saw no more of him.

Soon the professional entertainers who ply up and down the river during Henley week discovered the "Ammurikins," as they called us, and we had our first encounter that night with the Thames nigger, a creature painfully unlike that delightful commodity at home. The Thames nigger is generally a cockney covered with blackening, which only alters his skin and does not change his accent. To us it sounded deliciously funny to hear this self-styled African call us "Leddies," and say "Halways" and say "'Aven't yer, now?" They sang in a very indifferent manner, but were rather quick in their retorts.

Our large uninvited, but welcome audience, who had drawn so near that they could not use their oars and only pulled their boats along by the gunwales of the other boats, laughed at these witticisms rather inquiringly. Always slightly unconvinced, they seemed to have no inward desire to laugh, but yielded politely to the requirements, owing to the niggers' harlequin costume and blackened face.

To the student of human nature there is nothing so exquisitely ridiculous on the face of the globe as the typical British audience, at a show which appeals humourously to the intellect rather than to the eye. For this reason the Princetonians were indefatigable in their conversation with the niggers, for the electric lights of the Lulu illuminated the faces of our audience, which soon, in addition to the strolling craft of the river, numbered many canoes from the neighbouring house-boats, who were attracted by the gaiety and lights, thus forming a typical river audience, thoroughly mixed, seemingly on pleasure bent, good humoured, well behaved, polite, stolid, British.

Jimmie is hospitable to the core of his being, and nothing pleased him better than to keep "open house-boat" for the entire floating population of the Thames during Henley week. Every afternoon it was particularly the custom about tea time for boats containing music hall quartettes or a boatload of Geisha girls to pull up in front of the house-boat and regale the occupants with the latest music hall songs.

In one end of their boat is a little melodion apparently built for river travel, for I never saw one anywhere else. They have in addition velvet collection-boxes on long poles whereby to reach the upper decks of the house-boat for our coins. These things look for all the world like the old-fashioned collection-boxes which the deacons used to pass in church.

There was one set of Geisha girls who were masked below the eyes, one of whom sang what she fondly imagined was a typical American song calculated to captivate her American audience. She sang through her nose, the better to imitate the nasal voices which to the British mind is the national characteristic of the American, and her song had the refrain beginning "For I am an Ammurikin Girl," telling how this "Ammurikin Girl" had come to England to marry a title and had finally secured an Earl, and ending with the statement that she had done all this "like the true Ammurikin Girl." This song, especially the nasal part, was received with such ill-concealed joy by our usual stolid river audience that one afternoon I took it upon myself to avenge our house-boat family for these truly British politenesses. So I went to the railing after our audience had thoroughly collected and said through my nose:

"Won't you please sing that pretty song of yours about the 'Ammurikin

Girl?' You know we are 'Ammurikin girls,' and we do so love the way you take off our 'Ammurikin' voices."

At the same time I dropped a lot of small silver into their boat without waiting for the collection-box. I was delighted to see that some of it went overboard, for their consternation at that and at my having turned the tables on them put them into such a flutter that they couldn't sing at all, and they pulled away, saying that they would be back in half an hour. Our audience, too, suddenly remembered urgent business a mile or two up the river, and scattered as if by magic.

Jimmie was deeply pleased by this rencontre, for the prejudice of the middle-class Britons (for the sake of occasionally being moderate, I will say middle class) against all classes of Americans is just about as deeply rooted and ineradicable as the prejudice of middle-class Americans against everything that flies the Union Jack. The travelled upper classes are inclined to be more moderate in their prejudice and to see fit either for political or social reasons to affect a friendship. But seriously I myself question if there is a nation more thoroughly foreign to America than the English.

This, I take it, is because the middle classes of both countries are not abreast of the times, and take little notice of the trend of events. They are still influenced by the prejudice engendered by the wars of a century ago, which has partly been inherited and partly enhanced by marriages with England's hereditary foes, who take refuge with us in such numbers.

However, the people could be influenced through their sympathies, and in the to-be-expected event of the death of England's queen, or a calamity of national importance on our own shores, the sympathy which would be extended from each to each, through the medium of the press, would do more to educate the masses along lines of sympathy between the two great English-speaking nations than any amount of statecraft or diplomacy. The people must be taught by the way of the heart, and touched by their emotions. Their brains would follow.

As it is, the differences still exist. Take, for instance, their language, from which ours has so far departed and become so much more pure English, and has been enriched by so many clean-cut and descriptive adjectives that certain sentences in English and in American will be totally unintelligible to each other. On one occasion, going with a party of eight English people to the races, Bee looked out of the car window at the landscape, and said:

"How thoroughly finished England is. Here we are running through a hill country where they are so complete and so neat in their landscape that they even sod the cuts. It is like going through a terraced garden."

It may be that the phrase she used was academic, but I am at least reasonable in thinking that the average American would know what she meant. Not one of those eight English people caught even the shadow of her meaning, and when she explained what she meant by "sod your cuts," they said that she meant "turf your cuttings." She replied that "cutting" with us was a greenhouse term and meant a part clipped from a plant or a tree. They said the word "cut" meant a cut of beef or mutton, to which she retorted that we might also use the term "cut" in a butcher shop, but when travelling in a hill country and looking out of the train window it meant the mountain cut. They said they never heard

of the word sod, except used as a noun. She replied that she never heard the word "turf" used as a verb. We continued in an amiable wrangle which finally brought out the fact which even the most obstinate of them was obliged to admit, and that is that when traced to its proper root, the Americans speak purer English than the English.

House-boat hospitality we discovered to be conducted on a very irregular plan, for it appeared that the casual afternoon caller always meant tea and sometimes dinner. This is all very well if the people happen to be agreeable and the food holds out, but even I, the least conservative of the three women, am conservative about invitations to guests, nothing being more offensive to me than to be politely forced into a dinner invitation to people I don't want. Another thing, it kept us constantly scurrying for more to eat, as house-boat provisions are all furnished by firms in town, and house-boat owners are expected to let the purveyors know beforehand how many guests to provide for at each meal.

I like English people very much, but I cannot help observing that some who are very well born and are supposed to be exceedingly well bred, take advantage of American hospitality in a way in which they would never dream of pursuing with their English hosts. For instance, Americans were very free in remaining so dangerously close to the dinner hour that we were pushed into inviting them to remain, but never once did they make it obligatory to invite them to remain over night, while no less than half a dozen times during Henley week our English friends said to Jimmie:

"I say, old man, beastly work getting back to town. Can't you put us up for the night?"

As this occurred when every stateroom was filled, even Bee's sacred duke being among the number of our guests, these self-invited ones remained in every instance when they knew that it would force Jimmie to sleep upon a bench in the dining-room and be seriously inconvenienced. Toward the end of the week this supreme selfishness which I have noticed so often in otherwise worthy English gentlemen annoyed me to such an extent that with one Englishman who had thus insisted upon dispossessing Jimmie for the second time I resolved to make a test. So I said to him:

"Of course it's a little hard on Jimmie, your way of turning him out of his stateroom to sleep on the table, so, as turn about is fair play, if you've quite decided to remain over night, my sister and I will let you have our room and we will sleep on the benches in the dining-room. Jimmie doesn't get much sleep you know--we keep it up so late, and of course you always wake him up when you turn out for your swim at six o'clock in the morning, so if you will promise not to disturb us until seven, and go out through the kitchen for your swim, you can have our room for to-night."

"Oh, I say!" he replied, "that's awfully jolly of you. It is a beastly shame to turn the old man out of his bed two nights in one week, but your boat is the only one on the river where a fellow feels at home, you know. Besides that, I couldn't get back to town before ten o'clock to-night if I started now, and where would I get my dinner? And if I wait to get my dinner here, I'd either have to sleep at Henley or be half the night in getting home. So you see I've got to stay, and thanks awfully for letting me have your room."

Bee, who was standing near, pushed her veil up and cleared her throat.

She looked at me.

"Did you ever in all your life?" she said.

"No, I never did," I said. "I never, never did."

"Never did what?" said the English gentleman.

"I never saw anybody like you in a book or out of it, but I suppose there are ten thousand more just as good-looking as you are; just as tall and well built and selfish."

"Selfish," he blurted out with a very red face. "What is there selfish about me, I should like to know? You offered me your room, didn't you?"

"Yes, she offered it," said Bee, sitting on a little table and tucking her feet on a chair. "She offered it to you just to see if you'd take it--just to see how far you would go. You haven't known my sister very long, have you? Why, she'd no more let you have her room than I would let Jimmie turn himself out a second time for you. If you stay to-night you'll be the one to sleep in the dining-room on that narrow bench."

"Oh, I say," he said, turning still redder, "I can't do that, you know. It would be so very uncomfortable. It is very narrow."

"You can lie on your side," said Bee. "You aren't too thick through that way, and we three women have decided to allow Jimmie to go to bed early to-night. We'll make it as comfortable as we can for you, and you'll get fully three hours' sleep, perhaps four. It is all Jimmie would get if he slept there."

"Why, I don't believe that the old man will let me sleep there. I think he'd rather I had his room. He and his wife were so awfully good to me when I was in America. I stayed two months at their place and they entertained me royally."

"Where's your wife?" I said, suddenly.

"She's in our town house," he answered.

"And that's in Upper Brooke Street?" said Bee.

"And where's your sister, the Honourable Eleanor?" I said.

"What's that got to do with it?" said our friend.

"Nothing," I said. "I just wondered if you'd noticed that, every single time we have been in London for the past two years, neither your sister nor your wife has ever called on Mrs. Jimmie; although, as you have just admitted, you stayed two months with them in America. All that you have done in return for the mountain trip that Jimmie arranged for you, taking you in a private car to hunt big game, taking you fishing and arranging for you to see everything in America that you wanted, when you know that Jimmie isn't rich judged by the largest fortunes in America--all, all I say, that you have done for him in return for everything he did for you was to put him up at your club and take them to the races twice, and even though you saw your wife at a distance you never introduced them, although once you stopped and spoke to her. Now, what do you think of yourself?"

"I think--I think," he stammered.

"No, you don't think," said Bee. "You flatter yourself."

He stared at us helplessly, but we were enjoying ourselves too maliciously to let up on him.

"I never was talked to so in my life," he said.

"No, perhaps not," I said, pleasantly. "But it has done you good, hasn't it? Confess now, don't you feel a little better?"

His face, which was very red at all times, grew a little more claret coloured, and he evidently wanted very much to get angry, but Bee and I were so very cheerful, almost affectionate in our manner of mentally skinning him, that he couldn't seem to pull himself together.

"He'll never stay after that," said Bee, complacently, to me afterward. But he did stay, and although Jimmie was furious, he had every intention of letting him have his bedroom again, which Bee and I so fiercely resented that we locked Jimmie in his stateroom, where, after a few feeble pounds on the door, he resigned himself to his fate and got the only night's sleep that he had in the eight days of Henley.

Whether the Honourable Edwardes Edwardes slept on his side on the bench or on his back on the dinner-table, or stood up all night, we never knew. He was a little cross at breakfast, and complained of feeling "a bit stiff." But nobody petted or sympathised with him or ran for the liniment. So by luncheon time he was drinking Jimmie's champagne again with the utmost good humour.

One of the most amusing things we did was to go after dinner in little boats and form part of the river audience in front of some other house-boat where something was going on,--crowded in between other boats, having to ship our oars and pull ourselves along by our neighbours' gunwales, getting locked for perhaps half an hour, until suddenly our Geisha girls or niggers would start the cry "Up river," when away we would all go, entertainers and entertained, pulling up the river to the lights of another house-boat, enjoying the music for a few minutes and then slipping away in the darkness toward the lights of Henley village, or perhaps back to the Lulu.

Once or twice a boat would capsize, giving the occupants a severe wetting, but as river costumes are always washable and the river is not deep, no harm ever seemed to come of these aquatic diversions. Once, however, it was brought near home in this wise.

Jimmie invited his wife to go canoeing. I went canoeing once on the Kennebunk River with an Indian to paddle, and after watching the manoeuvres of the paddlers on the Thames and the antics of those wretched little boats, I made the solemn promise with myself never to trust any one less skilled than an Indian again. But Jimmie, while he is not more conceited than most people, is what you might call confident, and he would have been all right in this instance, if he had noticed that a race had just been rowed and that the swell from the racers was just rippling over the boom and creeping gently toward the house-boat. The canoe was still at the house-boat steps. They were both seated comfortably and just about to paddle away when a swell came alongside

and tilted the canoe in such a succession of little unexpected rolls that our two friends, in their anxiety to hold on to something which was not there to hold on to, overbalanced, and the canoe shipped enough water to submerge their legs entirely, giving them a nice cold hip bath.

Mrs. Jimmie screamed, and we all rushed down and fished her out of the boat dripping like a mermaid and thoroughly chilled. Bee took her in to warm her with a brandy and to hurry her into dry clothes, while I remained to see what I could do for Jimmie, who was very wet, very mad, and very uncommunicative.

"What a pity," I remarked, pleasantly, "that you are so thin. Shall I come down and hold the boat still while you get out? Wet flannel has such a clinging effect."

Jimmie is a good deal of a gentleman, so he made no reply. I was just turning away, resolving in a Christian spirit to order him a hot Scotch, when I heard a splash and a remark which was full of exclamation points, asterisks, and other things, and looking down I saw the canoe bottom upwards, with Jimmie clinging to it indignantly blowing a large quantity of Thames water from his mouth in a manner which led me to know that the sooner I got away from there the better it would be for me. I kept out of his way until dinner-time, and only permitted him to suspect that I saw his disappearance by politely ignoring the fact that all his and Mrs. Jimmie's lingerie, to speak delicately, was floating about, hanging from pegs in unused portions of the house-boat. My silence was so suspicious that finally Jimmie could stand it no longer.

"Did you see me go down?" he demanded.

"I did not," I answered him, firmly, whereat he released my elbow and I edged around to the other side of the table.

"But I saw you come up," I said, pleasantly, "and I saw what you said."

"Saw?" said Jimmie. "Saw what I said?"

"Certainly! There was enough blue light around your remarks for me to have seen them in the dark."

"Well, what have you got to say about it?" he said, resigning himself.

"Only this, and that is that this afternoon's performance in that canoe was the only instance in my life where I thoroughly approved of the workings of Providence. Ordinarily the good die young and the guilty one escapes."

"Is that all?" growled Jimmie.

"Yes," I said, hesitatingly, "I think it is. Did I mention before that I thought you were thin?"

"You certainly did," said Jimmie.

"Your legs," I went on, but just then I was interrupted by the reappearance of a little German musician, who had floated up the river two days before in a white flannel suit without change of linen and who played accompaniments of our singers so well that Jimmie permitted him to stay on without either actually inviting him or showing him that his

presence was not any particular addition to our enjoyment.

Jimmie objected violently to some of his sentiments, which the German was tactless enough to keep thrusting in our faces. He was as offensive to our English friends on the subject of England as he was to us concerning America, but one of the Englishmen sang and couldn't play a note, so Jimmie let the German stay, because Miss Wemyss wanted him to.

Although secretly I think Jimmie and I hated him, we are sometimes polite enough not to say everything we think, but at any rate there never was a moment when Jimmie and I wouldn't leave off attacking each other, hoping for an opportunity for a fight with the German, which thus far he had escaped by the skin of his teeth.

"Your sister sent me to tell you that there is a house-boat up near the Island flying the American flag and we are all going up there to see it. Would you like to go?"

"Thanks so much for your invitation," said Jimmie, "but I've got some guests coming in half an hour, so I can't go."

"I'll go. Just wait until I get my hat."

One boat contained Bee, Mrs. Jimmie, and two Princeton men, and the other Miss Wemyss, the German, Miss Wemyss' fiance, Sir George, and me. Side by side the two skiffs pulled up the river to the Island, where on a very small house-boat named the *Queen* a large American flag was flying and beneath it were crossed a smaller American flag and the Union Jack.

Sir George, who is one of the nicest Englishmen we ever met, pulled off his cap and cried out:

"All hats off to the Stars and Stripes!"

In an instant every hat was whipped off, ours included, although there was some wrestling with hat-pins before we could get them off. All, did I say? All--all except the German! He folded his arms across his breast and kept his hat on.

"Didn't you hear Sir George?" I said to him.

He had a nervous twitching of the eye at all times, and when he was excited the muscles of his face all jerked in unison like Saint Vitus' dance. At my question every muscle in his face, as the Princeton man in Bee's boat said, "began working over time."

"Yes, I heard him. Of course I heard him," he said.

"Then take your hat off!" said Miss Wemyss.

"Yes, take your hat off!" came in a roar from all the others, none being louder and more peremptory than the Englishman's.

"I will not take my hat off to that dirty rag," he said. "It means nothing to me. The flag of any country means nothing to me. I can go into a shop and buy that red, white, and blue! That is only a rag--that flag."

Sir George leaned over with blazing eyes and took him by the collar.

"Don't do that, George," said Miss Wemyss, excitedly. "His linen is not fit to touch."

"Let's duck him," said the Princeton man.

But Mrs. Jimmie interfered, saying in a quiet voice, although her hands were trembling:

"Don't do anything to him until we take him back to the house-boat. Remember he is my guest."

At this the German smiled with such insolence and pulled his hat further down on his brow with such a vicious look of satisfaction that I had all I could do to hold myself in. The boats flew back to the house-boat as if on wings.

"You see, miss," he leaned forward and said to me in low tones. "You do not like me. You love your flag. Ah, ha, I revenge myself."

"Just wait till I tell Jimmie," I said.

"Ah, ha, he will do nothing! I play for his concert to-night."

As the boats pulled up to the steps of the house-boat, Jimmie met us with his two friends, who had come during our absence. We had never seen them before.

"What do you think, Jimmie?" stammered Bee, stumbling up the steps in her excitement.

"And Jimmie, he wouldn't take his hat off to the flag!"

"And Jimmie, I wish you had been there, you'd have drowned him!" came from all of us at once.

"What's that?" cried Jimmie in a rage at once, and:

"What's that?" came from the men behind him. "Wouldn't take off his hat to the flag? Who wouldn't?"

"That nasty little German!" cried Miss Wemyss.

We were all out of the boats by that time except the unhappy object of our wrath, whose countenance by this time was working into patterns like a kaleidoscope.

"Mr. Jimmie," he said, coming to the end of the boat with every intention of stepping out, "I apologise to you. I am very sorry."

"Get back in that boat!" thundered Jimmie.

"But, sir! Your concert to-night! I play for you!"

"You go to the devil," said Jimmie. "You'll not put your foot on board this boat again. Off you go! Take him down to Henley!" he ordered the boatman.

"Very well! Very well!" said the German, "I go, but I do not take my hat off to your flag."

"Ah! Don't you?" cried the Princeton man, making a grab for the German's sailor hat with his long arm, just as the boat shot away. He stooped and took it up full of Thames water and flung it thus loaded squarely in the little wretch's face, while the man at the oars dexterously tossed it overboard, where it floated bottom upwards in the river, and the boat shot out toward Henley with the bareheaded and most excited specimen of the human race it was ever our lot to behold.

Then Jimmie introduced his friends. Bee has just looked over this narrative of the pleasantest week we ever spent in England and she says:

"You haven't said a word about the races."

"So I haven't."

But they were there.

CHAPTER II

PARIS

"Now," said Jimmie as our train was pulling into Paris, "we are all decided, are we not, that we shall stay in Paris only two days?"

His eyes met ours with apprehension and a determination that ended in a certain amount of questioning in their glance.

"Certainly!" we all hastened to assure him. "Not over two days."

"Just long enough," said Jimmie, beamingly, "to have one lunch at the Cafe Marguery for _sole a la Normande_--"

"And one afternoon at the Louvre to see the Venus and the Victory--" I pleaded.

"And the Father Tiber--" added Jimmie, waxing enthusiastic.

"Yes, and one dinner at the Pavilion d'Armenonville to hear the Tziganes--" said Bee.

"And one afternoon on the Seine to go to St. Cloud to see the brides dance at the Pavilion Bleu, and a supper afterward in the open to have a _poulet_ and a _peche flambee_."

Jimmie by this time was wriggling in ecstasy.

"And just time to order two or three gowns apiece and have one look at hats," added Mrs. Jimmie, complacently.

"Two or three gowns apiece and one look at hats," cried Jimmie. "And how long will that take? We agreed on two days, and you never said a word about clothes. That means a whole week!"

"Not at all, Jimmie," said Bee. "It's too late to do anything to-night. To-morrow morning we'll go and look. In the afternoon we'll think it over while we're doing the Louvre. It is always cool and quiet there, and looking at statuary always helps me to make up my mind about clothes. The next morning we'll go and order. In the afternoon we'll buy our hats, and with one day more for the first fittings, I believe we might manage and have the things sent after us to Baden-Baden."

"Not at all," put in Mrs. Jimmie. "They will never be satisfactory unless we put our minds on the subject and give them plenty of time. We must stay at least two days more. Give us four days, Jimmie."

I had to laugh at Jimmie's rueful face. He was about to remonstrate, but Bee switched him off diplomatically by saying, in her most deferential manner:

"What hotel have you decided on, Jimmie? It's such a comfort to be getting to a Paris hotel. What one do you think would be best?"

Bee's tone was so flattering that Jimmie forgot clothes and said:

"Well, you know at the Binda you can get corn on the cob and American griddle cakes--"

"Oh, but the rooms are so small and dark, and we could go there for luncheon to get those things," said his wife.

"Do let's go to the Hotel Vouillemont," I begged. "We won't see any Americans there, and it is so lovely and old and French, and so heavenly quiet."

"But then there is the new Elysee Palace," said Bee. "We haven't seen that."

"And they say it's finer than the Waldorf," said Mrs. Jimmie.

Jimmie and I looked at each other in comical despair.

"Let 'em have their own way, Jimmie," I whispered in his ear, "while we're in their country. They know that we are going to make 'em dodge Switzerland and go up in the Austrian Tyrol and perhaps even get them to Russia, so we'll be obliged to give them their head part of the way. Let's be handsome about it."

We went to the Elysee Palace, and we spent two weeks in Paris. Part of this time we were fashionable with Mrs. Jimmie and Bee, and part of the time they were Latin Quarters with us. We made them go to the Concert Rouge and to the Restaurant Foyot, and occasionally even to sit on the sidewalk at one of the little tables at Scossa's, where you have _dejeuner au choix_ for one franc fifty, including wine, and which they couldn't help enjoying in spite of pretending to despise it and us, while occasionally we went with them to call on the grand and distinguished personages to whom they had letters. But it remained for the last days of our stay for us to have our experiences. The first came about in this wise.

I had brought a letter to Max Nordau from America, but I heard after I got to Paris that he was so fierce a woman hater, that I determined not

to present it. I read it over every once in awhile, but failed to screw my courage to the sticking point, until one day I mentioned that I had this letter, and Jimmie to my surprise threw up both hands, exclaiming:

"A letter to Max Nordau! Why, it is like owning a gold mine! Present it by all means, and then tell us what he is like."

Afraid to present it in person, I sent it by mail, saying that I had heard that he hated women and that I was scared to death of him, but if he had a day in the near future on which he felt less fierce than usual, I would come to see him, and I asked permission to bring a friend. By "friend" I meant Jimmie.

The most charming note came in answer that a polished man of the world could write--not in the least like the bear I had imagined him to be, but courteous and even merry. In it he said he should feel honoured if I would visit his poor abode, and he seemed to have read my books and knew all about me, so with very mixed feelings Jimmie and I called at the hour he named.

He lives in one of the regulation apartment houses of Paris, of the meaner sort--by no means as fine as those in the American quarter. The most horrible odour of German cookery--cauliflower and boiled cabbage and vinegar and all that--floated out when the door opened. The room--a sort of living-room--into which we were ushered was a mixture of all sorts of furniture, black haircloth, dingy and old, with here and there a good picture or one fine chair, which I imagined had been presented to him.

Jimmie was much excited at the idea of meeting him. Max Nordau is one of his idols,--Nordau's horrible power of invective fully meeting Jimmie's ideas of the way crimes of the bestial sort should be treated. Jimmie is often a surprise to me in his beliefs and ideals, but when Doctor Nordau entered the room I forgot Jimmie and everything else in the world except this one man.

I can see him now as he stood before me--a thick-set man with a magnificent torso, but with legs which ought to have been longer. For that body he ought to have been six feet tall. When he is seated he appears to be a very large man. You would know that he was a physician from the way he shakes hands--even from the touch of his hand, which seems to be in itself a soothing of pain.

He was exquisitely clean. Indeed he seemed, after one look into his face, to be one of the cleanest men I ever had seen. And to look into the face of a man in Paris and to be able to say that, means something.

His eyes were gray blue--very clear in colour. Their whites were really white--not bloodshot nor yellow. His skin was the clear, beautiful colour which you sometimes see in a young and handsome Jew. There was the same clear red and white. This distinguishing quality of clearness was noticeable too in his lips, for his short white moustache shows them to be full, very red, and with the line where the red joins the white extremely clear cut. His teeth were large, full, even, and white, like those of a primitive man, who tore his rare meat with those same white teeth, and who never heard of a dentist. His hair was short, white, and bristling. He seemed to have some Jewish blood in him, but he seemed more than all to be perfectly well, perfectly normal, filled to the brim

with abounding life. It was like a draught from the Elixir of Life to be in his presence. What a man!

All at once the whole of "Degeneration" was made clear to me. How could any man as sane, as normal, as superbly health-loving and health-bestowing keep from writing such a book! I never met any one who so impressed me with his knowledge. Not pedantry, but with the deep-lying fundamental truth that humanity ought to know. His sympathies are so broad, his intuitions so keen, his understanding so subtle.

He asked us at once into his study--a small room, lined with books bound in calf. Both the chair and his couch had burst out beneath, showing broken springs and general dilapidation. He speaks many languages, and his English is very pure and beautiful.

Like all great men, his manner was extremely simple. He did not pose. He was interested in me, in my work, in my ambitions, hopes, and aims. He seemed to have no overpoweringly high idea of himself, nor of what he had achieved. He was thoroughly at home in French, German, English, Scandinavian, and Russian literature. He read them in the originals, and his knowledge of the classics seemed to be equally complete. The well-worn books upon his shelves testified to this.

I asked him if he intended to come to America in the near future. To which he replied:

"Unhappily I cannot tell. I should like to go. I consider America the country of the world at present. Whether we admit it or not, all nations are watching you. The rest of the world cannot live without you. Russia is the only country in the world which could go to war without your assistance. You must feed Europe. Your men are the financiers of the world and your women rule and educate and are the saviours of the men. Therefore to my mind the greatest factor in the world's civilisation to-day is the great body of the American women. You little know your power. _You_ seem to have got the ear of the American woman, and the only advice I have to give you is to be more bold. Don't be afraid of being too pedantic. You are too subtle. You bury your truths sometimes too deeply. The busy are too busy to dig for it, and the stupid do not know it is there."

"I think 'Degeneration' is the most wonderful book ever written," Jimmie broke in at this point as if unable to keep silent any longer. Then he looked deeply embarrassed at Doctor Nordau's hearty laughter.

"Thank you a thousand times," he said; "such a decided opinion I seldom hear. Your great country was the first to appreciate and read it. I have many friends there whom I never saw but who love me and whom I love. They often write to me."

"And beg autographs and photographs of you," I said.

"Oh, yes, but it is very easy to do what they ask. But one curious thing strikes me about America. See, here on my book shelves I have books written explaining the government of all countries in all languages--all countries, that is to say, except America. Why has no one ever written such an one about the United States?"

Jimmie pricked up his ears as this phase of the conversation came home to him. He forgot his awe and said:

"What's the matter with Bryce?"

Doctor Nordau looked puzzled. He is a practising physician.

"What's the matter with Bryce?" he repeated.

Jimmie blushed.

"Haven't you read 'Bryce's Commonwealth?'" I broke in, to give Jimmie time to get on his legs again.

"Is there a book on American government by an American that I never heard of?" asked Nordau of Jimmie.

"Well, Bryce is an Englishman, but he knows more about America than any American I know," answered Jimmie. "I'll send you the book if you would like to read it."

Doctor Nordau thanked him and said he would be delighted to have it. While Jimmie was making a note of this, Doctor Nordau looked quizzically at me and said:

"Do American publishers rob all foreign authors as I have been robbed, or am I mistaken in thinking that large numbers of 'Degeneration' have been sold in America?"

Alas, wherever I go in Europe, I am obliged to hear this denunciation of our publishers! I cannot get beyond the sound of it. To hear foreign authors denounce American publishers by every term of opprobrium which could commonly be applied to Barabbas! I was puzzled to know whether they really are the most unscrupulous robbers in creation or if they only have the name of being.

"You are not mistaken in thinking that large numbers of 'Degeneration' have been sold," I said, "and if your book was properly copyrighted and protected and you did not sign away all your rights to your American publishers for a song, as too many foreign authors do in their scorn of American appreciation of good literature, you should not be obliged to complain, for I distinctly remember that 'Degeneration' often led in the lists of best selling books which our booksellers report at the end of each week."

"Then I will leave you to judge for yourself," said Doctor Nordau. "The entire amount I have received from my American publishers for 'Degeneration' is fifty pounds! That is every sou!"

"Fifty pounds!" cried Jimmie, in consternation. "Why that is only two hundred and fifty dollars of our money!"

"I leave it to you to judge for yourselves," said Doctor Nordau again.

We said nothing, for as Jimmie said after we left, there was really nothing to say.

But evidently our consternation touched him, for he broke out into a big German laugh, saying:

"Don't take it so deeply to heart! You are too sensitive. Do you take

the criticisms of your books so deeply to heart as you take a criticism of your countrymen? Don't do it! Remember, there are few critics worth reading."

"I never read them while they are fresh," I admitted. "I keep them until their heat has had time to cool. Then if they are favourable I say, 'This is just so much extra pleasure that, as it is all over. I had no right to expect.' And if they are unfavourable I think, 'What difference does it make? It was published weeks ago and everybody has forgotten it by this time!'"

"You have the right spirit," he said. "Where would I be if I had taken to heart the criticisms of the degenerates on 'Degeneration?' I sit back and laugh at them for holding a hand mirror up to their faces and unconsciously crying out 'I see a fool!' To understand great truths,--and great truths are seldom popular,--one must bring a willing mind. Yet how often it is that the very sick one wishes most to help are the ones who refuse, either from conceit or stupidity, to believe and be healed. Remember this: no one can get out of a book more than he brings to it. Readers of books seldom realise that by their written or spoken criticisms they are displaying themselves in all their weaknesses, all their vanities, all their strength for their hearers to make use of as they will."

"I shouldn't think anything ever would disturb you," said Jimmie, regarding Doctor Nordau's gigantic strength admiringly.

Doctor Nordau laughed.

"It is the little things of this life, my friend, which often disturb a mental balance which is always poised to receive great shocks. The gnat-bites and mosquito buzzings are sometimes harder to bear than an operation with a surgeon's knife."

I looked triumphantly at Jimmie as Doctor Nordau said that, for Jimmie never has got over it that I once dragged the whole party off a train and made them wait until the next one, because the wheels of our railway carriage squeaked. But Jimmie's mind is open to persuasion, especially from one whose opinions he admires as he admires Max Nordau's, for he looked at me with more tolerance, as he said:

"It is the nervous organisation, I suppose. She can bear neuralgia for days at a time which would drive me crazy in an hour, but I've seen her burst into tears because a door slammed."

"Exactly so!" said Doctor Nordau. "I understand perfectly."

"Now, I never hear such noises," pursued Jimmie. "But I suppose there must be some difference between you both, who can write books, and me, who can't even write a letter without dictating it!"

Soon after this we came away, Jimmie beaming with delight over one idol who had not tumbled from his pedestal at a near view.

We were still in the midst of the Paris season. It was very gay and Bee and Mrs. Jimmie had made some amiable friends among the very smartest of the Parisian smart set. When we went to tea or dinner with these people Jimmie and I had to be dragged along like dogs who are muzzled for the first time. Every once in awhile en route we would plant our fore feet

and try to rub our muzzles off, but the hands which held our chains were gentle but firm, and we always ended by going.

On one Sunday we were invited to have *_dejeuner_* with the Countess S., and as it was her last day to receive she had invited us to remain and meet her friends. At the breakfast there were perhaps sixteen of us and the conversation fell upon palmistry. We had just seen Cheiro in London, and as he had amiably explained a good many of our lines to us, I was speaking of this when the old Duchesse de Z. thrust her little wrinkled paw loaded down with jewels across the plate of her neighbour and said:

"Mademoiselle, can you see anything in the lines of my hand?"

I make no pretence of understanding palmistry, but I saw in her hand a queer little mark that Cheiro had explained to us from a chart. I took her hand in mine and all the conversation ceased to hear the pearls of wisdom which were about to drop from my lips. The duchesse was very much interested in the occult and known to be given to table tipping and the invocation of spirits.

"I see something here," I began, hesitatingly, "which looks to me as if you had once been threatened with a great danger, but had been miraculously preserved," I said.

The old woman drew her hand away.

"Humph," she muttered with her mouth full of homard. "I wondered if you would see that. It was assassination I escaped. It was enough to leave a mark, eh, mademoiselle?"

"I should think so," I murmured.

The young Count de X. on my right said, in a tone which the duchesse might have heard:

"When she was a young girl, only nineteen, her husband tied her with ropes to her bed and set fire to the bed curtains. Her screams brought the servants and they rescued her."

My fork fell with a clatter.

"What an awful man!" I gasped.

"He was my uncle, mademoiselle!" said the young man, imperturbably, arranging the gardenia in his buttonhole, "but as you say, he was a bad lot."

"I beg your pardon!" I exclaimed.

"It is nothing," he answered. "It is no secret. Everybody knows it."

Later in the afternoon I took occasion to apologise to the duchesse for having referred to the subject.

"Why should you be distressed, mademoiselle," said the old woman, peering up into my face from beneath her majenta bonnet with her little watery brown eyes, "such things will go into books and be history a few years hence. We make history, such families as ours," she added, proudly.

I turned away rather bewildered and for an hour or two watched Bee and Mrs. Jimmie being presented to those who called to pay their respects to our hostess. They were of all descriptions and fascinating to a degree. Finally the duchesse came up to me bringing a lady whom she introduced as the Countess Y.

"She is a compatriot of yours, mademoiselle."

It so happened that Bee and Mrs. Jimmie were standing near me and overheard.

"Ah, you are an American," I said.

"Well," said the countess, moving her shoulders a little uneasily, "I am an American, but my husband does not like to have me admit it."

It was a small thing. She had a right to deny her nationality if she liked, but in some way it shocked the three of us alike and we moved forward as if pulled by one string.

"I think we must be going," said Bee, haughtily.

Jimmie's jaw was so set as we left the house of the countess, and Bee and Mrs. Jimmie looked so disturbed that I suggested that we drive down to the Louvre and take one last look at our treasures. Mine are the Venus de Milo and the Victory, and Jimmie's is the colossal statue of the river Tiber. Jimmie loves that old giant, Father Tiber, lying there with the horn of plenty and dear little Romulus and Remus with their foster mother under his right hand. Jimmie says the _toes_ of the giant fascinate him.

It looked like rain, so we hastily checked our parasols and Jimmie's stick and cut down the left corridor to the stairs, and so on down to the chamber where we left Jimmie and the Tiber to stare each other out of countenance. The rest of us continued our way to the room where the Venus stands enthroned in her silent majesty. We sat down to rest and worship, and then coming up the steps again and mounting another flight, we stood looking across the arcade at the brilliant electric poise of the Victory, and in taking our last look at her, we did not notice that it had gradually grown very dark.

When we came out, rested, uplifted, and calmed as the effect of that glorious Venus always is upon our fretted spirits, we discovered that the most terrific rainstorm was in progress it ever was our luck to behold. The water came down in cataracts and blinding sheets of rain. Every one except us had been warned by the darkness and had got themselves home. The streets were empty except for the cabs and carriages which skurried by with fares. Our frantic signals and Jimmie's dashes into the street were of no avail.

We would have walked except that Bee and I had colds, and big, beautiful Mrs. Jimmie was subject to croup, which as every one knows is terrible in its attacks upon grown people.

Poor Jimmie ran in every direction in his wild efforts for a carriage, but none was to be had. We waited two hours, then Mrs. Jimmie saw a black covered wagon approaching and she gathered up her skirts and hailed it. The driver obligingly pulled up at the curb.

"You must drive us to our hotel." she said, firmly. "We have waited two hours."

"Impossible, madame!" said the man.

"But you must," we all said in chorus.

"You shall have much money," said Jimmie in his worst French.

"All the same it is impossible, monsieur," said the man.

He regretted exceedingly his inability to oblige the ladies, but--and he prepared to drive off.

"Get in, girls," said Mrs. Jimmie, firmly, pushing us in at the back of the wagon. The man expostulated, not in anger but appealingly. Mrs. Jimmie would not listen. She said there ought to be more cabs in Paris, and that she regretted it as much as he did, but she climbed in as she talked, and gave the address of the hotel.

"You shall have three times your fare," she said, calmly, "drive on!"

"But what madame demands is impossible," pleaded the poor man. "I am on my way for another body. Madame sits in the morgue wagon!"

But there he was mistaken, for madame sat nowhere. Before he had done speaking madame was flying through the air, alighting on poor Jimmie's foot, while Bee and I clawed at our dripping skirts in a mad effort to follow suit.

The morgue wagon pursued its way down the Rue de Rivoli, while we risked colds, croup, and everything else in an endeavour to find a "grand bain," splashing through puddles but marching steadily on, Jimmie in a somewhat strained silence limping uncomplainingly at our side.

CHAPTER III

STRASBURG AND BADEN-BADEN

We are on our way to the Passion Play, and although each of the four of us is a monument of amiability when taken individually, as a quartet we sometimes clash. At present we are fighting over the route we shall take between Paris and Oberammergau. Bee and Mrs. Jimmie have replenished their wardrobes in the Rue de la Paix, and wish to follow the trail of American tourists going to Baden-Baden, while Jimmie and I, having rooted out of a German student in the Latin Quarter two or three unknown carriage routes through the mountains which lead to unknown spots not double starred, starred, or even mentioned in Baedeker, are wondering how the battle between clothes and Bohemianism will end.

We arrived at Strasburg still in an amiable wrangle, but all four agreed on seeing the clock which has made the town famous. Our time was so limited that there was not, as is often the case, an opportunity for all four of us to get our own way.

Anybody who did not know her, would imagine by the quiet way that Bee has let the subject of Baden-Baden alone for the whole day, that she had quite given up going there, but I know Bee. She has left Jimmie and me to defend the front of the fortress, while she is bringing all her troops up in the rear. Bee does not believe in a charge with plenty of shouting and galloping and noise. Bee's manoeuvres never raise any dust, but on a flank movement, a midnight sortie or an ambush, Bee could outgeneral Napoleon and Alexander and General Grant and every other man who has helped change the maps of the world. Only by indication and past sad experience do I know what she is up to. One thing to-day has given me a clue. I have a necktie--the only really saucy thing about the whole of my wardrobe, the only distinguishing smartness to my toilet--upon which Bee has fixed her affection, and which she means to get away from me. I don't know how I came to buy it in the first place. However, I sha'n't have it long. Bee is bargaining for it--that means that we are going to Baden-Baden. She is not openly bargaining, for that would let me know how much she wants it, but she has admired it pointedly. She tied my veil on for me this morning, and even as I write, she is sewing a button on my glove. Bee in the politest way possible is going to force me to give her that tie. I wish she wouldn't, for I really need it, but I must get all the wear I expect to have out of it in the next two days, for by the end of the week, if these attentions continue, that Charvet tie will belong to Bee.

Last night, as soon as we arrived and had our dinner, we went to the Orangerie. This great park with myriads of walks is one of the most attractive things about Strasburg. A very good band was playing a Sousa march as we came in and took our seats at one of the little tables.

But just here let me record something which has surprised me all during my travels in Europe; and that is the small amount of good music one hears outside of opera. I have always imagined Germany to be distinguished equally by her music and her beer. I have not been disappointed in the beer, for it is there by the tub, but as to the music, there is not in my opinion in the whole of Germany or Austria one such as Sousa's, and as to men choruses, not one that I have heard, and I have followed them closely wherever I heard of their existence, is to be compared with any of our College Glee Clubs. In my opinion the casual open-air music of Germany is another of the disappointments of Europe--to be set down in the same category with the linden trees of Berlin and the trousers of the French Army.

German music seems to be too universally indulged in to be good. It is performed with more earnestness than skill and the programme is gone through with with more fervour than taste. The musicians of a typical German band dig through the evening's numbers with the same dogged perseverance and perspiration that they would exercise in tunnelling through a mountain. In this connection I am not speaking of any of the trained orchestras, but solely of the band music that one hears all through the Rhine land. It is only tradition that Germans are the most musical people in the world, for in my opinion the rank and file of Germans have no ear for key. That they listen well and perform earnestly is perfectly true. That they respect music and give it proper attention is equally true, but that they know the difference between a number performed with no expression, with one or two instruments or voices, as the case may be, entirely out of pitch, and the same number correctly rendered, is impossible to believe by one who has watched them as carefully as I.

Sousa once made the statement to the American Press that in his opinion the American nation was the most musical nation in the world. He based this astonishing belief, which was violently attacked by the German-American Press, upon his observation of his audiences and by the street music, even including whistling and singing. I agree with his opinion with all my heart. In an American audience of the most common sort an instrument off the key or improperly tuned will be sure to be detected. It may be, nay, it probably is true, that the person so detecting the discord will not know where the trouble lies or of what it consists, but his ear, untrained as it is, tells him that something is wrong, and he shows his discomfort and disapproval. I claim that the ordinary American--the common or garden variety of American--has a more correct ear than the common or garden variety of German. I claim that the rank and file in America is for this reason more truly musical than the same class in the German nation, although the German nation has a technical knowledge of music which it will take the Americans a thousand years to equal. For this reason an open-air concert in America is so much more enjoyable both from the numbers selected and the spirit of their playing, that the two performances are not to be mentioned in the same day.

A criticism which the wayfaring man will whip out to floor me at this point, viz., that nearly all performers in American bands are Germans, will not cause me to wink an eyelash, for the effect of American audiences on German performers has raised the standard of their music so that I am informed by Germans and Austrians that the most annoying, irritating, and insulting factor in their otherwise peaceful lives is the return of a German-American to his native heath. They tell me that his arrogance and conceit are unbearable--that he claims that Americans alone know how to make practical use of the technical knowledge of the German--that the Teuton gathers the knowledge, the Yankee applies it. This goes to prove my point.

We Americans are a curious people. We get better music under our own vine and fig-tree than they have anywhere else in the world but we don't know it. There is no such band on earth as Sousa's, no better orchestra than Theodore Thomas's or the Boston Symphony, and we hear the Metropolitan and French operas.

Take also our chamber music and from that come down to our street ballads, and then to the whistling and singing heard in the streets, with no thought of audience or even listeners.

I have followed German music closely, and I claim that German musicians, or rather let me say German producers of music, lack ear just about half of the time. Their students cannot compare with our college singing, their pedestrian parties, which one meets all through the country, singing, often from notes (and if you take the trouble to inquire, they will frequently tell you with pride that they belong to such and such a singing society) almost drive sensitive ears crazy. But they love it--they adore music, they take such comfort out of it, that one is forced to forgive this lack of ear and this polyglot pitch, or else be considered a churl.

The Orangerie has, however, a very good average band--for Germany. The picture of the great crowd of people gathered at little tables around the band-stand, whole families together; of a tiny boy baby, just able to toddle around, being dragged about by an enormous St. Bernard dog,

whose chain the baby tugged at most valiantly; the long dim avenues under the trees where an occasional young couple lost themselves from fathers and mothers; the music; the cheerful beer-drinking; the general air of rosy-cheeked contentment has formed in my mind a most agreeable recollection of the Orangerie of Strasburg.

Strasburg has, however, much more to boast of than her clock. The city was founded by the Romans, and in the middle ages was one of the most powerful of the free cities of the German Empire, on the occasions of imperial processions her citizens enjoying the proud distinction of having their banner borne second only to the imperial eagle.

Then, because of its strategical importance, in a time of peace, Louis XIV. of France seized the city of Strasburg, and this delicate attention on his part was confirmed by the Peace of Ryswick in 1679, thereby giving Strasburg to France. The French kept it nearly two hundred years, but Germany got it back at the Peace of Frankfort, 1871, and it is now the capital of German Alsace and Lorraine.

I never think of Alsace and Lorraine that I do not recall the statue in the Place de la Concorde, with gay coloured wreaths looking more like a festival of joy than mourning,--in fact I never think of Paris mourning for anything, from a relative to a dead dog, that I can keep my countenance.

On the Jour des Morts, I once went to the Pere-Lachaise and found in the family lot of a duchesse with a grand name, a stuffed dog of the rare old breed known as mongrel. In America he would have slouched at the heels of a stevedore--or any sort of a man who shuffles in his walk and smokes a short black pipe. But this yellow cur was in a glass case mounted on a marble pedestal, and his yellowness in life was represented by a coat of small yellow beads put on in patches where the hair had disappeared. His yellow glass eyes peered staringly at the passer-by and his tomb was literally heaped with expensive couronnes tied with long streamers of crape, while couronnes on the grass-grown tomb of the defunct husband of the duchesse, buried in the back of the lot behind the dog, were conspicuous by their absence. I wondered if the widow took this ingenious method of publishing to the world that in life her husband had been less to her than her dog.

Paris crape is this slippery, shiny sort of stuff, like thin haircloth--the kind they used to cover furniture with. It is made up into "costumes" which have such an air of fashion that the deceased relative is instantly forgotten in one's interest in the cut and fit of the gown. A butterfly of a bonnet, a tiny face veil coming just to the tip of the nose, with the long one in the back sweeping almost to the ground, completes a picture of such a jaunty grief, such a saucy sorrow, that one would be quite willing to lose one or two distant relatives in order to be clad in such a manner.

The University of Strasburg changed its nationality as often as the town, but not at the same time. In one of its German periods Goethe graduated there as doctor of laws--which fact ought to be better known. At least I didn't know it. But Bee says that doesn't signify, because I know so little. But Bee only says that when she has asked me some stupid date that nobody ever knows or ever did know except in a history class.

The next day after our evening at the Orangerie, at half after eleven,

we went to the Cathedral to see the clock. It only performs all its functions at noon, and as there is always a crowd of tourists about it, we went early.

The most wonderful feature of this clock to Jimmie is that it regulates itself and adapts its motions to the revolutions of the seasons, year after year and year after year, as if it had a wonderful living human mind somewhere in its insides. Its perpetual calendar, too, is a marvel! How can that insensate clock tell when to put twenty-eight days and when to give thirty-one, when I can't even do it myself without saying:

"Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November,
All the rest have thirty-one,
Except February alone,
Which has but twenty-eight in fine
Till leap-year gives it twenty-nine."

And who tells that clock when leap year comes, and when the moon changes, and when it's going to rain, and when hoop-skirts will be worn again? Wonderful people, these Germans.

We were there on Monday when the clock struck noon. Monday is the day when Diana steps out upon the first gallery. Each day has its deity--Apollo on Sunday, Diana on Monday, etc.

On the first gallery an angel strikes the quarters on a bell in his little mechanical hand. Then a gentleman who has nothing else to do the whole year round reverses an hour-glass each hour in the twenty-four; so that you can tell the time by counting the grains of sand or by glancing at the face of the clock,--whichever way you have been brought up to tell time.

Above this there is a skeleton, which strikes the hours, and evidently cheerfully reminds us what our end will be, around which are grouped the quarter-hours, represented by the four figures, boyhood, youth, manhood, and old age.

But the two most remarkable things are those which crown the clock. In the highest niche, at noon, the twelve apostles, also representing the hours, come out of a door and march around the figure of the Saviour. Judas hangs his head, and the eyes of the Christ follow him until he disappears. Then on the highest pinnacle of all, a cock comes out, preens himself, flaps his wings, and gives such an exultant crow that Peter pauses in his walk, then drops his head forward on his breast, and so passes out of sight.

When the performance is over, the crowd melts away. Some few stay to do the Cathedral, but we went to luncheon. At luncheon it was decided to go to Baden-Baden. Jimmie and I compromised on three days of it.

There is nothing particularly interesting about the journey thither. When you come to the village of Oos, you get off the train and take a little train which is waiting on a siding, and in less than five minutes, before you have time to sit down, in fact, you are at Baden, at the entrance of the Black Forest, and find it beautiful.

It was the height of the season and we went to a very smart hotel, where they have very badly dressed people, because nearly everybody there

except us had money and titles.

Now the height of the season at any watering-place depresses me. If I could wear fern seed in my shoes to make me invisible, and sit on the piazza railing in a shirt-waist and a short skirt, I would love it. But both Bee and Mrs. Jimmie, with the light of heaven in their eyes, pulled out and put on their most be-yew-tiful Paris clothes, and if I do say it of my sister--well, for modesty's sake, I will only say that Mrs. Jimmie looked ripping. I was happily travelling with a steamer trunk and a big hat-box, and had hitherto rejoiced that my lack of clothes would prevent my being obliged to dress. I thought perhaps Jimmie and I would be allowed to roam about hunting little queer restaurants like Old Tom's or the Cheshire Cheese. But when Jimmie's boyish face appeared over a white expanse of tucked shirt front, I sank down in a dejected heap.

"And thou, Brutus?" I said.

"Couldn't help it," he answered, laconically. "We'd better give in handsomely for three days. It'll pay us in the end. Get into your 'glad rags' and be good."

"But I didn't bring my 'glad rags,'" I said.

Just then Bee looked around from fastening a lace butterfly in her hair on a jewelled spiral.

"I had two extra trays in my trunk and I put a few of your things in. Would you like to wear your lace gown? You've never even tried it on."

My mouth flew open, contrary to politeness and my excellent bringing-up. Jimmie collapsed with a silent grin, while I meekly followed Bee into my room.

When I saw my new gown all full of rolls of tissue-paper, packed by poor dear Bee, I went to my trunk and pulled out my smart Charvet tie. I handed it to her in silence.

"Take it," I said. "I hate to give it up, but you deserve it."

Bee accepted it gratefully.

"It's good of you to give it to me," she said. "You really need it more than I do, only this peculiar shade of blue is so becoming to me. I'll tell you what I'll do though," she added, heroically. "I'll lend it to you whenever you want it."

I thanked her, dressed, and then humbly trailed down to dinner in the wake of my gorgeous party.

Jimmie had engaged a table on the piazza, nearest the street and commanding the best view of all the other diners. I very willingly sat with my back to all the people, with the panorama of the Lichtenthaler Strasse passing before my eyes, and in quiet moments the sounds of the great military band playing on the promenade in front of the Conversationshaus coming to our ears.

A great deal of grandeur always makes me homesick. It isn't envy. I don't want to be a princess and have the bother of winding a horn for my

outriders when I want to run to the drug-store for postage stamps, but pomp depresses me. Everybody was strange, foreign languages were pelting me from the rear, noiseless flunkies were carrying pampered lap-dogs with crests on their nasty little embroidered blankets, fat old women with epilepsy and gouty old men with scrofula, representing the aristocracy at its best, were being half carried to and from tables, and the degeneracy of noble Europe was being borne in upon my soul with a sickening force.

The purple twilight was turning black on the distant hills, and the silent stars were slowly coming into view. Clean, health-giving Baden-Baden, in the Valley of the Oos, with its beauty and its pure air, was holding out her arms to all the disease and filth that degenerate riches produce.

I wasn't exactly blue, but I was gently melancholy. Jimmie was smoking, and Bee and Mrs. Jimmie had their heads together, casting politely furtive glances at a table which held royalty. I certainly was feeling neglected.

Suddenly a voice in English at my elbow said:

"Pardon me, madame, but were not you at the Grand Hotel at Rome last winter?"

"Yes," I said.

"I mean no impertinence in addressing you. I am the head waiter there in winter, here in summer. I remembered you at once, and I came to say that if anything goes wrong with any of your distinguished party during your stay, I shall count it a favour if you will permit me to remedy it. The hotel is at your disposal. I will send a private maid to attend you during your stay. I hope you will be happy here, madame."

Then with a bow he was gone.

I was in a state of exhilaration inside which threatened to break through at the sudden attentions of my party.

"Who's your friend?" said Jimmie.

"How nice of him!" commented his wife.

"Servants never remember me, yet I always feel better than you do," complained Bee.

"Console yourself. It is only porters and head waiters who care whether I am happy or not," I said, bitterly.

"Deary me!" said Jimmie, sitting up. "Come, let's get out of this. We must walk her over where she'll hear some music and see some pretty lights or she'll drown herself in her bath to-morrow."

We went, we promenaded, we showed our clothes, and came home smirking with satisfaction. We had been pointed out everywhere for Americans, which spoke volumes for our clothes and the smallness of our feet.

During two mortal weeks we stayed at Baden-Baden, taking the baths,

improving our German and driving through the Black Forest and the Oos Valley to the green hills beyond.

Then on one happy day we were all packed to go. We sent our trunks down, saw every drawer emptied, pulled the bed to pieces, looked under it and decided that this time we hadn't left so much as a pin. Bee stuck her "blaue cravatte," as we now called the necktie, under the bureau mat to put on when we came up, and then we snatched a hasty luncheon. In the meantime we turned our "private maid" and the chambermaid loose to see if we had overlooked anything.

When we came up they were still rummaging, but had found nothing.

Bee hurried to the bureau and looked under the mat. No tie. She asked the two women. They had not seen it. Then everybody hunted. Jimmie swore we had packed it. But Bee's gray eyes turned to green as she watched the flurried movements of the two maids. She walked up to them.

"Give me that blue necktie," she said, in awful German.

At that Jimmie, who hates a row when it is not of his own making, interfered and insisted that we must have packed it--he remembered numbers of times when we had made a fuss over nothing--it was of no account anyway, and if we would only come along and not miss the train he would send back to Charvet and get Bee another "blaue cravatte."

"For heaven's sake, take that man downstairs," I said to Mrs. Jimmie, "and let us manage this affair."

So poor Jimmie was whisked from the scene of action, still protesting and gesticulating, and being soothed but marched steadily onward by his wife.

When we came down we were heated but unsuccessful. I insisted upon reporting the affair to my friend the head waiter. He almost went back on his devotion to me in his assurances that those maids were honest. Then Jimmie had to come up and interfere, and those two men decided that we had packed it.

Bee was in a cold ladylike fury.

We gave all the servants double fees to assure them that meanness had not prompted the search, and got into the carriage.

"Remember," said Bee, "I claim that one of those women has that tie in her pocket now, because all four of us looked every inch of the rooms over together. I advise you to have them searched. On the other hand I will telegraph you from Nuremberg if I find it in my trunks."

We had half an hour before the train left. Bee, who was riding backward, kept looking out down the road whence we had come with a curious expression on her face. Jimmie, in spite of warning pressures from his wife's foot, kept sputtering about women's poor memories, etc. Bee didn't even seem to hear.

Presently, in a cloud of dust, up drove one of the men from the hotel, with a little package in his hand.

"Blaue cravatte," he said, bowing.

"Where did you find it?" demanded Mrs. Jimmie.

"Between the mattress and the springs of the bed. Madame must have put it there to press it."

Jimmie looked sheepish and put us into the train with a red face. Bee simply slipped the tie into her satchel and put on her travelling-cap without a word, and began to read. Bee never nags or crows.

So much for Baden-Baden.

CHAPTER IV

STUTTGART, NUREMBERG, AND BAYREUTH

We had planned to go to Stuttgart next, but as we were nearing the town, Bee pushed up her veil and said:

"I don't see why we are going to Stuttgart. I never heard of it except in connection with men who 'studied' in Stuttgart. What's there, Jimmie? An Academy?"

"I should say," said Jimmie, waking up. "The Academy where Schiller studied."

"That's very interesting," I broke in, "but it's hardly enough to keep me there very long. Are there any queer little places--"

"Any concert-gardens?" asked Bee.

"Are the hotels good?" asked his wife.

"There is one hotel called Hotel Billfinger, which I'd like to try, because Mark Twain's guide in 'Innocents Abroad' was named Billfinger. Remember?"

"He afterwards called him Ferguson, which I think is against the name and against the hotel," I said. "Why do we stop except to break the journey?"

"Well, the real reason," said Jimmie, with that timid air of his, "is because Baedeker says that in the Royal Library there are 7,200 Bibles in more than one hundred languages, and I thought if you stayed by them long enough you might get enough religion so that you would be less wearing on my nerves as a travelling companion. It wouldn't take you long to master them. While you are studying, the rest of us will refresh ourselves in the Stadt-Garten, where Bee will find a band, where I shall find a restaurant, and where my wife can ponder over Baedeker's choice information of the places where it is not proper to take a lady."

Nobody pays any attention to Jimmie, so we all stared out of the windows to see that the town was beautifully situated, almost upon the Neckar, and surrounded by such vine-clad hills and green wooded heights as to make it seem like a painting.

But Bee was still unconvinced.

"It is the capital of Nuremberg and used to be the favourite residence of the Dukes of Nuremberg," said Mrs. Jimmie, as we drove up to the hotel, not the Billfinger, let me remark in passing.

We found a band for Bee, and in the course of our stay in Stuttgart we heard any number of men's choruses, students' singing and the like. There was, too, the Museum of Art, and a fine one. There was also a lovely view, from the Eugen-Platz, of the city which lies below it. But after all, the Schloss-Garten and concerts to the contrary notwithstanding, there is an atmosphere about the law schools, museums, and collections of Stuttgart, which led frivolous pleasure-seekers like us to depart on the second day, for Nuremberg.

Jimmie has a curious way of selecting hotels. As the train neared that quaintest of old cities, toward which my heart warms anew as I think of it, he broke the silence as though we had held a long and heated argument on the matter.

"You might as well cease this useless discussion. I have decided to go to the Wittelsbacher Hof, Pfannenschmiedsgasse 22."

"Good heavens!" I murmured.

"There you go, _arguing!_" cried Jimmie. "But can't you see the advantages of all those extra letters on your note-paper when you write home?"

"Besides, it's a very good hotel, I've been told," said his wife, affably.

It was a very good hotel, and there was a lunch-room half-way up the main flight of stairs at the right as you enter, which I remember with peculiar pleasure. Travellers like us may well be excused for remembering a first luncheon such as that which we had at the Wittelsbacher Hof.

Then we all strolled out in the early summer twilight and took our first look at Nuremberg. Tell me if you can why we went into such ecstasies over Nuremberg and stayed there two weeks, when we could barely persuade ourselves to remain one day in Stuttgart. But the picturesqueness of Nuremberg is particularly enticing. The streets run "every which way," as the children say, and the architecture is so queer and ancient that the houses look as if they had stepped out of old prints.

It was so hot when we arrived that we were on terms of the most distant civility with each other. Indeed, it was dangerous to make the simplest observation, for the other three guns were trained upon the inoffensive speaker with such promptness and such an evident desire to fight that for the most part we maintained a dignified but safe silence.

Mrs. Jimmie bearded Jimmie in his den long enough to ask him to see about our opera tickets at once. Everybody said we could not get any, but trust Jimmie! The agent of whom he bought them had embroidered a generous romance of how he had got them of a lady who ordered them the January before, but whose husband having just died, her feelings would not permit her to use them, and so as a great accommodation, etc., etc.

Everybody knows these stories. Suffice it to say that Jimmie really had, at the last moment, secured admirable seats near the middle of the house, and everybody said it was a miracle. In looking back over the experiences of that one opera of "Parsifal," I cannot deny that there was something of a miracle about it. However, "Parsifal" was three days distant, and Nuremberg was at hand.

I love to think of Nuremberg. The recollection of it comes back to me again and again through a gentle haze of happy memories. The narrow streets were lined with houses which leaned toward each other after the gossipy manner of old friends whose confidence in each other is established. The windows jutted queerly, and odd balconies looped themselves on corners where no one expected them. They call these pretty old houses the best examples of domestic architecture, but warn you that the quaint peaked roofs are Gothic and the surprises are Renaissance--a mixture of which purists do not approve. But I am a pagan. I like mixtures. They give you little flutters of delight in your heart, and one of the most satisfactory of experiences is not to be able to analyse your emotions or to tell why you are pleased, but to feel at liberty to answer art questions with "Just because!"

So Nuremberg. Its fortifications are rugged and strong. Its towers imposing. It dates back to the Huns. Frederick Barbarossa frequently occupied the castle which frowns down on you from the heights. Hans Sachs, the poet, sang here. Albrecht Durer painted here. Peter Vischer perhaps dreamed out the noble original of my beautiful King Arthur here.

From the quaint and awkward statues of saints and heroes in church and state, to such delicate examples of sculpture as the figure of the Virgin in the Hirschelgasse, so delicate and graceful that it was once attributed to an Italian master, you realise how early the arts were established here and how sedulously they were pursued. Everywhere are works of art, from the cruder decorations over doorways and windows to the paintings of Durer in the Germanic Museum. It is a sad reflection to me that most of Durer's work, and all of his masterpieces, are in other cities--Munich, Berlin, and Vienna, and that, as it is in Greece, only their fame remains to glorify the city of his birth.

His statue, copied from a portrait painted by himself, stands in the Albrecht-Durer Platz, and in his little house are copies of his masterpieces and a collection of typical antique German furniture and utensils. The exquisite art of glass-staining is the suitable occupation of the custodian who shows you about the house.

Indeed, wood carving, glass staining, engraving of medals and medallions, copying ancient cabinets and quaint furniture are, if not the principal, at least the most interesting occupations pursued in Nuremberg to-day. In searching out the little shops I also found that table linen, superbly embroidered and decorated with drawn-work of intricate patterns was here in a bewildering display.

Dear Nuremberg! A stroll through your lovely streets is a feast for the eye and a whip to the imagination that no other city in the German Empire can duplicate or approach. You abound in quaint doorways, over which if I step, I find myself transplanted to the scenes of tapestries and old prints, and I can easily imagine myself framed and hanging on the wall quite comfortable and happy.

One of these tiny doorways led us, on a bright Sunday afternoon, into one of the oddest places we ever saw. It was the Bratwurst-Glocklein--such a restaurant as Doctor Johnson would have deserted the Cheshire Cheese for, and revelled in the change.

It appeared to be a thousand years old. Perhaps Melanchthon expounded the theories of the Reformation on the very benches on which we sat.

The door-sill was high, and we stepped over it on to a stone floor, the flagging of which was sunken in many places, causing pitfalls to the unwary. The room was small and only half lighted by infinitesimal windows. One end of the room was given up to what appeared to be a charcoal furnace built of bricks, over which in plain view buxom maids, whose red cheeks were purple from the heat, were frying delicious little sausages in strings. We squeezed ourselves into a narrow bench behind one of the tables whose rudeness was picturesque. I have seen schoolboy desks at Harrow and Eton worn to the smoothness of these tables here and carved as deeply with names. There was not a vestige of a cloth or napkins. The plates and knives and forks were rude enough to bear out the surroundings. In fact, the clumsiness and apparent age of everything almost transported us, in imagination, to the stone age, but the sensation was delightful.

One of the maids brought a string of sausages sizzling hot from the pan and deftly snipped off as many as were called for upon each of our plates. We drank our beer from steins so heavy that each one took both hands. A person with a mouth of the rosebud variety would have found it exceedingly difficult to obtain any of the beer, the stein presenting such unassailable fortifications.

It was too hot when we were there to appreciate to the full this delicious old spot, but on a winter evening, after the theatre, which closes about ten o'clock, think what a delightful thing it would be, O ye Bohemian Americans, with fashionable wives who insist upon the Waldorf or Sherry's after the theatre, to go instead to the Bratwurst-Glocklein! There you smoke at your ease, put your elbows on the table and dream dreams of your student days when the dinner coat vexed not your peaceful spirit.

Owing to our late arrival and the enormous crowd of people at Bayreuth, we found it expedient to remain in Nuremberg and go up to Bayreuth for the opera. The day of our performance of "Parsifal" was one of the hottest of the year. Not even Philadelphia can boast of heat more consolidated and unswerving than that of North Germany on this particular day.

We put on muslin dresses and carried fans and smelling salts, and Jimmie had to use force to make us carry wraps for the return. The journey, lovely in itself, was rendered hideous to us by the heat, but when we arrived at Bayreuth the babel of English voices was so delightfully homelike, American clothes on American women were so good to see, and Bayreuth itself was so picturesque, that we forgot the heat and drove to the opera-house full of delight.

I am sorry that it is fashionable to like Wagner, for I really should like to explain the feelings of perfect delight which tingled in my blood as I realised that I was in the home of German opera--in the city where the master musician lived and wrote, and where his widow and son still maintain their unswerving faithfulness toward his glorious music.

I am a little sensitive, too, about admitting that I like Carlyle and Browning. I suppose this is because I have belonged to a Browning and Carlyle club, where I have heard some of the most idiotic women it was ever my privilege to encounter, express glib sentiments concerning these masters, which in me lay too deep for utterance. It is something like the occasional horror which overpowers me when I think that perhaps I am doomed to go to heaven. If certain people here on earth upon whom I have lavished my valuable hatred are going there, heaven is the last place I should want to inhabit. So with Wagner.

"Parsifal!" That sacred opera which has never been performed outside of this little hamlet. I was to see it at last!

I was prepared to be delighted with everything, and the childishness of the little maid who took charge of our hats before we went in to the opera charmed me. My hat was heavy and hot, and I particularly disliked it, owing to the weight of the seagull which composed one entire side of it, and always pulled it crooked on my head. The little maid took the hat in both her arms, laid her round red cheek against the soft feathers of the gull, kissed its glass bead eyes, and smilingly said in German:

"This is the finest hat that has been left in my charge to-day!"

Verily, the opera of "Parsifal" began auspiciously. Quite puffed up with vainglorious pride over the little maiden's admiration of one of my modest possessions, while Bee's and Mrs. Jimmie's ravishing masterpieces had received not even a look, we met Jimmie bustling up with programmes and opera-glasses, and went toward the main entrance. We showed our tickets, and were sent to the side door. We went to the side door, and were sent to the back door. At the back door, to our indignation, we were sent up-stairs. In vain Jimmie expostulated, and said that these seats were well in the middle of the house on the ground floor. The doorkeepers were inexorable. On the second floor, they sent us to the third, and on the third they would have sent us to the roof if there had been any way of getting up there. As it was, they permitted us to stop at the top gallery, and, to our unmitigated horror, the usher said that our seats were there. Jimmie was furious, but I, not knowing how much he had paid for them, endeavoured to soothe him by pointing out that all true musicians sat in the gallery, because music rises and blends in the rising.

"We are sure to get the best effect up here, Jimmie, and those front rows, especially, if our seats happen to be in the middle, won't be at all bad. Don't let's fuss any more about it, but come along like an angel."

I will admit, however, that even my ardour was dampened when we discovered that our seats were absolutely in the back and top row, so that we leaned against the wall of the building, and were not even furnished with chairs, but sat on a hard bench without relief of any description.

And the price Jimmie hurled at us that he had paid for those tickets! I am ashamed to tell it.

Now Jimmie hates German opera in the most picturesque fashion. He hates in every form, colour, and key, and in all my life I was never so sorry for any one as I was for Jimmie that day at Bayreuth. The heat was stifling, his rage choked him and effectually prevented his going to

sleep, as otherwise he might have done in peace and quiet. He sat there in such a steam and fury that it was truly pitiable. He went out once to get a breath of air, and they turned the lights out before he could get back, so that he stumbled over people, and one man kicked him. With that Jimmie stepped on the German's other foot, and they swore at each other in two languages and got hissed by the people around them. When he finally got back to us, we found it expedient not to make any remarks at all, and I was glad it was too dark for him to see our faces.

Yet, in spite of Jimmie and the heat and the ache in our backs and the hard unyielding bench, that afternoon at "Parsifal" is one of the experiences of a lifetime.

People tell us now that we were there on an "Off day." By that they mean that no singers with great names took part. How like Americans to think of that! Germans go to the opera for the music. Americans go to hear and see the operatic stars.

Happily unvexed by my ignorance, I heard a perfect "Parsifal" without knowing that, from an American point of view, I ought not to have been so delighted. The orchestra was conducted by Siegfried Wagner, and Madame Wagner sat in full view from even our eyrie.

And then--the opera! Perfection in every detail! I believed then that not even the Passion Play could hold my spirit, so in leash with its symbolism, its deep devotion, and its enthralling charms.

The day on which I saw "Parsifal" at Bayreuth was a day to be marked with a white stone.

CHAPTER V

THE PASSION PLAY

Jimmie came into the sitting-room this morning (for, by travelling with the Jimmies, Bee and I can be very grand, and share the luxury of a third room with them), but I suspected him from the moment I saw his face. It was too innocent to be natural.

"What you got, Jimmie?" I said. Jimmie's manner of life invites abbreviated conversation.

"Only the letter from the Burgomeister of Oberammergau, assigning our lodgings," he replied, carelessly. He yawned and put the letter in his pocket.

"Oh, Jimmie!" we all cried out. "Have they--"

"Have they what?" asked Jimmie, opening his eyes.

"Don't be an idiot," I said, savagely. "You know I have hardly been able to sleep, wondering if we'd have to go to ordinary lodgings or if they would assign us to some of the leading actors in the play. Tell us! Let me see the letter!"

"Now wait a minute," said Jimmie, and then I knew that he was going to be exasperating.

"Don't you let him fool you," said Bee, who always doubts everybody's good intentions and discounts their bad ones, which worthy plan of life permits her to count up at the end of the year only half as many mental bruises as I, let me pause to remark. "You know that not one in ten thousand has influence enough to obtain lodgings with the chief actors, and who are we, I should like to know, except in our own estimation?"

"Well," said Jimmie, meekly, "in the estimation of the Burgomeister of Oberammergau, my wife is an American princess, travelling incognito as plain Mrs. Jimmie, to avoid being mobbed by entertainers. He promises in solemn German, which I had Franz translate, not to betray her disguise."

"That makes a prince of you, Jimmie," I said, sternly. "A pretty looking prince you are."

"Not at all," said Jimmie modestly. "I felt that I could not do the princely act very long either as to looks or fees, so I said that the princess had made a morganatic marriage, and that I was it."

"Jimmie!" said his wife, blushing scarlet. "How could you? Why, a morganatic marriage isn't respectable. It's left-handed."

"My love! You are thinking of a broomstick marriage. Trust me. We are still legally married, and if I should try to sneak out of my obligations to you by this performance, I should still be liable in the eyes of the law for your debts. Let that console you."

"But--" said Mrs. Jimmie, still blushing, "by this plan they won't let us be together, will they?"

"They wouldn't anyway, as I discovered from their first letter. We are all to be lodged separately, and from the tone of that first letter, in which they addressed me as their prince, I hit on the morganatic marriage as more economical in letting him down easy, without telling him I had lied or having to pay for my lie," said Jimmie, with timid appeal in his innocent blue eyes.

"But where do I come in, Jimmie?" I said, impatiently.

"You come in with Judas Iscariot. Where you belong!" said Jimmie, severely.

Bee howled. Mrs. Jimmie looked startled.

"Nonsense!" I said, indignantly. "That is going a little too far. I won't be put there. I believe you asked 'em on purpose, just so that you could crow over me afterward."

"You are getting slightly mixed," said Jimmie, politely. "If you mention crowing, 'tis Peter you ought to have been lodged with."

"What a fool you are, Jimmie!"

Jimmie gave an ecstatic bounce. Whenever he has completely exasperated anybody he simply beams with joy.

"Where have they put me, Jimmie?" asked Bee.

"They have thoughtfully assigned you to Thomas,--last name not mentioned,--where you can sit down and hold regular doubting conventions with each other and both have the time of your lives."

"I don't believe you!"

"Look and see, O doubtful--doubting one, I mean!"

"My word! He is telling the truth!" cried Bee in astonishment.

"I tried to get--" began Jimmie to his wife, but she stopped him.

"Don't, dear," she said, gently. "You know I love your jokes, but don't be sacrilegious. Leave His name out of this nonsense. I--I couldn't quite bear that."

Jimmie got up and kissed her.

"They have lodged you with the Virgin Mary, sweetheart, and the two most lovely Marys in the world will be in the same house together," he said.

Mrs. Jimmie blushed and smoothed Jimmie's riotous hair tenderly.

"And have they separated you and me, dear? Where have they lodged you?"

"I have secured an apartment with Mary Magdalene--in her house, I mean!" said Jimmie, straightening up.

Bee and I shrieked. Jimmie edged toward the door.

"Jimmie!" said his wife in horror. "_Please_ don't--"

"Don't what?"

His wife rose from her chair and turned away.

"Don't what?" he repeated.

"I was only going to say," said Mrs. Jimmie, "don't make a joke of every--"

"Well, if you don't want me to go there, I'll trade places with the scribe and put her with the lady who is generally represented reclining on the ground in a blue dress improving her mind by reading. Perhaps you would feel more comfortable if I lodged with Judas?"

"No, indeed! and put her with Mary Magdalene?" said Mrs. Jimmie, whose serious turn of mind was as a well-spring in a thirsty land to Jimmie.

"My dear," he said, impressively, with his hand on the door-knob. "Two things seem to have escaped your mind. One is that this is only play-acting, and the other is that Mary Magdalene, when history let go of her, was a reformed character anyway."

The door slammed. We both looked expectantly at Mrs. Jimmie. Her apologies for Jimmie's most delicious impertinences are so sincere and her sense of humour so absolutely wanting that we love her almost as

dearly as we love Jimmie.

Mrs. Jimmie, large, placid, fair and beautiful as a Madonna, rose and looked doubtfully at us after Jimmie had fled.

"You mustn't mind his--what he said or implied," she said, the colour again rising in her creamy cheeks. "Jimmie never realises how things will sound, or I think he wouldn't--or I don't know--" She hesitated between her desire to clear Jimmie and her absolute truthfulness. She changed the conversation by coming over to me and laying her hand tenderly on my hair.

"You are sure, dear, that you don't mind lodging with Judas Iscariot?"

Bee stuffed her handkerchief into her mouth and politely turned her back. I bit my lip. It hurts her feelings to be laughed at.

"Not a bit, Mrs. Jimmie. I shall love it."

"Because I was going to say that if you did, I would gladly exchange with you, and you could lodge with Mary."

"Mrs. Jimmie," I said, "you are an angel. That's what you are."

"And now," said Bee, cheerfully, who hates sentiment, "let's pack, for we leave at noon."

I don't apologise for Jimmie's ribald conversation, because many people, until they have seen the Passion Play, make frivolous remarks, which would be impossible after viewing it, except to the totally insensible or irreligious.

Jimmie is irreligious, but not insensible. He really had gone to no end of trouble to obtain these lodgings for us, and he had insisted so tenaciously that we must be lodged with the principals that we were obliged to wait for an extra performance, and live in Munich meanwhile.

We all four made the journey from Munich to Oberammergau, which lies in so picturesque a spot in the Bavarian Alps, from very different motives. Mrs. Jimmie, who is an ardent churchwoman, went in a spirit of deep devotion. Bee went because one agent told her that over twelve thousand Americans had been booked through their company alone. Bee goes to everything that everybody else goes to. Jimmie went in exactly the same spirit of boyish, alert curiosity with which, when he is in New York, he goes to each new attraction at Weber and Field's.

As we got off the train the little town looked like an exposition, except that there were no exhibits. English, German, and French spoken constantly, and not infrequently Russian, Spanish, and Italian assailed our ears the whole time we were there. Only one thing was characteristic. The native peasants looked different. The picturesque costume of the Tyrolese men, consisting of velveteen knee breeches, gay coloured stockings, embroidered white blouse, and short bolero jacket with gold braid or fringe, and the Alpine hat, with a pheasant or eagle feather in it, sat jauntily upon most of the young men, whose bold glances and sinewy movements suggested their alert, out-of-door life in their mountain homes. But the Oberammergau peasants walked with a slower step. Their eyes were meek instead of roving, their smiles tender instead of saucy, and they say it is all the influence of the Passion

Play, which for over three hundred years has dominated their lives. No one who commits a crime, or who lives an impure life, can act in the great drama, nor can any except natives take part. And as the ambition of every man, woman, and child in Oberammergau is to form part of this glorious company, the reason for the purity of their aspect is at once to be seen. No murder, robbery, or crime of any description has been committed in Oberammergau for three hundred years.

The peasants of this little mountain village live their whole lives under the shadow of the cross.

Nor was it long before our little party came under this strange influence. My own sense of the eternal fitness of things is so highly developed that I was under the tense strain of nervous excitement which always wrecks me after reading a strong novel or witnessing a tragic play. I was afraid to see the Passion Play for two reasons. One that I could not bear to see the Saviour of mankind personified, and the other that I was afraid that the audience would misbehave. If I am going to have my emotions wrenched, I never want any one near me. To my mind the mad King Ludwig of Bavaria obtained the highest enjoyment possible from having performances of magnificent merit with himself as the sole auditor. This world is so mixed anyway, and audiences at any entertainment so hopelessly beyond my control. Nothing, for example, makes me feel so murderous as for an audience to go mad and stamp and kick and howl over a cornet solo with variations, no matter how ribald, and beg for more of it. And they always _do_!

The Passion Play, up to a comparatively few years ago, had comic characters and scenes, as for instance, there was once a scene in hell where the Devil, as chief comedian, ripped open the bowels of Judas and took therefrom a string of sausages. This vulgar and hideous buffoonery was in the habit of being received with delight by the peasants from neighbouring hamlets, which, up to fifty years ago, formed the principal part of the Passion Play audiences.

And as tradition, the handing down of legends from father to son, forms such a part of the mountaineer's education, I was not surprised to hear a party of Tyrolese giggle at moments when the deeper meaning of the play was holding the rest of us in a spell so tense that it hurt.

I remember in Modjeska's rendition of Frou-frou, when Frou-frou's lover is breaking her heart, and the strain becomes almost unbearable, Modjeska's nervous hands tear her valuable lace handkerchief into bits. It is a piece of inspired acting to make the discriminating weep, but my friend the audience always giggled irresistibly, as if the sound of rending lace, when a woman's agony was the most intense, were a bit of exquisite comedy.

I am constrained to believe, however, that in almost entirely remodelling the Passion Play, the village priest, Daisenberger, was not moved by any consideration of what an ignorant audience might do, but rather by the noble, Oberammergau spirit of a life of devotion, dedicated to the rewriting, rehearsing, and directing of the performance.

The history of this man illustrates what I mean by the Oberammergau spirit. In 1830 he was a young peasant who saw the possibilities of the Passion Play. He went to the head of the Monastery at Ettal, and vowed to consecrate his whole life to this work, if they would make him a

priest and permit him to become the spiritual director of the people of the village. But he was obliged to study seven years before they gave him the position. He was seventy years old when he died, having so nobly fulfilled his vow that he is called "The Shakespeare of the Passion Play." For forty-five years he superintended every performance and every public rehearsal, and as these rehearsals take place in some form or other almost every night during the ten years which intervene between one performance and another, something of the depth of his devotion to his beloved task may be gathered.

Jimmie marvelled that he could leave his money and his valuables around, and his room door unlocked, until they told him that the street door was never locked either. At this information Jimmie grew suspicious, and locked his bedroom door, much to the affliction of the gentle family of Bertha Wolf, who plays Mary Magdalene. He explained to them that there were plenty of Italian, French, and English robbers, even if there were no Tyrolese. "And are there no American robbers?" they asked, simply, to which Jimmie replied with equal guilelessness that Americans in Europe had no time to rob other people, they were so busy in being robbed.

"People think we are so very rich, you see," he explained, when they gazed at him uncomprehendingly. Then he gave the little brown-eyed boy who clings to his mother's skirt in one of the tableaux five pfennigs to see him clap his hands twice and bob his yellow head, which is the way Tyrolese children express their thanks.

This living in the families of the actors was most interesting, except for the autograph fiends, who simply mobbed the Christus, Anton Lang, and Josef Maier, the Christus of the last three performances, who now takes the part of the speaker of the prologue. Those dear people were so obliging that no one was ever refused, consequently thousands of tourists must possess autographs of most of the principals. Not one of our party asked an autograph of anybody. I hope they are grateful to us. I should think they would remember us for that alone.

Mrs. Jimmie was not at all disturbed by the somewhat wooden and inadequate acting of Anna Flunger, who plays Mary, and loved, I believe almost worshipped, that young peasant girl, who walked bareheaded and with downcast eyes through the streets, or who waited upon the guests in her father's house with such sweet simplicity. To Mrs. Jimmie, Anna Flunger was the real Virgin Mary, so real, indeed, that I believe that Mrs. Jimmie could almost have prayed to her.

Even Bee was intensely touched by an act of Peter,--for her lodging was changed to the house of Thomas and Peter Rendl after we arrived. The father, Thomas Rendl, plays St. Peter, while his son is again John, the beloved disciple. He played John in 1890, at the age of seventeen, but they say that there is not a line in his beautiful, spiritual face to show the flight of time. His large liquid eyes follow the every movement of the Master's on the stage, and their expression is so hauntingly beautiful that even Bee admitted its influence. Bee said that one evening, as they were sitting around the table, resting for a moment after supper was finished, the village church bell began to ring for the Angelus. In an instant the two men and the two women politely made their excuses and rising, stood in the middle of the room facing eastward, crossing their hands upon their breasts in silent prayer. Bee said it was most beautiful to see how simply they performed this little act of devotion.

I wouldn't let Jimmie know of it for the world, but it has been quite a trial to me to live in the house with Judas. He plays with such tremendous power--he makes it seem so real, so close, so near. Once I asked him if he liked the part, and he broke down and wept. He said he hated it--that he loathed himself for playing it, and that his one ambition was to be allowed to play the Christus for just one time before he died, in order to wipe out the disgrace of his part as Judas and to cleanse his soul. I cried too, for I knew that his ambition could never be realised. I told him that perhaps they would allow him to act the part at a rehearsal, if he told them of his ambition, and the thought seemed to cheer him. He said he knew the part perfectly, and had often rehearsed it in private to comfort his own soul.

Such was his sincerity and grief, such his contrition and remorse after a performance, that it would not surprise me some day to know that the part had overpowered him, and that he had actually hanged himself.

As to the play itself--I wish I need say nothing about it. My mind, my heart, my soul, have all been wrenched and twisted with such emotion as is not pleasant to feel nor expedient to speak about. It was too real, too heart-rending, too awful. I hate, I abhor myself for feeling things so acutely. I wish I were a skeptic, a scoffer, an atheist. I wish I could put my mind on the mechanism of the play. I wish I could believe that it all took place two thousand years ago. I wish I didn't know that this suffering on the stage was all actual. I wish I thought these people were really Tyrolese peasants, wood-carvers and potters, and that all this agony was only a play. I hate the women who are weeping all around me. I hate the men who let the tears run down their cheeks, and whose shoulders heave with their sobs. It is so awful to see a man cry.

But no, it is all true. It is taking place now. I am one of the women at the foot of the cross. The anguish, the cries, the sobs are all actual. They pierce my heart. The cross with its piteous burden is outlined against the real sky. The green hill beyond is Calvary. Doves flutter in and out, and butterflies dart across the shafts of sunlight. The expression of Christ's face is one of anguish, forgiveness, and pity unspeakable. Then his head drops forward on his breast. It grows dark. The weeping becomes lamentation, and as they approach to thrust the spear into His side, from which I have been told the blood and water really may be seen to pour forth, I turn faint and sick and close my eyes. It has gone too far. I no longer am myself, but a disorganised heap of racked nerves and hysterical weeping, and not even the descent from the cross, the rising from the dead, nor the triumphant ascension can console me nor restore my balance.

The Passion Play but once in a lifetime!

CHAPTER VI

MUNICH TO THE ACHENSEE

If there were a country where the crowned heads of Europe in ball costume sat in a magnificent hall, drinking nothing less than champagne, while the court band discoursed bewitching music, and the electric lights flashed on myriads of jewels, Bee and Mrs. Jimmie would declare

that sort of Bohemia to be quite in their line. And because that kind of refined stupidity would bore Jimmie and me to the verge of extinction, and because we really prefer an open-air concert-garden with beer, where the people are likely to be any sort of cattle whom nobody would want to know, yet who are interesting to speculate about, I really believe that Bee and Mrs. Jimmie think we are a little low.

However, their impossible tastes being happily for us unattainable, three hours after our arrival in Munich found Jimmie proudly marching three sailor-hat and shirt-waist women into the Lowenbraukeller.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when we arrived, and we took our seats at a little table in the terraced garden. A rosy-cheeked maid, who evidently had violent objections to soap, brought us our beer, and then we looked around. There was music, not very good, only a few people smoking china pipes and not even drinking beer, a few idly reading the paper, and a general air over everybody of Mr. Micawber waiting for something to turn up.

Jimmie glanced around anxiously. The length of our stay depended upon our ability to please Mrs. Jimmie and Bee, who were easily fatigued by the populistic element of society.

"Nothin' doin'," growled Jimmie in my ear. "Wake 'em up, can't you? Create a riot. Let's smash our beer-mugs, and shout 'Down with the Kaiser!'"

"You'd find you would stay longer than you wanted to if you did that," I said. "What do you suppose they are all waiting for?"

Jimmie called the redolent maiden, and in German which made her quiver put the question.

"At five o'clock they will open a fresh hogshead of beer--the Lowenbrau," she answered him.

"Fresh beer?" cried Jimmie. "How long has this been opened?"

"Since three."

"Great Scott!" whispered Jimmie. "Think of me brought up on a bottle, coming to a land where men will sit for an hour to get beer the first five minutes it is opened."

"See, they are opening it now," said the maid.

Sure enough, every man in the garden slowly rose and ambled leisurely to a horse-trough in the centre of the garden in which lay perhaps a score of mugs in running water. Each took a stein or two or three, depending on his party, and formed in line in front of the counter across which the beer was passed.

"Come, Jimmie," I said. "I'm going to get my own stein."

"Why do they do that?" asked Mrs. Jimmie, after we had got in line.

"It saves the half-cent charged for service," answered the maid.

"Now isn't she funny!" complained Bee of me as I returned beaming with

content. "She likes to go and do a queer thing like that instead of sitting still to be waited on, like a lady."

"Been waited on a million times like a lady," I ventured to respond. "It isn't every day one can get a cool mug and see the beer drawn fresh and foaming like that. I felt like a Holbein painting."

Bee, as at Baden-Baden, plaintively gave the attendant a double fee to show that meanness had not caused my apparently thrifty act. Then for the first time in our lives we found what fresh beer really meant.

Even Bee and Mrs. Jimmie admitted that it was worth while coming, and let me record in advance that when we got to Vienna, and they served us an equally delicious beer in long thin glasses as delicate as an eggshell, Bee grew so enthusiastic in the process of beer drinking that Jimmie grew absurdly proud of his pupil, and professed to think that she was "coming round after all." But Bee declared that it was the thinness of the glasses which attracted her, and insisted that beer out of a German stein was like trying to drink over a stone wall.

We went many times after that, generally in the evening, when the concert was held in a hall which must have contained two thousand people, even when all seated at little tables, and where the band would have deafened you if the hall had not been so large. Here Jimmie and the waitress prevailed upon us to taste the most inhuman dishes with names a yard long, which the maid declared we would find to be "wunderschoen."

We began in a spirit of adventure, but Jimmie's taste in food is so depraved that if he followed the precedent all through his life, Lombroso would class him as a degenerate. As it was, he soon had us distanced. But we let him eat pickles and cherries and herring and cream and tripe and garlic and pig's feet all stewed up together, while we listened to the music, and planned what we would bury him in.

The pictures in Munich we loved. I must say that I enjoy the atmosphere of the Munich school better than any other. There is a healthiness about German realism that one is not afraid nor ashamed to admire. French realism is like a suggestive story, expunged of all but the surface fun for girls' hearing. You are afraid of the laugh it raises for fear there is something beneath it all that you don't understand. But the modern Munich galleries were not the task that picture galleries often are. They were a sincere delight, and let me pause to say that Munich art was one thing that we four were unanimous in praising and enjoying as a happy and united family.

It was here that Jimmie proceeded to go mad over Verboeckhoven's sheep pictures, and Mrs. Jimmie and Bee over the crown jewels in the Treasury of the Alte Residenz. To be sure they are fine. For example, there is the famous "Pearl of the Palatinate," which is half black, and a glorious blue diamond about twice as fine as the one owned by Lord Francis Hope, which his family went to law to prevent his selling not long ago, and a superb group of St. George and the dragon, the knight being in chased gold, the dragon made entirely of jasper, and the whole thing studded thickly with precious stones of every description. But, except that these things are historic and kept in royal vaults, they are no more wonderful than jewellers' exhibits at the expositions.

But if you want to be thoroughly mixed up on the Nibelungenlied, after you think you have got those depraved old parties with their iniquitous

marriages and loose morals pretty well adjusted by a faithful attendance at Walter Damrosch's lectures and Wagner operas, just go through the Koenigsbau, and let one of those automatic conductors in uniform take you through the Schnorr Nibelungen Frescoes, and from personal experience I will guarantee that, when you have completed the rounds, you won't even know who Siegfried is.

There is one thing particularly worth mentioning about Munich, and that is that also in Alte Residenz, in the Festsaalbau, which faces on the Hofgarten, and is 256 yards, not feet, long, are two small card rooms, with what they call a "gallery of beauties."

Now everybody knows how disappointing professional beauties are. Think over the names of actresses heralded as "beauties;" of belles, who have been said to turn men's heads by the score; of Venuses, and Psyches, and Madonnas of the galleries of Europe, and tell me your honest opinion. Aren't most of them really--well, _trying,_ to say the least?

Titian's beauties all need an obesity remedy, and Jimmie criticises most "beauties" so severely that we have got to searching them out, when we are tired and cross, just to vent our spleen upon.

Jimmie's favourite story is the old, old one of the old woman who saw a hippopotamus for the first time. She looked at him a moment in silence and then said: "My! ain't he plain!"

It is pre-historic, that story, but it has saved our lives many a time in Europe. It fits so many cases, and I mention it here just to prove my point. Go, then, to the "Gallery of Beauties" in the Palace, and you will find thirty-six portraits by Steiler, of thirty-six of the most exquisite women conceivable to the mind of man. Some of these are women, like the Empress of Austria, who were justly famed for a beauty which is not often the gift of royalty. Others are women of whom you have never heard, but so lovely that it would be impossible not to remember their loveliness for ever and a day.

We all enthusiastically bought photographs of the painting of the Empress Elizabeth at the age of eighteen, which to my mind is one of the most exquisite faces ever put upon canvas, and then, highly elated with our presentation of Munich to Mrs. Jimmie and Bee, we gaily wended our way southward, following the river Isar for a time, until we reached Innsbruck, on our way to the Achensee.

At Innsbruck we halted for a sentimental reason which I am not ashamed to divulge, as the ridicule of the public would be sweet approval compared to the way Jimmie wore himself to a shadow in the violence of his jeers. But the fact is that the King Arthur of Tennyson has always been one of my heroes, and in the Franciscan Church or the Hofkirche in Innsbruck, there were twenty-eight heroic bronze statues, the finest of these being of Arthur, Koenig von England, by the famous Peter Vischer of Nuremberg.

So in Innsbruck we paused for a few days, finding it delightful beyond our ideas of it, and exquisitely picturesque, situated on both banks of a dear little foaming, yellow river, with foot-bridges upon which you may stand and watch it rage and churn, and around it on all sides rising the mountains of the Bavarian Alps, which are not so near as to crowd you. Mountains smother me as a rule.

Jimmie obligingly took us at once to the Hofkirche, to get to which we passed under the Triumphal Gate, erected by the citizens on the occasion of the entry of the Emperor Francis I. and the Empress Maria Theresa, to commemorate the marriage of Prince Leopold, who afterward became the Emperor Leopold II., with the Infanta Maria Ludovica. This magnificent arch is of granite and will last thousands of years. It reminded me of the Dewey Arch in New York--it was so different.

The Emperor Maximilian I. directed in his will that the Hofkirche should be built, and in the centre of the nave he is represented kneeling by a sumptuous bronze statue, surrounded by the statues I had come to see. Jimmie declared that the marble sarcophagus upon which the statue of Maximilian is placed was "worth the price of admission," but Jimmie's opinion is of no value except when he is accidentally right, as in this instance. He studied this and the monument of Andreas Hofer, whose remains are buried here, under a magnificent sarcophagus of Tyrolese marble, leaving us to our bronze statues.

I found my King Arthur perfectly satisfactory, much to my surprise, for I am always prepared to be disappointed. Some of the statues are ridiculous in the extreme, but these monstrosities served the better to emphasise the dignity of King Arthur's pose and the nobility of his countenance.

Just after you leave the Hofkirche, you find yourself just opposite to the "Golden Dachl," which the natives tell you is a roof built of pure gold, but which the skeptical declare to be copper gilded. This roof covers a handsome Gothic balcony and blazes as splendidly as if it were gold, as Bee and Mrs. Jimmie preferred to believe. It is said to have cost seventy thousand dollars, and was built by Count Frederick of Tyrol, who was called "The Count of the Empty Pockets," to refute his nickname.

While we were taking infinite satisfaction in this little history, we lost Jimmie. He emerged presently from a handsome shop near by followed by a man bearing a large box.

"What have you been buying, Jimmie?" we demanded, suspiciously.

"Only a replica of Maximilian's statue," he answered, blandly.

"You mean a 'copy,' my darling," I corrected him, sweetly.

Now Jimmie loves a fight and so do I, so we immediately offered battle to each other, Jimmie insisting on his replica, and I declaring that a replica meant that the same artist must have made both the original and the second article, which when made by another craftsman became a "copy."

Jimmie got red in the face and abusive, while I remained cool and exasperating. I was getting even with Jimmie for everything since Paris.

But conceive, if you can, my utter humiliation when, upon arriving at the hotel, I discovered that the box contained, not Maximilian, but my dear King Arthur, and that Jimmie had bought it for me!

I really cried.

"Jimmie," I said in a meek and lowly voice, "you are an angel--a bright,

beautiful, golden angel, and from now on, I'll call this a replica,--when I'm talking to a wayfaring man. And I'll never, never fight with you again!"

"Then gimme back that bronze man!" declared Jimmie. "If you give up the battlefield I'll start home to-morrow!" Which shows you where I got encouragement to be "ungentlemanly," as Jimmie calls me.

Innsbruck is the capital of Tyrol, and the whole country of Tyrol is like a picture-book. Its history is so stirring, its country so beautiful, its people are so picturesque. There are any number of dainty little lakes lying in among its mountains, which are accessible to the tourist, and therefore semi-public, by which I mean not as public as the Swiss or Italian lakes. But up the Inn River a few miles, and completely hidden from the tourist, being out of the way and little known to Americans, there lies the most lovely lake of all, the Achensee, and all around it the Tyrolese peasants, as they ought to be allowed to remain, simple, primitive, natural. We wanted to see them dance. So regardless of whether an iron bound itinerary would take us there next, we folded away our maps, put our trust in our little yellow coupon ticket book, and started for the Achensee. From the moment we began to see less of tourists and more of the natives, Jimmie's and my spirits rose. Chiffon and patent leather might belong to Bee and Mrs. Jimmie, but here in the Austrian Tyrol, Jimmie and I were getting our innings.

We got off the train at Jenbach and left our trunks there. Then on the same platform, but behind it, and a few yards beyond the station, there is a curious little hunchbacked engine and an open car. Into this car we climbed with our handbags, and beheld on the same seat with Mrs. Jimmie a beautiful woman in a gown unmistakably from Paris, who looked so familiar that we could scarcely keep from staring her out of countenance. Finally Bee leaned across and whispered:

"Don't look, but isn't that Madame Carreno?"

Without heeding Bee's polite warning, I turned and pounced upon my idol.

"Madame Carreno!"

"My _dear_ child!"

"What in the world are you doing here?"

"Why I _live_ here! And you? How came _you_ to find your way to this inaccessible spot?"

"We are going to the Achensee--to the Hotel Rhiner, to hear Fraeulein Therese--"

"You have heard of my little friend Therese, and you have come--how many thousand miles?--to hear her sing and play on her zither?"

"To do all that, but mostly to see if she will tell me her love story."

"How do you know she had one?" inquired Madame Carreno, quickly.

"I heard of it in England. Some one who knew the duke told me."

"It was a lucky escape for her, and I think she will tell you all about

it. You see it happened, ah, so many years ago."

To my mind, Madame Carreno is the most wonderful genius of modern times at the piano. I have heard all the others scores of times, so don't argue with me. You may all worship whom you will, but the whole musical part of my heart is at Madame Carreno's feet, with a small corner saved for Vladimir de Pachmann, when he plays Chopin. She claims to be an American, but she plays with a heart of a Slav, and as one whose untamed spirit can never be held in leash even by her music. Her playing is so intoxicating that it goes through my veins like wine. The last time I heard her play was in an enormous hall in the West, when her audience was composed of music lovers of every class and description. Just back of me was a woman whose whole soul seemed to respond to Carreno's hypnotic genius. Carreno had just finished Liszt's "Rhapsodic Hongroise" No. 2, and had followed it up with a mad Tschaikowsky fragment. I was so excited I was on the verge of tears when I heard the woman behind me catch her breath with a sob and exclaim:

"My Lord! Ain't she got _vinegar_!"

I repeated this to Madame Carreno at Jenbach, and she seized my hands and shouted with laughter. Such a grip as she has! Her hands are filled with steel wires instead of muscles, and her arms have the strength of an athlete in training.

The car propelled by the hunchbacked engine grated and bumped its way over its cog-wheel road, pushing its delighted quota of passengers higher and higher into the mountains. The Inn valley fell away from our view, and wooded slopes, fir-trees, patches of snow on far hillsides, and tiny hamlets took its place.

"Here and there among these little villages live my summer pupils," said Madame Carreno. "I have six. One from San Francisco, one from Australia, one from Paris, one from Geneva, and two from Russia--all young girls, and with _such_ talent! They live all the way from Jenbach to the Achensee, and come to see me once a week."

The train stopped with a final squeal of the chain, and a lurch which loosened our joints.

Before us spread a sheet of water of such a blueness, such a limpid, clear, deep sapphire blue as I never saw in water before.

Around it rose the hills of Tyrol, guarding it like sentinels.

It was the Achensee!

CHAPTER VII

DANCING IN THE AUSTRIAN TYROL

Jimmie is such a curious mixture that it is really very much worth while to study his emotions. I think perhaps that even I, who find it so hard to discover either man, woman, child, or dog whom I would designate as "typically American," am forced to admit that Jimmie's mental make-up is

perfect as a certain type of the American business man, travelling extensively in Europe. The real bread of life to Jimmie is the New York Stock Exchange; but being on the verge of a nervous breakdown, he brought his fine steel-wire will to bear upon his recreation with as much nervous force as he ever expended in a deal in Third Avenue or Union Pacific.

Hence he travels nervously yet deliberately, and views Europe from the point of view of the American stock market, scoffing at my enthusiasm, ironical of Bee's most cherished preferences, patient with his wife's serious love of society, and chivalrously tolerant, as only the American man can be, of the prejudices of his travelling family.

I notice that he is taking on a certain amount of true culture. He is broadening. Jimmie is beginning to let his emotions out; however, very gradually, with a firm, nervous hand on the throttle-valve, with the sensitive American's fear of ridicule as his steam-gauge.

I watched Jimmie as he first saw the Achensee. The colour came into his face, his eyes brightened, and he clenched his hands--a sure sign of feeling in Jimmie.

There was a little white steamboat at the pier. The lake spread out before us was of the colour which you see when you look down into the depths of some fine unmounted sapphire at Tiffany's. The pebbles on the beach under the water looked as if they were in a basin of blueing. I reached in to take one out, and thoroughly expected to find my hand stained when I withdrew it. Around the lake arose little hills of the same beauty and verdure as our Berkshires, with the exception that these hills possessed a certain purplish, bluish haze with a gray mist over them, which gave to their colouring the same softness that a woman imparts to her complexion when she wears white chiffon under a black lace veil.

I cannot understand what makes the Achensee so blue and the Koenigsee so green. Chemically analysed, the waters are almost identical, and the verdure surrounding them is very similar, and yet the Koenigsee is as green as the Achensee is blue.

A little steamer took us around the edge of the lake, where at the first landing-place Madame Carreno left us. We could only see the roof of her cottage in the grove of trees.

There is a new hotel somewhere along the lake; but we left that, with its modern equipments and electric lights, and went where we had been directed--to the Hotel Rhiner. Fraeulein Therese met us at the landing. Alas! she was no longer the beauty of her love story of thirty years before. She was ample. Her short hair curled like a boy's, as without a hat she stood under a green umbrella, to welcome her guests. She had large feet, large hips, a large waist, and large lungs; but as she took our hands in the friendliest of greetings, and beamed on us from her full-moon face, we felt how delightful it was to get home once more.

The Hotel Rhiner is severely plain,--almost unfurnished,--and its appointments are primitive in the extreme. There was no carpet upon the floor of our rooms. Two little single beds stood side by side. A single candle was supposed to furnish light, and the wash-bowl was about the size of your hand. Yet everything was exquisitely clean, and from the windows of our corner room stretched away the blue Achensee and the

mountains of the Tyrol, making a view which made you forget that the sheets were damp, and that the chairs were uncushioned.

Physically, I am sure that I was never more uncomfortable than I was at the Hotel Rhiner. The bed squeaked; the mattress, I think, was filled with corn-shucks, the hard part of which had an ungentle way of assailing you when you least expected it. Yet, if now were given to me the choice of going back to the Elysee Palace in Paris, or the Hotel Rhiner on the Achensee, it would not take me two seconds to start for the corn-shucks.

A rosy-cheeked, amply proportioned maid, named Rosa, dressed in the picturesque costume of the Tyrolese peasants, installed us in our rooms and advised us to row upon the lake and see the sunset before supper.

Tourists from the other hotels were being landed at our pier from tiny boats, to have their supper at the Hotel Rhiner, for the cooking is famous. Jimmie came and pounded on our door, executing a small war-dance in the corridor when we appeared,

"We've struck our gait," he said, ecstatically, to me. "Virtue is its own reward. This pays us for Baden-Baden and Paris. What do you think? The Rhiner family themselves do the cooking. There are the old mother, Fraeulein Therese, three sons, two daughters-in-law, and five grandchildren who run this house. I have ordered the corner table on the veranda for supper--and such a table! And afterward there is going to be a dance in the kitchen. Fraeulein Therese has promised to play for us on her zither, and there is going to be singing. Now, come along and let's do the sunset stunt."

Bee and Mrs. Jimmie followed us with gentle apprehension, for they are always a little suspicious of anything that Jimmie and I particularly like. Under a long, sloping roof we found several dozen little row-boats, with the "shipmaster," a peasant whose costume might have come out of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera. He launched us, however, and the boat shot out into the lake, with Jimmie and me at the oars, and then we saw a sight that none of us had ever seen before. The air was wonderfully calm and still. The only ripple on the lake was that which was left by our boat as we rowed out to where there was a break in the hills. On the east and west, there the tallest hills fall away from the Achensee and make an undulating line on the horizon. As we reached this break, we stopped rowing, transfixed by the glory of the scene.

The sun was just setting, a great molten mass of flame, splashing down in the crimson clouds, which showed in the aperture between the hills. Little thin wraiths of mist or haze curled up from this molten mass into the rosy sky above, as if the gods on Olympus were mulling claret for a marriage feast. The purple hills curved down on each side in the exact shape of an amethyst punch-bowl, and the radiance of colouring fairly blinded us. On the other hand, the full moon was rising above the eastern hills in a haze of silver, but with a calmness and serene majesty which formed a direct antithesis to the sinking sun she faced.

Lower and lower sank the king, going down out of sight finally in a blaze of splendour which left the western sky aflame with light. In the east higher and higher rose the queen, rising from her silver mists into the clear pale blue of the sky, and sending her white lances gliding across the blue waters of the Achensee, till their tips touched our oars.

We watched it, hushed, breathless, awed. I looked at Jimmie.

"What is it like?" murmured Bee.

And to my surprise, Jimmie answered her from out of the spell this magic scene had caused, saying:

"It is like a glimpse of the splendours of the New Jerusalem."

We had supper that night in the open air of the veranda, where Jimmie had engaged the table. Hedwig, a waitress, whispered into my ear confidentially that we would find the fish delicious, as they were some of those the priests had not needed.

The Tyrol, especially in the vicinity of the Achensee, is absolutely priest-ridden, every one, from the peasants to the gentry, contributing, and the best in the land going into their larders and their coffers.

We were indebted to the overfeeding of these fat priests for a delicacy which was then unknown to me--broiled goose liver with onions. It is a German dish, but a rarity not to be had in even all first-class hotels in Germany and Austria. When you have it, it is announced to the guests personally, with something the same air as if the proprietor should say:

"Madame, the Emperor and his suite will dine at this hotel to-night, at eight."

Goose liver may not sound tempting to some, but as I saw it that night, cooked by the old mother of Fraeulein Therese, a luscious white meat delicately browned and smothered in onions as we smother a steak, and so delicate that it melted in the mouth like an aspic jelly, it was one of the most delicious dishes I ever essayed.

As we were eating our dessert, a gemischtes compote so rich that it nearly sent us to our eternal rest, Fraeulein Therese came and asked us to have our coffee in the kitchen. A long, low-ceiled room, three steps below the level of the ground, with seats against the wall, and a raised platform on each side, with little tables for coffee, adjoined the hotel. This room at one time perhaps had been a real kitchen, where cooking was done. Now it was turned into a place of recreation. Around the walls were seated a variegated, almost motley, array of men and women, from the dear old fat mother of Fraeulein Therese and the three boys, the daughters-in-law, the granddaughters, to a picturesque old man, whose coal-black beard fell almost to his waist, our friend the "shipmaster," and the band of four musicians, all dressed in the Tyrolese costume, with the exception of the women of the Rhiner family.

Some thirty years ago the father Rhiner, now dead and gone, the mother, whose voice is still a wonder, Fraeulein Therese, and the three boys journeyed to London to sing before the Queen at her jubilee. This made them famous, and was the beginning of the Fraeulein's love story, which was told me in London by Lady J., a relative of the duke who so nearly wrecked the Fraeulein's life.

By telling the Fraeulein that I knew Lady J., I induced her to repeat the story to me.

"It was in St. Petersburg that I saw him for the second time. He was

then the Marquis of B., in the suite of the Prince of Wales, when he went to pay a visit to the Tzar's court. The marquis loved me, as I thought sincerely. I was very young, and I believed him. After he went back to London, he arranged for me to sing in grand opera; they tell me that it was a lie; that I could not have sung in opera; that he only wanted to get me away from my family. They tell me that it was a wise thing, directed by God, that I should drop the letter in which he gave me directions how to meet him, that my sister-in-law should find it, and that my brother should overtake me at the train, and prevent my going. I do not know. I only know that I have always loved him. Even after he became the Duke of M., and married one of your countrywomen, I still loved him. Now he is dead, and I love him still. See, I wear this black ribbon always in his memory. Yet they tell me that he lied to me, and that it was for the best. Well, we are all in God's hands." And she sighed deeply.

She drew her zither toward her, and began to play as I never heard that simple little instrument played before. Then one by one they began to sing. It was amazing how little of the freshness of their voices has been lost during all this time. I never heard such singing. A bass voice which would have graced the Tzar's choir, came booming from the old man with the black beard, as they yodeled and sang and sang and yodeled again, until their little audience went quite wild with delight.

Bee and Mrs. Jimmie were beginning to forgive us. Jimmie dashed over to Fraeulein Therese, at Bee's request, to ask who the old man was.

"It's the cowherd," he announced, with his evil-minded simplicity, and seemed to obtain a huge interior enjoyment from the way Bee pushed her chair back out of range, and looked disgusted.

Presently came Rosa, the chambermaid, and Hedwig, the waitress, and a dozen young men from the neighbouring hamlet, and began to dance the "schuplattle." I have seen this wonderful dance performed on the stage and in other Tyrolese villages, but never have I seen it danced with the abandonment of those young peasants in that little kitchen on the Achensee. They were all beautiful dancers. The young "shipmaster" seized our pretty Rosa around the waist, and they began to waltz. Suddenly, without a moment's warning, they fell apart, with a yell from the boy which curdled the blood in our veins. Rosa continued waltzing alone, with her hands on her hips, while her partner did a series of cart-wheels around the room, bringing up just in front of her, and waltzing with her again without either of them losing a step. Then he lifted her hands by the finger tips high above her head, and they writhed their bodies in and out under this arch, he occasionally stooping to snatch a kiss, and all the time their feet waltzing in perfect time to the music. Suddenly, with another yell, he leaped into the air, and, with Rosa waltzing demurely in front of him, began the fantastic part of the schuplattle, which consists, as Jimmie says, "of making tambourines all over yourself, spanking yourself on the arms, thighs, legs, and soles of your feet, and the crown of your head, and winding up by boxing your partner's ears or kissing her, just as you feel inclined."

I never saw anything like it. I never heard anything like it. It was so exhilarating it aroused even the cowherd's enthusiasm, so that he came and did a turn with Fraeulein Therese.

Then more of the peasants joined in the schuplattle, and in a moment the

kitchen was a mass of flying feet, waving arms, leaping, shouting men and laughing girls, the dance growing wilder and wilder, until, with a final yell that split the ears of the groundlings, the music stopped, and the dancers sank breathless into their seats. The excitement was contagious. One after another got up and danced singly, each attempting to outdo the other.

The other guests, who had seen this before, by this time had finished their coffee and left. Our little party remained. The Fraeulein Therese came over to our table, saying that the "shipmaster" would like very much to dance with me. I don't blush often, but I actually felt my whole face blaze at the proposition. I protested that I couldn't, and wouldn't; that I should die of fright if he yelled in my ear, and that he would split my sleeves out if he tried "London bridge" with me. She urged, and Jimmie urged, and Bee and Mrs. Jimmie joined. So finally I did, the Fraeulein having warned him that I would simply consent to waltz, with nothing else. They never reverse, the music was fast and furious, and the room was as hot as a desert at midday. After I had gone around that room twice with the "shipmaster," he whirled me to my seat, and for fully five minutes the room, the musicians, and the tables continued the waltz that I had left off. It makes me dizzy to think of it even now.

When I got my sight back, I looked apprehensively at Bee, to see if I had gone beyond the limit which her own perfectly ladylike manner always sets for me; but to my surprise her foot was tapping the floor, and there was a gleam in her eyes which told the mischievous Jimmie that the music was getting into Bee's blood. Jimmie wrenched my little finger under the table and whispered:

"For two cents, Bee would do the skirt dance!"

"Ask her," I whispered back.

He jogged her elbow and said:

"Give 'um the skirt dance, Bee. You could knock 'um all silly with the way you dance."

Bee needed no urging. It was quite evident she had made up her mind to do it before we asked. She arose with a look of determination in her eyes, which would have carried her through a murder. When Bee makes up her mind to do a thing, she'll put it through, good or bad, determined and remorseless, from giving a dinner to the poor to robbing a grave, and nobody can stop her, or laugh her out of it any more than you can persuade her to do it, if she doesn't want to. Nobody is responsible for Bee's acts but herself. Therefore, I recall that scene with a peculiar and exquisite joy which the truly good never feel.

Bee's travelling-skirt was tailor-made, tight at the belt, and of ample fulness around the bottom. She had on a shirt-waist, a linen collar, the Charvet tie, a black hat with a few gay coloured flowers on it, and a lace petticoat from the Rue de la Paix. At the first strains of the skirt dance from the delighted band Bee seized her skirts firmly and began the dance which is so familiar to us, but which those Tyrolese peasants had never seen before. Jimmie says he would rather see Bee do the skirt dance than any professional he ever saw on any stage. He says that her kicks are such poems that he forgives her everything when he thinks of them, but when she danced that night, Jimmie was so tickled

by the excitement and polite interest she created in her primitive audience, that he stretched himself out on the bench in such shrieks of laughter that even Bee grinned at him, while I simply passed away. She sat down, flushed, breathless, but triumphant.

Instantly she was surrounded by every young fellow in the room, imploring her to dance with him, and at once Bee became the belle of the ball. And, if you will believe it, when Mrs. Jimmie and I went outside to get a breath of air, Bee, the ladylike; Bee, the conservative; haughty, intolerant Bee, was dancing with the cowherd!

CHAPTER VIII

SALZBURG

We had our breakfast the next morning on the same piazza where we had dined and where the early morning sun gave an entirely new aspect to the eternal blueness of the Achensee. Oh, you who have seen only Italian lakes, think not that you know blue when you see it, until you have seen the Achensee!

"If you would only get back into yourself," said Jimmie, addressing my absent spirit, "you might help me decide where we shall go next."

"I can't leave here," I replied. "I cannot tear myself away from this spot."

"It is beautiful," murmured Bee, dreamily, but she murmured dreamily not so much because of the beauty of the scene as because eating in the open air that early in the morning always makes her sleepy.

"'Tis not that," I responded. "'Tis because, while some few modest triumphs have come my way, I think I never achieved one which gave me such acute physical satisfaction as I underwent last night at my sister Bee's success as a premiere danseuse. Shall I ever forget it? Shall danger, or sickness, or poverty, or disaster ever blot from my mind that scene? Jimmie, never again can she scorn us for our sawdust-ring proclivities, for do you know, I shouldn't be surprised to see her end her days on the trapeze!"

But if I fondly hoped to make Bee waver in her thorough approval of her own acts, this cheerful exchange of badinage, where the exchange was all on my part, undeceived me, for Bee simply looked at me without replying, so Jimmie uncoiled himself and handed the map to Bee.

"Jimmie has talked nothing but salt mines for a fortnight," said Bee, finally, "yet by coming here we have left Salzburg behind us."

"Let's go back then," he said. "It isn't far, and it's all through a beautiful country."

For a wonder, we all agreed to this plan without the usual discussion of individual tastes which usually follows the most tentative suggestion on the part of any one of us who has the temerity to leap into the arena to be worried.

The whole Rhiner family, including the chambermaid, the shipmaster, and Bee's friend the cowherd, were on the little pier, under some pretext or other, to see us off, and not only feeling but knowing that we left real friends behind us, we started on our way to Jenbach, down the same little cog-wheel road up which we had climbed, and, as Jimmie said: "literally getting back to earth again," for the descent was like being dropped from the clouds.

The journey from Jenbach to Salzburg was indeed marvellously beautiful, but some little time before we arrived Jimmie emerged from his guide-book to say, somewhat timidly:

"Are you tired of lakes?"

"Tired of lakes? How could we be when we've only seen one this week?"

"And that the most exquisite spot we have found this summer!"

"Certainly we are not tired of the beautiful things!"

From this avalanche of replies Jimmie gathered an idea of our attitude.

"Thank you!" he said, politely. "I think I understand. Would you consent

to turn aside to see the Koenigsee, another small lake which belongs more to the natives than to the tourists?"

For reply, we simply rose in concert. Mrs. Jimmie drew on her gloves and Bee pulled down her veil.

"When do we get off, Jimmie?"

"In ten minutes," he said with a delighted grin. And in another ten minutes we were off, and Salzburg was removed another twenty-four hours from us.

But after the Achensee, the Koenigsee was something of an anticlimax, although the natives were perfectly satisfactory, and not an English word was spoken outside of our party. But as Jimmie speaks German-American, we got what we wanted in the way of a boat, and found that the Koenigsee is quite as green as the Achensee is blue. At least it was the day we were there. The tiny Tyrolese lad who went with us as guide, told us that it was sometimes as blue as the sky. But the black shadows cast upon its waters by the steep cliffs which rise sheerly from its sides, give back their darkness to the depths of the lake, and for the scene of a picturesque murder it would be perfect. There is a magnificent echo around certain parts of the Koenigsee, and swans sailing majestically on the breast of the lake remind one of the Lohengrin country.

We rested that night at a dear little inn and the next morning took up our interrupted journey to Salzburg.

On the way Jimmie talked salt mines to us until, when we arrived at Salzburg, we imagined the whole town must be given up to them. But to our surprise, and no less to our delight, we found Salzburg not only one of the most picturesque towns we had met with, but interesting and highly satisfactory, while the salt mines are not at Salzburg at all,

but half a day's drive away. Salzburg satisfied the entire emotional gamut of our diversified and centrifugal party. It had mountains for Jimmie, the rushing, roaring, picturesque little river Salzach for me, the Residenz-Schloss, where the Grand Duke of Tuscany lives part of his time, for Mrs. Jimmie and Bee, and the glorious views from every direction for all of us. Here, also, Bee found her restaurants, with bands, situated more delightfully than any we had found before.

Hills bound the town on two sides--thickly wooded, with ravishing shades of green, to the side of which a schloss, or convent, or perhaps only a terraced restaurant, clings like a swallow's nest. All the bridle-paths, walks, and drives around Salzburg lead somewhere. You may be quite certain that no matter what road you follow you will find your diligence rewarded.

There is one curious restaurant where we went for our first dinner, because two rival singing societies were to furnish the programme. It is reached by an enormous elevator which takes you up some two hundred feet, where there spreads before you a series of terraces, each with tables and diners, and above all the band-stand. Here were the singers singing quite abominably out of key, but with great vigour and earnestness, and always applauded to the echo, but getting quite a little overcome by their exhilaration later in the evening. Then there is the fortress protecting the town, the Nonnberg, the cloisters in whose church are the oldest in Germany, and they won't let you in to see them at any price. This of itself is an attraction, for as a rule there is no spot so sacred, so old, or so queer in all Europe that you can't buy admission to it. But when I found the cloisters of the Convent Church closed to the gaping public, I thanked God and took courage. We found another spot in Salzburg where they allow only men to enter, but as we found plenty of those in Turkey, we paid no particular attention to the Franciscan Monastery for barring women, except that we had some curiosity to hear the performance which is given daily on the pansymphonicon, a queer instrument invented by one of the monks. Jimmie, of course, came out fairly bursting with unnecessary pride, and to this day pretends that you have lived only half your life if you haven't heard the pansymphonicon. We gave him little satisfaction by asking no questions and yawning or asking what time it was every time he tried to whet our curiosity by vague references and half descriptions of it. Jimmie is a frightful liar, and would sacrifice his hope of heaven to torture us successfully for half a day. I don't believe one word of all he has said or hinted or drawn or sung about that thing, and yet, I would give everything I possess, and all Bee's good clothes, and all Mrs. Jimmie's jewels, if I could hear and see the pansymphonicon _just once_!

One of the most romantic things we did was to take the little railway leading to the top of the Gaisberg, where we spent the night at the little Hotel Gaisbergspitze, and saw Salzburg lying beneath us, twinkling with lights, and making a sight to be remembered for ever. Tucked in among the Salzburg Alps you can see seven little lakes, and the colouring, the dark shadows, and fleecy belts of clouds make it a ravishing view, and full of a tender, poetic melancholy. Mr. and Mrs. Jimmie sat very close together, and renewed the days of their courting, but poor Bee and I held each other's hands and felt lonely.

The romance of the situation drove me to poetry, and reduced Bee to the submission of listening to it--for a short time. Trust me! I know how far to trespass on my sister's patience! But when I said, mournfully:

"Never the time and place
And the loved one all together,"

Bee nodded a plaintive acquiescence.

In the morning, we almost saw the sun rise, but not quite. Aigen, the chateau of Prince Schwarzenberg, was more cheerful; so was Mozart's statue and his Geburthaus. I didn't know that Mozart was born in Salzburg, but he was. There is something actually furtive about the way certain facts have a habit of existing and I not learning of them until everybody else has forgotten them.

We decided to make the excursion to the salt mine on Monday, and on the Sunday Jimmie arranged for us to visit the Imperial chateau of Helbrun, built in the seventeenth century, and promising us several new features of amusement and interest not generally to be met with. Our hotel being a very smart one, filled with Americans, we naturally had on rather good frocks, for it was Sunday, and we were to drive instead of taking the train. We had all been to the church in the morning, and felt at liberty to escape from the gossip of the piazzas, and to amuse ourselves in this decorous way.

Now, Jimmie is thoroughly ashamed of himself, and would give anything if I would not tell this, but I have recently suffered an attack of pansymphonicon, and this is my revenge.

I noticed something suspicious in Jimmie's childlike innocence and elaborate amiability during our drive. If Jimmie is business-like and somewhat indifferent, he is behaving himself. If he is officiously attentive to our comfort, and his countenance is frank and open, look out for him. I hate practical jokes, and on that Sunday I almost hated Jimmie.

We drove first into a great yard surrounded by high trees. The horses were immediately taken from our carriage, as if our stay was to be a long one. Then we made our way through the gates into what appeared to be a lovely garden or park with gravelled walks, flowering shrubs, and large shade trees. There were any number of pleasure seekers there besides ourselves. Father, mother, and six or seven children in one party, with the air of cheerfulness and light-heartedness--an air of those who have no burdens to carry, and no bills to pay, which characterises the Continental middle class on its Sunday outing. It was impossible to escape them, for their cheerful interest in our clothes, their friendly smiling countenances robbed their attendance of all impertinence. Thus, somewhat of their company, although not strictly belonging to it, we went to the Steinerne Theatre, hewn in the rock, where pastorals and operas were at one time performed under the direction of the prince-bishops.

Then, in front of the Mechanical Theatre, there is a flight of great stone steps and balustrades of granite upon which, in company with our German friends, we hung and climbed and stood, while the most ingenious little play was performed by tiny puppets that I ever had the good fortune to behold. Over and over again the midgets went through every performance of mechanism with such precision and accuracy that it took me back to the first mechanical toy I ever possessed. This little mechanical theatre is really a wonder.

I have never been sure how seriously to blame Jimmie for what followed. At any rate, he knew something of the trick, and I have a distant recollection of the gleam in his eyes when he led his unsuspecting party along the gravel walk to the side of a certain granite building, whose function I have forgotten. I remember standing there and looking up the stone steps at our German friends, when suddenly out from behind the stones of this building, from the cornice, from above and from beneath, shot jets of water, drenching me and all others who were back of me, and sending us forward in a mad rush to gain the top of those stone steps, and so to safety. A stout German frau, weighing something between three and four hundred pounds, trod on the train of my gown, and the gathers gave way at the belt with that horrid ripping noise which every woman has heard at some time of her life. It generally means a man. It makes no difference, however; man or woman, the result is the same. As I could not shake her off, and we were both bound for the same place, she continued walking up my back, and in this manner we gained the top of the steps and the gravelled walk, only to find that thin streams of water from subterranean fountains were shooting up through the gravel, making it useless to try to escape. It was all over in a minute, but in the meantime we were drenched within and without and in such a fury that I for one am not recovered from it. It seems that this is one of the practical jokes of which the German mind is capable. Practical jokes seem to me worse than, and on the order of, calamities. Unfortunately Mrs. Jimmie was the wettest of any of us. She had on better clothes than Bee or I, and she refused to run, and she got soaking wet. I really pity Jimmie as I look back on it.

The visit to the salt mine we had planned for the next day. It was necessarily put off. Two of us were not on speaking terms with Jimmie,--Bee and I,--while Mrs. Jimmie, from driving back to the hotel in her wet clothes, had a slight attack of her strange trouble, croup. Poor dear Mrs. Jimmie! However, Jimmie's repentance was so deep and sincere, he was so thoroughly scared by the extent of the calamity, so deeply sorry for our ruined clothes, apart from his anxiety over his wife, that we finally forgave him and took him into our favour again, to escape his remorseful attentions to us. So one day late, but on a better day, we took a fine large carriage, having previously tested the springs, and started for the salt mines. A description of that drive is almost impossible. To be sure, it was hot, dusty, and long. Before we got to the first wayside inn we were ravenous, and Jimmie's thirst could be indicated only by capital letters. But winding in and out among farmhouses with flower gardens of hollyhocks, poppies, and roses; passing now a wayside shrine with the crucifixion exploited in heroic size; houses and barns and stables all under one roof; and now curiously painted doors peculiar to Bavarian houses; the country inns with their wooden benches and deal tables spread under the shade of the trees; parties of pedestrians, members of Alpine clubs, taking their vacations by tramping through this wonderful district; the sloping hills over and around which the road winds; the blues and greens and shadows of the more distant mountains, all combine to make this road from Salzburg to the salt mines one of the most interesting to be found in all Germany.

Never did small cheese sandwiches and little German sausages taste so delicious as at our first stop on our way to the salt mines. Jimmie said never was anything to drink so long in coming. Near us sat eight members of a Mannerchor, whose first act was to unsling a long curved horn capable of holding a gallon. This was filled with beer, and formed a loving-cup. Afterward, at the request of the landlord, and evidently to their great gratification, these men regaled us with songs, all sung

with exceeding great earnestness, little regard to tune, and great carelessness as to pitch; but, if one may judge from their smiling and streaming countenances, the music had proved perfectly satisfactory to the singers themselves. Another drive, and soon we were at the mouth of the salt mine. We had learned previously that the better way would be to go as a private party and pay a small fee, as otherwise we would find ourselves in as great a crowd as on a free day at a museum. If I remember rightly, four o'clock marks the free hour. It had commenced to rain a little,--a fine, thin mountain shower,--but the carriage was closed up, the horses led away to be rested, and we three women pushed our way through the crowd of summer tourists waiting for the free hour to strike in the courtyard, and found ourselves in a room in which women were being arrayed in the salt mine costume. This costume is so absurd that it requires a specific description.

Two or three motherly-looking German attendants gave us instructions. Our costumes consisted of white duck trousers, clean, but still damp from recent washing, a thick leather apron, a short duck blouse, something like those worn by bakers, and a cap. The trousers, being all the same size and same length, came to Bee's ankles, were knickerbockers for me and tights for Mrs. Jimmie.

European travel hardens one to many of the hitherto essential delicacies of refinement, which, however, the American instantly resumes upon landing upon the New York pier; it being, I think, simply the instinct of "when in Rome do as the Romans do," which compels us to pretend that we do not object to things which, nevertheless, are never-ending shocks. I have seldom undergone anything more difficult than the walk in broad daylight, across that courtyard to the mouth of the salt mine. We were borne up by the fact that perhaps one hundred other women were similarly attired, and that both men and women looked upon it as a huge joke and nothing more. One rather incomprehensible thing struck us as we left the attiring-room. This was the use of the leather apron. The attendant switched it around in the back and tied it firmly in place, and when we demanded to know the reason, she said, in German, "It is for the swift descent."

Jimmie was similarly arrayed when he met us at the door, but he seemed to know no more about it than we did. At the mouth of the salt mine we were met by our conductor, who took us along a dark passage, where all the lights furnished were those from the covered candles fastened to our belts, something on the order of the miner's lamp.

Further and further into the blackness we went, our shoes grinding into the coarse salt mixed with dirt, and the dampness smelling like the spray from the sea. Presently we came to the mouth of something that evidently led down somewhere. Blindly following our guide who sat astride of a pole, Jimmie planted himself beside him, astride of the guide's back; Mrs. Jimmie, after having absolutely refused, was finally persuaded to place herself behind Jimmie, then came Bee, and last of all myself.

Our German is not fluent, nevertheless we asked many questions of the guide, whose only instructions were to hold on tight. He then asked us if we were ready.

"Ready for what?" we said.

"For the swift descent," he answered.

"The descent into what?" said Jimmie.

But at that, and as if disdainful of our ignorance, we suddenly began to shoot downward with fearful rapidity on nothing at all. All at once the high polish on the leather aprons was explained to me. We were not on any toboggan; we formed one ourselves.

When we arrived they said we had descended three hundred feet. But we women had done nothing but emit piercing shrieks the entire way, and it might have been three hundred feet or three hundred miles, for all we knew. After our fierce refusal to start and our horrible screams during the descent, Jimmie's disgust was something unspeakable when we instantly said we wished we could do it again. Our guide, however, being matter of fact, and utterly without imagination, was as indifferent to our appreciation as he had been to our screams.

He unmoored a boat, and we were rowed across a subterranean lake which was nothing more or less than liquid salt. We were in an enormous cavern, lighted only by candles here and there on the banks of the lake. The walls glittered fitfully with the crystals of salt, and there was not a sound except the dipping of the oars into the dark water.

Arriving at the other side, we continued to go down corridor after corridor, sometimes descending, sometimes mounting flights of steps, always seeing nothing but salt--salt--salt.

In one place, artificially lighted, there are exhibited all the curious formations of salt, with their beautiful crystals and varied colours. It takes about an hour to explore the mine, and then comes what to us was the pleasantest part of all. There is a tiny narrow gauge road, possibly not over eighteen inches broad, upon which are eight-seated, little open cars. It seems that, in spite of sometimes descending, we had, after all, been ascending most of the time, for these cars descend of their own momentum from the highest point of the salt mine to its mouth. The roar of that little car, the occasional parties of pedestrians we passed, crowded into cavities in the salty walls (for the free hour had struck), who shouted to us a friendly good luck, the salt wind whistling past our ears and blowing out our lanterns, made of that final ride one of the most exhilarating that we ever took.

But, of course, from now on in describing rides we must always except "the swift descent."

CHAPTER IX

ISCHL

We were wondering where we should go next with the delicious idle wonder of those who drop off the train at a moment's notice if a fellow passenger vouchsafes an alluring description of a certain village, or if the approach from the car window attracts. Only those who have bound themselves down on a European tour to an itinerary can understand the freedom and delight of idle wanderings such as ours. We never feel compelled to go on even one mile from where we thought for a moment we

should like to stop.

It was Jimmie who made this plan possible, without the friction and unnecessary expense which we should have incurred had we followed this plan, and bought tickets from one city to another, but in fussing around information bureaux and railway stations, Jimmie unearthed the information that one can buy circular tickets of a certain route, embodying from one to three months in time, and including all the spice for a picturesque trip of Germany and Austria, where one would naturally like to travel. By purchasing these little books with the tickets in the form of coupons at the railway station we saved the additional fee which the tourist agent usually exacts, and this frugal act so filled us with joy that our trip proved unusually expensive, for at every stop we indulged in a small extravagance which we felt that we could well afford on account of this accidental saving at the start. We have been so amply repaid at every pause on our journey that it has become a matter of pride with Jimmie and me to have no falling off from the standard we had set. Therefore Jimmie came and sat down by me one morning and said:

"Ever hear of Ischl?"

"No," I said, "what is it? But I warn you beforehand that I sha'n't touch it if it's a mixture of sarsaparilla and ginger ale, or lime juice and red ink, or anything like that thing you--"

"It isn't a drink," said Jimmie, in disgust. "It's a town! If people who read your stuff realised how little you know--"

"I am perfectly satisfied," I said, looking at him firmly, "that it isn't twenty minutes since you found what Ischl is yourself. You never learned a thing in your life that you didn't bring it to me as though you had known it for ever, whereas your information is always so fresh that it's still bubbling, and if Kissingen is a town as well as a drink, why shouldn't Ischl be a drink as well as a town?"

My triumphant manner was a little annoying that early in the morning, but as Jimmie really had something to say, my gauntlet lay where I cast it, unnoticed by the adversary.

"Now Ischl," said Jimmie, "is where the Austrian Emperor has his summer residence. It is tucked up in the hills with drives which you would call 'heavenly.' People from all over Austria gather there during the season. There will be royalty for my wife; German officers for Bee; heaps of people for you to stare at, and as for me, I don't need any attraction. I can be perfectly happy where there is no strife and where I can enjoy the delight of a small but interesting family party."

I smiled at this statement, for when Jimmie is not carefully stirring me up for argument or battle, I always feel his pulse to see if he is ill.

"It will probably please Bee and Mrs. Jimmie," I said, doubtfully, "and they have been _so_ good to us at the Achensee and Salzburg, perhaps--"

"That's just what I was thinking," said Jimmie. "You're a good old sort. You're as square as a man."

At this, I positively gurgled with delight, for it is not once in a million--no, not once in ten million years that Jimmie says anything decent about me to my face. I sometimes hear rumours of approving

remarks that he makes behind my back, but I never have been able to run any of them to earth.

"If Ischl is a royal country-seat," said Jimmie, "I'll bet you a '_blaue cravatte_' for yourself against a '_blaue cravatte_' for myself--both to come from Charvet's--that Bee will know all about it."

"You can't bet with me on that because I know I'd lose. I'll bet that they both know all about it. Let's ask them."

"Ever hear of Ischl, Bee?" said Jimmie, as Bee appeared as smartly got up as if she were in New Bond Street.

"Did I ever hear of Ischl?" repeated Bee, in surprise. "Why, certainly. Ischl is where Emperor Franz Josef has his summer home. He is there now with his entire suite, and next Wednesday is his birthday."

"Say 'geburt-day,' Bee," I pleaded. Nobody paid any attention. Jimmie looked meekly at Bee.

"Have you decided on a hotel there?" he asked, ironically. But Bee flinched not.

"There are two good ones--the 'Kaiserin Elisabeth' and the 'Goldenes Kreuz.' It will probably be very crowded, for they always celebrate the Emperor's birthday."

Jimmie and I looked at each other helplessly. She knew all about Ischl, and had intended to steer the whole four of us there, while Jimmie and I had just heard of it, and were planning to give her a nice little surprise!

Jimmie said nothing, but took his hat and went out to telegraph for rooms.

"I'm glad I didn't bet with you, Jimmie," I whispered as he passed me.

It is the merest suspicion of a journey from Salzburg to Ischl, but it consumes several hours, because every inch of the country on both sides of the car is worth looking at. The little train creeps along now at the foot of a mountain, now at the edge of a lake, and it is such a vision of loveliness that even those unfeeling persons who "don't care for scenery" would be roused from their lethargy by the gentle seductiveness of its beauty. Ischl appears when you are least looking for it, tucked in the hollow of a mountain's arm as lovingly as ever a baby was cradled.

Our rooms at the Goldenes Kreuz had a wide balcony where our breakfasts were served, and commanded not only a view of the mountains and valleys, and a rushing stream, but afforded us our only meal where we could get plenty of air.

Our first experience in the general dining-room was a revelation of many things. The room was air-tight. Not a window or door was permitted to be opened the smallest crack. The men smoked all through dinner, and quite a number of women smoked from one to a dozen cigarettes held in all manner of curious cigarette-holders, some of which were only a handle with a ring for the cigarette, something like our opera-glass handles, while others were the more familiar mouthpieces. But all were

jewelled and handsome, and the women who used them were all elderly. Two women smoked strong black cigars, but as the smokers were very smart and went in court society, Bee's eyes only grew round and big, and she ventured no word of criticism.

But all this smoke and lack of ventilation made the air very thick and hot and unbreathable for us, so that we complained to the proprietor, who sympathised with us so deeply that he nearly wept, but he assured us that Austrians were even worse than the French in their fear of a draught, and he declared that while he would very willingly open all the windows, and as far as he was concerned, he himself revelled in fresh air,--nevertheless, if he should follow our advice, his hotel would be emptied the next day of all but our one American party.

In vain we reminded him that it was August. Not a window nor a door was opened in that dining-room while we were there.

But we got along very well, for we are not too strenuous in our demands,--especially when we realise that we cannot get them acceded to,--so in lieu of air we breathed smoke, and in watching the people we soon forgot all about it. Air is not essential after all when royalty is present.

If not royalty, at least the next thing to it. The gorgeous and glorious officers of his Majesty's suite, handsome, distinguished, young, and ever near the throne! Bee's eyes were glued to their table. We were afraid the poor dear would never pull through. She scarcely ate any dinner.

"Bee," I whispered, pulling her dress under the table, "you really must not pay them such marked attention. Remember your husband and baby--far away, to be sure, but still _there_!"

"What difference does it make, I should like to know," was Bee's callous reply. "They can't speak English."

Now of all the irrelevant retorts!

Bee had so evidently capitulated to the whole lot that I stole a few furtive glances myself, and while I was rewarded by some brief interest from their table, and I felt sure that they were talking about us, it seemed to me that the interest of _The One_, the tallest, handsomest, and the one most suited for a pedestal in Central Park, was overlooking both Bee's and my undeniable attractions, and was concentrating all his fiery, hawk-like glances upon Mrs. Jimmie, whose total unconsciousness of her great beauty is one of her supreme charms. She wore a black lace gown that night with sleeves which came not quite to her elbow; no bracelets to mar those perfect arms, but her hands fairly loaded with rings. She never looks at any other man except Jimmie, and Jimmie thinks that the earth exists simply for her. Poor Jimmie never can express his emotion in proper words, but I have seen his eyes fill with tears of love and pride as he whispered to me, "Isn't she ripping to-night?"

She certainly was "ripping" that first night at Ischl--far more ripping than any titled dame there, upon whose mature ugliness all her calm attention was bestowed, while I was on the verge of collapse when I saw that Bee's love was like to go unrequited, while Mrs. Jimmie's rings and beauty--I name her attractions in their proper order as far as I was able to gather from the enamoured officer's glances--snatched the prize.

The situation as it bade fair to develop was far, far too sacred to permit of ribald speech, so with the greatest difficulty I held my tongue. For my only natural confidant, Jimmie, was plainly disqualified in this case.

The next morning Jimmie wanted us to drive, but I, hoping to give matters an onward fillip, spoke so warmly in favour of a morning stroll in the promenade "to see people" that he gave in, and Bee's attentions to me while garbing ourselves were so marked that I almost hoped I had been wrong the night before.

But alas for our ignorance of officers' duties! Not one of those in his Majesty's suite was visible, although all the old ladies were out in force, and some very pretty Austrian girls appeared, smartly gowned, and most of them carrying slender little gold or silver mounted sticks. Those sticks caught Bee's eye at once, and she bought one before the hour was over, much to Jimmie's disgust.

But his expostulations produced no effect. It seemed queer to me--her sister--that he should waste his breath. But Jimmie was obliged to relieve his mind by saying that it looked too pronounced.

"It's all right for an Austrian," said Jimmie, wagging his head. "But everybody knows you are an American, and it doesn't look right."

"Doesn't it go with my costume, Jimmie?" demanded Bee. "Look me over! Doesn't it match?"

Alas for Jimmie! It did match. Bee's carrying it simply looked saucy, not loud. I couldn't have carried it--I should have tripped over it, and fallen down. Mrs. Jimmie would have dropped or broken it. Bee and that stick simply fitted each other--there in Ischl! Nowhere else.

At luncheon, just as we were going out, the four officers came in. We passed them in the doorway. Bee looked desperate. They lined up to allow us to pass, and for a moment I thought Bee was going to snatch one, and make her escape. But she compromised, on seeing them seat themselves at the table we had just left, by sending Jimmie back to look for her handkerchief.

"If that doesn't fetch an acquaintance," Bee's look seemed to say, "with Jimmie burrowing around on the floor among their boots and spurs, I shall have but a poor opinion of Austrian ingenuity."

Jimmie was gone half an hour. When he came back, his face was too innocent. He seated himself quietly, and after saying, "It wasn't there, Bee," he went on smoking placidly.

Now, any one who knows anything about anything, cannot fail to admit that my sister ought either to be at the head of Tammany Hall or the army. She gave one look at Jimmie's suspiciously bland countenance, then gathered up her gloves, her veil and stick, and went slowly up-stairs, apparently in a brown study.

Jimmie is clever, but he is no match for a clever woman. No man is, for that matter.

The moment she was out of sight, he began to chuckle.

"Great Scott," he whispered, bringing our three heads together by a gesture. "If Bee knew that all those officers we just passed went right in, and sat down at the very table we left, so that when she sent me for her handkerchief I had to run bang into them, I wonder if she would have gone up-stairs so calmly!"

"Why didn't you tell her?" I cried.

"I was going to--after I had got her curiosity up a little. They were very polite, and nothing would do but I must sit down, and have a glass of beer with them. I didn't want that, so I took a cigar, and they all nearly fell over themselves to offer me one--from the most beautiful cigar cases you ever saw. That tall chap with the eyes had one of gold, with the Tzar's face done in enamel, surmounted by the imperial crown in diamonds, and an inscription on the inside showing that the Tzar gave it to him. I took one out of that case for Bee's sake. I'll save her the stub!"

"Did they ask any questions about us?" I said, guilelessly.

"Yes, heaps. And when I told them how devoted my wife was to the Empress Elizabeth they offered to make up a party to show us two of the shrines she built near here, and invited us to dine afterward. So I made it for this afternoon at three. Don't tell Bee. Let's surprise her. Her eyes will pop clear out of her head when she sees them."

Within ten minutes I had told Bee everything I knew, and had even enlarged upon it a little, and Bee, in a holy delight, was preparing to robe herself in costly array. She solemnly promised me to be surprised when she saw them.

Only two of them could leave--The One, whose name shall be Count Andreae von Engel, and the other, Baron Oscar von Furzmann. They had a four-seated carriage for us, while they accompanied us on horseback.

That drive was one of the most romantic episodes which ever came into my prosaic life. To be sure I was not in the romance at all,--neither one of those bottle-green knights had an eye for me--but I was there, and I saw and heard and enjoyed it more than anybody.

Bee, with the craft of a fox, offered to sit riding backward with Jimmie, knowing that she must thus perforce be face to face with the horsemen. But in this she was outwitted by a mere man, but a man skilled in intrigue and court diplomacy. Although the road was narrow and

dangerous, twisting over mountains and beside rushing streams, The One, in order to feast his eyes on Mrs. Jimmie, permitted his horse to curvet and caracole as if he were in tourney. Jimmie, while the count was doing it, managed to whisper to me: "Tom Sawyer showing off," but I knew that it was for a second purpose which counted for even more than the first.

I must admit that this Austrian diplomat was very skilful, and managed it in a way to throw the unsuspecting wholly off his guard, for, in order not to make his manoeuvres too marked, he often rode ahead of the carriage, when, by turning in his saddle, he could look back and fling his ardent glances in our direction. They not only overshot me, but glanced as harmlessly off Mrs. Jimmie's arrow-proof armour of complete

unconsciousness as if they had hurtled aimlessly over her handsome head.

I was in ecstasies, for Bee's wholesome admiration of her stunning officer and his undeniably unusual horsemanship prevented her from being rendered in any way uncomfortable by his action, for truth to tell, Bee was a target for the roving glances of Baron von Furzmann, but he was so hopelessly the wrong man that she not only was unaware of it then but vehemently disclaimed it when I enlightened her later. Alas and alack! The wrong man is always the wrong man, and never can take the place of the right man, no matter what his country or speech.

It was supremely interesting to talk with men who had known the beautiful Empress well; to whom her living beauty was as familiar as her pictured loveliness was to us. We plied them with countless questions as to her wonderful horsemanship, her daily appearance, her dress, her conversation, and her learning. Their enthusiastic praise of her was genuine and spontaneous.

I was dying to ask minute questions about the Crown Prince's affair, but just enough sense was left in my make-up to know that I must not. They might whisper their gossip to each other who knew all of the truth anyway, but to strangers their loyalty would compel them to suppress not only what they themselves knew but what we knew to be the truth. Both of these officers had known Prince Rudie well; had hunted with him; travelled with him; served with him; had often been at his hunting-lodge Mayerling, where he died, but, when they came to refer to this part of their narrative, they were so visibly embarrassed that we changed the subject to the Princess Stephanie. Here, although they were studiously careful to put nothing into actual words, their manner plainly indicated their contempt and dislike of the heavy Belgian Princess, who was so poor a helpmeet for the graceful and picturesque figure of the Crown Prince of Austria.

"Did you know the lady in her Majesty's suite who wrote 'The Martyrdom of an Empress?'" I demanded, boldly.

Von Engel's face flushed darkly.

"I do not know. I am not certain," he stammered.

"Never mind. Don't commit yourself. She was exiled, wasn't she, for arranging meetings between Prince Rudolph and his belle amie? She was a dear thing, whoever she was, for she gave him what was probably the only real happiness he ever knew. And when people love each other well enough to die together, it means more than most men and women can boast."

Jimmie trod on my foot just here, so I stopped, but, to his and my surprise, Mrs. Jimmie not only agreed with me, but added:

"What a misfortune it is that princes and kings and queens must marry for state reasons, so that love can play no part."

I don't know whether Von Engel had not then put two and two together, so that he knew that Mrs. Jimmie had her own husband in mind when she made that speech about love or not. I think not, for I happened to be looking at him, and for a moment I thought he was going to spring from his horse right into her lap.

To me the two loveliest women rulers of the world, the ones whose histories I most grieve over, and with whose temperaments I am most in sympathy, are the Empress Eugenie of the French and the Empress Elizabeth of Austria. The Empress Elizabeth was of such a high-strung, nervous, proud temperament that had there not been madness in her unfortunate family, all her apparently unbalanced acts could be accounted for by her imperious and imperial nature, and the stigma of a mind even partially unbalanced need never have been hers. Many a wife in the common walks of life has been driven to more insane acts in the eyes of an unfeeling and critical world than ever the unhappy Empress Elizabeth committed, and for the same causes. An inhumanly tyrannical mother-in-law, the most vicious of her vicious kind, whose chief delight was to torture the high-strung nature she was too small to comprehend; a husband, encouraged in his not-to-be-borne gallantries by his own mother, this same monstrous mother-in-law of the Empress; her children's love aborted by this same fiend in woman form--is it any marvel that the proud Empress broke away from her splendid torture and found a sad comfort in travel and study? The wonder of it is that she chose so mild a remedy. She might have murdered her husband's mother, and those who knew would have declared her justified. If she had done so she could scarcely have suffered in her mind more than she did.

When I expressed some of these opinions I discovered that both officers looked at me with undisguised sympathy. They themselves dared not put into words such incendiary thoughts, but they welcomed their expression from another. This was not the first time I had worded the inner thoughts of a company who dared not speak out themselves, but, as catspaws are invariably burned, I cannot lay to my soul the flattering unction that I have escaped their common lot. Bee says I am generally burned to a cinder.

We had just visited the last of the shrines, which were interesting only because erected by the Empress, when we were overtaken by a terrific mountain storm which broke over our heads without warning. The rain came down in torrents, but not even the officers got wet, for they instantly produced from some mysterious region rubber capes which completely enveloped their beautiful uniforms.

I was not sure, but, in the general confusion of closing the carriage top, I thought I saw Count Andreae whisper to Mrs. Jimmie. I am positive I heard Von Furzmann whisper to Bee. So, not to be outdone, I leaned over and whispered to Jimmie. I do so hate to be left out of a thing.

We had a gay little supper at the Kaiserin Elisabeth, but I could not see that Count Andreae "got any forrarder," as Jimmie would say, for he literally could not concentrate his attention on Mrs. Jimmie on account of Bee's attentions to him. Poor Von Furzmann had to content himself with Jimmie and me.

The next day being the Emperor's birthday, the whole town was gloriously illuminated, and the splendid old Franz Josef--splendid in spite of his past irregularities--appeared before his adoring people, with Bee the most adoring of all his subjects.

There were any number of little parties made up after that, for, of course, we returned the civility of the officers. But after awhile Ischl, in spite of the bracing air, and bewitching drives, and occasional glimpses of royalty, and daily meetings with our beloved officers, Jimmie and I began to think longingly of green fields and

pastures new. It was a little hard on Bee, and even on Mrs. Jimmie, to drag them away from the morning promenade, where they always saw the rank and fashion of Austria. I wondered what Bee's feelings would be at parting with her loved ones, for most of our conversations lately had tended toward turning our journeyings aside from Vienna to go north to the September manoeuvres, in which our friends were to take part. We in turn combated this by begging them to meet us in Italy in three months. You should have seen their anguished faces when Jimmie and I mentioned three months! A week's separation was more than they could think of without tying crape on their arms. To our amazement they assured us that a leave was out of the question. Von Engel declared that he had not had a leave of absence for ten years and he doubted if he could obtain one on any excuse short of a death in the family.

At last, however, one fine day, with farewell notes and loaded with flowers, and with the prettiest of parting speeches, we tore ourselves away and were off for Vienna.

As Bee leaned back in the railway carriage with one glove missing, I looked to see her very low in her mind, but to my surprise she was smiling slowly.

"You don't seem to mind leaving them very much," I observed, curiously.

"I haven't left them for long," she replied, drawing her face into complacent lines. "They are both coming to Vienna on leave."

"On _leave_?" I cried.

CHAPTER X

VIENNA

If Americans continue to flock to Europe in such numbers, the whole country will in time be as Americanised as the hotels are becoming. Vienna, with her beautiful Hotel Bristol, is such an advance in modern comfort from the best of her accommodations for travellers of a few years ago that she affords an excellent example, although for every steam-heater, modern lift, and American comfort you gain, you lose a quaintness and picturesqueness, the like of which makes Europe so worth while. The whole of civilised Europe is now engaged in a flurried debate as to the propriety of remodelling its travelled portions for the benefit of ease-loving American millionaires.

It was not the season when we arrived in Vienna, but we had letters to the old Countess von Schimpfurmann, who had been lady-in-waiting to the Empress Elizabeth when she first came to the court of Austria, a mere slip of a girl, with that marvellous hair of hers whose length was the wonder of Europe, dressed high for the first time, but oftenest flowing silkily to the hem of her skirt. The countess was something of an invalid, and happened to be in town when we arrived. Her husband, the old count, had been a very distinguished man in his day, standing high in the Emperor's favour, and died full of years and honour, and more appreciated, so rumour had it, by his wife in his death than in his life.

We also had letters from a lady whose friendship Mrs. Jimmie made at Ischl, to her daughter-in-law, Baroness von Schumann, the baron being attached to an Austrian commission then in Italy; to several officers who were friends of our officers in Ischl, and, last but not least, to a little Hungarian, to whom I had a letter from America, who was so kind, so attentive, so fatherly to us, that he went by the name of "Little Papa"--a soubriquet which seemed to give him no end of pleasure.

Thus well equipped, we prepared to fall in love with Vienna, and we found it an easy task, for in spite of it being out of season, we were vastly entertained, and in all likelihood obtained a more intimate knowledge of the inner life of our Vienna friends than we could have done if we had arrived in the season of formal and more elaborate entertainment.

The opera was there, and, with all due respect to Mr. Grau, I must admit that we saw the most perfect production of "Faust" in Vienna than I ever saw on any stage.

The carnival was going on, where no Viennese lady, so the baroness declared, would think of being seen, because confetti-throwing was only resorted to by the canaille (and officers and husbands of high-born ladies, who went there with their little friends of the ballet and chorus), but where we did go, contrary to all precedent, persuading the baroness to make up a smart party and "go slumming." Her husband being in Italy, she had no fear of meeting him there, and she took good care to send an invitation to any one who might have been inclined to be critical, to be of the party, which, after one mighty protest as to the propriety of it, they one and all accepted with suspicious alacrity.

It was not so very amusing. It consisted of merely walking along a broad avenue lined with booths, and flinging confetti into people's faces. More rude than lively or even amusing, it seemed to me, and my curiosity was so easily satisfied that I was ready to go after a quarter of an hour. But do you think we could persuade the other ladies to give it up? Indeed, no! Like mischievous children, with Americans for an excuse, they remained until the last ones, laughing immoderately when they encountered men they knew. But as these men always claimed that they had heard we were coming, and immediately attached themselves to our party as a sort of sheet armour of protection against possible tales out of school, our supper party afterward was quite large. A carnival like that in America would end in a fight, if not in murder, for the American loses sight of the fact that it is simply rude play, and when he sees a handful of coloured paper flung in his wife's face, it might as well be water or pebbles for the stirring effect it has on his fighting blood.

The baroness had such a beautiful evening that she quite sighed when it was over.

"Don't you ever have this in America?" she asked Bee.

"No, indeed," said Bee. "And if we did, we wouldn't go to it. We reserve such frolics for Europe."

"Exactly as it is with us," declared the baroness; "Carl and I always go in Paris and Nice, but here--well, we had to have you for an excuse. I must thank you for giving us such an amusing evening!" she added, gaily.

"After all, it is so much more diverting to catch one's friends in mischief than strangers whom no one cares about!"

I suppose, in showing Vienna to us, we showed more of Vienna to the baroness and her friends than they ever had seen before. We went into all the booths and shows; we were in St. Stephen's Church at sunset to see the light filter through those marvels of stained-glass windows. Instead of stately drives in the Prater, we took little excursions into the country and dined at blissful open-air restaurants, with views of the Danube and distant Vienna, which they never had seen before. They became quite enthusiastic over seeking out new diversions for us, and, through their court influence, I feel sure that few Americans could have got a more intimate knowledge of Vienna than we.

An amusing coincidence happened while we were there, concerning the gown Mrs. Jimmie was to be painted in. The baroness's brother, Count Georg Brunow, was an authority on dress, and, as he designed all the gowns for his cousin, who was also in the Emperor's suite, he begged permission to design Mrs. Jimmie's. His English was a little queer, so this is what he said after an anxious scrutiny of Mrs. Jimmie's beauty:

"You must have a gown of white--soft white chiffon or mull over a white satin slip. It must be very full and fluffy around the foot, and be looped up on the skirt and around the decollete corsage with festoons of small pink considerations."

"Considerations?" said Mrs. Jimmie.

"Carnations, you mean," said Bee.

"Yes, thank you. My English is so rusty. I mean pink carnations."

Mrs. Jimmie thanked him, and we all discussed it approvingly. Still, she told me privately that she would not decide until she got back to Paris to her own man, who knew her taste and style.

"You know, for a portrait," said Count Georg, "you do not want anything pronounced. It must be quite simple, so that in fifty years it will still be beautiful."

When we got back to Paris, we presented ourselves before Mrs. Jimmie's dressmaker, who has dressed her ever since she was sixteen. She told him to design a gown for a full-length portrait. He looked at her carefully and said, slowly:

"I would suggest a gown of soft white over a white satin slip. It should be cut low in the corsage, and have no sleeves. A touch of colour in the shape of loops of small pink roses at the foot, heading a triple flounce of white, and on the shoulders and around the top of the bodice. You know for a portrait, madame, you want no epoch-making effect. It should be quite simple, so that in the years to come it may still please the eye as a work of art and not a creation of the dressmaker's skill."

Bee and I nearly had to be removed in an ambulance, and even Mrs. Jimmie looked startled.

"Order it," I whispered. "Plainly, Providence has a hand in this design. It might be dangerous to flout such a sign from heaven."

All of which goes to prove that the eye of the artist is true the world over. Or, at least, that is the deduction I drew. Bee is more skeptical.

The Countess von Schimpfurmann lived in a marvellous old house, to which we were invited again and again, her dear old politeness causing her to give three handsome entertainments for us, so that each could be a guest of honour at least once, and be distinguished by a seat on the sofa. The Emperor being at Ischl, we were permitted all sorts of intimate privileges with the Imperial Residenz, the court stables and private views not ordinarily shown to travellers, which were more interesting from being personally conducted than by the marvels we saw, for several years of continuous travel rather blunt one's ecstasy and effectively wear out one's adjectives.

Again, as in Munich, we were never tired of the picture-galleries, the whole school of German and Austrian art being quite to our taste, while if there exists anywhere else a more wonderful collection of original drawings of such masters as Raphael, Durer, Rubens, and Rembrandt which comprise the Albertina in the palace of the Archduke Albert, I do not know of it.

The old countess had numerous anecdotes to tell of the beautiful Empress, all of which confirmed and strengthened my belief that she was most of all a glorious woman gloriously misunderstood by her nearest and dearest. What other prince or princess of Europe in all history turned to so noble a pursuit as culture, learning, and travel to cure a broken heart and a wrecked existence in the majestic manner of this silent, haughty, noble soul? The excesses, dissipation, and intrigue which served to divert other bruised royal hearts were as far beneath this imperial nature as if they did not exist. Her life, in its crystal purity and its scorn of intrigue, is unique in royal history. Yet she, this blameless princess, this woman of imperial beauty, this noblest of all empresses, was marked to be stricken down by the red hand of anarchy, to whose crime, and poison, and danger we open our national ports with an unwisdom which is criminal stupidity, and of which we shall inevitably reap the benefit. America cannot warm the asp of anarchy in her bosom without expecting it to turn and sting her.

The deference paid to royalty is so difficult of comprehension to the republican mind that every time we encountered it it gave us a separate shock of surprise. At least, it gave it to me. I have an idea from the way events finally shaped themselves that Bee and Mrs. Jimmie were a little more alive to its possibilities than I was.

The Bristol was quite full when we arrived and Jimmie could not get communicating rooms, nor very good ones. I did not particularly notice it at the time, but I remembered afterward that Bee kept urging him to change them, and Jimmie made two or three endeavours, but seemed to obtain no favour at the hands of the proprietor.

One morning, however, when Jimmie started to leave the sitting-room, he opened the door and closed it again suddenly. We were sitting there waiting for breakfast to be served, and we were all three struck by the expression on his face.

"What's the matter, Jimmie?"

He looked at us queerly.

"What have you three been up to?" he asked.

"Nothing. Honestly and truly!" we cried. "What's out in the hall? Or are you just pretending?"

"The hall is full of menials and officials and gold lace and brass buttons. I hope you haven't done anything to be arrested for!"

Bee began to look knowing, and just then came a knock at the door.

"If you please," said the interpreter, bowing at every other word, "here is one of the Emperor's couriers just from Ischl, with despatches from the court of his Imperial Majesty for the ladies if they are ready to receive them. The courier had orders not to disturb their sleep. He waited here in the corridor until he heard voices. Will the excellent ladies be pleased to receive them? His orders are to wait for answers."

Jimmie signified that we would receive them, when forth stepped a man in the imperial liveries and handed him a packet on a silver tray. Jimmie had the wit to lay a gold piece on the tray, at which the courier almost knelt to express his thanks. The other attendants drew long envious breaths.

The door was shut, and Mrs. Jimmie and Bee opened their letters. Both were from Count Andreae von Engel, saying that he and Von Furzmann, rendered desperate by the near departure of his Majesty for the manoeuvres, had resolved to risk dismissal from his suite by absence without leave. The letter said that on that day--the day on which it was written--they had both attended his Majesty on a hunt, and as he seldom hunted with the same officers two days in succession, they bade fair not to be on duty after noon the next day. Therefore, if we heard nothing to the contrary, they would leave Ischl on the one o'clock train in uniform, as if on official business. Their servants would board the train at Gmund with citizens' clothes, and they would be with us soon after seven that night. They begged leave to dine with us in our private dining-room that evening, and would we be so gracious as to receive them until midnight, when they must take train for Ischl, and be on duty in uniform by seven in the morning.

I simply shrieked, as I looked at Jimmie's perplexed face.

"What shall we do?" he said. "We can't have 'em here! We must stop 'em! Get a telegraph blank, Bee! We haven't any private dining-room, anyhow, and if they got caught we might be dragged into it! Well, what is it?"

He turned to the door half savagely, and there stood the proprietor, with some ten or twelve servants at his heels.

"You were speaking to me the other day about better rooms? Will it please you to look at some on the second floor, which have never been occupied since they were done over? There are five rooms _en suite_--just about what your Excellency desires."

Jimmie turned to us with a sickly grin.

We all waited for Mrs. Jimmie to speak.

"Jimmie, dear," she said at last, "if you don't object, I think it would be very nice to take those rooms, and entertain the gentlemen this

evening. Of course, they cannot be seen in the public dining-room, and, after all, they are gentlemen and in the Emperor's suite, so their attentions to us, while a little more pronounced than we are accustomed to, are an honour."

Jimmie said nothing, but went to the door and signified that we would look at the rooms.

We did look; we took them, and before noon every handsome piece of furniture from all over the house had been placed in our suite; flowers were everywhere, and servants fairly swarmed at our commands.

Jimmie, in reality, was not at all pleased by any of this, but he has such a blissful sense of humour that he could not help seeing the pitiful front it put upon human nature, both Austrian and American. He permitted himself, however, only one remark. This was now done with his wife's sanction, and loyalty to her closed his lips. But he beckoned me over to the window, and, handing me a paper-knife, he turned up the sole of his shoe, saying:

"Scrape 'em off!"

"Scrape what off, Jimmie?"

"The servants! I haven't been able to step to-day without crushing a dozen of 'em!"

As I turned away he called out:

"There aren't any on the shoes I wore yesterday!"

A rumour somewhat near the truth had swept through the hotel, for wherever we appeared we found ourselves the object of the deepest attention, not only by the slavish minions of the hotel from the proprietor down, but from the other guests.

It was so pronounced that my feeble spirit quaked, so to borrow some of my sister's soul-sustaining joy, I went into her room and said:

"Bee, what does all this mean, anyhow? Where will it land us?"

Bee's eyes gleamed.

"If you aren't actually blind to opportunity," she said, slowly, "you certainly are hopelessly near-sighted. Don't you understand how nobody can do anything or be anybody without royal approval? Haven't you seen enough here to-day, to say nothing of the attentions we had from women in Ischl, to know what all this counts for?"

"Yes, I know," I hastened to say. "But what of these men? You know what they will think; they are Austrians, Russians, and Hungarians, remember, not Americans!"

Bee laughed.

"A man is a man," she said, sententiously. "Don't worry for fear the poor dears' hearts will be broken. Now I'll tell you something. Mrs. Jimmie's sincere indifference and my silent eye-homage have stirred these blase officers out of their usual calm. There you have the whole

thing. Von Engel thinks Mrs. Jimmie's indifference is assumed, and both Von Engel and Von Furzmann are determined that my silence shall voice itself. I have no doubt that they would like to have me _write_ it, so that they could boast of it afterward to their fellow officers. Now, as Jimmie would say in his frightful slang, 'I'm going to give them a run for their money.' Von Engel will probably beseech you to arrange to keep Jimmie at your side, so that he can have a few words with Mrs. Jimmie. Von Furzmann will plead with you to permit him a word with me. I need hardly tell you that your role to-night is to make yourself as disagreeable as possible to both of them by keeping the conversation general, and by cutting in at any attempt at a _tete-a-tete_."

I felt limp and weak. "And all this display, this dinner, this added expense?"

"Part of the game, my dear!"

"And the end of it all? When they come back from the manoeuvres?"

"We shall be gone! Without a word!"

"Then this _isn't_ a flirtation?"

"Only on their parts. They are after our scalps. But we are actuated by the true missionary spirit."

We leaned over and shook hands solemnly. I do _love_ Bee!

That night--shall I ever forget it? Those stunning men dashed into our rooms muffled in military cloaks, which they tossed aside with such grace that they nearly secured _my_ scalp, for all they were after Bee's and Mrs. Jimmie's. They were in velveteen hunting costumes; we in the smartest of evening dress. Jimmie had given his fancy free rein in ordering the dinner, but, to his amazement and indignation, the little game being played by the rest of us so surprised and baffled our guests that Jimmie's delicacies were removed with course after course untasted. The officers searched the brilliant room with their eyes, hoping for a quiet nook, or balcony. There was none, and their disguise effectually prevented them from suggesting to go out. I saw that, finally, they pinned their hopes to me, and the way I clung to Jimmie to prevent their speaking to me almost roused his suspicions that I was in love with him. We stuck doggedly to the table, even after dinner was over and the servants dismissed. Finally, Von Furzmann, who spoke English rather well, rose in a determined manner, and quite forgetful of our proximity, said to Bee in a loud, distinct tone:

"My heart is on fire!"

It was too much. Jimmie and I led the way in a general shout of laughter, and then, as a happy family party, we adjourned to the single salon, where we grouped ourselves together, and, strive as they might, the officers could not outwit my sister nor upset her plan.

Toward midnight, when the hour of parting drew near, they grew so desperate I almost feared that they would say something rash. But they were diplomats and game. Occasionally a gleam of suspicion would appear on their countenances--it was so very unusual, I imagined, for their plans so persistently to miscarry--but both Bee and I have an extremely guiltless and innocent eye, and we used an unwinking gaze of genial

friendliness which disarmed them.

At last they flung their cloaks around them, as their servants announced their carriage for the third time.

"_Such_ an evening!" moaned Von Engel.

It might mean anything!

Bee bit her lip.

"I was never more loath to leave. Promise that you will be here when we return. It will only be ten days! Promise us!"

"I hardly think--" began Jimmie, but Bee trod on his foot.

"Ouch!" said Jimmie, fiercely.

"I beg your pardon, Jimmie, dear!" murmured Bee. "It is possible," said Bee to Von Engel. "We never make plans, you know. We go whenever we are bored, or when we have nothing pleasant to look forward to."

"Oh, then, pray remain! We shall _fly_ to see you the moment we are free!"

"That surely is an inducement," said Bee, with a little laugh, which caused Von Engel to colour.

Von Engel's servant, under pretext of arranging the collar of his master's cloak, here whispered peremptorily to him, and the officer started with a hurried "Yes, yes!" to his servant.

They bent and kissed our hands, and Von Furzmann, in the violence of his emotion, flung his arms around Jimmie and kissed him on the cheek. Then they dashed away down the long corridor, looking back and waving their hands to us.

Jimmie came into the room with his hand on the spot where Von Furzmann had kissed him.

"Well, I'll be damned!" he said. "That was all _your_ fault," he added, looking at Bee.

"I've always said somebody would steal you, Jimmie!" I said.

"Did you enjoy yourself, dear?" asked Mrs. Jimmie kindly of Bee.

Bee stood up yawning.

"Oh, I don't know," she said. "These officers try to be so impressive. They urge you to take a little more pepper in the same tone that they would ask you to elope."

Jimmie beamed on her.

When Bee and I were alone, I dropped limply on the bed. Bee turned to the light and read a crumpled note which Von Furzmann had thrust into her hand at parting. She handed it to me:

"I shall write every day, and shall count the hours until I see you again!" it read. I could just hear him shouting, "My heart is on fire!"

"Well, did you enjoy it?" I asked her.

"Enjoy it? Certainly not!"

"Why, I thought you were having the time of your life!" I cried.

She laughed.

"Oh, yes, in a way it was amusing. But did it ever occur to you that it wasn't very flattering for those two unmarried officers to select the two married women in our party for their attentions when you, being unmarried, were the only legitimate object of their interest?"

I said nothing. To tell the truth I had not thought of it.

"No, these officers need just a few kinks taken out of their brains concerning women, and I propose to do it. I told Jimmie to-day that if he would be handsome about to-night, I would start to-morrow for Moscow. Mrs. Jimmie is perfectly willing, and I know you are dying to get on to Tolstoy. I've only stayed over for to-night. I knew this was coming when we were in Ischl, and I wanted them to see how lightly we viewed their risking dismissal from his Majesty's service for us. We have paid up all our indebtedness to everybody else, so nothing but farewell calls need detain us."

"And the officers?" I stammered. "How will they know?"

"I'll get Jimmie to send them a wire saying we have gone. They won't know where. Hurry up and turn out the lights. They hurt my eyes."

CHAPTER XI

MY FIRST INTERVIEW WITH TOLSTOY

At the critical point of relating the difficulty attending my first audience with Tolstoy, I am constrained to mention a few of the obstacles encountered by a person bearing indifferent letters of introduction, and if by so doing I persuade any man or woman to write one worthy letter introducing one strange man or woman in a foreign country to a foreign host, I shall feel that I have not lived in vain.

No one, who has not travelled abroad unknown and depending for all society upon written introductions, can form any idea of the utter inadequacy of the ordinary letter of introduction. When I first announced my intention of several years' travel in Europe, I accepted the generously offered letters of friends and acquaintances, and, in some instances, of kind persons who were almost total strangers to me, careless of the wording of these letters and only grateful for the goodness of heart they evinced.

In one instance, a man who had lived in Berlin sent me a dozen of his visiting-cards, on the reverse side of which were written the names of

his German friends and under them the scanty words, "Introducing Miss So-and-So." He took pains also to call upon me several times, and to ask as a special favour that I would present these letters. Forgetful of the fact that his German acquaintances would have no idea who I was, that there was no explanation upon the card, and without thinking that he would not take the trouble to write letters of explanation beforehand, I presented these twelve cards without the least reluctance, simply because I had given my word. Out of the twelve, ten returned my calls and we discussed nothing more important than the weather. We knew nothing of each other except our names, and all of these I dare say were mispronounced. Two out of the twelve entertained me at dinner, and three years afterward, when I returned to America, I received a letter of the sincerest apology from one, saying that she had learned more of me through the ambassador, and reproaching me for not having volunteered information about myself, which might have led at least to conversation of a more intimate nature.

I was armed at that time with many of these visiting-cards of introduction, and after this instance I filed them with great care in the waste-basket. I then examined my other letters. It is idle to describe to those who have never depended upon such documents in foreign countries the inadequacy of half of them. In spite of the kindest intentions, they were really worthless.

It was only after I got to Poland and Russia, where the hospitality springs from the heart, that my introductions began to bear fruit satisfactory to a sensitive mind. It is, therefore, with feelings of the liveliest appreciation that I look back on the letter given me by Ambassador White in Berlin to Count Leo Tolstoy. A lifetime of diplomacy, added to the sincerest and most generous appreciation of what an ideal hospitality should be, have served to make this representative of the American people perfect in details of kindness, which can only be fully appreciated when one is far from home. Nothing short of the completeness and yet brevity of this letter would have served to obtain an audience with that great author, who must needs protect himself from the idle and curious, and the only drawback to my first interview with Tolstoy was the fact that I had to part company with this precious letter. It was so kind, so generous, so appreciative, that up to the time I relinquished it, I cured the worst attacks of homesickness simply by reading it over, and from the lowest depths of despair it not only brought me back my self-respect, but so exquisitely tickled my vanity that I was proud of my own acquaintance with myself.

My introduction to Princess Sophy Golitzin, in Moscow, was of such a sort that we at once received an invitation from her to meet her choicest friends, at her house the next day. When we arrived, we found some thirty or forty charming Russians in a long, handsomely furnished salon, all speaking their own language. But upon our approach, every one began speaking English, and so continued during our stay. Twice, however, little groups fell into French and German at the advent of one or two persons who spoke no English.

Russians do not show off at their best in foreign environments. I have met them in Germany, France, England, Italy, and America, and while their culture is always complete, their distinguishing trait is their hospitality, generous and free beyond any I have ever known, which, of course, is best exploited in their own country and among their own people.

At the Princess Golitzin's, I was told that the Countess Tolstoy and her daughter had been there earlier in the afternoon, but, owing to the distance at which they lived, they had been obliged to leave early. They, however, left their compliments for all of us, and asked the princess to say that they had remained as long as they had dared, hoping for the pleasure of meeting us.

Being only a modest American, I confess that I opened my eyes with wonder that a personage of such renown as the Countess Tolstoy, the wife of the greatest living man of letters, should take the trouble to leave so kind a message for me.

When Bee and Mrs. Jimmie heard it, they treated me with almost the same respect as when they discovered that I knew the head waiter at Baden-Baden. But not quite.

As, however, our one ambition in coming to Russia had been to see Tolstoy himself, we at once began to ask questions of the princess as to how we might best accomplish our object, but to our disappointment her answers were far from encouraging. He was, I was told by everybody, ill, cross as a bear, and in the throes of composition. Could there be a worse possible combination for my purpose?

So much was said discouraging our project that Jimmie was for giving it up, but I think one man never received three such simultaneously contemptuous glances as we three levelled at Jimmie for his craven suggestion. So it happened that one Sunday morning we took a carriage, and, having invited the consul, who spoke Russian, we drove to Tolstoy's town house, some little distance out of Moscow.

We gave the letter and our visiting-cards to the consul, and he explained our wish to see Tolstoy to the footman who answered our ring. Having evidently received instructions to admit no one, he not only refused us admittance, but declined to take our cards. The consul translated his refusal, and seemed vanquished, but I urged him to make another attempt, and he did so, which was followed by the announcement that the countess was asleep, and the count was out. This being translated to me, I announced, in cheerful English which the footman could not understand, that both of these statements were lies, and for my part I had no doubt that the footman was a direct descendant of Beelzebub.

"Tell him that you know better," I said. "Tell him that we know the count is too ill to leave the house, and that the countess could not possibly be asleep at this time of day. Tell him if he expects us to believe him, to make up a better one than that."

"Say something," urged Bee. "Get us inside the house, if no more."

"Tell him how far we have come, and how anxious we are to see the count," said Mrs. Jimmie.

"Oh, better give it up," said Jimmie, "and come on home."

The consul obligingly made the desired effort, evidently combining all of our instructions, politely softened by his own judgment. The footman's face betrayed no yielding, and in order the better to refuse to take our cards he put his hands behind him.

"You see, it's no use," said the consul. "Hadn't we better give it up?"

"He won't let you in," said Jimmie, "so don't make a fuss."

"I shall make no fuss," I said, quietly. "But I'll get in, and I'll see Tolstoy, and I'll get all the rest of you in. Give me those cards."

I took two rubles from my purse, and, taking the cards and letter, I handed them all to the footman, saying in lucid English:

"We are coming in, and you are to take these cards to Count Tolstoy."

At the same time, I pointed a decisive forefinger in the direction in which I thought the count was concealed. The obsequious menial took our cards, bowed low, and invited us to enter with true servant's hospitality.

In all Russian houses, as, doubtless, everybody knows, the first floor is given up to an *_antechambre_*, where guests remove their wraps and goloshes, and behind this room are the kitchen and servants' quarters. All the living-rooms of the family are generally on the floor above. Having once entered this *_antechambre_*, my Bob Acres courage began to ooze.

"Now, I am not going to be rude," I said. "We'll just pretend to be taking off our wraps until we find whether we can be received. I don't mind forcing myself on a servant, but I do object to inconveniencing the master of the house."

"You're weakening," said Jimmie, derisively. "You're scared!"

"I am not," I declared, indignantly. "I am only trying to be polite, and it's a hard pull, I can tell you, when I want anything as much as I want to see Tolstoy. If he won't see us after he reads that letter, I can at least go away knowing that I put forth my best efforts to see him, but if I had taken a servant's refusal, I should feel myself a coward."

I looked anxiously at my friends for approval. Jimmie and the consul looked dubious, but Bee and Mrs. Jimmie patted me on the back and said I had done just right.

While we were engaged in this conversation, and while the man was still up-stairs, the door from the kitchen burst open, and in came a handsome young fellow of about eighteen, whistling. Now my brother whistles and slams doors just like this young Russian. So my understanding of boys made me feel friendly with this one at once. Seeing us, he stopped and bowed politely.

"Good morning," I said, cheerfully. "We are Americans, and we have travelled five thousand miles for the purpose of seeing Count Tolstoy, and when we got here this morning the servant wouldn't even let us in until I made him, and we are waiting to see if the count will receive us."

"Why, I am just sure papa will see you," said the boy in perfect English. "How disgusting of Dmitri. He is a blockhead, that Dmitri. I shall tell mamma how he treated you. The idea of leaving you standing down here while he took your cards up."

"It is partly our fault," I said, defending Dmitri. "We sent him up to ask."

"Nevertheless, he should have had you wait in the salon. Dmitri is a fool."

"His manner wasn't very cordial," I admitted, as we followed him up-stairs and into a large well-furnished, but rather plain, room containing no ornaments.

"But as I had a letter from the ambassador," I went on, "I felt that I must at least present it."

The boy turned back, as he started to leave the room, and said:

"Oh! From Mr. White? Your ambassador wrote about you, and also some friends of ours from Petersburg. Papa has been expecting you this long time. He would have been so annoyed if he had failed to see you. I'll tell him how badly Dmitri treated you. What must you think of the Russians?"

He said all this hurrying to the door to find his father. We sat down and regarded each other in silence. Jimmie and the consul looked into their hats with a somewhat sheepish countenance. Bee cleared her throat with pleasure, and Mrs. Jimmie carefully assumed an attitude of unstudied grace, smoothing her silk dress over her knee with her gloved hand, and involuntarily looking at her glove the way we do in America. Then the door opened and Count Tolstoy came in.

To begin with, he speaks perfect English, and his cordial welcome, beginning as he entered the door, continued while he traversed the length of the long room, holding out both hands to me, in one of which was my letter from the ambassador. He examined our party with as much curiosity and interest as we studied him. He wore the ordinary peasant's costume. His blue blouse and white under-garment, which showed around the neck, had brown stains on it which might be from either coffee or tobacco. His eyes were set widely apart and were benignant and kind in expression. His brow was benevolent, and counteracted the lower part of his face, which in itself would be pugnacious. His nose was short, broad, and thick. His jaw betrayed the determination of the bulldog. The combination made an exceedingly interesting study. His coarse clothes formed a curious contrast to the elegance of his speech and the grace of his manner. He was simple, unaffected, gentle, and possessed, in common with all his race, the trait upon which I have remarked before, a keen, intelligent interest in America and Americans.

While he was still welcoming us and apologising for the behaviour of his servant, the countess came in, followed by the young countess, their daughter. The Countess Tolstoy has one of the sweetest faces I ever saw, and, although she has had thirteen children, she looks as if she were not over forty-three years old. Her smooth brown hair had not one silver thread, and its gloss might be envied by many a girl of eighteen. Her eyes were brown, alert, and fun-loving, her manner quick, and her speech enthusiastic. Her plain silk gown was well made, and its richness was in strange contrast to the peasant's costume of her illustrious husband.

The little countess had short red brown hair parted on the side like a boy's and softly waving about her face, red brown eyes, and a skin so delicate that little freckles showed against its clearness. Her modest,

quiet manner gave her at once an air of breeding. Her manner was older and more subdued than that of her mother, from whom the cares and anxieties of her large family and varied interests had evidently rolled softly and easily, leaving no trace behind.

All three of them began questioning us about our plans, our homes, our families, wondering at the ease with which we took long journeys, envying our leisure to enjoy ourselves, and constantly interrupting themselves with true expressions of welcome.

It is, perhaps, only a fair example of the bountiful hospitality we received all through Poland and Russia to chronicle here that Count Tolstoy invited us to his house in the country, whither they expected to go shortly, to remain several months, and, as he afterward explained it, "for as long as you can be happy with us."

His book on "What is Art?" was then attracting a great deal of attention, but he was deeply engaged in the one which has since appeared, first under the title of "The Awakening," and afterward called "Resurrection." It is said that he wrote this book twelve years ago, and only rewrote it at the instance of the publishers, but no one who has met Tolstoy and become acquainted with him can doubt that he has been collecting material, thinking, planning, and writing on that book for a lifetime.

Many consider Tolstoy a poseur, but he sincerely believes in himself. He had only the day before worked all day in the shop of a peasant, making shoes for which he had been paid fifty copecks, and we were told that not infrequently he might be seen working in the forest or field, bending his back to the same burdens as his peasants, sharing their hardships, and receiving no more pay than they.

It was a wonderful experience to sit opposite him, to look into his eyes, and to hear him talk.

"It is a great country, yours," he said. "To me the most interesting in the world just at present. What are you going to do with your problems? How are you going to deal with anarchy and the Indian and negro questions? You have a blessed liberty in your country."

"If you will excuse me for saying so, I think we have a very un blessed liberty in our country! Too much liberty is what has brought about the very conditions of anarchy and the race problem which now threaten us."

"Do you think the negroes ought not to have been given the franchise?"

"That is a difficult question," I said. "Let me answer it by giving you another. Is it a good thing to turn loose on a young republic a mass of consolidated ignorance, such as the average negro represented at the close of the war, and put votes into their hands with not one restraining influence to counteract it? You continentals can form no idea of the Southern negro. The case of your serfs is by no means a parallel. But it is too late now. You cannot take the franchise away from them. They must work out their own salvation."

"Would you take it away from them, if you could?" asked Tolstoy.

"Most certainly I would," I answered, "although my opinion is of no value, and I am only wasting your time by expressing it. I would take

away the franchise from the negroes and from all foreigners until they had lived in our country twenty-one years, as our American men must do, and I would establish a property and educational qualification for every voter. I would not permit a man to vote upon property issues unless he were a property owner."

"Would you enfranchise the women?" asked the countess.

"I would, but under the same conditions."

"But would your best element of women exercise the privilege?" asked the little countess.

"Not all of them at first, and some of them never, I suppose; but when once our country awakens to the meaning of patriotism, and our women understand that they are citizens exactly as the men are citizens, they will do their duty, and do it more conscientiously than the men."

"It is a very interesting subject," said the count; "and your suggestions open up many possibilities. Women do vote in several of your States, I am told."

"How I would love to see a woman who had voted," cried the countess, clasping her hands with all the vivacity of a French woman.

"Why, I have voted," said Bee, laughing. "I voted for President McKinley in the State of Colorado, and my sister and Mrs. Jimmie voted for school trustee in Illinois." All three of the Tolstoys turned eagerly toward Bee.

"Do tell me about it," said the count.

"There is very little to tell. I simply went and stood in line and cast my ballot."

"But was there no shooting, no bribery, no excitement?" cried the countess. "Do they go dressed as you are now?"

"No, I dressed much better. I wore my best Paris gown, and drove down in my victoria. While I was in the line half a dozen gentlemen, who attended my receptions, came up and chatted with me, showed me how to fold my ballot, and attended me as if we were at a concert. When I came away, I took a street-car home, and sent my carriage for several ladies who otherwise would not have come."

"And you," said the countess, turning to Mrs. Jimmie.

"It was in a barber shop," she said, laughing. "When I went in, the men had their feet on the table, their hats on their heads, and they were all smoking, but at my entrance all these things changed. Hats came off, cigars were laid down, and feet disappeared. I was politely treated, and enjoyed it immensely."

"How very interesting," said Tolstoy. "But are there not societies for and against suffrage? Why do your women combine against it?"

"Because American women have not awakened to the meaning of good citizenship, and they prefer chivalry to justice, regardless of the love of country. I never belonged to any suffrage society, never wrote or

spoke or talked about it. I think the responsibility of voting would be heavy and often disagreeable, but, if the women were enfranchised, I would vote from a sense of duty, just as I think many others would; and, as to the good which might accrue, I think you will agree with me that women's standards are higher than men's. There would be far less bribery in politics than there is now."

"Is there much bribery?" asked Tolstoy.

"Unfortunately, I suppose there is. Have you heard how the ex-Speaker of the House of Representatives, Tom Reed, defines an honest man in politics? 'An honest man is a man that will stay bought!'"

There is no use in denying the truth. Tolstoy is always the teacher and the author. I could not imagine him the husband and the father. He seemed in the act of getting copy, and had a way of asking a question, and then scrutinising both the question and the answer as one who had set a mechanical toy in motion by winding it up. Tolstoy would make an excellent reporter for an American newspaper. He could obtain an interview with the most reticent politician. But I had a feeling that his methods were as the methods of Goethe.

His wife evidently does not share his own opinion of himself. She listened with obvious impatience to the conversation, then she drew Bee and Mrs. Jimmie aside, and they were soon in the midst of an animated discussion of the Rue de la Paix.

Tolstoy overheard snatches of their talk without a sign of disapproval. I have seen a big Newfoundland watch the graceful antics of a kitten with the same air of indifference with which Tolstoy regarded his wife's humanity and naturalness. Tolstoy takes himself with profound seriousness, but, in spite of his influence on Russia and the outside world, the great teacher has been unable to cure his wife's interest in millinery.

Nordau told me in Paris that Tolstoy was a combination of genius and insanity. Undoubtedly Tolstoy is actuated by a genuine desire to free Russia, but the idea was unmistakably imbedded in my mind that his Christianity was like Napoleon's description of a Russian. Scratch it and you would find Tartar fanaticism under it,—the fanaticism of the ascetic who would drive his own flesh and blood into the flames to save the soul of his domestics. This impression grew as I watched the attitude of the countess toward her husband. What must a wife think of such a husband's views of marriage when she is the mother of thirteen of his children? What must she think of insincerity when he refuses to copyright his books because he thinks it wrong to take money for teaching, yet permits her to copyright them and draw the royalties for the support of the family?

Her opinion of her famous husband lies beneath her manner, covered lightly by a charming and graceful impatience,—the impatience of a spoiled child.

When we got into the carriage I said:

"Well?"

"Well," said our friend the consul, who had not spoken during the interview, "he is the queerest man I ever met. But how he pumped you!"

"We are all 'copy' to him," said Jimmie. "He wanted information at first hand."

"Sometime he may succeed in convincing his daughter," said Mrs. Jimmie, "but never his wife. She knows him too well."

"Yet he seemed interested in you and Jimmie," said Bee, ruefully. Then more cheerfully, "but we're asked to come again!"

"We are living documents; that's why."

"What do you think of him?" said Jimmie to me with a grin of comradeship.

"I don't know. My impressions have got to settle and be skimmed and drained off before I know."

"Well, we'll go to their reception anyway," said Bee, comfortably, with the air of one who had no problems to wrestle with.

"What are you going to wear?"

To be sure! That was the main question after all. What were we going to wear?

CHAPTER XII

AT ONE OF THE TOLSTOY RECEPTIONS

When we arrived the next evening, it was to find a curious situation. The Countess Tolstoy and her daughter and young son, in European costume,—the countess in velvet and lace, and the little countess in a pretty taffeta silk,—were receiving their guests in the main salon, and later served them to a magnificent supper with champagne. The count, we were told, was elsewhere receiving his guests, who would not join us. Later he came in, still in his peasant's costume, and refused all refreshment. He was exceedingly civil to all his guests, but signalled out the Americans in a manner truly flattering.

It was a charming evening, and we met agreeable people, but, although they stayed late, we remained, at Tolstoy's request, still later, and when the last guest had departed, we sat down, drawing our chairs quite close together after the manner of a cheerful family party.

After inquiring how we had spent our day, and giving us some valuable hints about different points of interest for the morrow, Tolstoy plunged at once into the conversation which had been broken off the day before. It was evident that he had been thinking about our country, and was eager for more information.

"I became very well acquainted with your ambassador, Mr. White, while he was in this country," he began. "I found him a man of wide experience, of great culture, and of much originality in thought. I learned a great deal about America from him. It must be wonderful to live in a country

where there is no Orthodox Church, where one can worship as one pleases, and where every one's vote is counted."

Jimmie coughed politely, and looked at me.

"It encourages individuality," he added. "Do you not find your own countrymen more individual than those of any other nation?" he added, addressing Jimmie directly for the first time.

"I think I do," said Jimmie, carefully weighing out his words as if on invisible scales. Jimmie is largely imbued with that absurd fear of a man who has written books, which is to me so inexplicable.

"Your country appeals to Russians, strongly," pursued the count, evidently bent upon drawing Jimmie out.

"I have often wondered why," said Jimmie. "It couldn't have been the wheat?"

"No, not entirely the wheat, although the news of your generosity spread like wildfire through all classes of society, and served to open the hearts of the peasants toward America as they are opened toward no other country in the world. The word 'Amerikanski' is an _open sesame_ all through Russia. Have you noticed it?"

"Often," said Jimmie. "And often wondered at it. But that wheat was a small enterprise to gain a nation's gratitude. It is the more surprising to us because it was not a national gift, but the result of the generosity and large-mindedness of a handful of men, who pushed it through so quietly and unostentatiously that millions of people in America to this day do not know that it was ever done, but over here we have not met a single Russian who has not spoken of it immediately."

"The Russians are a grateful people," observed Mrs. Jimmie, "but it seems a little strange to me to discover such ardent gratitude among the nobility for assistance which reached people hundreds of miles away from them, and in whose welfare they could have only a general interest, prompted by humanity."

"Ah! but madame, Russians are more keenly alive to the problem of our serfs than any other. Many of our wealthy people are doing all that they can to assist them, and, when a crisis like the famine comes, it is heart-breaking not to be able to relieve their suffering. Consequently, the sending of that wheat touched every heart."

"Then, too, we are not divided,--the North against the South, as you were on your negro question," said the little countess. "The peasant problem stretches from one end of Russia to the other."

"We are a diffuse people," I said. "Perhaps that is the result of our mixed blood and the individuality that you spoke of, but your books are so widely read in America that I believe people in the North are quite as well informed and quite as much interested in the problem of the Russian serf as in our own negro problem."

Bee gave me a look which in sign language meant, "And that isn't saying half as much as it sounds."

"Undoubtedly there is a strong point of sympathy between our two

countries. Like you, we have many mixed strains of blood, and, though we are so much older, we have civilised more slowly, so that we are both in youthful stages of progress. Your great prairies correspond in a large measure to our steppes. America and Russia are the greatest wheat-growing countries in the world. Our internal resources are the only ones vast enough to support us without assistance from other countries."

"Is that true of Russia?" Jimmie cut in, his commercial instinct getting the better of his awe of Tolstoy. "Where would you get your coal?"

"True," said Tolstoy, "we could not do it as completely as you, and your very resources are one reason for our admiration of America."

"In case of war, now,--" went on Jimmie. He stopped speaking, and looked down in deep embarrassment, remembering Tolstoy's hatred of war.

"Yes," said Tolstoy, kindly. "In case the whole civilised world waged war on the United States, I dare say you could still remain a tolerably prosperous people."

"At any rate," said Jimmie, recovering himself, "it would be a good many years before we would be a hungry nation, and, in the meantime, we could practically starve out the enemy by cutting off their food supply, and disable their fleets and commerce for want of coal, so there is hardly any danger, from the prudent point of view, of the world combining against us."

"If the diplomacy at Washington continues in its present trend, under your great President McKinley, your country will not allow herself to be dragged into the quarrels of Europe. We older nations might well learn a lesson from your present government."

"Oh!" I cried, "how good of you to say that. It is the first time in all Europe that I have heard our government praised for its diplomacy, and coming from you, I am so grateful."

Jimmie and the consul also beamed at Tolstoy's complimentary comment.

"Now, about your men of letters?" said Tolstoy. "It is some time since I have had such direct news from America. What are the great names among you now?"

At this juncture Countess Tolstoy drew nearer to Bee and Mrs. Jimmie, and our groups somewhat separated.

"Our great names?" I repeated. "Either we have no great names now, or we are too close to them to realise how great they are. We seem to be between generations. We have lost our Lowell, and Longfellow, and Poe, and Hawthorne, and Emerson, and we have no others to take their places."

"But a young school will spring up, some of whom may take their places," said Tolstoy.

"It has already sprung up," I said, "and is well on the way to manhood. One great drawback, however, I find in mentioning the names of all of them to a European, or even to an Englishman, is the fact that so many of our characteristic American authors write in a dialect which is all that we Americans can do to understand. For instance, take the negro

stories, which to me are like my mother tongue, brought up as I was in the South. Thousands of Northern people who have never been South are unable to read it, and to them it holds no humour and no pathos. To the ordinary Englishman, it is like so much Greek, and to the continental English-speaking person it is like Sanskrit. In the same way the New England stories, which are written in Yankee dialect, cannot be understood by people in the South who have never been North. How then can we expect Europeans to manage them?"

"How extraordinary," said Tolstoy. "And both are equally typical, I suppose?"

"Equally so," I replied.

"The reason she understands them both," broke in Jimmie, "is because her mother comes from the northernmost part of the northernmost State in the Union, and her father from a point almost equally in the South. There is but one State between his birthplace and the Gulf of Mexico."

"About the same distance," said Tolstoy, "as if your mother came from Petersburg and your father from Odessa."

"But there are others who write English which is not distorted in its spelling. James Lane Alien and Henry B. Fuller are particularly noted for their lucid English and literary style; Cable writes Creole stories of Louisiana; Mary Hartwell Catherwood, stories of French Canadians and the early French settlers in America; Bret Harte, stories of California mining camps; Mary Hallock Foote, civil engineering stories around the Rocky Mountains; Weir Mitchell, Quaker stories of Pennsylvania; and Charles Egbert Craddock lays her plots in the Tennessee mountains. Of all these authors, each has written at least two books along the lines I have indicated, and I mention them, thinking they would be particularly interesting to you as descriptive of portions of the United States."

"All these," said Tolstoy, meditatively, "in one country."

"Not only that," I said, "but no two alike, and most of them as widely different as if one wrote in French and the other in German."

"A wonderful country," murmured Tolstoy again. "I have often thought of going there, but now I am too old."

"There is no one in the world," I answered him, "in the realm of letters or social economics, whom the people of America would rather see than you."

He bowed gracefully, and only answered again:

"No, I am too old now. I wish I had gone there when I could. But tell me," he added, "have you no authors who write universally?"

"Universally," I repeated. "That is a large word. Yes, we have Mark Twain. He is our most eminent literary figure at present."

"Ah! Mark Twain," repeated Tolstoy. "I have heard of him."

"Have you indeed? I thought no one was known in Europe, except Fenimore Cooper. He is supposed to have written universally of America, because he never wrote anything but Indian stories! In France, they know of Poe,

and like him because they tell me that he was like themselves."

"He was insane, was he not?" said Tolstoy, innocently.

I bit my lip to keep from laughing, for Tolstoy had not perpetrated that as a jest.

"But many of our most whimsical and most delicious authors could not be appreciated by Europe in general, because Europeans are all so ignorant of us. There is Frank Stockton, whose humour continentals would be sure to take seriously, and then Thomas Nelson Page writes most effectively when he uses negro dialect. His story 'Marse Chan,' which made him famous, I consider the best short story ever written in America. Hopkinson Smith, too, has written a book which deserves to live for ever, depicting as it does a phase of the reconstruction period, when Southern gentlemen of the old school came into contact with the Northern business methods. Books like these would seem trivial to a European, because they represent but a single step in our curious history."

"I understand," said Tolstoy, sympathetically. "Of course it is difficult for us to realise that America is not one nation, but an amalgamation of all nations. To the casual thinker, America is an off-shoot of England."

"Perfectly true," said Jimmie, "and that barring the fact that we speak a language which is, in some respects, similar to the English, no nations are more foreign to each other than the United States and England. It would be better for the English if they had a few more Bryces among them."

"If it weren't for the dialects," said Tolstoy, "I think more Europeans would be interested in American literature."

"That is true," I said, "and yet, without dialects, you wouldn't get the United States as it really is. There are heaps and heaps of Americans who won't read dialect themselves, but they miss a great deal. Take, for instance, James Whitcomb Riley, a poet who, to my mind, possesses absolute genius,—the genius of the commonplace. His best things are all in dialect, which a great many find difficult, and yet, when he gives public readings from his own poems, he draws audiences which test the capacity of the largest halls. I myself have seen him recalled nineteen times."

"America and Russia are growing closer together every day," said Tolstoy. "Every year we use more of your American machinery; your plows, and threshers, and mowing-machines, and all agricultural implements are coming into use here. Every year some Americans settle in Russia from business interests, and we are rapidly becoming dependent on you for our coal. If you had a larger merchant marine, it would benefit our mutual interests wonderfully. Is your country as much interested in Russia as we are in you?"

"Equally so," I said. "Russian literature is very well understood in America. We read all your books. We know Pushkin and Tourguenieff. Your Russian music is played by our orchestras, and your Russian painter, Verestchagin, exhibited his paintings in all the large cities, and made us familiar with his genius."

"All art, all music has a moral effect upon the soul. Verestchagin

paints war--hideous war! Moral questions should be talked about and discussed, and a remedy found for them. In America you will not discuss many questions. Even in the translations of my books, parts which seem important to me are left out. Why is that? It limits you, does it not?"

"I suppose the demand creates the supply," I ventured. "We may be prudish, but as yet the moral questions you speak of have not such a hold on our young republic that they need drastic measures. When we become more civilised, and society more cancerous, doubtless the public mind will permit these questions to be discussed."

"The time for repentance is in advance of the crime," said Tolstoy.

"American prudery is narrowing in its effect on our art," I ventured, timidly.

"Is that the reason for many of your artists and authors living abroad?"

"It may be. We certainly are not encouraged in America to depict life as it is. That is one reason I think why foreign authors sell their books by the thousands in America, and by the hundreds in their own country."

"Then the taste is there, is it?" asked Tolstoy.

"The common sense is there," I said, bluntly,--"the common sense to know that our authors are limited to depicting a phase instead of the whole life, and then, if you are going to get the whole life, you must read foreign authors. It's just as if a sculptor should confine himself to shaping fingers, and toes, and noses, and ears because the public refuses to take a finished study."

"But why, why is it?" said Tolstoy, with a touch of impatience. "If you will read the whole thing when written by foreign authors, why do you not encourage your own?"

"I am sure I don't know," I said, "unless it is on the simple principle that many men enjoy the ballet scene in opera, while they would not permit their wives and daughters to take part in it."

"America is the protector of the family," said Jimmie, regarding me with a hostile eye.

Tolstoy tactfully changed the subject out of deference to Jimmie's displeasure.

"Do many Russians visit America?" asked Tolstoy.

"Oh, yes, quite a number, and they are among our most agreeable visitors. Prince Serge Wolkonsky travelled so much and made so many addresses that he made Russia more popular than ever."

"Do you know how popular you are in America?" said Jimmie, blushing at his own temerity.

"I know how many of my books are sold there, and I get many kind letters from Americans."

"Isn't he considered the greatest living man of letters in America?" said Jimmie, appealingly to me boyishly.

"Undoubtedly," I replied, smiling, because Tolstoy smiled.

"Whom do you consider the greatest living author?" asked Jimmie.

"Mrs. Humphrey Ward," said Tolstoy, decisively.

This was a thunderbolt which stopped the conversation of the other members of the party.

"And one of your greatest Americans," went on Tolstoy, "was Henry George."

"From a literary point of view, or--"

"From the point of view of humanity and of the Christian."

Jimmie and I leaned back involuntarily. Judged by these standards, we were none of us either Christians or human, in our party at least.

The Countess Tolstoy, who seemed to be in not the slightest awe of her illustrious husband, having become somewhat impatient during this conversation, now turned to me and said:

"It has been so interesting to talk with your sister and Mrs. Jimmie about Paris fashions. We see so little here that is not second hand, and your journey is so fascinating. It seems incredible that you can be travelling simply for pleasure and over such a number of countries! Where do you go next?"

"We have come from everywhere," I said, laughing, "and we are going anywhere."

The countess clasped her hands and said:

"How I envy you, but doesn't it cost you a great deal of money?"

"I suppose it does," I said, regretfully. "I am going to travel as long as my money holds out, but the rest are not so hampered."

"Alas, if I could only go with you," said the countess, "but we are under such heavy expense now. It used to be easier when we had three or four children nearer of an age who could be educated together. Then it cost less. But now this boy, my youngest, necessitates different tutors for everything, and it costs as much to educate this last one of thirteen as it did any four of the others."

"But then you educate so thoroughly," I said. "Russians always speak five or six, sometimes ten languages, including dialects. With us our wealthy people generally send their children to a good private school and afterward prepare them by tutor for college. Then the richest send them for a trip around the world, or perhaps a year abroad, and that ends it. But the ordinary American has only a public school education. Americans are not linguists naturally."

"Ah! but here we are obliged to be linguists, because, if we travel at all, we must speak other languages, and, if we entertain at all, we meet people who cannot speak ours, which is very difficult to learn. But languages are easy."

"Oh! _are_ they?" said Jimmie, involuntarily, and everybody laughed.

"Jimmie's languages are unique," said Bee.

"Are you going to Italy?" said the countess.

"Yes, we hope to spend next spring in Italy, beginning with Sicily and working slowly northward."

"How delightful! How charming!" cried the countess. "How I wish, how I _wish_ I could go with you."

"Go with us?" I cried in delight. "Could you manage it? We should be so flattered to have your company."

"Oh, if I could! I shall ask. It will do no harm to ask."

We had all stood up to go and had begun to shake hands when she cried across to her husband:

"Leo, Leo, may I go--"

Then seeing she had not engaged her husband's attention, who was talking to Jimmie about single tax, she went over and pulled his sleeve.

"Leo, may I go with them to Italy in the spring? Please, dear Leo, say yes."

He shook his head gravely, and the little countess smiled at her mother's enthusiasm.

"It would cost too much," said Tolstoy, "besides, I cannot spare you. I need you."

"You need me!" cried the countess in gay derision. Then pleadingly, "Do let me go."

"I cannot," said Tolstoy, turning to Jimmie again.

The countess came back to us with a face full of disappointment.

"He doesn't need me at all," she whispered. "I'd go anyway if I had the money."

As I said before, Russia and America are very much alike.

As we left the house my mind recurred to Max Nordau, whose personality and methods I have so imperfectly presented. The contrast to Tolstoy would intrude itself. In all the conversations I ever had with Max Nordau, he spent most of the time in trying to be a help and a benefit to me. The physician in him was always at the front. His aim was healing, and I only regret that their intimate personality prevents me from relating them word for word, as they would interest and benefit others quite as much as they did me.

The difference between these two great leaders of thought--these two great reformers, Nordau and Tolstoy--is the theme of many learned discussions, and admits many different points of view.

To me they present this aspect: Tolstoy, like Goethe, is an interesting combination of genius and hypocrisy. He preaches unselfishness, while himself the embodiment of self. Max Nordau is his antithesis. Nordau gives with generous enthusiasm--of his time, his learning, his genius, most of all, of himself. Tolstoy fastens himself upon each newcomer politely, like a courteous leech, sucks him dry, and then writes.

Max Nordau, like Shakespeare, absorbs humanity as a whole. Tolstoy considers the Bible the most dramatic work ever written, and turns this knowledge of the world's demand for religion to theatrical account. Tolstoy is outwardly a Christian, Nordau outwardly a pagan. Tolstoy openly acknowledges God, but exemplifies the ideas of man, while Max Nordau's private life embodies the noble teachings of the Christ whom he denies.

It was not until months afterward, we were back in London in fact, when Jimmie's opinion of Tolstoy seemed to have crystallised. He came to me one morning and said:

"I've read everything, since we left Moscow, that Tolstoy has written. Now you know I don't pretend to know anything about literary style and all that rot that you're so keen about, but I do know something about human nature, and I do know a grand-stand play when I see one. Now Tolstoy is a genius, there's no gainsaying that, but it's all covered up and smothered in that religious rubbish that he has caught the ear of the world with. If you want to be admired while you are alive, write a religious novel and let the hoi polloi snivel over you and give you gold dollars while you can enjoy 'em and spend 'em. That's where Tolstoy is a fox. So is Mrs. Humphrey Ward. She's a fox, too. They are getting all the fun _now_. But it's all gallery play with both of 'em."

I said nothing, and he smoked in silence for a moment. Then he added:

"But I _say_, what a ripper Tolstoy could write if he'd just cut loose from religion for a minute and write a novel that didn't have any damned _purpose_ in it!"

Verily, Jimmie is no fool.

CHAPTER XIII

SHOPPING EXPERIENCES

In going to Europe timid persons often cover their real design by claiming the intention of taking German baths, of "doing" Switzerland, or of learning languages. But everybody knows that the real reason why most women go abroad is to shop. What cathedral can bring such a look of rapture to a woman's face as New Bond Street or what scenery such ecstasy as the Rue de la Paix?

Therefore, as I believe my lot in shopping to be the common lot of all, let me tell my tale, so that to all who have suffered the same agonies and delights this may come as a personal reminiscence of their own, while to you who have Europe yet to view for that blissful first time,

which is the best of all, this is what you will go through.

When I first went to Europe I had all of the average American woman's timidity about asserting herself in the face of a shopgirl or salesman. Many years of shopping in America had thoroughly broken a spirit which was once proud. I therefore suffered unnecessary annoyance during my first shopping in London, because I was overwhelmingly polite and affable to the man behind the counter. I said "please," and "If you don't mind," and "I would like to see," instead of using the martial command of the ordinary Englishwoman, who marches up to the show-case in flat-heeled boots and says in a tone of an officer ordering "Shoulder arms," "Show me your gauze fans!" I used to listen to them standing next me at a counter, momentarily expecting to see them knocked down by the indignant salesman and carried to a hospital in an ambulance.

My own tones were so conversational when I said, "Will you please show me your black satin ribbon?" that, while I did not say it, my voice implied such questions as "How are your father and mother?" and "I hope the baby is better?" and "Doesn't that draught there on your back annoy you?" and "Don't you get very tired standing up all day?"

It was Bee, as usual, who gave me my first lesson in the insolent bearing which alone obtains the best results from the average British shopman.

Still without having thoroughly asserted myself, not having been to that particular manner born, I went next to Paris, where my politeness met with the just reward which virtue is always supposed to get and seldom does.

I consider shopping in Paris one of the greatest pleasures to be found in this vale of tears. The shops, with the exception of the Louvre, the Bon Marche, and one or two of the large department stores of similar scope, are all small--tiny, in fact, and exploit but one or two things. A little shop for fans will be next to a milliner who makes a specialty of nothing but gauze theatre bonnets. Perhaps next will come a linen store, where the windows will have nothing but the most fascinating embroidery, handkerchiefs, and neckware. Then comes the man who sells belts of every description, and parasol handles. Perhaps your next window will have such a display of diamond necklaces as would justify you in supposing that his stock would make Tiffany choke with envy, but if you enter, you will find yourself in an aperture in the wall, holding an iron safe, a two-by-four show-case, and three chairs, and you will find that everything of value he has, except the clothes he wears, are all in his window.

As long as these shops are all crowded together and so small, to shop in Paris is really much more convenient than in one of our large department stores at home, with the additional delight of having smiling interested service. The proprietor himself enters into your wants, and uses all his quickness and intelligence to supply your demands. He may be, very likely he is, doubling the price on you, because you are an American, but, if your bruised spirit is like mine, you will be perfectly willing to pay a little extra for politeness.

It is a truth that I have brought home with me no article from Paris which does not carry with it pleasant recollections of the way I bought it. Can any woman who has shopped only in America bring forward a similar statement?

All this changes, however, when once you get into the clutches of the average French dressmaker. By his side, Barabbas would appear a gentleman of exceptional honesty. I have often, in idle moments, imagined myself a cannibal, and, in preparing my daily menu, my first dish would be a fricassee of French dressmakers. Perhaps in that I am unjust. In thinking it over, I will amend it by saying a fricassee of _all_ dressmakers. It would be unfair to limit it to the French.

There is one thing particularly noticeable about the charm which French shop-windows in one of the smart streets like the rue de la Paix exercises upon the American woman, and that is that it very soon wears off, and she sees that most of the things exploited are beyond her means, or are totally unsuited to her needs. I defy any woman to walk down one of these brilliant shop-lined streets of Paris for the first time, and not want to buy every individual thing she sees, and she will want to do it a second time and a third time, and, if she goes away from Paris and stays two months, the first time she sees these things on her return all the old fascination is there. To overcome it, to stamp it out of the system, she must stay long enough in Paris to live it down, for, if she buys rashly while under the influence of this first glamour, she is sure to regret it.

Dresden and Berlin differ materially from Paris in this respect. Their shop-windows exploit things less expensive, more suitable to your every-day needs, and equally unattainable at home. So that if you have gained some experience by your mistakes in Paris, your outlay in these German cities will be much more rational.

Leather goods in Germany are simply distracting. There are shops in Dresden where no woman who appreciates bags, satchels, card-cases, photograph-frames, book-covers, and purses could refrain from buying without disastrous results. I remember my first pilgrimage through the streets of Dresden. Between the porcelains and toilet sets, the Madonnas, the belts, and card-cases, I nearly lost my mind. The modest prices of the coveted articles were each time a separate shock of joy. If these sturdy Germans had wished to take advantage of my indiscreet expressions of surprise and delight, they might easily have raised their prices without our ever having discovered it. But day after day we returned, not only to find that the prices remained the same, but that, in many instances, if we bought several articles, they voluntarily took off a mark or two on account of the generosity of our purchases.

Dresden is a city where works of art are most cunningly copied. You can order, if you like, copies of any but the most intricate of the treasures of the Green Vaults, and you will not be disappointed with the results. You can order copies of any of the most famous pictures in the Dresden galleries, and have them executed with like exquisite skill. Nor is there any city in all Europe where it is so satisfactory to buy a souvenir of a town, which you will not want to throw away when you get home and try to find a place for it. Because souvenirs of Dresden appeal to your love of art and the highest in your nature. Leather you will find elsewhere, but the Dresden works of art are peculiarly its own.

In Austria manners differ considerably both from those of Paris and upper Germany. I should say they were a cross between the two. We shopped in Ischl, which has shops quite out of proportion to its size on account of being the summer home of the Emperor, and there we met with a politeness which was delightful.

In Vienna we had occasion to accompany Jimmie and "Little Papa" on business expeditions which led him into the wholesale district. There it was universal for all the clerks to be seated at their work, particularly in the jeweller's shops. At our entrance, every man and woman there, from the proprietor to the errand boys, rose to their feet, bowed, and said "Good day."

When we finished our purchases, or even if we only looked and came away without buying, this was all repeated, which sometimes gave me the sensation of having been to a court function.

Vienna fashions are very elegant. Being the seat of the court, there is a great deal of dress. There is wealth, and the shops are magnificent. Personally, I much prefer the fashions of Vienna to those of Paris. Prices are perhaps a little more moderate, but the truly Paris creation generally has the effect of making one think it would be beautiful on somebody else. I can go to Worth, Felix, and Doucet, and half a dozen others equally as smart, and not see ten models that I would like to own. In Vienna there were Paris clothes, of course, but the Viennese have modified them, producing somewhat the same effect as American influence on Paris fashions. To my mind they are more elegant, having more of reserve and dignity in their style, and a distinct morality. Paris clothes generally look immoral when you buy them, and feel immoral when you get them on. There is a distinct spiritual atmosphere about clothes. In Vienna this was very noticeable. I speak more of clothes in Paris and Vienna, as there are only four cities in the world where one would naturally buy clothes,—Paris, Vienna, London, and New York. In other cities you buy other things, articles perhaps distinctive of the country.

When you get to St. Petersburg, in your shopping experiences, you will find a mixture of Teuton and Slav which is very perplexing. We were particularly anxious to get some good specimens of Russian enamel, which naturally one supposes to be more inexpensive in the country which creates them, but to our distress we discovered Avenue de l'Opera prices on everything we wished. Each time that we went back the price was different. The market seemed to fluctuate. One blue enamelled belt, upon which I had set my heart, varied in price from one to three dollars each time I looked at it. Finally, one day I hit upon a plan. I asked my friend, Mile, de Falk, to follow me into this shop and not speak to me, but to notice the particular belt I held in my hand. I then went out without purchasing, and the next day my friend sent her sister, who speaks nothing but Russian and French, to this shop. She purchased the belt for ten dollars less than it had been offered to me. She ordered a different lining made for it, and the shopkeeper said in guileless Russian, "How strange it is that ladies all over the world are alike. For a week two American young ladies have been in here looking at this belt, and by a strange coincidence they also wished this same lining."

For once I flatter myself that I "did" a Russian Jew, but his companions in crime have so thoroughly "done" me in other corners of the world that I need not plume myself unnecessarily. He is more than even with me.

All through Russia we contented ourselves with buying Russian engravings, which are among the finest in the world. Perhaps some of their charm is in the subject portrayed, which, being unfamiliar, arouses curiosity. Russian operas, paintings, theatricals, the national

ballet, the interior of churches and mosques are different from those of every other country. There is in the churches such a strange admixture of the spiritual and the theatrical. So that the engravings of these things have for me at least more interest than anything else.

Occasionally we were betrayed into buying a peasant's costume, an ikon, or an enamel, but in Moscow and Kief, the only way that we could reproduce to our friends at home the glories and splendours of these two beautiful cities was by photographs, in which the brilliancy of their colours brings back the sensations of delight which we experienced.

Shopping in Constantinople is not shopping as we Americans understand it, unless you happen to be an Indian trader by profession. I am not. Therefore, the system of bargaining, of going away from a bazaar and pretending you never intended buying, never wanted it anyhow, of coming back to sit down and take a cup of coffee, was like acting in private theatricals. By nature I am not a diplomat, but if I had stayed longer in the Orient, I think I would have learned to be as tricky as Chinese diplomacy.

We were given, by several of our Turkish friends, two or three rules which should govern conduct when shopping in the Orient. One is to look bored; the second, never to show interest in what pleases you; the third, never to let your robber salesman have an idea of what you really intend to buy. This comes hard at first, but after you have once learned it, to go shopping is one of the most exciting experiences that I can remember. I have always thought that burglary must be an exhilarating profession, second only to that of the detective who traps him. In shopping in the Orient, the bazaars are dens of thieves, and you, the purchaser, are the detective. We found in Constantinople little opportunity to exercise our new-found knowledge, because we were accompanied by our Turkish friends, who saw to it that we made no indiscreet purchases. On several occasions they made us send things back because we had been overcharged, and they found us better articles at less price. Of course we bought a fez, embroidered capes, bolero jackets, embroidered curtains, and rugs, but we, ourselves, were waiting to get to Smyrna for the real purchase of rugs, and it was there that I personally first brought into play the guile that I had learned of the Turks.

I remember Smyrna with particular delight. The quay curves in like a giant horseshoe of white cement. The piers jut out into the sapphire blue of this artificial bay, and are surrounded by myriads of tiny rowing shells, in which you must trust yourself to get to land, as your big ship anchors a mile or more from shore.

It was the brightest, most brilliant Mediterranean sunshine which irradiated the scene the morning on which we arrived at Smyrna. A score of gaily clad boatmen, whose very patches on their trousers were as picturesque as the patches on Italian sails, held out their hands to enable us to step from one cockle-shell to another, to reach the pier. In the way the boats touch each other in the harbour at Smyrna, I was reminded of the Thames in Henley week. We climbed through perhaps a dozen of these boats before we landed on the pier, and in three minutes' walk we were in the rug bazaars of Smyrna. Such treasures as we saw!

We were received by the smiling merchants as if we were long-lost daughters suddenly restored, but we practised our newly acquired diplomacy on them to such an extent that their faces soon began to

betray the most comic astonishment. These people are like children, and exhibit their emotions in a manner which seems almost infantile to the Caucasian. Alas, we were not the prey they had hoped for. We sneered at their rugs; we laughed at their embroideries; we turned up our noses at their jewelled weapons; we drank their coffee, and walked out of their shops without buying. They followed us into the street, and there implored us to come back, but we pretended to be returning to our ship. On our way back through this same street, every proprietor was out in front of his shop, holding up some special rug or embroidery which he had hastily dug out of his secret treasures in the vain hope of compelling our respect. Some of these were Persian silk rugs worth from one to three thousand dollars each. Although we would have committed any crime in order to possess these treasures, having got thoroughly into the spirit of the thing, we turned these rugs on their backs and pretended to find flaws in them, jeered at their colouring, and went on our way, followed by a jabbering, excited, perplexed, and nettled horde, who recklessly slaughtered their prices and almost tore up their mud floors in their wild anxiety to prove that they had something--anything--which we would buy. They called upon Allah to witness that they never had been treated so in their lives, but would we not stop just once more again to cast our eyes on their unworthy stock?

Having had all the amusement we wanted, and it being nearly time for luncheon, we went in, and in half an hour we had bought all that we had intended to buy from the first moment our eyes were cast upon them, and at about one-half the price they were offered to us three hours before. Now, if that isn't what you call enjoying yourself, I should like to ask what you expect.

Ephesus, the graves of the Seven Sleepers, the tomb of St. Luke, the ruins of the Temple of Diana ("Great is Diana of the Ephesians"), the prison of St. Paul, are only a part of my vivid experiences in Smyrna.

In Athens we bought nothing modern, but found several antique shops with Byzantine treasures, also silver ornaments, ancient curios, more beautiful than anything we found in Italy, and ancient sacred brass candlesticks of the Greek Church, which bore the test of being transplanted to an American setting.

In truth, some of my richest experiences have been in exploring with Jimmie tiny second-hand shops, pawn-shops, and dark, almost squalid corners, where, amid piles of rubbish, we found some really exquisite treasures. Mrs. Jimmie and Bee would have been afraid they would catch leprosy if they had gone with us on some of our expeditions, but Jimmie and I trusted in that Providence which always watches over children and fools, and even in England we found bits of old silver, china, and porcelain which amply repaid us for all the risk we ran. We often encountered shopkeepers who spoke a language utterly unknown to us and who understood not one word of English, and with whom we communicated by writing down the figures on paper which we would pay, or showing them the money in our hands. Perhaps we were cheated now and then--in fact, in our secret hearts we are guiltily sure of it, but what difference does that make?

When you get to Cairo, it being the jumping-off place, you naturally expect the most curious admixture of stuffs for sale that your mind can imagine, but, after having passed through the first stages of bewilderment, you soon see that there are only a few things that you really care for. For instance, you can't resist the turquoises. If you

go home from Egypt without buying any you will be sorry all the rest of your lives. Nor ought you to hold yourself back from your natural leaning toward crude ostrich feathers from the ostrich farms, and to bottle up your emotion at seeing uncut amber in pieces the size of a lump of chalk is to render yourself explosive and dangerous to your friends. Shirt studs, long chains for your vinaigrette or your fan, cuff buttons, antique belts of curious stones (generally clumsy and unbecoming to the waist, but not to be withstood), carved ostrich eggs, jewelled fly-brushes, carved brass coffee-pots and finger bowls, cigar sets of brilliant but rude enamel, to say nothing of the rugs and embroideries, are some of the things which I defy you to refrain from buying. To be sure, there are thousands of other attractions, which, if you are strong-minded, you can leave alone, but these things I have enumerated you will find that you cannot live without. Of course, I mean by this that these things are within reach of your purse, and cheaper than you can get them anywhere else, unless perhaps you go into the adjacent countries from which they come.

As you go up the Nile, your shopping becomes more primitive. On the mud banks, at the stations at which your boat stops, Arabians, Nubians, and Egyptians sit squatting on the caked mud with their gaudy clothes, brilliant embroideries, and rugs piled around them all within arm's reach. Here also you must bring the guile which I have described into play.

It may be that at Assuan, near the first cataract, I really got into some little danger. I never knew why, but in the bazaars there I developed an awful, insatiable desire to make a complete collection of Abyssinian weapons of warfare. For this purpose, one day, I got on my donkey and took with me only a little Scotchman, who had presented me with countless bead necklaces and so many baskets all the way up the Nile that at night I was obliged to put them overboard in order to get into my stateroom, and who wore, besides his goggles, a green veil over his face. We made our way across the sand, into which our donkeys' feet sank above their fetlocks, to the bazaars of Assuan.

These bazaars deserve more than a passing mention, as they are unlike any that I ever saw. They are all under one roof on both sides of tiny streets or broad aisles, just as you choose to call them, and through these aisles your donkey is privileged to go, while you sit calmly on his back, bargaining with the cross-legged merchants, who scream at you as you pass, thrusting their wares into your face, and, even if you attempt to pass on, they stop your donkey by pulling his tail. On this particular day I left my donkey at the door and made my way on foot, as I was eager to make my purchases.

Perhaps I was careless and ought to have taken better care of my Scotchman, because he was so little and so far from home, but I regret to say that I lost him soon after I went into the bazaar, and I didn't see him again for three hours. Never shall I forget those three hours.

In Smyrna, Turkey, and Egypt the bargaining language is about the same.

"What you give, lady?"

"I won't give anything! I don't want it! What! Do you think I would carry that back home?"

"But you take hold of him; you feel him silk; I think you want to buy."

Ver' cheap, only four pound!"

"Four pounds!" I say in French. "Oh, you don't want to sell. You want to keep it. And at such a price you will keep it."

"Keep it!" in a shrill scream. "Not want to sell? Me? I here to sell! I sell you everything you see! I sell you the shop!" and then more wheedlingly, "You give me forty francs?"

"No," in English again. "I'll give you two dollars."

"America! Liberty!" he cries, having cunningly established my nationality, and flattering my country with Oriental guile.

"Exactly," I say, "liberty for such as you if you go there. None for me. Liberty in America is only free to the lower classes. The others are obliged to buy theirs."

He shakes his head uncomprehendingly. "How much you give for him? Last price now! Six dollars!"

We haggle over "last prices" for a quarter of an hour more, and after two cups of coffee, amiably taken together, and some general conversation, I buy the thing for three dollars.

Bee says my tastes are low, but at any rate I can truthfully say that I get on uncommonly well with the common herd. I got about thirty of these jargon-speaking merchants so excited with my spirited method of not buying what they wanted me to that a large Englishman and a tall, gaunt Australian, thinking there was a fight going on, came to where I sat drinking coffee, and found that the screams, gesticulations, appeals to Allah, smiting of foreheads, brandishing of fists, and the general uproar were all caused by a quiet and well-behaved American girl sitting in their midst, while no less than four of them held a fold of her skirt, twitching it now and then to call attention to their particular howl of resentment. They rescued me, loaded my purchases on my donkey boy, and found my donkey for me, beside which, sitting patiently on the ground and humbly waiting my return, I found my little Scotchman.

With all this cumulative experience, as Jimmie says, "of how to misbehave in shops," we got back to London, where I could bring it into play, and in a manner avenge myself for past slights.

I was so grateful to Jimmie for the King Arthur that he gave me at Innsbruck that I decided to surprise him by something really handsome on his birthday.

When we got to Paris, there seemed to be an epidemic of gun-metal ornaments set with tiny pearls, diamonds, or sapphires. Of these I noticed that Jimmie admired the pearl-studded cigar-cases and match-safes most, but for some reason I waited to make my purchase in London, which was one of the most foolish things I ever have done in all my foolish career, and right here let me say that there is nothing so unsatisfactory as to postpone a purchase, thinking either that you will come back to the same place or that you will see better further along, for in nine cases out of ten you never see it again.

When we got to London, Bee and I put on our best street clothes and started out to buy Jimmie his birthday present. We searched everywhere,

but found that all gun-metal articles in London were either plain or studded with diamonds. We couldn't find a pearl. Finally in one shop I explained my search to a tall, heavy man, evidently the proprietor, who had small green eyes set quite closely together, a florid complexion, and hay-coloured side-whiskers. His whiskers irritated me quite as much as the fact that he hadn't what I wanted. Perhaps my hat vexed him, but at any rate he looked as though he were glad he didn't have the pearls, and he finally permitted his annoyance, or his general British rudeness, to voice itself in this way:

"Pardon me, madame," he said, "but you will never find cigar-cases of gun-metal studded with pearls, no matter how much you may desire it, for it is not good taste."

I was warm, irritated, and my dress was too tight in the belt, so I just leaned my two elbows on that show-case, and I said to him:

"Do you mean to have the impertinence, my good man, to tell two American ladies that what they are looking for is not in good taste, simply because you are so stupid and insular as not to keep it in stock? Do you presume to express your opinion on taste when you are wearing a green satin necktie with a pink shirt? If you had ever been off this little island, and had gone to a land where taste in dress, and particularly in jewels, is understood, you would realise the impertinence of criticising the taste of an American woman, who is trying to find something worth while buying in so hopelessly British a shop as this. Now, my good man," I added, taking up my parasol and purse, "I shall not report your rudeness to the proprietor, because doubtless you have a family to support, and I don't wish to make you lose your place, but let this be a warning to you never to be so insolent again," and with that, I simply swept out of his shop. I seldom sweep out. Bee says I generally crawl out, but this time I was so inflated with an unholy joy that I recklessly cabled to Paris for Jimmie's pearls, and to this day I rejoice at the way that man covered his green satin tie with his large hairy red hand, and at the ecstatic smiles on the faces of two clerks standing near, for I knew he was the proprietor when I called him "My good man."

If you want to open an account in London, you have to be vouched for by another commercial house. They won't take your personal friends, no matter how wealthy, no matter if they are titled. Your bank's opinion of you is no good. Neither does it avail you how well and favourably you are known at your hotel for paying your bill promptly. This, and the custom in several large department stores of never returning your money if you take back goods, but making you spend it, not in the store, but in the department in which you have bought, makes shopping for dry goods excessively annoying to Americans.

I took back two silk blouses out of five that I bought at a large shop in Regent Street much frequented by Americans, which carries on a store near by under the same name, exclusively for mourning goods. To my astonishment, I discovered that I must buy three more blouses, or else lose all the money I paid for them. In my thirst for information, I asked the reason for this. In America, a lady would consider the reason they gave an insult. The shopwoman told me that ladies' maids are so expert at copying that many ladies have six or eight garments sent home, kept a few days, copied by their maids and returned, and that this became so much the custom that they were finally forced to make that obnoxious rule.

I have heard complaints made in America by proprietors of large importing houses that women who keep accounts frequently order a handsome gown, wrap, or hat sent home on approval, wear it, and return it the next day. If this is the custom among decent self-respecting American women, who masquerade in society in the guise of women of refinement and culture, no wonder that shopkeepers are obliged to protect themselves. There is nowhere that the saying, "the innocent must suffer with the guilty," obtains with so much force as in shopping, particularly in London.

It is a characteristic difference between the clever American and the insular British shopkeeper that in America, when a thing such as I have mentioned is suspected, the saleswoman or a private detective is sent to shadow the suspect, and ascertain if she really wore the garment in question. In such cases, the garment is returned to her with a note, saying that she was seen wearing it, when it is generally paid for without a word. If not, the shop is in danger of losing one otherwise valuable customer, as she is placed on what is known as the "blacklist," which means that a double scrutiny is placed on all her purchases, as she is suspected of trickery.

In this same shop in Regent Street, of which I have been speaking, we submitted to several petty annoyances of this description without complaint, the last and pettiest of which was when Mrs. Jimmie, being captivated by an exquisite hundred-guinea gown of pale gray, embroidered in pink silk roses, and veiled with black Chantilly lace, bought it and ordered it altered to her figure. For this they charged her two pounds ten in addition to that frightful price for about an hour's work about the collar. Mrs. Jimmie seldom resents anything, and in her gentleness is easily governed, so this time I persuaded her to protest, and dictated a furious letter of remonstrance to the proprietor, citing only this one case of extortion. Jimmie sat by, smoking and encouraging me, as I paced up and down the room with my hands behind my back, giving vent to sentences which, when copied down in Mrs. Jimmie's ladylike handwriting, made Jimmie scream with joy. I think Mrs. Jimmie never had any intention of sending the letter, having written it down as a safety-valve for my rather explosive nature, but Jimmie was so carried away by the artistic incongruities of the situation that he whipped a stamp on it and mailed it before his wife could wink.

To his delight, Mrs. Jimmie received, three days later, a letter from the astonished proprietor, which showed in every line of it the jolt that my letter must have been to his stolid British nerveless system. He began by thanking her for having reported the matter to him, apologised humbly, as a British tradesman always does apologise to the bloated power of wealth, and said that her letter had been sent to all the various heads of departments for their perusal. He declared that for five years he had been endeavouring to bring the directors to see that, if they were to possess the coveted American patronage for which they always strove, they must accommodate themselves to certain American prejudices, one of which was the unalterable distaste Americans displayed in paying for refitting handsome gowns. He was delighted to say that her letter had been couched in such firm, decisive, and righteously indignant language, such as he himself never would have been capable of commanding, had carried such weight, and had been productive of such definite results with the directors that he was pleased to announce that henceforward a radical change would appear in the government of their house, and that never again would an extra charge be

made for refitting any garment costing over ten pounds. He thanked her again for her letter, but could not resist saying at the close that it was the most astonishing letter he had ever received in his life, and he begged to enclose the two pounds ten overcharge.

Jimmie fairly howled for joy as he read this letter aloud; Bee looked very much mortified; Mrs. Jimmie exceedingly perplexed, as if uncertain what to think, but I confess that all my irritation against British shopkeepers fell away from me as a cast-off garment. I blush to say that I shared Jimmie's delight, and when he solemnly made me a present of the two pounds ten I had so heroically earned, I soothed my ladylike sister's refined resentment by inviting all three to have broiled lobster with me at Scott's.

I imagine, however, that one woman's experience with dressmakers is like all others. I have noticed that to introduce the subject of my personal woes in the matter is to make the conversation general, in fact I might say composite, no matter how formal the gathering of women. Like the subject of servants, it is as provocative of conversation as classical music.

Far be it from me, however, to class all shopping in London under the head of dry goods, or the rage one gets into with every dressmaker. In most of the shops, in fact, I may say, in all of them (for the one unfortunate experience I have related in the jeweller's shop was the only one of the kind I ever had in London), the clerks are universally polite, interested, and obliging, no matter how smart the shop may be. Take for instance, Jay's, or Lewis and Allenby's. The instant you stop before the smallest object a saleswoman approaches and says, "Good morning." You say, "What a very pretty parasol!" and she replies, "It is pretty, isn't it, modom?" She wears a skin-tight black cashmere gown with a little tail to it. Her beautiful broad shoulders, flat back, tiny waist, bun at the back of her head, and the invisible net over the fringe, all proclaim her to be an Englishwoman, but her pronunciation of the simplest words, and the way her voice goes up and down two or three times in a single sentence, sometimes twice in a single word, might sometimes lead you to think she spoke a foreign tongue.

The English call all our voices monotonous, but it was several weeks after I reached London for the first time before I could catch the significance of a sentence the first time it was pronounced. All over Europe our watchword with the Russians, Turks, Egyptians, Arabs, French, Germans, and Italians was always "Do you speak English?" and in London it is Jimmie's crowning act of revenge to ask the railway guards and cab-drivers the same insulting question. Imagine asking London cabbies the question, "Do you speak English?" It puts him in a purple rage directly.

But shopkeepers all over Europe are quick to anticipate all your wants, to suggest tempting things which have not occurred to you to buy, and to offer to have things made, if nothing in stock suits you. I suppose I am naturally slow and stupid. Bee says I am, but having been brought up in America, in the South, where nothing is ever made, and where we had to send to New York for everything, and where even New York has to depend on Europe for many of its staples, my surprise overpowered me so that it mortified Bee, when they offered to have silk stockings made for me in Paris.

Like most Americans, I am in the habit of turning away disappointed, and

preparing to go without things if I cannot find what I want in the shops, but in London and Paris they will offer of their own accord to make for you anything you may describe to them, from a pair of gloves to a pattern of brocade. This is one and perhaps the only glory of being an American in Europe, for, as my friend in Naples, of the firm of Ananias, Barabbas, and Company, said to me:

"Behold! you are an American, and by Americans do we not live?"

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