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(Special Correspondence.)

Up to June Florence is very beautiful and delightful, Flora, her special goddess, holding there a very carnival, a long, wild bacchanalian route of roses, but after that time Apollo gets the upper hand, slaying her children right and left, and making things too hot for her generally.

We once remained in Florence till June had well set in and found the heat very oppressive, as it naturally would be in a city shut in by hills and dependent for fresh air on very intermittent breezes, which drop down from the Apennines or steal up from the distant sea. Nobody got up and out early enough to enjoy the brief morning freshness, but everybody could enjoy that of the evening, and the lingering sunset splendors and tender lights and shades from the noble historic heights of Fiesole and San Miniato, or in that loveliest of parks and riverside drives, the Caseini. Then the moonlight strolls on the Lungarno and about the solemn old historic and haunted *piazze* and *loggie* are simply hours of enchantment. We all became wise as owls during those last weeks in Florence, keeping in quiet and languid through the hot day, and being all alive and all abroad at night. We having many times gone through all the galleries and churches had little to tempt us out before sunset. I must confess, however, to the weakness of having gone to the Lungarno several times late in the afternoon, to watch for the celebrated Livingston—not the pious African explorer—but the rich American, who for more than twenty years had made his horses and drag a popular show in Florence. He first began, I believe, modestly, driving six-in-hand, then eight, then ten, and, finally, actually doubled the last number of beautiful blooded bays. I myself have seen him driving twenty of those splendidly groomed and appointed animals, with the aid, however, of two or three active grooms, most of time on foot. As the much-elongated equipage wound through the narrow city streets, toward the Lungarno, the immense bundle of ribbons held by the nervous but feeble hands of an elderly man, strapped in late years to his seat, and looking as anxious as the czar of all the Russias, Florentines looked for an accident with cheerful confidence, all ready to buy lottery tickets on the number of people killed or injured. If that long line of spirited, high-stepping, jingling, champing animals had taken fright and broken away from the control of driver and grooms, there would have been a whole chapter of accidents, "linked catastrophe long drawn out," but, as we with others looked and waited in vain for such a sensation, the equine and asinine display became monotonous, palled upon us, and we turned away in disgust. Soon after that the long-suffering municipal government interfered, and obliged their eccentric adopted citizen to divide the one grand circus turn-out into three parts. The last time I saw him, some four years ago, he was driving his original six—his son, brought up in the way he should drive, and a groom followed in separate drags—so all his pampered bays were out, and the show lacked only the piquant element of danger. It is Livingston's "fad." We all have them. I would not be ungenerous. If I had all those magnificent horses, he should be welcome to the "fad."

Florentines can remain later in the season with comfort in their big bowl of a city than foreigners, because they know just how to take life there, but all possessed of means treat themselves to a summer change. Many go to the baths of Lucca, not very cool, but salubrious and awfully fashionable, and to the seaside, and but few to the lakes, the air of which is not considered healthy until the autumn. Many seek to the mountains—the Appennines, the Tyrol, the Engadine—all the great Swiss resorts, while some go every year to the German baths. Few Americans know what picturesque, quiet, resting and cooling-off places are to be found in only in a few hours' journey from Florence among the Appennines. While the August sun was blazing on the parched plains, we once found four weeks of unbroken coolness and freshness at Abetone, amid vast pine forests on the summit of that lordly mountain range, a point reached by a five hours' drive from the railroad, up one of those wonderful military roads which are among the few beneficent results of war. Things at Abetone are much in keeping with its ambitious altitude—the winds, the pines, the hotel charges, and the airs of the waiters. Life is pleasantly primitive in some respects, in others too artificial; at least in the best hotel, where we only endured the style and ceremony for the sake of the cleanliness and good living. Among a crowd of all nationalities we found three Americans—a youth just from Harvard—but more English than the English in dress, manner, face, and speech; and two young brothers, artists, handsome and full of character and talent, as they well might be, being grandsons of Colonel Benton and nephews of Mrs. Fremont.

Among the Italians I most distinctly remember a large family of Hebrews from Ferrara, said to be exceedingly rich. The father was a portly, stately, diamond-studded personage, evidently bursting with prosperity, but quiet enough; the mother was pretty and accomplished, flinging modern languages right and left, but ah, the children! When they filed into the dining-room, we exclaimed: "Behold, a troop cometh!" And it was like a troop of horses. Through their noisy, tumultuous ways and execrable table-manners, revanche was taken for the impositions of Pharaoh, and the tyrannies of the ducal Este family, who used to shut their ancestors up in a crowded and noisome ghetto. There was a baby Jewess who, from her little high chair, ruled all about her with the very rod of Moses. If anything went against her will or whim she would set up an exceeding bitter cry, which pierced the head like Jael's vengeful nail. The presence of this tempestuous infant at table was protested against by several of the guests at our end of the table, but mine host could do nothing for fear of offending such rich patrons. There is no doubt but that the "chosen people" rule Europe by something mightier than the sword—the power of gold—to which must in fairness be added the force of a peculiar genius—astute, persistent, patient. I hope I have no narrow Christian prejudices. For my part, I never forget that Our Lord was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and yet there were times at that *table d'hote* when I wished that there still existed a ghetto for the "Hebrew children."

At Abetone there were positively no amusements, so-called—no riding, very little driving, no advancing, no lawn-tennis. We did nothing for fun but the wood—those interminable pine forests, solemn and sonorous as the sea—full of lonely paths and delicious nooks, and exhailing odours enough to sweeten a continent.

Between Abetone and the railway are several picturesque mountain towns frequented by well-to-do Italians, English, and Americans, during the summer heats. At San Marcello is a charming villa kept by the clever and accomplished Madame Piccoli, whose pension in Florence is so popular.

People who go summering to the Italian lakes will, if they are wise, keep indoors during the heat of the day, taking their walks in the early morning, and their sails and rows in the evening. All that nature can do to uplift and cheer the stranger's heart, whose lot, according to the pensive Hemans, is "a yearning anguish," is done on and beside those glorious lakes. They mirror the most exquisite skies and the loveliest hills in the world; they are enchanting pictures framed in a marvellous mosaic of foliage and flowers.

But sometimes the most enchanting scenes possess a double enchantment for the wanderer. By the emotion, tender and dreamy, they awake in you they send you home, to a very lonely spot, perhaps, to where your dearest are, your distant and yet your nearest.

One memorable, miserable, mosquitish month we were compelled by professional obligations to spend at a famous Italian health resort, the Springs of Agui, not far from Turin. This cure was much in vogue in the days of Imperial Rome, and celebrated as now for its sulphur springs and hot and mud baths, sovereign remedies for rheumatism and kindred diseases. The *Stablimento*, as it is called, is a handsome group of buildings in a pleasant park a mile or so out of town. It is a gay and fashionable place in spite of its big congregation of crippled invalids. It seemed as though every aristocratic, gouty patient, brought with him all his sisters, his cousins, and his aunts, coming just for fun. It seemed that the young and vigorous danced all the more merrily and furiously in the ballroom for being surrounded by poor fellow-creatures to whom mere locomotion was a clumsy agony. Like an Egyptian plague were the mosquitoes of Agui. We thought with sympathetic twinges of the sufferings of Roman ladies, of old, in their classical robes, adhering to their bodies by some law of attraction to us unknown, and of helpless Roman paralytics in their pretarious togas. The gout and paralysis cast out of patients at the cure seem to have gone into the old town, which has a most depressing aspect of desertion and dilapidation. Neither the theatre nor the cathedral is properly patronized; doctors are frozen out by the staff at the cure, and not even a cheerful support is given to the undertaker. In fact, the old town is moribund.

We were once conducted through the cure in an interval of treatment and bathing. In the court back of the wards, we were shown an immense tank or reservoir of black mud, simmering and bubbling. From this is taken the uninviting material for baths, beds and poultices. Within are ranged wooden couches, on which patients recline, sometimes entirely wrapped in sheets, plastered with mud. Sometimes they are immersed in baths, if so they may be called, of the same stuff, and there have to remain for hours. Many a poor rheumatic wretch lies down and rises up in mud, is black and sticky with it from head to heels, for all the world like an American presidential candidate. The difference is that this sort of mire sometimes cures the disease.

From what I have seen of well-bred, well-to-do Italians at summer resorts I should say that they take their holidays in a way more sensible than rich Americans. They make far less display in dress and equipage, they keep better hours, and avoid excess in exercise and amusements. They show less anxiety to be exclusive in their associations and higher-toned in their manners. They do not thrust long pedigrees or long purses down your throat. They bravely wear comfortable old clothes. Their kirtles and their titles, their coats and coats-of-arms, set easily upon them.

Many a fair *contessa*, whose home in Florence or Rome is an ancient *palazzo*, with lots of blood-curdling family traditions about it, and a family spectre or two, takes with her to the baths of Lucca or the seaside far less and less costly baggage than many a New York belle, with no ancestors to speak of, and only a photographic album of family portraits, going from a spectreless boarding-house to Saratoga or Long Branch.

The enormous iron-bound trunks of an American signorina are appalling objects to Italians, especially Italian porters, and are a sore burden to the fair owner herself as soon as she has been abroad long enough to have some of the nonsense out of her. By the way I have found after many years of sojourning in trunks, and many thousand miles of travelling, that the most enduring trunks are the lightest, and apparently the most slight, those made of well-seasoned oak work, with no iron about them. The celebrated Bon Marche trunk, light and elastic, has only narrow brass braces on the corners, which faithful little protectors never budge. I have one of these malles, of the largest size, which has been in almost constant use for ten years, and which is good yet, though, I must confess, no longer goodly to look upon. Not a nail has left its place, not a point projects from its brass-bound corners. I would that some enterprising American manufacturer would figure to himself what this trunk of mine was when it was new, and put the "very moral of it on the market." It would be a christian enterprise, sure to reduce the amount of profane swearing among porters and melt the hard and impenitent heart of the baggage-smasher. It would in those moments of sore and sudden trial when rich garments are rent on the broken iron bands or refractory nails of the wicked and way-laying trunk, save lovely woman from the sinful thought that, in the use of strong expletives, man enjoys one of his most *enviable* monopolies. I declare to goodness, I would rather look on the jagged lightning than a jagged tear in my best lace flounce. Even the big tin box of the English tourist, which can, for the nonce, be converted into a bath-tub, and which is very light, is better than than the Saratoga, which outweighs Plymouth Rock.

I hope I shall not be accused of a lack of patriotism in preferring foreign articles to home manufactures. If we copy without scruple or copyright French tragedies, why not French trunks; if we steal English brains, why not English boxes? Let us keep on in the good old religious republican way, "spoiling the Egyptians."—GRACE GREENWOOD.

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