

monks had for centuries been buried in the cellar, or crypt, and some Capuchin with a burning love of art, and unable to use chisel or brush, had exhumed their bones with which to fresco the ceiling and ornament the walls. They were hung in festoons, made into flower-baskets, arranged in columns, while here and there a grinning skeleton was clad in his old cowl and gown. It was the most wonderful art gallery that we visited in all Europe. It is shown with a real pride by an English-speaking monk, and nets no small sum for the monastery. But it is impossible to conceive of any thing more revolting. In what morbid forms may even the love of art display itself!

LETTER XLI.

FLORENCE, VENICE, AND ACROSS THE ALPS.

"IS this Mr. Hart's studio? Please hand him our cards." "*La morte.*" *Dead.* We were in Florence, and were visiting the studio of Mr. J. T. Hart, formerly of Palmyra, Mo. He had distinguished himself as a sculptor, and all Americans, especially Missourians, were ever welcome in his studio. Our meager knowledge of Italian was ample to interpret the language announcing his death. He had died some four months previous to our visit. Less famous than Hiram Powers, he was nevertheless widely known, and the works of his chisel which we saw showed that his reputation was well deserved.

We also visited Powers's studio, where his two sons handle the chisel, although less deftly than their distinguished father did. Copies of all his great works are on exhibition. Most famous is the "Greek Slave," but "America" and the two "Eves," one before and the other after the fall, have hardly fewer admirers. Here and in other studios we were introduced to some of the secrets of the sculptor's art. A great artist handles the chisel but little, especially after his reputation is made. His skill is mostly seen in modeling in clay. Workmen then copy the original in marble, a system of measurements being observed that makes the work a mere mechanical one. Sometimes a few finishing touches

are given by the sculptor, but often the marble is wholly shaped by common, though skilled, workmen. Hence mere human faces or busts are not the highest style of art, but ideal conceptions, which are copies from no original. Even these latter are often due to some living face, which, to the artist's sympathetic insight, is an embodiment of grief or hope, of innocence or remorse. The finest figures are copies of no *one* original. We were told that it takes from twelve to twenty female forms to make up a complete model, perfect in every part. One furnishes the neck, another the brow, a third the arm, a fourth the foot, and so on, until, taking something from each, the figure approaches our ideal of woman's beauty before marred by sin. One sculptor assured us that in his most famous work he employed no less than one hundred different female models before he was able to perfect his ideal form.

The natural beauty of Florence is such that it is a very fitting home for some of the greatest works of art, as well as of many of the most celebrated living artists. The beautiful Arno, with its graceful bridges, divides the city in twain, while its handsome park and pleasure-drives are to be expected from its many elegant residences. Americans and Englishmen of wealth are here in no small numbers, and are amongst the most liberal patrons of art. In fact, art has nearly always owed its existence here to some such patrons, most generous of whom were the famous Medici family, whose name is thus associated with some of the finest statuary in the world. The very square where Savonarola was burned is now adorned with choice marbles, while the wonderful collections of the Uffizi Gallery and the Pitti Palace are without a parallel. Gathered in one octagonal room are the gems of the collection: the "Venus di Medici," "Apollo of the School of Praxiteles," "the Wrestlers," and "the Grinder, or

Slave;" while the walls are hung with some of the finest works in oil of Raphael, Michael Angelo, Titian, Rubens, Guido Reni, Van Dyck, Durer, Domenichino, Correggio, and others of the world's favorite artists.

We joined in the general admiration of the bronze doors of the baptistery that Michael Angelo said were "fit to be the gates of paradise," ascended the handsome Campanile, from which to view the delightful surroundings of the city, and looked in at the famous cathedral whose dome was Michael Angelo's model for that of St. Peter's, and which was Dante's special admiration as he sat and watched it for hours together. What wonderful power Michael Angelo had in his day! He was not simply the greatest sculptor, architect, and painter, but under his lead the city was fortified, and we were shown part of the forts which he built. A fitting tablet marks his grave in one of the churches of Florence, while her great galleries contain many of his unfinished works, more splendid in their incompleteness than the finished work of other artists. These galleries, like all others in Europe which contain works of great merit, are filled with artists studying and copying the famous originals. The copies may often be bought for a few dollars, where the original cost thousands. In fact, one hundred thousand dollars is no unusual price for a piece of canvas not larger than an ordinary window, but the brush of genius must first have left immortal touches!

Pisa accommodates the traveler by having her leaning tower, and famous baptistery and cathedral, with her strange Campo Santo, all in one square. The inclination of the leaning tower is hardly so great as we had thought, being only thirteen feet out of perpendicular, with a total height of one hundred and seventy-nine feet. Having seen several others at Bologna, I am rather inclined to the

opinion that they were all built that way originally. It is a style of architecture, however, attractive chiefly from its oddity, and which happily did not become widely popular. In this instance the tower is a bell-tower. We were amply repaid for climbing it, by the splendid view of the Mediterranean and the Apennines. In the baptistery near by there fell from the dome such echoes as we had not heard since leaving the Taj, at Agra. In the cathedral we saw the famous lamp which had suggested, by its swinging motion, the law of the pendulum to the thoughtful mind of Galileo. We had seen his rude astronomical instruments carefully preserved in one of the museums of Florence. The Campo Santo is the well-known burial-ground of Pisa. More than fifty ship-loads of earth had been brought here from Mount Calvary by the zeal of the crusaders, and this soil has for seven centuries been peculiarly sacred. The open rectangular space in the middle is surrounded by a one-story building with porticoes facing the interior. The walls contained frescoes of "the Judgment-day," which, for hideousness, might pass for a Buddhist purgatory. The monuments are often tasty, but, as a whole, inferior to those which we saw in the cemetery at Bologna. The place has given the name *Campo Santo* to every grave-yard in Italy.

Pisa seems to be a place of but little commercial importance now, but the splendid residences of its old nobility still abound along the banks of the Arno, reminders of former greatness. An exquisite little church stands all alone by the river, where it was erected many centuries ago for sailors about to go to sea. The principal industry that we noticed was the manufacture of silk. The market-place was filled with large baskets of silk cocoons awaiting a purchaser.

As for the next few days, my diary written on the

spot may best tell the story, somewhat "boiled down:"

June 13.—Left Florence for Venice, crossing the Apennines and enjoying some of the finest mountain scenery of my life. (I had not yet seen the Alps.) Stopped some five hours at Bologna to see "St. Cecilia in Ecstasies," by Raphael, and Guido Reni's "Crucifixion." (While painting this great picture, in order to get the proper expression of agony on the face of his model, bound on the cross, the artist seized a dagger, and in a moment of frenzy thrust it into the heart of the victim, and then, transferring his expression to the canvas, he fled from the city and remained an exile for many years, until finally his genius was regarded as atoning for his offense, and he was permitted to return.) Saw the churches where Dominic, the founder of the Dominican order, was buried, and where Charles V. was crowned. Drove out to the Campo Santo, with its magnificent monuments and crowded vaults. Saw on its commanding site the Madonna of St. Luke, a fine church, so called because containing a portrait of the Virgin said to have been painted by St. Luke. Reach Venice in a furious thunder-storm after midnight. Our gondolier points to the clouds and says "*Fulmen*," and we order a second gondolier, who helps to bring us to our hotel at an earlier hour—the Royal Hotel Danieli, formerly a palace—but in our weariness we could sleep anywhere.

June 14.—Rather jaded for sight-seeing, not reaching our hotel until 1 A.M., and then sitting up an hour later to read our letters. We visit St. Mark's Church and the old Palace of the Doges, including the memorable Bridge of Sighs and the prison with its different dungeons. Take a gondola down the whole length of the Grand Canal, passing under the Ponte Rialto and round through the Jews' quarter. Shylock's house and the palace of many a merchant

of Venice passed on the way. We paused to visit one of the great glass manufactories for which Venice is so justly famous. We witnessed the spinning and weaving of glass, and were shown some peculiar specimens of gold-stone, the mode of whose manufacture is a profound secret.

June 15.—Walk through the Merceria, the great business street of Venice. It is a mistake to suppose that one can go nowhere here without a gondola. Of the one hundred and seventeen islands upon which Venice is built, three are of very respectable size, and one may long walk the streets of these without seeing any canals or hearing the "*Preme*"—"pass to the right"—of the gondoliers. In the palace of Emo Treves we see Canova's last work, "Hector and Ajax," which one can never forget. At the Art Academy we see Titian's first and last paintings, "the Visitation" and "the Entombment," as well as his masterpiece, "the Assumption." We direct our gondolier to row us to the Arsenal, where we see the famous marble lion believed once to have stood on the battle-field of Marathon; and while in the Arsenal we see a model of piles on which Venice is built, and the rude armor of Atilla, with the remains of the doge's ship used in wedding the Adriatic. In the Church of St. John and St. Paul we see the finest bass-relief in marble that we have met with anywhere. A walk about Venice by moonlight gives us a charming view of its old monuments and palaces, infamous from the cruelty of the doges. An ascent to the top of the Campanile gave us a view of its one hundred and fifty canals, with glimpses of the lagoons and the sea.

June 16.—Leave Venice for Milan, passing in sight of the snowy Alps and the mysterious Lake Garda, whose surface is often as rough and dangerous as the sea. From Virgil's day till now its waters are rarely at rest. Can they have shared the disquietude

of the cities along our road, whose fortified walls tell of numerous past wars and of apprehended danger in the future? We reach Milan in time to ascend the graceful steeple of its world-renowned cathedral. Too hazy for a good view of the Alps, but we feast our eyes on the forest of statues which crown the cathedral roof and pinnacles. Begun in the fourteenth century, it has been over five hundred years in building, and can hardly be said to be finished yet. It has a look of greater elegance and costliness than St. Peter's, which it almost rivals in size.

June 17.—We see privately Leonardo di Vinci's masterpiece, "the Last Supper." Frescoed in oil on the wall of the refectory of a monastery, it stands entirely alone. The adjoining premises are military stables. The picture itself is rapidly becoming dim with age, and no art has been able to restore it. There were perhaps not less than a dozen easels before it, with copies in a greater or less stage of completion. It is a picture which will stand apart in the memory of the beholder, though seen in a crowded gallery.

Attended the Waldensian service in their preaching-hall, its simplicity in striking contrast with the great ecclesiastical edifices of Milan. The Presbyterian mode of service observed. The singing hearty and the sermon without notes, but not remarkable for the earnestness of its delivery. The Italian language peculiarly liquid and sweet, so that while unable to understand the sermon we still followed it with pleasure, catching now and then familiar words by their resemblance to the Latin, and especially pleased to hear the name of *Jesus*, which we had now heard spoken by his followers in so many of the languages of the earth. Milan is less a Sabbath-observing city than any one that we have yet visited on the Continent. Few of the places of business are closed on our street, the principal one of the city.

June 18.—Left by an early train for Como, where we take a steamer for a ride on Lake Como as far as Bellagio. The scenery peculiarly beautiful. What with the clear water of the lake, the bold mountains covered with luxuriant vegetation, the elegant villas on the slopes, the whole under a strangely soft, mellow Italian sunlight, we have not had the view surpassed in all our tour. From the hill back of our hotel at Bellagio we see the three arms of the lake, the whole picture combining more elements of the beautiful than are to be found blended in almost any other part of the world. Como has won my heart; I shall ever associate with it, too, some of Thorwaldsen's and Canova's choicest marbles which we saw in one of the elegant villas on its banks.

June 19.—Cross the lake in a row-boat to Menaggio, where we take a carriage to Porlezza. A splendid retrospect and some fine mountain scenery during our two hours' drive. While waiting for the boat at Porlezza we visit a silk-cocoon establishment, where we see the silk-worms in all stages of development, feeding on mulberry-leaves. When they have fed enough they begin to spin, and many had already imprisoned themselves in their bright yellow cocoons. This industry of silk-growing is evidently the leading one of this district, as we find mulberry-groves everywhere.

Our little steamer bears us rapidly over the smooth surface of Lake Lugano to Lugano, whence another carriage takes us to Luino, one of the prettiest places on Lake Maggiore. We cross the line between Italy and Switzerland on our way, and run the gauntlet of the custom-house. Italian is the universal language of the Swiss in this canton. A large boat awaits us at Luino, and I find my affection for Como almost shaken by the hardly less fascinating charms of Maggiore. But I have plighted my affection to Como, and I will not forsake "my first love." If I had

seen Maggiore first the result might have been different. It is the old story—

Of all the sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these, It might have been.

It is thus I think that travelers so widely differ in their admiration of the Italian lakes—it all depends upon which is seen first. They are almost equally beautiful. Como lacks the charming Borromeo islands and distant snows of the Alps, but Maggiore wants Como's gardens and vineyards, and bolder mountains and narrower banks, dotted with almost royal villas. If I could only see one I should prefer—both.

June 20.—Crossing the Alps! It was useless to retire last night, for we did not reach Arona until 9 P.M., and the *diligence* across the Simplon left at midnight, so we engaged our places and dozed through the interval on our hotel sofas. Taking care to get rid of our Italian paper-money before starting, we formed in line, while the proper officer called off our names and assigned us places in the *diligence* in the order of our registering. A supplemental *diligence* is necessary, but we are all ready at midnight, and the crack of the driver's whip is heard with the stroke of the clock as our poor horses dash out into the darkness. A *diligence* I found simply a stage-coach with a French name. A place under the driver's feet called the *coupé*, and one on top at the back of the coach called the *banquette*, afforded somewhat less obstructed views than are had from the inside seats, but otherwise my Swiss *diligence* is the American stage-coach of my boyhood. Besides the driver, a man accompanies us, known as the guard, whose duty is to look after the mails and the passengers, and receive backshish at the end of the journey.

Between snatches of sleep I get glimpses of Lake

Maggiore, splendid granite quarries, the distant Alps, and wake up at daylight conscious by the changed temperature of being far up on the sides of the mountains. After a half hour for breakfast, we continue our ascent over a splendid mountain road, which zigzags up the slopes, along deep gorges, across mad torrents, by great glaciers, sometimes reaching almost to the road itself, always in sight of snow and the most charming of water-falls, from the delicacy of a bridal veil to the full volume of a river. If we expected a fine view of the Alps we were disappointed. We were too near to them for that. We could see the great heights above us, but not the complete view which remoteness alone can give. Our road lay along a natural pass in the mountains, which Napoleon's keen eye had detected as forming the basis of a great highway, and which he determined to utilize after his laborious passage of the little St. Bernard. The road as he projected it led from Geneva to Milan, but the railway now shortens the distance formerly traversed in the *diligence*. It is a great feat of engineering, which we best appreciated after crossing the Swiss frontier. We walked for several miles with the rocks standing two thousand feet above our heads, yet not too high for water-falls to burst over them and be dissipated into mist as they fall into the valley. We pass through a tunnel about two hundred and fifty yards long, known as the Gallery of Gondo, and walking along a deep ravine by the same name, we are so exhilarated by the mountain air, and so interested in the wild torrent which thunders at our feet, that we forget that our *diligence* was left more than an hour ago. We await its coming in one of the grandest parts of the road, where the houses of refuge standing close together tell of the peril of winter travel. What avalanches have swept down these slopes, hurling their ruinous masses of rock and ice

upon the road and sweeping out of existence such habitations as these, which, despite the danger, we see now clinging to the rocks on both sides! Their very roofs are weighted down with huge stones to keep them in their places against the fierce winds.

We lunch at Simplon, near the summit of the Pass, and soon reach the Hospice, kept by some of the monks of St. Bernard. In this large stone building travelers may always find a bed and a loaf. No fixed payment is required, the traveler usually dropping in the box in the chapel the full equivalent of his entertainment. The same kind of dogs that saved so many lives elsewhere in the Alps are sent out from the Hospice in times of peril. We stopped long enough to look in on the good-natured monks, and while some tasted the proffered wine all remembered the box.

We were now beyond the range of all flowers, except the Alpine rose, which flourishes amid the snow. Great banks of snow abounded by the roadside, while immense glaciers reached down from the mountains above. In a few minutes we have reached the summit of the Pass, and begin our descent. One wheel of our *diligence* is locked by having a flat iron shoe, a little wider than the tire, placed under it, and we speed down the winding road at a fearful rate. We pass through tunnels, and *under* waterfalls, and over mountain torrents, and amid clouds of blinding dust. The finest scenery we have already left on the south side of the Pass, but we get charming glimpses of the Valley of the Rhone and of the Bernese Mountains. Could we have stopped at Brieg, at the foot of the Pass, we would have written the day a delightful one, despite the dust, but we had fully twenty miles more to go, and that in the valley, with a high temperature to succeed the bracing air of the mountains. We finally reached Suste, the terminus of the railway which we were to take on

the morrow to Geneva, but the last three of our twenty-one hours in a *diligence* came near making us renounce it forever. But a good night's rest reconciled us, and we could have tried it again in the morning. The cars awaited us, however, and in a couple of hours or more we were ready to embark on an inviting steamer that was to bear us over Lake Lemman to Geneva.

LETTER XLII.

. SWITZERLAND AND GERMANY.

“CLEAR, placid Lemman,” as Byron calls Lake Geneva, was in one of its best moods as we sailed its entire length on the 21st of June. We passed the Castle of Chillon, immortalized by Byron's verse, and the little island on which the prisoner of Chillon ever looked, “the only one in view.” We were content with a view of the exterior, but we saw many pilgrims going in row-boats to see the pavement of the cellar worn by the steps of Bonnivard and other prisoners. Coasting along the north bank of the lake we saw the beautiful villas and vineyards that skirt its shores, and we stopped every few minutes at some one of the numerous villages which are the favorite homes of Americans who summer in Switzerland.

In bright weather we should have enjoyed a fine view of the Alps, but their lofty heads had begun to attract the floating clouds several hours before, and soon each peak had on its “night-cap.” The clouds soon began to weep, but after a little the sun dried up their tears. Mont Blanc, however, refused to show his sublime head throughout the day, and during our entire stay in Geneva. I always looked for him the first thing on rising in the morning, but, while I could see several of the royal family near him, the monarch himself would not grant an audience.